

# Facing the Egalitarian Heresy of the 21st Century

by [Boyd Cathey](#) (March 2020)



*The Absinthe Drinker*, Pablo Picasso, 1901

Poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, in [\*The Masque of Pandora\*](#), writes, “Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad.” He was not the first to use a version of the phrase, which is found in Sophocles’ play, *Antigone*. But the meaning has been fairly consistent for over two millennia.

Aren’t we witnessing this today?

A large number of our fellow citizens seem possessed by a kind of madness. They seem to exist in a kind of parallel universe, with its own set of beliefs, its own standards of truth and particular narrative of facts. In almost every respect this universe represents the contrary, the negation, of the inherited, rooted foundation on which our historic Western and Christian civilization is based.

This contrary reality did not all of a sudden spring up, it has existed and been cultivated and nurtured for centuries. Its founding ideologues understood that their premises and desired objectives ran up full force against the ingrained traditions and historic legacy of a culture and civilization that traced its origins not only to the beliefs of the ancient Hebrews, but also to the highest art, philosophy and statecraft of the Greeks and Romans.

Encouraged by the Emperor Constantine at the [First Council of Nicaea](#) (325 A.D.) and two centuries later by the Emperor [Justinian the Great](#), the empire both East and West recognized

the primacy of Divine Positive Law—the laws and revealed teachings of God and His Church. But not only that: this transformation signaled the explicit foundation of Europe based not only on Revelation, but also upon the reality of Natural Law, those rules inscribed in nature and integral to it that also have as their Author, God Himself. The Christian civilization that came about was built securely and firmly not only on Holy Scripture but also the traditions and the legacy of those ancient cultures that were not destroyed by the Faith, but fulfilled and completed by it.

In the incredibly rich inheritance of ancient philosophy there was a recognition that there were discernible “laws” which govern the orderly operation and functioning of the social order and make possible a harmonious communal existence within society. What the Christian church did was to confirm the existence of those laws while adding a capstone, a divine sanction and specificity derived from Revelation and the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Church. Thus, this transformation of ancient society was prescriptive, conservative in the best sense of that word.

Is this template not the exact opposite of the modernist, progressivist revolution which seeks to cut society off from its inheritance, depriving it of the accumulated wealth of that heritage?

No doubt, change and reform, in some degree, always must occur in society. But these changes do not affect the necessity of our acceptance of the unaltered and unalterable higher laws given by God or the laws inscribed in nature. Rather, they occur on a practical level in any well-functioning society. There is a quote from Prince Giuseppe di Lampedusa’s famous

novel describing the revolutionary turmoil of mid-19th century Italy, *The Leopard (Il Gattopardo)*: "Things will have to change in order that they remain the same." In 1963 director Luchino Visconti directed an exquisite film of the same name based on that novel, starring, quite improbably, Burt Lancaster. The film vividly portrays the tensions between the immemorial past and the circumstances created by political and social change.

What Lampedusa's principle character, the Prince of Salina is saying is that no society—no culture—can completely denude itself of its inheritance and its history and actually survive. And more, a denial of natural law and the Divine Positive Law ends catastrophically. Such experiments in total revolutionary transformation have inevitably ended in violent bloodshed and incredible destructiveness—in the massacres of the French Revolution, and more recently, in the Gulag and the concentration camp, or in blood-soaked Maoism.

Over the past half century and more we have witnessed a different kind of revolution; it does not employ as weapons of choice the tank and bayonet, nor the Gulag as the final destination for unrepentant opponents. It leaves nothing of substance behind in its wake. It is an unfolding, all-encompassing cultural movement, subverting and then incorporating in its service diverse extreme revolutionary elements injected into our educational system, into our entertainment industry, into our politics, even into the very language we use to communicate with each other. The "violence" it metes out is mostly of a cerebral nature, not of the physical kind, but rather predicated on shame, humiliation, and the fear of the loss of a job or reputation. It plays on the natural human desire for conformity, while steadily upping the ante in our laws—constantly moving the goalposts of what

are acceptable and unacceptable. It is the kind of intellectual "violence" now writ large that once impelled people to look the other way when their neighbors were hauled off to Siberia under Comrade Stalin, or to Dachau under Hitler. But, arguably, it is worse, for it denies the very existence of those immutable laws that govern the universe.

It has been highly effective, utilizing as its major weaponry the terrifying twins, the inexpugnable accusations of "racism" and "sexism," and a whole panoply of sub-terms that accompany such charges: "white supremacy," "historic white oppression," "colonialist imperialism," "misogyny," "toxic masculinity," and increasingly expanded to incorporate terms like "anti-migrant" or "anti-transgender" bigotry.

The overarching desire of this progressivist revolution is, in fact, not reform—not what Lampedusa's Prince of Salina says consolingly about some things changing so that other things can remain the same. No, it is incredibly "post-Marxian," making the older Communist and Marxist revolutionary dreams seem tame in comparison. It invokes and demands a total transformation in which nearly all, if not all, of those institutions, those traditions, and that inheritance vouchsafed to us from our ancestors is rudely discarded, rejected, and condemned as racist, sexist, fascist—in other words, our remembered past is cut off from us.

This progressive revolution is predicated on the idea of equality. Yet, in fact, the equality as envisaged does not exist and has never existed in nature. For revolutionary "equality" is a slogan, in reality an exercise in guile and subterfuge employed to shame and cajole a weak-willed and gullible citizenry into eventually dissolving the traditional

social bonds and inherited natural (and moral) laws that have governed our culture for two millennia. Its true objective is domination over and power in society.

As an increasingly independent outgrowth of an historic cultural Marxism formulated decades ago and insinuated into our educational systems and entertainment industry, this assault on our historic culture makes the template of the old Soviet Communists appear conservative. Josef Stalin would never have, and never did, put up with same sex marriage, transgenderism, or the kind of feminist extremism we see around us today. True, the Soviets *talked* of equality, and women occupied some professional positions, but for the Reds a strong family and observance of supposedly “outdated” traditional morality were still important.

Revolutionary equality, in the form of egalitarianism, is not only a rebellion against the Divine Positive Law, but also against Nature, that is, against the way things are and function naturally in our world, those workings and that usual consistency observed as prescriptive laws for thousands of years.

There is a parable in the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Parable of the Talents ([Mt. 25:14-30](#))