



Fetterman-inspired Senate Slovenliness Is Symptom of Larger Problem

Just as some quip that there are politicians who fancy the book *1984* an instruction manual, it appears many Americans today consider the film *Idiocracy* a video tutorial. A recent example is the dropping of the Senate dress code in deference to one John Fetterman (D-Penn.), a member of that august body who's determined to dress for distress.

It's not clear why Fetterman — a physically fettered man as a result of a 2022 stroke — feels compelled to attend Senate sessions wearing a hoodie and shorts. Perhaps his cognitive impairment means he can no longer make a tie knot; maybe he has been trying to conceal a large lump on his neck (though [recent reports](#) indicate it's gone). Then again, he possibly is just another cultural devolutionary who revels in destroying tradition. Whatever the case, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) decided just days ago that the sergeant-at-arms should cease enforcing the Senate's long-standing dress code.

So, show up in that bathing attire. Just as they say "What's in a name?" what's in a suit, after all? Apparently not much of substance, judging from the politicians who wear them. This doesn't mean appearance is irrelevant, however. What's more, Fetterman's defiance of standards and Schumer's enabling of it reflects a wider problem: The Left's unremitting attack on our traditions and institutions. *Newsweek* senior editor-at-large Josh Hammer made this point just today. He then [elaborated](#):

(We are, after all, reliably informed by many wokesters that the very structure of the Senate — two members per state, regardless of population — is a throwback to "white supremacy.") But the koshering of Fetterman's sartorial slovenliness bespeaks a trend both greater and more pernicious than the wokes' now-trite attacks on American traditions: the failure to recognize, and uphold, objective social standards.

... Across all of American and Western society, the "participation trophy" mentality now reigns supreme. Objective standards are certainly not upheld in the world of modeling, where to speak of "objective beauty" is to out oneself as a hidebound chauvinist; so-called plus-size models, on the contrary, are now all the rage. Objective standards are certainly not upheld in the world of art, either, where much of modern art makes a mockery of the one-



AP Images
John Fetterman



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time craft of da Vinci and van Gogh. Nor are objective standards recognized in much of postwar architecture, which saw the rise of such hideous schools as brutalism at the expense of the neoclassical and Gothic styles.

Suggesting that some physical female figures, works of art, building designs, musical songs, and so forth are affirmatively “nicer” than others is now frowned upon. We are often told that it is too “judgmental” to make such blanket assertions — to treat mere differences of subjective opinion as matters of objectivity, good and bad, right and wrong. So too, Schumer and Senate Democrats are telling us, it is wrong to treat Fetterman’s preference for casting Senate votes in hoodies and shorts as any different — any “better” or any “worse” — than his colleagues’ preference for doing so in suits and ties. As with a participation trophy, everyone is a winner just for showing up!

Do note, however, that these tradition-killing moral relativists/nihilists are hypocritical. They certainly are willing to make judgments, after all — and uncompromising ones at that — when someone dares violate their woke (im)moral code. Why, just say something politically incorrect about race or sex (or many other things), and a cancellation may come a-knockin’.

Philosopher C.S. Lewis noted this long ago, saying of such people, “Their scepticism about values is on the surface: it is for use on other people’s values; about the values current in their own set they are not nearly sceptical enough.”

But how can relativists become the most absolute of dogmatists? It’s simple:

The ultimate result of relativism is to make everything relative to *oneself* — and self-deification can be the result.

Speaking of which, this left-wing skepticism about dress codes is situational. How many Chuck Schumer types would take kindly to you showing up looking like a bum to a cherished loved one’s wedding or funeral? How many would thus dress themselves if meeting the king of England?

Really, though, dress’s importance is underappreciated. Consider, for example, that when justifying casual attire in church, many will say, “Does God care how you dress?!”

Actually, yes — He probably does.

For God cares about whatever affects our fellow man, and how we dress influences others. Wearing bathing suits, for example, engenders a very different mindset than does donning a three-piece suit.

As Annenberg Learner [writes](#), addressing ceremonial wear, by “donning attire that is more beautiful, more expensive, more extraordinary, we step out of our daily routines, facilitating our own participation in out-of-the-ordinary events.”

What’s more, at issue here is a universal. As Annenberg continues, “As this British court dress and Turkmen *chyrpy* [seen in pictures [at the site](#)] demonstrate, the concept of ‘ceremonial’ garb translates across both cultures and historical eras.”

This is why our continual dumbing down of sartorial standards matters. For example, there’s little question that if kids still had to dress up for school or wear uniforms, their behavior would immediately improve (to a degree).

As to this, Hammer makes the point that society can’t function without objective standards. Shedding



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them means descending, he writes, into “social and cultural lawlessness” and an anything-goes mentality.

Really, though, perhaps this is the point. Destabilization is necessary to foment a revolution that would allow you to seize control over the country. And what better way to destabilize a nation than to disregard its social laws along with the governmental ones?



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