



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on July 26, 2024

Does Christian Fundamentalism “Infect” Our Schools?

As if cuing ominous music, we hear incessant warnings today about “Christian nationalism” and “fundamentalism.” We’re supposed to fear these forces and, in particular, their alleged inroads into education. In fact, as the *Los Angeles Times* writes this week, this phenomenon threatens to “destroy” our schools and transform us “from a democracy to a theocracy.”

Why, if students hear about God at all, they just may get the crazy idea that government is not their highest power.



The *LA Times*’ Fear

Times writer Michael Hiltzik quotes early on in his [piece](#) Clarence Darrow, of Scopes “monkey trial” fame, as saying, “I knew that education was in danger from the source that has always hampered it — religious fanaticism.” Hiltzik then goes on to provide a history of the trial — involving a Tennessee law banning the teaching of evolution in schools — which is quite interesting and appears very fair. But he then lowers the boom, claiming that “fundamentalism” is again rearing its frightful head.

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“Oklahoma’s reactionary state superintendent of education, Ryan Walters, recently mandated that the Bible should be taught in all K-12 schools, and that a physical copy be present in every classroom, along with the Ten Commandments, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution,” Hiltzik writes. ““These documents are mandatory for the holistic education of students in Oklahoma,’ he ordered.”

Is Teaching the Bible “Fundamentalist”?

Hiltzik certainly wouldn’t like the following lines, either. “The most important business in this Nation — or any other nation, for that matter — is raising and training children,” they begin. “I don’t think we put enough stress on the necessity of implanting in the child’s mind the moral code under which we live.” What would this be?

“The fundamental basis of this Nation’s law was given to Moses on the Mount,” the quotation continues. “The fundamental basis of our Bill of Rights comes from the teachings which we get from Exodus and St. Matthew, from Isaiah and St. Paul. I don’t think we emphasize that enough these days.”

Oh, the “fundamentalist” [uttering the above](#) was Democratic President Harry Truman in 1950. Democrat FDR before him [trumpeted the Bible](#) as well.

Reality: Teaching the Bible in schools and posting the Ten Commandments were very common in the



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U.S. for most of our history — they're as American as apple pie.

And, no, though I won't rehash the arguments here, [doing so isn't unconstitutional at all](#).

“Leftist Fundamentalism”

Now, Hiltzik also dislikes “laws suppressing discussions of race and gender in the classrooms,” as he puts it, two topics the Left prioritizes. Given this, some might now rail against “leftist fundamentalism” in schools (and elsewhere). But claiming its presence would be an unfair accusation.

Leftism simply involves no, or virtually no, principles to be fundamental about.

As *Merriam-Webster* [informs](#) in the entry's second definition, “fundamentalism” is “a movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles.” Leftism, however (or liberalism, which has become de-facto synonymous), is not an ideology as much as a *process* — that of ever seeking change unguided by principles; aka movement toward moral disorder. That is, at least until complete control is attained by those for whom this process yields power.

Yet if leftism does have one enduring principle, it is this: that there is no God and that man is thus a mere cosmic accident.

A corollary of this is that the highest power would be the biggest government.

A secondary corollary is that government would then be the ultimate lawgiver.

Enter evolution — in its godless form.

Evolution vs. Intelligent Design

We've transitioned from a nation where evolution sometimes couldn't be taught in school to one where it must be and intelligent design (ID) is banned from classrooms. (Hiltzik points to a 2005 court opinion on the latter.) But *why*?

Remember those exam exercises in which we had to choose which element of a group was out of place? Let's try one here:

Math, history, English, geography, evolution — which doesn't belong? Some may now say it is part of science, but even insofar as it may be valid (i.e., as a possible vehicle through which God created complexity), it is a *specialty*. Why the obsession with teaching it? Are we trying to forge a nation of paleontologists?

New York University law and philosophy Professor Emeritus Thomas Nagel, an avowed atheist, has some idea. In his [2008 essay](#) “Public Education and Intelligent Design,” he warns that disqualifying ID “results in the avoidance of significant questions about the relation between evolutionary theory and religious belief.” He later added:

From the beginning it has been commonplace to present the theory of evolution by random mutation and natural selection as an alternative to intentional design as an explanation of the functional organization of living organisms. The evidence for the theory is supposed to be evidence for the absence of purpose in the causation of the development of life-forms on this planet. It is not just the theory that life evolved over billions of years, and that all species are descended from a common ancestor. Its defining element is the claim that all this happened as the result of the appearance of random and purposeless mutations in the genetic material followed by natural selection due to the resulting heritable variations in



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reproductive fitness. It displaces design by proposing an alternative.

In other words, while critics claim ID sends a theological message, conventional evolution sends an *atheological* message. It treads in — and on — the theological realm.

Will Kids Be Taught the “Science” of Evolution?

Moreover, what of the call to “follow the science”? During evolutionary teaching, will kids be told that we can’t explain how chemicals “came to life” (abiogenesis) and, incredibly, had a will to continue living and become more complex? Will they be informed that Bill Gates said DNA is like a software program far more complex than anything we’ve ever devised? Will they hear that famed cosmologist Fred Hoyle [stated](#) that a “commonsense interpretation of the facts suggests that a super-intellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology?

If not, we can conclude that our schools do have an infection, all right — one neither Christian nor fundamental.

Note: In the interview below, a brilliant ID proponent discusses the proof of God embedded in living cells.





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