

The Rise of Christian Nationalism

Resources & Further Reading

Foundational:

Christians Against Christian Nationalism ([homepage](#) - [statement](#) - [curriculum](#))

Listen:

<https://www.npr.org/2022/01/14/1073215412/christian-nationalism-is-stronger-than-ever-even-without-donald-trump-as-president>

Read:

['Taking America Back for God'](#), Andrew Whitehead & Samuel Perry (book; sociology)

['Jesus & John Wayne'](#), Kristin Kobes du Mez (book; religion)

['The Power Worshipers'](#), Katherine Stewart (book; public policy)

['Wolf in Fleece Clothing'](#), Diana Butler Bass (article; xtn nat'l w/in ACNA/Episcopal ethos)

For Further Reflection (Paul's notes from 30,000 feet):

Core concepts:

1. Dominant Group Status Threat (Wilkerson)
2. WCN Categories (Whitehead & Perry)
3. Embattlement (Du Mez)
4. Aggrieved Retaliation (Stewart)

So what?

1. Know history of 'power' distribution in US and divide/conquer, scapegoating;
2. Identify ways 'accommodators' enable 'ambassadors,' and equip 'accommodators' to be effective 'resistors';
3. Challenge view of 'progressive' causes ('the Liberal agenda') as source of chaos/disorder, challenge 'traditional' order/control expectations, challenge zero-sum perception of 'power' (rising tide), increase pain threshold for social change, shifting identities and power distribution;
4. Invite the 'aggrieved ambassadors' to exercise real creative power (Genesis, Imago Dei) by becoming 'hopeful proponents' of others' flourishing, challenge undermining of pluralistic participatory democracy, affirm high-functioning civil sector as defender of human dignity and proponent of the expansion of human rights/responsibilities.

Mapping Intervention-Up/DownStream:

1. Prevention: developing epistemological immunity to WCN's appeal — digital, social, political, emotional, and theological literacy; social networks intentionally geared toward inviting and including isolated, at-risk boys and men;
2. Early intervention: identifying beliefs/behaviors that indicate red-pilling; identify intervention strategies/tactics; identify entry points with community partners (families, schools, behavioral health, law enforcement); social networks intentionally geared toward including and de/reprogramming partial radicalization;

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3. Middle Intervention: identifying local radicalized groups; identifying signs of ambivalence among group members; identifying strategies for raising pre-contemplative dissonance and contemplation of readiness for change; identifying signs of readiness to act; developing network of well-trained companions to map and orchestrate exit strategy; developing contact and intake strategy/tactics for those who self-identify and reach out for help;
4. Late Intervention: developing network of well-trained practitioners to engage folks whose behaviors have led them to be gathered up in the legal (or other) dragnet; developing credibility and contacts within law enforcement and other intervening entities; developing best practices for companioning long-term, multi-disciplinary de-rad work.

Other issues:

1. Profile of a Disciple: clear shape and practices of a disciple's lifestyle w/ particular focus on non-toxic (i.e. constructive) masculinity;
2. Accountability: networks of mutual accountability, equipped to name and address specifics w/ concrete steps for confession, repentance, reckoning, repair, and reconciliation;
3. Justice: balancing punitive and restorative (sticks & carrots), affirming the former to 'raise the bottom of the barrel' and the latter to 'incentivize the hard work'; needs to be trauma-informed and victim-centered, e.g. what concrete proof of above steps (see 2) do victims deserve to see before being asked to participate in restorative work?;
4. Psychological/Psychiatric: prevalence of DSM dx; role of Freudian/Jungian frameworks for long-term de/reprogramming; balancing conscious/unconscious work w/o minimizing either personal agency and accountability OR the power of pathology;
5. Behavior Modification: 'do this, not that'; developing a very prescriptive 'recovery program' that includes very specific rehabilitative actions/steps; how would we define the 'addiction' (power? privilege? status?) active in radicalization?; what would re-articulating the 12-steps for de-rad work look like?;
6. Rational Re-set: short-course in US history from the marginalized, complexifying personal assumptions and providing new information; ability to see the American experience from multiple perspectives with new awareness and appreciation for unequal distribution of power and influence re: exercising self-determination, defining the 'common good,' and shaping the public sector (race, class, gender; capitalism; democracy);
7. Reform & Re-integration: utilizing models like Braver Angels to put new self-awareness and new knowledge into practice by intentionally engaging across obvious difference; increasing pain threshold for difference; increasing capacity for curiosity, wonder, and surprise;
8. Rational/Irrational: developing strategies and skills for moving conversation from ostensibly 'rational' realm (e.g. Du Mez deconstructing white evangelicalism) to address the 'irrational' dynamics at play (e.g. grief, fear, fragility, compensatory bravado and aggression);

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9. Branding & Broadcast: how would this be upscaled for maximum impact as a cultural leavening agent, above and beyond direct interpersonal pastoral engagement?