

A new film details the collapse of belief in America



by Phyllis Chesler

Gloria Greenfield is about to premiere a new movie, and that's always very good news.

Greenfield has produced, co-produced and directed [five films](#) over the last 15 years, all passionate works in defense of truth, Israel and Western civilization. She always assembles an honorable cast of cutting-edge thinkers. These days, they are known as "conservatives." They are, perhaps, Western civilization's front-line defenders.

Her new film is titled "[Civilization in the Danger Zone](#)." It is aptly titled and very timely. As Kenneth L. Marcus, Director of the Brandeis Center for Human Rights, notes in the film, "We are witnessing the greatest crime of identity theft in the history of the world." He is referring to the demonization of American history so that only "past injustices ranging from slavery to Jim Crow" remain visible.

"We're forgetting all that has made America great," Marcus asserts.

Greenfield's documentaries provide a much-needed corrective to the endless courses, programs, books and films that specialize in racism, prejudice and injustice, but rarely focus on Jews, antisemitism, the Judeo-Christian tradition, or why the demonized Western Canon is crucial to our survival.

Here's how author Rod Dreher puts it in the film: "We're seeing a time now when people are taught that patriotic feelings or any love for your own country is wicked. ... We are racist, we are sexist. ... All of these things are true. They're true of every country on Earth. ... A patriot is someone who loves his country like he loves members of his family. They're not all perfect, but they're yours."

In fact, Americans and Europeans have much to be proud of. Heather MacDonald of the Manhattan Institute says, "We are the recipients of an extraordinary legacy of accomplishment ... a university should allow students to understand that."

Interviewee after interviewee dares to talk about the importance of knowing your past (Eric Cohen), the value of "Judeo-Christian ideals" (David Brog) and the importance of the family (Rod Dreher and Peter Wood) as the most likely place where one can "first learn loyalty and how to love justice, compassion, mercy."

Yes, we know that not all families are stable or even safe. But the good ones provide something no state ever can. Ask anyone who's been abandoned or dumped into state "care" systems.

The interviewees are also concerned with "faith," a sense that there is a larger purpose to our lives, "something larger than ourselves." With the decline of faith, we have begun to see the "harassment of strongly religious people." As academic Ruth Wisse puts it: "There is a side of ourselves that has to

be nurtured ... not just individually but collectively.”

Eric Cohen states that the survival or at least the “strength of the West will turn ultimately on the strength of its religious communities.”

But how can most people in the West, and even in Israel, who are so influenced by secular, celebrity and politically correct culture avoid the lure of assimilation, paganism, idol worship, etc.? They probably can't.

Moshe Koppel notes that religious people, especially Jews, are “going to have to resist the majority culture. ... That's how [Jews] have survived 2,000 years of persecution. ... That need is going to be very, very great because the dominant culture is turning against us.”

Moreover, giving up nationalism or our own nation-state because it has a complicated history of sexism and racism could be suicidal. As Kenneth Marcus points out, “Just look at the Ukrainian people and how they have fought to protect themselves, their families and their country from invasion. The question for Americans is: Would Americans fight if our country were in danger?”

Marcus also notes the corruption of education at all levels. “In California, in the new ethnic studies, we're seeing a politicization of American education,” he says, “seeing teachers being trained in what is a very clear political ideology. Call it anti-racism. Call it critical Race Theory. What it is, is a packaging of radical political theories under the guise of addressing discrimination, but in fact, preaching something that is very different.”

If anyone thinks this is a hysterical exaggeration, or unique to California, listen to philosophy professor Jason Hill, who says, “The administration in my university at DePaul are asking: Have you decolonized your syllabi? Have you taken out of your syllabi those white canonical figures ... the theories

devised by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Rousseau—and I teach Kant as well, and John Stuart Mill.”

“You cannot fudge the history,” he asserts. “Social contract theory was not devised by Egyptians; it was not devised by the Chinese or the Japanese. It is a uniquely European construct that had an enormous influence. ... The Western canon is being targeted as racist, imperialistic and oppressive. And the goal is to get rid of these thinkers.”

Moreover, these curricula are erasing the persecution of Jews and Christians, and demonizing them for crimes they did not commit. We have lost generations of teachers who are now indoctrinated, as well as countless generations of students.

Wisse states, “A culture of grievance is overtaking a culture of gratitude. ... [We have] coalitions of grievance on campuses. And coalitions of grievance in government. ... Whereas what you should have ... is a culture of gratitude.”

The trendy people will reject all of this. They will accuse these thinkers of trying to hide or minimize “white evil” and “Jewish evil.” They will absolutely refuse to acknowledge Islamic, Hindu, Sikh or Buddhist histories of imperialism, colonialism, slavery and misogyny, as well as the atrocities of communism in Russia and China.

Greenfield’s work bears witness to this disaster, but it is also a clarion call, a corrective and perhaps it shows us a way out.

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