

14b. There is no Church - State Union - Part 2

Tess Lambert, 21.05.2022

Youtube Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cylH_Cd2P5c

[00:00:07.270] - Tess

Have we all heard of the term the culture war? I'm not sure if people have understood the concept of the culture war. But I want to go into that, explaining what the culture war means. If you were to go to the Wikipedia page and look up culture war, it'll divide it into sections. It'll discuss 1920s to 1980s as the origins between the 20's and the 80's of the last century. It was used, but it wasn't very common. It wasn't very popular as a phrase. When did it started to be popular? When did the concept of culture war be introduced? That modern polarization in the United States begins to be understood so clearly through the lens of a culture war? When did that happen? It was a singular event, a singular year? Ray.

[00:01:30.950] - Raymond

I was going to say second wave feminism until you said singular event. When you said singular year, I was going to guess 1989.

[00:01:44.850] - Tess

Close. It's a really good attempt. Marie, I missed you. Sorry, Ray, were you done?

[00:01:58.970] - Raymond

Yeah.

[00:02:04.190] - Marie

Saying singular year does stump me. But I would suggest or I would guess 2016. With Steve Bannon. Although I know that was all happening well before then. I guess again and say 2012.

[00:02:30.510] - Tess

Don't mind if you want to search. If people want to have a look. I don't mind that. By then you're seeing the fruits of the culture war, not where it begins to actually be understood as an issue. Graeme.

[00:02:55.490] - Graeme

I was going to say around 1996 where we see two streams of information brought into YouTube and Internet. That we developed a really big divide in culture.

[00:03:13.470] - Tess

You and Ray have book ended it. It's 1991. But you're on the right track. 1991, 1996. But when is the increase of knowledge? And it's in 1991, the increase of knowledge, that people start to understand that they are in the midst of a culture war in the United States. What happened was James Davison Hunter, a sociologist at the University of Virginia, introduced the expression again. It was known before, but he introduced it in his 1991 publication, *Culture Wars, The Struggle to Define America*. *"Hunter described what he saw as a dramatic realignment and polarization that had transformed American politics and culture."* They divide it to the 1920s to 1980s. It's used infrequently. And then they divide it 1991 to 2001. That ten year period. It took off because of what James Hunter wrote. *"He argued that on an increasingly number of hot issues, including abortion, gun politics, separation of church and state, privacy, recreational drug use, homosexuality, censorship, there existed two definable polarities. Furthermore, not only were there a number of divisive issues, but society had divided along essentially the same lines on these issues, so as to constitute two warring groups, defined primarily not by nominal religion, ethnicity, social class, or even political affiliation, but rather by ideological worldview."*

[00:05:05.060] - Tess

In the past, prior to 1991, you had the Moral Majority, you had the three movements, you had a lot of conflict for civil rights over the mid late 1900, but now you had two sides, two opposite poles. If you believed in one divisive issue, you tended to have similar positions on all the others. So people didn't have a wide spectrum of smattering of some and others. They're generally divided into two poles. And these two poles were now war. And what he also identified was that in past decades, centuries, this would be fought over based on someone's religion. Christianity, a defense of traditional family values through the protestant lens. And he says, not so anymore. Now, it's not about religion, it's not about ethnicity, it's not about social class, and it's not even really about what political party you belong to. It's about your ideological worldview. It's about which culture you want to belong to. In 2021, he was interviewed by Politico. It was the 30 year anniversary of him bringing this concept of culture war into the mainstream and it taking off from there.

[00:06:36.690] - Tess

So Politico interviewed him 30 years later. Last year. And asked for his views on America today. Where he sees the culture war over the last 30 years. And I'll come to that in a moment. Katherine, I'll take your hand first.

[00:06:57.020] - Katherine

It's okay. It's from before, when you wanted to know about the year. I was going to say 1991.

[00:07:09.110] - Tess

You've looked into that.

[00:07:15.630] - Katherine

No, I would have been wrong on the reason. I would have said that it was because of the Anita Hill. It would have been the beginning of the third wave. That's the logic I was using. That it would agitate. Just skip me now.

[00:07:33.070] - Tess

I'm sure that was part of the context that this man is seeing when he writes this publication. It would have reinforced that same culture war. It's a Politico article. The reason I haven't shared this on the media broadcast is because without context, there's things he says, and his political position, that I don't believe we can adhere to as a movement. They're not prophetically. He makes a lot of mistakes. He identifies himself as a conservative, but a liberal conservative. Modern day conservatives wouldn't be happy with him. In other words, he's a centrist leaning towards the conservative. And I think partly because of that, he's quite blind to some issues. He has such eyesight into some things, but then in others, he's completely missed the boat. For example, he said that the modern culture war is not at all over abortion, that it has moved on to the subject of racism. And the modern culture war is all about race. And whereas it was about abortion decades ago, that's done. And this is only last year, I think to think that abortion was not an issue, not part of the culture war.

[00:09:03.900] - Tess

Obviously, we know now that he was wrong, but he should have known that last year. He should have known that gender was the central issue of the culture war last year, not race. But he misses that. And I think part of the reason he misses that is because... If you're going to take the centrist conservative world view, you're missing some things. But he does have insight into the culture war that is relevant. He was relevant in 1991. I'll quote from this Politico article. 30 years ago, sociologist James Davison Hunter popularized the concept of culture war. Today he sees a culture war that's gotten worse, and that spells trouble for the future of the American experiment. *"In 1991, with America gripped by a struggle between an increasingly liberal, secular society that pushed for change and a conservative opposition that rooted its worldview in divine scripture, James Davis and Hunter wrote a book entitled it with a phrase for what he saw playing out in America's fights over abortion, gay rights, religion in public schools, and the like: 'Culture Wars'."* I won't read it all. But then as they interview him, he goes on to explain that over the last 30 years it hasn't been a fight over religion anymore.

[00:10:29.440] - Tess

It's a fight over the culture you belong to. It's a fight over your ideology. He says: "Politics is an artifact of culture. It's a reflection. Culture underwrites our politics. It's not a fight over politics. Elder Jeff couldn't have said you're attacking my politics. What we were attacking, what The Midnight Cry attack was something much more fundamental. Underneath politics exists culture. *"Politics is an artifact of culture. It's a reflection culture underwrites our politics. One probably the most prevalent ways to think of it as a political battle over certain kinds of cultural issues, like abortion, equality, family values, church, state, and*

so on. And therefore, the culture war is really about the mobilization of political resources, of people and votes and parties around certain positions on cultural issues. In that sense, a culture war is really about politics. But the biggest story is about the cultures that underwrite our politics. And the ways in which our politics become reflections of a deeper cultural disposition. Not just attitudes and values that go beyond their ability to reason about them. On political matters, one can compromise on matters of ultimate moral truth, one cannot. Conservatives see an existential threat. That's an important phrase. They see it as an existential threat to the way of life, to the things that they hold sacred." It's culture that is seen to be the ultimate moral truth. Culture that is considered sacred. The interviewer speaks. "There's a passage you wrote 30 years ago that seems relevant to this point. We suddenly slip into thinking of the controversies debated as political rather than cultural in nature. On political matters on this superficial level, one can compromise on matters of ultimate moral truth. One cannot. This is why the full range of issues today seems interminable."

[00:13:27.430] - Tess

"I like that sentence. I would put it this way. Culture, by its very nature, is hegemonic. It seeks to colonize. It seeks to envelop in its totality. The root of the word culture in Latin is Cultus. It's about what is sacred to us. Culture comes from Latin, Cultus. What are some other words that came from the same word. Cultus, Culture. Does anyone have any others? Culture. Marie.

[00:14:27.050] - Marie

Cult.

[00:14:34.530] - Tess

Sharon.

[00:14:38.970] - Sharon

I was going to say cult, too. But that's all right.

[00:14:43.630] - Tess

Great minds think alike. Josephine.

[00:14:48.610] - Josephine

How about culprit?

[00:14:51.010] - Tess

Culprit? I'm not sure about that one. You could be right. My research hasn't gone that extensive. Raymond.

[00:15:05.650] - Raymond

Cultivate?

[00:15:06.990] - Tess

Cultivate. Those were the ones that I particularly wanted us to see. Cult and cultivate. It all comes from the same root word. It's all about what is sacred to you, what you want to feed. It's about what is sacred. And the reason that sexism exists here is not because of religion. It's not religion that society holds sacred anymore. I don't even think Adventists are that religious anymore. It's not ultimately their Adventism that they are considering sacred to them. It's their culture. When we come in and we say in 2018, Fox News is bad. Ellen White didn't say anything about Fox News, but he felt attacked because we attacked his culture. He's on one side of that culture war, and that culture war is not fundamentally religious. Adventists today looking for the Sunday Law, believing it will be a Sunday Law issue. How are they tracing its steps? Oh, vaccine mandates. Where do you find that in scripture or Ellen White? It's George Soros. Where do you find George Soros in Ellen White. Their steps towards their own Sunday Law are not found in religion. Their steps are found in the culture that they have embodied. Adventists are not that religious. What undergirds politics is the same thing that undergirds people's religion, and it's culture. You could say religion. You could say lack of religion. It's culture that undergirds atheism. If a Protestant pastor believes that women were created by God to be nurturers and not rational thinkers as is required by politics. He believes they're created that way. If Dawkins and Harris think that women don't have that rational brain, they say evolution made them that way over millions of years. They don't need religion to undergird sexism. Because I would suggest on both sides what is undergirding the positions they take today on these things that society is fighting over are not religious. They're cultural. We attack culture. The Sunday Law is one key waymark in 30 years of increasing birth pangs and clustering of waymarks about a developing culture war. And the war for and against the Sunday Law is nothing more than the war between two cultures in the United States today. We attack culture.

[00:18:18.290] - Tess

And now the Jeff says, don't attack my culture. It didn't really matter if I was Australian or Californian. Because a liberal in California is on a different cultural wavelength to him. The polar opposite. I was the polar opposite. He's going to bring gender into that. It didn't help. But ultimately it's the fact that we're on two different cultural platforms. And I was saying that the cultural platform of The Midnight Cry was prophetically accurate because of reform lines. And that was too hard to swallow. November 9 2019. It's from here that we start having this fight in the movement. It really begins before. But almost immediately we start talking about feminism. A fight occurs in the movement between three different concepts of feminism. What are they? Explain to me the three we know. The radical.

[00:19:36.710] - Raymond

Cultural and Liberal or mainstream.

[00:19:48.930] - Tess

What's the issue with the cultural?

[00:19:55.030] - Raymond

They use essentially the same argument that was used to enforce segregation. Equal but separate. Equal but fundamentally different. A feminine essence, that ethics of care that is distinct to women that men don't have.

[00:20:26.110] - Tess

And they know that women don't have that because that is what their culture embodies. Does that make sense?

[00:20:36.070] - Raymond

Yes.

[00:20:37.390] - Tess

It's that Southern romanticization of the Southern woman putting together the thanksgiving feast, wearing the apron, bringing in the children. It's that glorification. It's built into their culture. Cultural feminism. It's built into the words. It's easy to say. It defends culture and refuses to root sexism out of their culture. They say, we'll be feminists, as long as you don't touch our culture. We will be feminist. We'll promote gender equality in every area that does not touch or harm our culture. Liberal feminism. First of all, what's the mantra of radical feminism?

[00:21:35.690] - Raymond

The personal is political.

[00:21:37.730] - Tess

The personal is political. And what is the personal?

[00:21:49.950] - Raymond

I can't remember.

[00:21:50.900] - Tess

Sorry, hasn't been said before. The personal equals your culture. You don't get to hold on to the sexism of your culture if they work against gender equality. Radical feminism says it's not really feminism if it holds to any sexism embodied in culture. In fact, we need to root it out of culture. And Elder Terry has spoken about the concept of the word radical connected to the word root. I don't know if we know the

mathematical symbol for calculating the square root. You're saying get to the heart of it. Liberal feminism says the personal is not political, so we will support gender equality as long as you do not touch my...

[00:22:47.350] - Raymond

Culture.

[00:22:54.050] - Tess

It's a different aspect of culture than cultural feminism, but it's still culture. It doesn't matter if it's bleaching your skin in South Korea, it doesn't matter if it's beauty standards in the United States. It doesn't matter. It manifests differently in different locations, because it is cultural to those locations. How it manifested in one part of the movement, liberal feminism was different to how it manifested in other parts of the movement. Radical feminism doesn't do that. Radical feminism is the same whether it's Australia, Fiji, Ghana, Germany, California, it doesn't matter. Radical feminism, as we teach it in this movement, is the same in every single country. Liberal feminism is not. Because they have to have liberal feminism that does not dismantle what you find in the personal. There is some overlap here. How they see the home life, the domestic goddess. Combined around beauty standards and those issues. Both cultural and liberal feminism say don't touch our culture. So Elder Jeff is going to say. I love all this message, but part of it attacks me personally.

[00:24:34.260] - Tess

I'm going to take that part out. I'm going to twist it slightly. I'm going to add some of my own. He leaves. Soon after. Some people in the movement who say we love feminism, we love the left wing. By the way. We've always advocated for more freedom in this movement, because they keep limiting our freedom. We like feminism, but don't touch our culture, and don't touch our culture. It continues to be a culture war. It was never about their interpretation of Scripture. We could defend ours based on scripture, reform lines, prophecy. They could not defend theirs. But that ultimately didn't matter. Because what people held sacred was not their religion. It was their culture. Very few people over the last few years have left over anything we said about Ellen White, or Bible texts, or Adventism or Adventist leadership. People have not left the movement over that. They have consistently left the movement, whether going back to Protestantism, or letting go of Christianity altogether. But what they have always left for is to go back to their culture. May 2020 Apis Bull. The point I wanted to make is. Yes, you can trace it from 1798 and see Protestantism interact with Adventism.

[00:26:06.770] - Tess

But what was the problem with ancient Israel? It wasn't Protestantism, it was paganism. It was paganism. But it was also Egyptian culture. How Egyptian culture viewed masculinity. If you see the time of Christ. It's about the fact that the Jewish culture had embodied the pagan culture. The way paganism viewed what to expect in a king. Again, it's about culture. Then we come to LGBT. By this time in the movement, some people are already teaching and saying we should by now be accepting LGBT people publicly in this movement. And there was a delay because we needed to get to that point from equality, not from freedom. But when we did, I disagreed with those that were saying that the root of homophobia was

protestantism and religion. I said it's not. We went back to Assyrian culture, Babylonian culture, Medo-Persian culture, specially Greek culture, Roman culture. And you see that embodied in Roman Catholicism. Modern atheism, and the four horsemen, they might be pro gay marriage, but they're still homophobic. And they have no tolerance for trans people. Why? Because the underlying root cause has never been religion.

[00:27:47.950] - Tess

It's been culture. Here we said homophobia. The underlying issue from homophobia over thousands of years, has always been a cultural one. Then we come to radical feminism and we made this point even stronger. And we said no to culture, no a to culture. From the day it was presented in 2018 to now it has been an issue of attacking culture. When I went to Africa, early 2020. We hadn't lost very much of Africa to Elder Jeff. We had in Elder Jeff's mind, attacked Ellen White and disrespected her, attacked Adventism, attacked the foundations of our faith. People in Eastern Africa, by and large in the movement, didn't care. We could have said a lot of things about Ellen White. They would have said, okay, great. Some might have needed more explanation. They didn't mind us looking over the ocean and attacking American culture. Sure, that's fine. But when we stepped foot in first Kenya, but then Uganda. Particularly at the school in Uganda. We started attacking their culture. We had lost hardly anyone to Elder Jeff by that point in time. And by and large, they never fully went to him.

[00:29:29.250] - Tess

They would go back to Protestantism, or back to Adventism mainly. But there was not much of a conflict. Nothing that we said about feminism. Women wearing trousers. Sure, maybe we had to explain the verses. There's no problem with that. But then we touched what was sacred and religion was not what was sacred to the vast majority of members of the movement in Eastern Africa. It was not religion. It was not Adventism, or the prophetic teaching of this movement that was sacred to them. It was culture. And we started to touch what was culture. And then we went from losing maybe 1 in a 100 to 95+ in a 100. Anything that was said about Christianity or religion didn't do anything, didn't offend people. Anything we said about Ellen White didn't really offend people. It was when we touched what was actually sacred. People left this movement because they preferred liberal feminism to cultural feminism. People left this movement because what was sacred. What was Cultus. It was culture. Not the prophetic message, not the everlasting gospel. I hope we can this. Brenden, can you see now how a new atheist doesn't need Dominionism or Protestantism? Does that make sense?

[00:31:18.390] - Tess

We will keep going over this again.

[00:31:22.790] - Brenden

Yes, it makes perfect sense. It's culture built over decades, centuries, millennium. And that is the underlying cause of many things, including sexism. I can see it. Thank you.

[00:31:58.310] - Tess

The root of the word culture, is Latin Cultus. It's about what is sacred to us. The very nature of the sacred is that it is special. It cannot be broached. And that is why you have absolute polarization in the United States today. And he says every time you have a civil war, it's preceded by a cultural war. I don't know post Sunday Law, how heated everything will get, but it's incredibly dangerous. They're already at war. They're already so opposed because what is sacred to Tucker Carlson is not his Protestantism, it's not his Christianity. It's his culture. That's why he says things that line up with something that an evolutionist will say, that one of the four horsemen will say. It is that sacred to them. *"Culture, in one respect is about that which is pure and that which is polluted. It is about the boundaries that are often transgressed and what we do about that. And part of the culture war. One way to see the culture war is that each has an idea of what is transgressive or what is a violation of the sacred and the fears and resentments that go along with that."*

[00:33:14.960] - Tess

Every culture has its view of sin. You don't have to be religious to have a concept of sin." For Dawkins, for Hitchens, for Harris, there are things they see as sin. *"Sin is an old fashioned word, quoting him, but it refers to that which is ultimately profane and cannot be permitted, must not be allowed. Understanding those things that underwrite politics helps us understand why this persists the way it does. Why it inflames the passions that we see."* They are all religious. They all worship something. They are all viewing something as sacred. But whether they subscribe to Protestant beliefs or they don't, whether they subscribe to evolutionary, biological Darwinism. Whether or not they are psychological evolutionists, social Darwinists, or a conservative Southern Baptist pastor. They all have a concept of what is sacred and what is profane, what is sacred and what is sin. And an atheist is going to view many of the exact same things as sin, as a Protestant will view. The transgression of what is meant to be biological. Trans, rights, radical feminism, they're going to see all of that as irrational, because evolution or God made us that way.

[00:34:52.330] - Tess

And it is a transgression of what evolution created. He makes the point that it's no longer based on a christian context. And I think that we need to keep saying that. But it's also about what happened inside this movement. And what is frightening is, that no amount of reform lines, nothing that is said, nothing will get through to anyone unless they are willing to let go of culture. The way that I think it is best described is... When we think it's religion, it's superficial. When it's politics or it's religion, it's superficial. You can compromise. You can work around things. You want to say something about Ellen White, which doesn't make her look good? Sure, just explain it. It's the superficial. And people in this movement thought they could get in the shower and wash away those parts of their superficial christianity and come out without being sexist. And when we said it isn't your religion, when we said it isn't primarily adventism, but we started targeting culture, we said it is fundamentally who you are.

[00:36:13.570] - Tess

It's built into the wiring of your brain. It's built into the very things that you love and you hate. Women come to me and they say, I have to be with a man who is not a member of this movement, because I cannot live unless I get married. And my issue with that is: that's your culture. That's not even Christianity. That is your culture. And unless you're willing to question it, fight it and rewire your brain, you will choose your culture, what you love and treasure and hold sacred over the truth of this movement. Because I believe for the vast majority of people in this movement and the shakings we've had over the last four years give evidence for that. For the vast majority of people in this movement, they're actually not very religious, with the concept of Christianity. They hold something sacred, but it's not the everlasting gospel. It's culture. If it wasn't, people would have shed their culture to embrace the everlasting gospel, but they couldn't. Because it wasn't what they fundamentally held sacred. We will continue this next time we come. I have a little bit more to quote from him. We're mostly done with that.

[00:37:26.300] - Tess

And then I want to come back to some of these men's rights arguments because they are embodied not necessarily in what people are taking from Protestantism or Adventism, but what we have imbibed from culture. Whether that be comes through the superficial voices of Christianity or new atheism or just people that we think are logical. We only have six days to our next Vespers now. If those that have their hands up could hold their thoughts. I don't go further over time. Sorry for that. If you don't think you're going to remember the point you wanted to make, please write it down. We'll close in prayer.

[00:38:17.270] - Tess

Dear Lord, it's frightening to see how superficially we have treated your truth. How little it has mattered when it touches that which we actually love, what we actually hold sacred. I pray, Lord, that you find a way to break through that. I can't seem to find a way to break through that for people. I don't know the words. I don't have them. I can't do that for them. I pray, Lord, that you will work with the members of this movement, work with the inquiring minds that are questioning that are watching and following along that are unsure what the point of all is that this is. I pray for all, women as well as men, that they look at the sexism that they have imbibed from their culture. And even the abuses of it, how much they have actually loved and treasured it. That everyone might be able to shed the ugliness of the cultures that we've learnt to love. I pray, Lord, that we will be saved from the things that we love. In Jesus name. Amen.