

*Fr. Perozich comments —*

*It has taken a few decades in the government, education, science, medicine, business and in the church for those to come to power who consider their ideas better than the values of others.*

*If church leaders speak about Jesus, redemption from sin, eternal life, the morality of the Bible and catechism rather than their proposed modifications, I can follow them.*

*If church leaders speak of novelties in theology to recreate things in their own image and likeness such a canceling the Mass of John XXIII, if they are led by the world in virus/vax, immigration, socialism, climate, race, etc, I grant them respect for their office but do not have to agree with every new thing they teach.*

*Angelo Codevilla wrote this when the ruling class objected to Indiana's laws regarding marriage and family. The ruling class now is stronger than ever. He gives some pointers on resistance.*

# Standing Up to the Ruling class

By ANGELO M. CODEVILLA

About Angelo M. Codevilla July 4, 2015 4:00 AM



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(Photo Illustration: NRO)

What citizens can do to resist the **ruling class's** redefinitions of moral and cultural norms.

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**“To learn who rules over you, find out whom you are not allowed to criticize.” — Voltaire**

If you're wondering what Americans can do as our **ruling class** sets about enforcing its redefinition of marriage, start by looking back at what it did to the citizens of Indiana when their legislature raised the possibility that someone might object to joining in celebrations of homosexual marriage.

Support for homosexual unions was incidental to the insistence of the likeminded folks atop society's commanding heights on punishing Indiana. ***What incurs their ire has less to do with any substantive matter than with the American people's resistance to honoring their fantasies.*** These fantasies can be reversed without notice. (Obama opposed homosexual marriage until 2013.) But dissenting from any of them — whether about race, or sex, or science, or

anything else — risks ostracism and disqualification from earning a living.

Indiana's Republicans, its churches, and conservatives in general pled for the liberty to speak and act according to religious faith. They did not and do not argue the worth of the Judeo-Christian religious beliefs that the **ruling class** deems odious. This has proved to be self-defeating. **Appeals for tolerance of all beliefs in the name of America's traditional freedoms fail because they concede the ruling class's assertion of its own moral-intellectual superiority, as well as its underlying assumption that good and evil, better and worse, are just other words for its own likes and dislikes.**

The **ruling class's** component groups jointly dismiss America's traditional liberties because they aim to replace them with their own primacy. Having seized the power to redefine liberty, our rulers tighten their definitions around their opponents' necks like nooses. **Since their desire for primacy has no limit, they can't stop tightening.** The norms that they demand that we honor help sustain each constituency by letting its members feel good about themselves while looking down on others. Their "dignitary interests" (to use Justice Kennedy's term for who must be honored vs. those who must submit to being vilified) simply trump those of others. **This is why the ruling class demonizes any questioning of its demands' substance by imposing modern equivalents of the slave-era "gag rule."** They wage **identity politics as war.**

As President Obama commented on (and commended) how the Indiana legislature had been quashed, he left no doubt about that war's aims: "**[W]e're going to have to change how our body politic thinks.**" Hillary Clinton similarly asserted the desire for mastery over society beyond any law: "**[D]eep-seated cultural codes, religious beliefs and structural biases have to be changed.**" The point is to squeeze out the wiggle room. As Communist theoretician Antonio Gramsci taught, "hegemony" over culture makes it impossible to even think of resisting rulers. Few of our princes of political correctness read Gramsci. But power over what we praise and blame, how we think and speak, is what they and theirs are all about.

Consequently, ***if we wish to remain who we are in the face of threats and declamations meant to force us to honor intellectual and moral falsehoods, we have no alternative but clearly and loudly to distinguish between true and false, fully making the case for what we believe to be right.*** There is no viable alternative to confronting the **ruling class's** fantasies and euphemisms substantively, in detail.

**Peaceable behavior will not protect you from being hounded as a "hater."** A whiff of "offensive" attitudes is enough for the **ruling class** to make you as untouchable as the lepers of old. Nor is silence a refuge.

Just as you must honor homosexuality, so you must affirm that certain Americans are "racists" addicted to "white privilege." Do you demur? Then, Racist that you

are, you must be shunned and should be fired. Do you support governmental efforts to reverse “anthropogenic global warming”? If you demur, you are a Denier who endangers our national security, and must be treated as a kook. Should you refuse to pledge your fealty to the proposition that life and the universe are the meaningless result of chance, you reveal yourself to be a Religious Zealot, an “American Taliban,” ineligible for public and private trust. Do you have reservations about the constitutionality or beneficence of administrative government? Then you are an Extremist, a proper target for Homeland Security, the IRS, the NSA, etc. Do you refuse to celebrate “terminating a pregnancy” as women’s fundamental right? Then you are a Warrior against Women, possibly a terrorist. Do you own guns? *Ipsa facto*, you are a Violent Extremist.

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Law no longer protects you. The **ruling class** does not punish through laws, and seldom by official actions, nor in any manner amenable to argument. Its bites come from officials and judges, from the connected and protected, whose rule is “Stop me if you can,” and who shove reason aside with epithets such as “offensive” and “hateful.” Justice Anthony Kennedy’s majority opinion in *U.S. v. Windsor* (2013) epitomized this: Objections to homosexual marriage “are inexplicable by anything except

animus.” The same goes for all issues on which the **ruling class** pronounces.

Nor will reason protect you. No discussion of merits is tolerated. Typically, the U.S. government’s interpretation of, for instance, the Affordable Care Act of 2010 or Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (prohibition of discrimination against women) is that to claim that the law means neither more nor less than what it says is to violate it. Our **ruling class**’s power to say “what the meaning of ‘is’ is” trumps all reason. Such is not law that bids to persuade fellow citizens. It is how conquerors treat defeated enemies. Yours is the burden of proving you’re on the correct side.

The **ruling class**’s demands that we mold ourselves to its appetites, based on the pretense of its own superior status, amount to pulling rank. But, by forsaking reason, our rulers leave their premises naked to challenges through reason and cede authority to whoever is willing to deal in the coin of explanations. The **ruling class** shouts: “The debate is over!” “Shut the bigots up!” This may cow public opinion, but it destroys the capacity to lead it.

In fact, public opinion can be led only by persuasion regarding true and false, better and worse. This is how free human beings deal with one another. No democratic case can be made for limiting substantive challenges to premises and pretensions. Lincoln, following John Quincy Adams, pointed again and again to the slaveholders’ efforts to silence debate about slavery’s moral and political effects as evidence of the slaveholders’ threat to the freedom of whites as well as of blacks. Like Adams,

Lincoln pressed slavery's hard, ugly realities upon audiences that preferred to evade them. As Lincoln brushed away the euphemisms and legal constructs in describing the slave trade's merchandising of human beings, so should we not mince words regarding all that the **ruling class** demands that we honor.

The demand that we call homosexual unions "gay marriage" forces us to honor something that is far from "gay" — i.e., lighthearted, joyful — but, in the case of male homosexuals, anal intercourse, which impairs the health of the persons involved and of society. Why honor it by calling it marriage? Perhaps because it is an instance of "love between consenting adults"? But what sort of society can be based on honoring all manner of sexual relations between any and all "consenting adults"? This logic applies with precisely the same force to polygamy, and to sexual relations between parents and adult children, or between brothers and sisters, as it does to sexual relations between two non-consanguineous homosexuals. But the assertion that mothers and fathers and children are interchangeable is a lie. The Supreme Court, in *Reynolds v. U.S.* (1878), judged that monogamous (they did not have to say "heterosexual") marriage is the cornerstone of a free society. Why, *precisely*, should we reject that judgment as ignorant and mean-spirited? Before 1961, all 50 states criminalized anal intercourse, heterosexual as well as homosexual. Why, *precisely*, were they wrong in doing so? By what right does anyone place such questions "out of bounds"?

The **ruling class** also refers to abortionists as providers of medical services for “reproductive rights,” and indicts as “extremists” those who illustrate what the abortionists do with photos of what surely look like children, with arms, legs, and heads chopped or burned. Yet each of these little ones’ DNA shows him or her to be a son or a daughter of a particular mother and father. Lincoln argued that no one has the right to exclude any other person from the human race. Why is it right so to dispose of millions of little sons and daughters? By what right does anyone dishonor as “extremists” those who show the victims for the human beings they are?

Our ruling politicians, media figures, and so on *don't even try to show* that life results from meaningless evolution or that anthropogenic global warming exists (tomorrow it will be something else). By answering questions about how they know such things, through appeals by appealing to Authority, they reveal their scientific illiteracy. Thus do they demand that you declare your faith in them as “Science R-Us,” or be pilloried as anti-science.

But science is reason, not pretense. Only the power of government can translate scientific illiteracy into scientific pretense. What President Dwight Eisenhower warned against in his 1961 farewell address has become our reality: “domination of the nation’s scholars by Federal employment, project allocations, and the power of money.” Government money is the means by which ruling-class power has become the scientific pretense by which we are instructed what to eat, how to shower, what medical care is



proper and what is not, and what to think about right and wrong.

*If anyone deserves labels such as “divisive” and “destructive,” is it not this **ruling class**?*

The principle of equality is the bedrock of the rule of law. Creating “protected classes” of citizens shattered that bedrock. No vote by our elected representatives ever did that. Hubert Humphrey, the principal sponsor of the 1964 Civil Rights bill, staked his hard-earned reputation for honesty on the proposition that the bill’s anti-discrimination provisions could never result in preferential treatment for Negroes, because this would contradict the bill’s central intent. Nevertheless, as courts enhanced executive powers to enforce anti-discrimination, they effectively codified discrimination on behalf of “protected classes,” defined first by race, and later by sex, age, disability, origin, religion. Ruling-class insiders use these officious codes to prey upon their opponents. Justice Kennedy’s and President Obama’s assurances that their creation of a right to homosexual marriage, and concomitant creation of a new “protected class,” should not reduce the rights of any other Americans rest on reputations poles apart from that of honest Hubert.

Why should not all “classes” be equally protected? Does the rule of law even admit of “classes”? Does not the 14th Amendment promise “the equal protection of the laws” to all alike? But when presidents and supreme courts tell us that “equal” can mean “unequal” as willfully as that “is” can mean “is not,” when what is written counts less

than what the powerful want, what can “law” mean? What obligation has anyone to obey such pretend-law?

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Demands from on high to join in mouthing lies call forth a visceral reaction: “Who the [expletive deleted] do they think they are to impose this warp of reality on us?”

Typically, however, people who live under unaccountable power follow fashion publicly and keep to family and friends such opinions as can get them in trouble. Crouching protectively, they secede from the regime individually. Thus lacking confidence in the future, they hollow out the country. America used to be an exception. No more. The official opposition in the Obama era — the Republican party’s leadership — now leads ordinary citizens in self-censorship, further convincing us that our dissent is lonely and futile. But to approve of officious lies, thereby tacitly normalizing unaccountable power, is to become worthy of it. As the great Solzhenitsyn reminds us, the sine qua non of liberty is refusal to live by lies.

We need neither submit nor secede.

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Americans tell pollsters that we distrust our bipartisan **ruling class**. Accusations of racism, sexism, ignorance, etc. have not convinced us. People who pay attention to public affairs are not ignorant about how these accusations contrast with reality. The several pro-life organizations have spread the elements of embryology and moral logic to

the ever-expanding millions of Americans who care about the sanctity of human life. Similarly, the Family Research Council and the National Organization for Marriage have bolstered the common sense that the words “marriage” and “family” derive their meaning from heterosexual monogamy, and that American society is founded on that. The Club for Growth has become the standard reference by which millions of voters judge the economic probity of policies and candidates. When the public thinks about the right to self-defense, it looks to the National Rifle Association or Gun Owners of America. And so it goes.

The practical problem in America has been that when the **ruling class** trains its united wrath against persons in any one sector — e.g., supporters of marriage as the dictionary and the law have defined it, or those who support economic probity or the right to keep and bear arms — the general public quietly stands by. No longer accustomed to speaking together, Americans hang separately. For the members of the public to transcend their isolation enough to threaten the **ruling class**’s hold on the commanding heights of American society would require a nationwide movement with which disparate individuals could identify, and which could encourage them to join together and speak up.

Typically, such movements are associated with presidential campaigns. Today’s campaigns, however, consist of focus-group-tested sound bites. Listening to them diminishes us all. To transcend this, to reclaim the American people’s freedom from arbitrary power over minds and souls as well as bodies, to expose the false

premises on which the **ruling class**'s pretenses rest, a candidate would have to imitate Abraham Lincoln. His debates with Stephen Douglas — no notes, much less teleprompters — dealt with complex matters before audiences few of whom had gone beyond elementary school, and enabled them seriously to discuss the choices they faced. Said Lincoln: “Let the people know the facts, and the Country will be saved.”

In our time, if a candidate were to challenge his opponents to bare-knuckle, Lincoln–Douglas sessions, his example might lead fellow citizens to reject the combination of poisonous sloganeering and of dominance, submissiveness, and corruption that now passes for politics. Retaking control of our lives requires us to reason with one another and to decide for ourselves what is good and bad, better and worse, true and false. This is how it was when we were free.