

[http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/willis\\_e\\_elliott/2007/12/tell\\_all\\_the\\_children.html](http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/willis_e_elliott/2007/12/tell_all_the_children.html)

## "Tell all the children...."

On a New York City subway earlier this month (Dec. '07), a Jew was assaulted for yelling "Happy Hanukkah!" after somebody yelled "Merry Christmas!" Out of the ensuing melee, the police arrested ten. Somebody said let's celebrate and somebody—with equal right—killed the intended joy by responding what do you mean "we"?

"We" minimum is two, maximum is everybody. In between, one's social identities are GIVEN by blood in time and space; CHOSEN (one's choice may be cultural [saying yes to the blood-gifts], rebellious [living marginally to one's birth-culture], or conversional [saying yes to another social identity]); or DENIED (saying yes to nothing except one's personal choices).

Now let's apply that matrix to the current "On Faith" question:

"Britain's equality chief says 'It's time to stop being daft about Christmas. It's fine to celebrate and it's fine for Christ to be the star of the show' in all public celebrations. Are we being too politically correct about Christmas?"

1.....Shocking! Presumably, a national "equality chief" would be the high potentate of political correctness, his hearing finely tuned to dissonances of inequality, sounds any sector of the populace might experience as offensive. Presumably also, the powers of such a functionary would include frustrating the will of the majority in the justice-interest of the oppressed (that is, offended) minority—a power which, when so exercised, the majority would experience as the tyranny of a minority (all having equal rights except the majority).

2.....But those wondrously weird Brits have this government "equality" watchdog laughing at sober-sided ideological PCs and even calling them "daft"! "Stop it!" he says (in effect), "Let's have a national show with Jesus Christ as the star in all public celebrations!" Though he puts it in interrogative-rhetorical form, his assertion is clear: "we" Brits have been "too politically correct about Christmas."

So what about "we" Americans and Christmas? In our pluralist society, we honor diversity but have only one official calendar-occasion for celebration of our historic national UNITY within Christendom. As conscience permits, let's say a hearty "Merry Christmas!" And please, nonChristian minorities and inclusive-language censors, don't be anti-"Christmas" party-poopers.

1.....While the First Amendment forbids the establishment of any religious institution ("church"), it does not exclude the favoring of America's primary religion, Christianity. Christmas Day, celebrating the birth of Christianity's Founder, is a federal holiday. Just before the signatures, our Constitution refers to Jesus as "our Lord" ("in the year of our Lord" as an English translation of A.D., *anno domini*, literally "[the] year of [the] Lord"). Even if one reads this date-formula as conventional, the convention was acceptable in that all our founders were Christians in heritage & none had converted to any other religion (though a few had become, philosophically, deist). ("A.D.," by referencing Jesus' birth, affirms that we are living in history's Christian period; its PC secularistic replacement, namely, "C.E." [common era] uses the same dating but obscures Jesus.)

2.....While "America" is secular (not secularist) in government and pluralist (not multicultural) in society, it is Christian in cultural foundation and (except for small minorities) in population. Of all large societies, we are the most open to diversity and consequently to *loss of unity*. Our Anglo ethnic foundation continues in many of our customs and in our language and laws; but our public schools are teaching multiculturalism, that "equality" applies to cultures (not just to persons), no culture to be honored more than any other. This extension of "equality" erodes the particularity of the American culture (and the culture of the West), which is Christian in contrast to other particular cultures, such as Muslim.

3.....Two narratives of America—the originalist and the revisionist—are warring for influence on the future, and Dec.25 is an annual battle in the war. What shall we tell the children? The REVISIONISTS (antisupernaturalists, as in the 1933 Humanist Manifesto and sequels) want the children taught the secularist version, that American founders' intended that this country be post-religious. We ORIGINALISTS want the children taught that America's genius was and is the co-equality and freedom of "church" and "state," not the withering away of "church" (as in communism and secularism).

Central to the revisionist-secularists is the autonomous INDIVIDUAL in the (God-less) universal community. Central to us originalist-theists is GOD, who through the Bible/Renaissance/Reformation/Enlightenment has been and is our "Author of Liberty." So, in a poem of Ernest Cadman Colwell, a former University of Chicago President, "Tell all the children / to tell the children's children / to dream this dream for God." (Colwell, a teacher of mine, was a specialist in the Gospels and had no problem with "Christmas" and "Jesus is the reason for the season.")

BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | DECEMBER 21, 2007; 10:14 AM ETSAVE & SHARE:



PREVIOUS: [OH FOR A SILENT NIGHT FROM POLITICIANS](#) | NEXT: [RESOLUTION OF THE HEART](#)

## Comments

Please report offensive comments below.

Rev. Elliott:

"I've never said that minorities should be "denied their rights to speak up": that would be government (police) action."

No, you've only defended your own practice of teaching that \*mobs\* who attack people in public for \*not\* saying 'Merry Christmas' are less at fault than the person who had the temerity to \*be\* of a minority.

You've turned even 'Merry Christmas' into a potential prelude to an attack by Christians.

When you defend the violent actions of those you propose to shepherd because the \*victim\* was 'disturbing the social tranquility ("peace")' \*by offering his own holidays' greeting,\*

No, you have no "peace" to offer, and certainly no America. Only fear and tyranny. Even if you deny the effects of your actions while saying it's impossible for those who say 'That is \*wrong!\* ...to have any 'Morality,' cause you define your version of your religion as the only possible source of morality, thus anything you do must be justified, and anyone else must really be at fault for \*your\* depredations, just for being there.

Gods know I've heard \*that\* rationalization before.

To whoever, (Reverend Elliott?) who said this under the 'Anonymous' name, got a simple answer for this:

"The easy one: "with the coining of 'Our Creator' (additionally, I was wondering- does the 'Our' pertain to you and yours, pagans in general, or all of us?")."

Pagans tend to see the American (Deist) mention of the Divine: as in 'Endowed by their creator' as a statement on human rights being a Divine mandte regardless of what religion or clergy might make these rights conditional (as a function of their religious specificities, for instance,) ...saying that these rights are \*inherent and unalienable,\* not 'only alienable by those who claim to speak for a specific Creator.'

Some Dominionists and exclusivists like the Reverend here want to ..exclusively identify the 'Creator' thus referenced with their interpretation of their translation of the book about their version of their God.

We see this as far less specific, cause it would have been easy as pie for people that literate to make extensive reference to the theocracy these folks want.

It means that as Americans we agree to believe that the highest authority that exists, whatever that may be seen to be, \*endowed us by virtue of being living humans with \*unalienable\* rights.

Among these rights being life, \*liberty,\* and the pursuit of happiness.

Not 'life unless we want to execute you, liberty, unless you threaten our violent sensibilities of 'unity,' or the 'pursuit of happiness' as someone defines 'happiness' while trying to legislate enforced misery.

The unalienability is the key word, not the squabbling over who gets to alienate people in the name of a Creator.

In short, most Pagans get along fine with the text of the Constitution. Not so with how others want to use that one word as appropriated by their \*own\* religious-political movement to \*claim\* the power to \*make\* these rights 'alienable' from nonbelievers.

Like I said, the Reverend here isn't about 'The American Mind,' ...he's about wanting something else. Something the American mind should know better than to fall for.

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POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 24, 2007 6:00 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Gee, Reverend: Who 'hates America for our freedom, \*now?\*

For you say \*this:\*

"You say my "unity is death to those who want freedom." It's a wash: I say your "freedom" is death to us who want the U.S. to survive in unity."

This is \*not\* the American mind, sir.

That's something else.

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POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 24, 2007 5:34 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Wanterby,

Located in the northeastern region of North America, originally the Six Nations was five and included the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas. The sixth nation, the Tuscaroras, migrated into Iroquois country in the early eighteenth century. Together these peoples comprise the oldest living participatory democracy on earth. Their story, and governance truly based on the consent of the governed, contains a great deal of life-promoting intelligence for those of us not familiar with this area of American history. The original United States representative democracy, fashioned by such central authors as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, drew much inspiration from this confederacy of nations. In our present day, we can benefit immensely, in our quest to establish anew a government truly dedicated to all life's liberty and happiness much as has been practiced by the Six Nations for over 800 hundred years.

Long before women in this country even started the fight for equality the Five Nations gave rights to their women:

We, the women of the Iroquois  
Own the Land, the Lodge, the Children  
Ours is the right to adoption, life or death;  
Ours is the right to raise up and depose chiefs;  
Ours is the right to representation in all councils;  
Ours is the right to make and abrogate treaties;  
Ours is the supervision over domestic and foreign policies;  
Ours is the trusteeship of tribal property;  
Our lives are valued again as high as man's.

The Great Binding Law /The Constitution of the Iroquois Nations

<http://www.indigenouspeople.net/iroqcon.htm>

There were meetings between the Five Nations and our Founders before the Constitution was written....So between the Greeks, Romans and the Five Nations...our Founders based our political construction on long lasting, proven methods. And not of Christianity, which was seen in the history of Europe not to work very well.

terra

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 24, 2007 12:24 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Kind of funny you 'act civilly' by promoting bigotry and division. Telling folks in the minority not to upset the apple cart because they happen to have a valid point of view. And that you so blithely shove aside because 'they're in the minority' so that 'their points shouldn't really matter'.

I call BS.

America is not a Christian nation.

Never was.. or will be.

Everything you have written in regards to those who don't think like you is dogmatic. Pretty words aside or not. It's not an invitation to conversation, it's an assertion of a superiority by 'majority rule' that is in itself a false dichotomy. Spread by people in the majority who cry 'war on Christmas' when others are willing to stand up and say 'I don't celebrate anything to do with Jesus'.

Religion is and should always be a private affair.

But you insist on making this country into some sort of Christian image. Which it never was. And those who oppose you you dismiss as 'party poopers' or 'haters' or some other brand of biased language. Because you fear what you don't understand. Always have, always will.

That is not promoting discussion, though it may assuage your giant ego to think so.

I am so fortunate to have Christian friends who also strongly disagree with you- it tells me that not everyone who calls themselves Christian is bent on forcing their religion onto other people- and shows that Christianity could actually be about what he taught. Exactly what part of 'love your neighbor as yourself' are you following?

Blessed Yule.

POSTED BY: PRIVER | DECEMBER 24, 2007 12:18 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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To JIHADIST:

You said, "Only one match? Do you both need gasoline too? Might as well go all the way and burn the Bible, the Torah, the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads, the Dhammapada, Age of Reason, Mad Magazine....."

Now we're getting somewhere! May we please substitute, "Book of Mormon" for Mad Magazine?

((((Merry Xmas))))

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 24, 2007 10:38 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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"Doctor"

I was calling you out to see if my analysis of your sinister purpose was correct. Your response has proven that it was.

Therefore, let it be known to all who were in doubt that this doctor favors the supremacy of Christianity above all else. Anyone with a differing belief or opinion best beware...

POSTED BY: DAREN NIKLEROG | DECEMBER 24, 2007 10:34 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Roger Scott,

Exactly. Well put.

There should be no fear in any human being to state the actual truth. Kudos to you for doing so.

There are ways that scripture instructs us to worship our Lord and Savior.

Christmas is not one of them. If Jesus chased the money changers from the temple, why in the world would humanity think He would be pleased with the commercialism in His name at this time of year. Man creates Jesus in his own image. Doesnt mean it is true and correct. According to Hebrews, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. It is mankind who changes.

Rev. 12:9

POSTED BY: TRUTH | DECEMBER 24, 2007 8:27 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Jesus may not be the reason for the season.

Luke 2:8: And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

This places the birth of Jesus somewhere around mid year. Sheep were kept under cover during the hard winters.

Why celebrate on December 25 then? Two hypotheses

- (i) The Roman feast of Saturnalia was adopted and adapted by early Christians
- (ii) the winter solstice festival of the invincible sun, Sol Invictus was co-opted.

Either way Jesus is not the reason for the season. He is just the reason employed for the last 1500 years or so.

POSTED BY: ROGER SCOTT | DECEMBER 24, 2007 6:37 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Dear Dr Elliot

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2008! I hope you get to celebrate Christmas also with some non-Christian friends and those who have no friends and family too (since suicide rate is the highest during the Christmas season among those who cannot cope with the loneliness if they happen to have no family to share Christmas with).

Soja John Thaikattil  
Sydney, Australia

POSTED BY: SOJA JOHN THAIKATTIL, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA | DECEMBER 24, 2007 3:49 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Things were never that wonderful. But as we get older, we dislike the future that's been built from the decisions we made when we were younger, and we keep trying to "reset the clock."

Elliott's trying to reset the clock -- back before the proverbial chickens came home to roost.

Don't mistake the symbols of Freemasonry used by the country's founders (mostly Freemasons) -- the pyramid with the eye, that sort of thing -- for Christian symbols.

Freemasonry is a hoot, but it's only nominally Christian.

For me, the crowning glory of this nostalgia romp is the Whopper of Big Lies about the "American mind," the alleged province of Christian white folks. That had me chuckling.

If you read anything by people that signed the country's founding documents, you realize that our participatory democracy was based on the example of the government of the Five (now six) Nations. They didn't try to hide their admiration.

These were "deists" (look that one up!) and staunch believers in the Enlightenment. (If the founding fathers appeared today, there would be a lot of Christians ready to brand them as liberals and worse the minute they opened their mouths.)

It's a glorious bit of revisionism, this new "American Mind" -- which was actually developed by the First Peoples, those wily red heathens whose country we stole -- and who we tried to exterminate because they got mad and fought us. We've tried to take credit for much of their original work, and here we are doing it again.

POSTED BY: WANTERBY | DECEMBER 23, 2007 10:43 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Willis,

A better statement would be, "There is no historical reason for the Christian Christmas season."

Merry Reality to everyone!!!!

POSTED BY: CONCERNED THE CHRISTIAN NOW LIBERATED | DECEMBER 23, 2007 6:15 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

CONCERNED...

I taught the New Testament in its original language & have long been entertained & bored by speculations as to the historicity of this or that detail. By combining the hermeneutics of suspicion with the genetic fallacy, a clever exegete may claim that this or that detail is "nothing but" a fictional projection from some or other preChristian myth or historical mite. Wise participants in any human tradition can & do both exercise and suspend disbelief.

There are multitudinous reasons for the season, but you are wrong in saying there is "No Historic Reason." The first HISTORICAL fact is Jesus' birth (sometime/somewhere, within severe time-&-place limits; but denying it is a backwater opinion). The second HISTORICAL fact is that in our American culture, this time of year is Christian.

Christmas, in order words, is highly HISTORICAL-FACTUAL. And its tapestry of scenes/sights/sounds continues to delight & enthrall (even in Radio City Music Hall Christmas, where the audience-cameras flash only when the crèche scene is unveiled).

DANIEL

The two things that most impress me about your post are (1) that you have the "theologian" aspect just right & (2) that you didn't quit reading me after I was "harsh" to you. As to the latter, I'm torn between the urge of ask your forgiveness & the thought that my rough treatment of you may have been what you needed--& I'm humbled by the thought that if you had been harsh to me, I might have stopped reading you.

You speak of the "conflations" & "convergences" of Christmas, then spell out its commercial corruption. A "mess," indeed, & a battleground. We can all have some sympathy for the Plymouth Bay Colony's imprisonment

of anybody caught celebrating Christmas! But I'm inclined to the generosity Jesus expressed: "Let the wheat and the weeds grow together until the harvest."

JOET

says "I don't care what the American Mind was....Dr. E, your history is much better than your reasoning from it to current social philosophy."

1 Pres. Eisenhower, after a conversation with Khrushchev, said "Everybody needs a religion, and I don't care what it is." Later, he regretted the wording "don't care." In saying my "history" (i.e., reading of the religion factor in America's origin-story) is good, you show you do care.

2 I care that America's children hear America's origin-story without secularist spinning. At the heart of that story is "the American mind" as I have been describing on the authority of the leading historians of American religion & philosophy. On this, I take it, you are not disagreeing with me.

3 You are correct that my notions of how to save America from amnesia about "the American mind" are inferior to my "reasoning from it." But my central concern is not my proposals for NOW but that, in the interest of getting the FUTURE better, we get an accurate understanding of the PAST.

4 I like the way you put it to Daniel. You agree with my picture of the (America-constituting) American mind which we all should "cherish, celebrate, and certainly remember...accurately whenever revisionists raise their ugly head." Those of us with this POV should get our heads together as to how we Americans can best do this remembering. Living Americans can't remember what they never knew, so how we get back to square one (a tough project, in view of the virtual elimination of theist claims from the public schoolroom since the 1963 Supreme Court banning of God-recognition: if God is not central to sense-making, God [& Jesus & Christmas] don't make sense)?

5 Christmas as battlefield is only marginal to the problem of "remembering." Indeed, the present American highly commercialized Christmas is to me more repulsive than attractive, the mall having replaced the church. (On Dec.5 in Omaha, a 19-year-old shot up a mall [8 dead + his suicide] after leaving a note saying the whole thing—life itself—is "meaningless.") (From the leading dictionary-publisher, I have an old letter thanking me for adding "consumerism"—as-a-religion to their dictionary. The just-published book CONSUMED spells out in detail how the market became America's deity, the mall its temple.)

6 You may be correct that America can no longer expect Christmas to be civil, peaceful. Even though the country is (as HR 847 passed 12.16.07 says) "over 3/4ths Christian" & the federal government accepts Christmas as Christian, we Christians & the government cannot expect nonChristians (in your words) to "lay low for a month or so." But what to do? Solstice is four days before the 12 days of Christmas....perhaps some day the late-Dec., early Jan. days will be portioned out among the religions in our pluralist society. Do you have any suggestions (1) for keeping alive "the American mind" & (2) for "Christmas"?

7 Yesterday I was at a family gathering of more than 54 & read to some (as a feeble but real buffer against the consumerist Christmas) a 1513 greeting of a poor man (a monk, Brother John [Fra Giovanni]) who had nothing material to give. Here it is: "I SALUTE YOU! There is nothing I can give you which you have not; but there is much that, while I cannot give, you can take. / No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today. Take Heaven. / No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present instant. Take Peace. / The gloom of the world is but a shadow; behind it, yet within our reach, is joy. Take joy. / And so, at this Christmas time, I greet you, with the prayer that for you, now and forever, the day breaks and the shadows flee away."

DANIEL

No, "Happy Holidays" is not "how we all talk." I've never said it. But you are correct that it's common.

PRIVER

I did not & would not deny any American "the basic right to speak up and to promote change." I've been in a lot of pro-change demos as (yes) a progressive. And in my current column's first paragraph, I affirmed that subway Jew's "equal right" to speak up. The issue is wisdom/prudence/civility, not human rights. And my comment to



JOET (above) shows that my taking a position is more an invitation to exploratory conversation than it is a dogmatic announcement about what to do. / I've never said that minorities should be "denied their rights to speak up": that would be government (police) action. The action I'm suggesting is minority-action (which applies to all Americans, for all of us are in minorities though only some of us are majority): let's act civilly, disturbing the social tranquility ("peace") only where we have good reason to hope that the disturbance we occasion will change sacred custom. / To argue that one citizen has as much social "right" as another to cause such disturbance is to act as if America were a religion-neutral secular SOCIETY, instead of only having a religion-open GOVERNMENT—a distinction which does not exist in the secularist mind.

HERB

You read me right, & I thank you--& I thank those three Muslim ex-students of yours who emailed you "Merry Christmas!"

DAREN NIKLEROG

As the world's Christians number more than twice the world's Muslims—2.1 billion to 1 billion—what a shock to read your complaint about my "distortions of fact" & then read your claim that "there are far more muslims in the world than christians"!

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | DECEMBER 23, 2007 5:33 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Sorry 'bout that AQ.

Forgot to add my "handle" CY

POSTED BY: CY | DECEMBER 23, 2007 5:02 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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A Question:

Well, truly, I am sorry to see that your questions were much more than I thought. Why? For the reason that I owe you an answer that requires my best effort(such as it is)

So, I will do my best.

First:

The easy one: "with the coining of 'Our Creator' (additionally, I was wondering- does the 'Our' pertain to you and yours, pagans in general, or all of us?".

I used the word "Our" to refer to my Creator as I understand "my" Creator. I understand "my Creator" to be "Our Creator", i.e., I believe we, each of us - you and I - as well as all of creation to be the product of the "Creator".

Second:

"Curiosity in the combination of two words (Creator and pagans) got the best of me."

I do not understand your curiosity with respect to the combination of the words "Creator" and "pagans". Did not the Creator create the pagans and do not the Pagans worship the Creator (forgive my confusion at capitalization)?

Third:

I had not taken your comments to be rude; I had reserved judgment.

Forth:

Intrigue? I cannot imagine why you are intrigued and therefore, I do not know how to respond.



Fifth:

"Who"? Well....., shortcomings in language and understanding preclude me from defining "Who".

The best answer I can offer is that "Who" is very much like "Tao". I believe that, ultimately, "Who " will be known and understood in-toto by all.

Sixth:

"Just wondering what your view is,.....".

View? (he laughed as he pondered the question).

I am a seeker, AQ, my view is always changing. Just about the time I think I understand, the Creator lets me know that I am not yet there.

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 23, 2007 4:59 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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'Tis the season to give reason...or, apparently, to perpetuate idiocy.

It seems the Dr. thinks that grinchy jew got what he deserved. He should have just shutup and smiled, or maybe forced himself to return a hearty "Merry Christmas" in kind so as not to be a "party pooper".

While the doctor includes far too many distortions of fact (Ahh, maybe that's what he is a doctor of?) to list in this comment, the very premise that permeates his commentary can be summed up as "majority rules". American culture is primarily christian and, therefore, everyone else should go along for the ride and either learn to enjoy it, or at least pretend that they do.

Well, in this age of globalization, one should note that there are far many more muslims in the world than christians. So, in an effort to bring about a more unified world, I implore the doctor to publicly declare his love for Allah and to keep his christ worship to himself.

POSTED BY: DAREN NIKLEROG | DECEMBER 23, 2007 10:20 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Athena:

\*\*Here's a thought... if Christians are allowed to put up creches and large slabs of stone with the 10 Commandments on them in public spaces, can Pagans put up a Maypole and dance around it on Beltane? I'd love to dance the Maypole in front of City Hall!\*\*

Give me that old time religion.....see you at the pole! :)

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | DECEMBER 23, 2007 8:03 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Here's a thought... if Christians are allowed to put up creches and large slabs of stone with the 10 Commandments on them in public spaces, can Pagans put up a Maypole and dance around it on Beltane? I'd love to dance the Maypole in front of City Hall!

POSTED BY: ATHENA | DECEMBER 22, 2007 10:33 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I read through about a third of the comments, and, while I was entertained, I can't get over the number of comments that appear to be in response to some message other than the one I read from Rev. Elliot. I did not read a "dominionist" screed as some have claimed it was. I read a measured plea for tolerance. There are and always have been a lot of Christians in this country, more than of any other religion, and they've influenced our culture profoundly, for both good and ill. So what if Christmas has become a national holiday and is at the same time the biggest retail festival of the year. Jesus would probably be appalled at what we've made of the festival

of his birth, starting with the fact that it almost certainly is not on the date of his birth. If you don't want to say "Merry Christmas," don't. If Bill O'Reilly wants to maunder on about a war on Christmas, let him. I don't have to listen to it. I'll say "Merry Christmas" to people that I know celebrate it but not to those that I don't know. Of course, three Moslem former students of mine have emailed me "Merry Christmas" greetings, one from Gaza, one from UAE, and one from Detroit. I'm grateful for them.

Let's recognized that we can have national festivals that have religious implications for some without violating the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

POSTED BY: HERB | DECEMBER 22, 2007 8:40 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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C Y,

Curiosity in the combination of two words (Creator and pagans) got the best of me. Not intending to be rude. My apologies if taken so.

My thoughts with regard to your statments were nothing but genuine intrigue...not only with the coining of 'Our Creator' (additionally, I was wondering- does the 'Our' pertain to you and yours, pagans in general, or all of us?)

The 'Who' is in reference to the use of the capitalization, intended or not necessarily intended. Is it refering to a proper name, person, object, place, project, institution, river, vessel, genus, culture, ethnic group, formal job title, book title, periodical, article, etc etc?

With regard to significance of 'Our Creator', that would be relative. Just wondering what your view is, basically because of my first statement above.

Best regards

POSTED BY: A QUESTION | DECEMBER 22, 2007 5:47 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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May I humbly remind the verbose Dr. that the American religious "truth" system including its disputes with their ludicrous Huckabees and Romneys is a problem with 3% of the world population. We others don't give a .... if something is "American" or "un-American", but, of course, we are vitally affected by all this terrible nonsense.

For a non-American, the silly and out-of-date notion that America is the navel of the world, the Dr.'s arguments are more than offensive: America, "thank god", is not the world ("deo favente"). Considering the statement that "unity" is above "freedom" reminds us oldies of Hitler: "Du bist nichts, dein Volk ist alles" (you are nothing, your nation is everything). And he was successful. Fascism pure. The only Hitler opponents, the social democrats, were quickly eliminated politically and physically as a "factor disturbing unity" - with exactly those arguments, agreed upon by a gullible majority.

The world is afraid of religious America. Where is the Dr.'s criticism of "Rapture" a notion reminiscent of Koresh and his ilk, a degenerate suicidal yearning of a once great nation?

I am one of the seculars or secularists, never mind the difference, who the Dr. thinks are the root of evil, and I am proud of it. After WWII we learned the hard way that democracy should strive for honesty and accountability, not superstition, opportunism and hypocrisy.

And again, I thank the Pagans for their uprightness and reason.

POSTED BY: GERRY | DECEMBER 22, 2007 4:33 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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A Q:

I've always wondered if it rude to inquire of a stranger without first stating one's thoughts.

Please explain your curiosity. Please explain the significance of your expression: 'Capitalized "Creator"'.

Let's hear what you mean by the word "Who" in your question. That will help me better understand the level of answer required.

Thank you,  
Cool Yule

POSTED BY: COOL YULE | DECEMBER 22, 2007 3:35 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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>>Our Creator..

>>..we pagans

A question to the person who quoted the above:  
Curious. Capitalized 'Creator'. Who is that to you?

thanks

POSTED BY: A QUESTION | DECEMBER 22, 2007 9:04 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Favoring the country's primary religion? Those evil secularists?

It is both incredulous and disingenuous that most neochristians who would find using Christmas and the cross of Jesus vulgar and crass in marketing merchandise or cars have no problem with using the same Holy icons to package the neocon political campaign of Pastor Mike Huckabee. How is Huckabee's "Christmas" campaign commercial complete with a glowing cross any different than using Christian symbols to sell cars

The neocon Perkins automotive family in Colorado Springs, for example, could rename their dealerships "Christian Chrysler" with ad copy that offers "Family Values," Celestial Savings," glowing cross license plate frames, fiber-optic lit fish insignia on the grill and a promotion for a free AK-47 automatic rifle rack for use against illegal Mexicans, in the "war against secularists" and to "take back the Nation for Christ."

Romney could resurrect the family car business with Mormon Motors - "Check out the 2008 Kolob, complete with a golden horn of Morni.

Offended? Before you hit the "Report Offensive Commnets" button, think about using the Lord and his Cross for marketing a political campaign. Is this anyway to celebrate Jesus' birthday?

POSTED BY: ROY | DECEMBER 22, 2007 7:46 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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At least two posters have referred to Willis Elliott as "erudite." He is not. He is verbose and mush-mouthed. Regardless of your feelings on his theological views, reading one of his essays is like wading hip-deep through a sea of cotton candy.

POSTED BY: CHUCKMCF | DECEMBER 22, 2007 12:17 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Happy Every Day!

Eclati-ON's have MEMETICS , via Prophet DAWKINS et al!

May XTRA Photons shine on all O.U.R. Kinders , In Sweet sweet America & in our Friendly's Nation's!

Praise The holy No Man Lord G-D Eponymous ECLAT + "i" = LIFE/Photons PHILOSOPHY!

We are Together forever mitt Source one & with "IT" (aka Loed ECLATi)!

Ya Ya YO ALL!

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 21, 2007 10:30 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Happy Yuletide,

Our Creator has begun the lengthening of daylight and there isn't a thing Christians, Mormons, Jews or anyone else can do about it. Pagan prayers and offerings will rule as they have from time immemorial.

No amount of Christian, Muslim, or Jewish prayers will prevail over our celebrations tonight or the Sun rise tomorrow.

What fun!! Presents! Santa Claus! Whoops, did we pagans co-opt a Christian word - Saint Nick?? - just a translation of Julenissen? - hmmm - no matter - Pagan and Christian children world-wide are waiting to hear the jingle bells of Dasher,Dancer, Comet, and the others.

POSTED BY: COOL YULE | DECEMBER 21, 2007 9:21 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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...Confusion.

POSTED BY: PRIMARY ATTRIBUTE OF THIS THREAD... | DECEMBER 21, 2007 4:16 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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"Your premise is that "all religions require equal representation" in "the public square." That is precisely what is in question, & I consider it an anti-American notion (as destructive of the unique American Mind)."

It is NOT Anti American to want to be included when one religion foists its presence in the public square. And then insists that others subscribe to their worldview, and declare 'war on Christmas' when other people who happen to believe differently want their symbols displayed as well and put up a fight when denied this basic right.

Either allow all faiths to be represented and given equal footing, or allow NONE of them, not even Christianity, in the public square, which would also include taking the Ten Commandments off of federal buildings. America is more than just Christianity. Like it or not.

You are no progressive, sir. Progressives learn to understand those people around them as \*human\*, rather than 'Anti- American' or 'bible haters' or whatever biased language you are using.

You have once again not addressed the point that was put to you, that you state that any 'minority' with a differing point of view be denied their rights as Americans. To be considered 'party poopers' or 'not American' and therefore unworthy of the basic right to speak up to promote change. It's turning back the clock to the pre-suffrage, pre civil rights movement.

It's pure bigotry, and promotes division.

That's not what America was, is, or ever will be.

POSTED BY: PRIVER | DECEMBER 21, 2007 3:12 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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The reason I bring this up, is, because this morning I was watching "Fox & Friends" on the Fox News Channel, and when they were done interviewing a guest, they said "happy holidays to you."

This struck me as odd because the Fox Network is one of the prime motivators that there is a "war on Christmas." Yet, even the personalities on Fox say "happy holidays." And why do they say "happy hollidays?" Because it is just how we all talk, and it is what we have all been brought up to say. It is a sort of quasi-formal well-wishing to strangers and people you do not know well, like "have a nice day."

Even people who want to concentrate on saying "Merry Christmas" and mean only to say "Merry Christmas" have moments of slippage, when they unconsciously say "happy holidays," because that is just how we all talk. Isn't it?

I have always thought the the greeting "Merry Christmas" was a more intimate greeting, reserved for close loved ones, used mainly on Christmas Eve, and the very day of Christmas, itself. Am I wrong? You mean all of this time, I have been mistaken?

By Gosh, darn it. I didn't mean to be saying it wrong.

POSTED BY: DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN | DECEMBER 21, 2007 1:32 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Daniel: I was raised Catholic, and indeed, I recall just as you do that Happy Holidays was a perfectly good greeting throughout the season for good christians. I suspect O'Reilly is just in denial. As I just posted, I think the problem is that Dr. E has a perfectly good historical perspective, but has reached the wrong conclusion from it. I have all the respect in the world for the American Mind he describes, and we should cherish, celebrate, and certainly remember it accurately whenever revisionists raise their ugly heads, but by no means need we impose it by force or any other means, or even ask that we all be polite and let christians act like the season and the country are exclusively theirs by laying low for a month or so.

POSTED BY: JOET | DECEMBER 21, 2007 12:58 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Let us suppose that the American Mind was indeed christian to some extent. And let us further suppose that an actual mushy unity in which everyone practiced some kind of universalized faith is as evil as Dr. E suggests (not that I think anyone is proposing same - I think it's a straw man for the good doctor). It simply does not follow that preserving or restoring the American Mind is fitting or proper or a good idea. I cannot find any good in asserting that we should all act like america is christian except in the privacy of our own homes, and refrain from any effort to celebrate anything else but Christmas, or from asking Huckabee to acknowledge that some of us aren't Baptists, or that celebrating the birth of christ isn't the only important thing to do. I don't care what the American Mind was. This is now, and non christians are not merely the guests of the christians who think they own the American Mind. Dr. E, your history is much better than your reasoning from it to current social philosophy.

POSTED BY: JOET | DECEMBER 21, 2007 12:38 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Dr Elliott is mainly a theologian and writes from a theological point of view, and he seems to be targeting other theologians. Therefore, I too, among many other commenters, often cannot understand his ponts very well.

To me, theologians are the ones who fill in all the blanks in the belief system, that most of us are not smart enough to think of, or are not interested in enough to work out, because we are busy, busy, busy, trying to stay afloat in the world. Theologians are the ones who tell us what we should believe.

Once, I wrote a criticism of his remarks, and he gave me a very harsh rebuke, ouch! which did hurt my feelings. However, I respect his abilities and his age, and cannot be too critical of him. After all "theology" is evidently a big field, and a lot of very intelligent people seem to be heavily into it.

Christmas is sort of mingled with Christianity, and there is THAT word "Christ" right there in Christmas (at least in the English language, which was derived from Latin) to indicate its Christian connections.

But, oh brother! Christmas! What a mess!

Christmas is the conflation of a complex Christian festival with the ancient pagan rites of the Winter Solstice, which was later conflated with the figure of St. Nicolas who was kind to children, which was later conflated with "A Visit from St Nick" and the Coca-Cola advertising campaign to give us "Santa", which was conflated with the novel Charles Dickens' depiction of Victorian Christmas, which was conflated with the German practices of the Christmas tree, borrowed from Queen Victoria's German husband, Prince Albert, the tree being a pyramid, so it could be lit with candles, without burning any over-hanging branches, which later morphed into electric lights on the tree, which morphed again, to lights, lights, lights, everywhere, lights.

And all these many convergences and conflations, then were sucked up into the mighty whirlwind of capitalism and secular materialism, so that it has ballooned and morphed into a truly overwhelming, gigantic, and profligate socio-economic phenomenon, which grips the whole month of December, and dominates, intrusively, into every aspect of life for every man, woman, and child in North America, no matter whether they are Methodists, Moslems, Jews, Catholics, Pagans, or atheists. The plaintive cries of Muslims for some recognition this time of year is just part of this cacophony, barely noticable above the din.

Of course, under the American legal doctrine of "separation of church and state" which I believe and hold to radically, and in the extreme, anyone can put Christ back into Christmas. They can skip all the rest, and just go to church on Christmas Eve and Christmas day.

And by the way, since we are on this subject, when I was a little kid in the 1950's, when "everyone" was a Christian, we said Merry Christmas on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day as a joyous proclamation to our closest and dearest loved ones, both in person and on the telephone; otherwise, we always said Happy Holidays; I remember this clearly and distinctly; does anyone else have such memories as this?

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POSTED BY: DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN | DECEMBER 21, 2007 12:16 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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As per many NT exegetes to include Professors Crossan, Borg and Fredriksen, On Faith panelists, there is "No Historic Reason for the Season".

There was no Virgin birth. [http://wiki.faithfutures.org/index.php/026\\_Jesus\\_Virginally\\_Conceived](http://wiki.faithfutures.org/index.php/026_Jesus_Virginally_Conceived)  
And there was no Star of Bethlehem.

[http://wiki.faithfutures.org/index.php/369\\_Star\\_of\\_Revelation](http://wiki.faithfutures.org/index.php/369_Star_of_Revelation)

"Gerd Lüdemann

Commenting on the infancy narratives overall, Lüdemann [Jesus, 124-29] concludes that Luke and Matthew represent "two equally unhistorical narratives." He cites the occurrence of a miraculous heavenly sign at key points in the life of Mithridates VI in a history written by Justinus (active in the reign of Augustus, 2 BCE to 14 CE). "

So nativity scenes on government property in the UK or the USA or wherever are basic representations of fiction and are equivalent to having representations of Santa Claus and his reindeer and/or Yule trees. No harm, no foul!!!

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

PAGANPLACE

You persist in personalizing historical realities, reducing “you”—plural (what Christians did) down to “you”—singular (what I do). As a historian, I resist anti-historical re-imaginings of history. As a Christian, I witness for the revelation of God through Jesus Christ my Savior & Lord—a witness which indeed clashes with alternative world-paradigms. As an American, I champion my country’s unique contribution to history, viz. the particular diversity-in-unity made possible by the structural recognition of “church” & “state” as separate structural realities. I hope you can cool it enough to have a civil conversation about these matters.

I must point out....

1....That your (probably unconscious) stratagem has been to claim that the whole conflictual “culture war” is all in my mind—confined to, even started by, me. I can understand your finding some comfort in this though-false confinement of the opposition to your position, but the stratagem is a diversion from your dealing with the realities I’ve been adducing.

2....That you are (unconsciously) hypocritical in treating me as an enemy while complaining that I see enemies where there are none.

MAD LOVE

Norman Rockwell’s America wasn’t perfect, nor is ours. / Blacks do appear in his SEP covers, e.g. on “The Four Freedoms.” / I fought with MLKing, not against him.

As for “unity” being “much closer to ‘egalitarianism’,” did you notice that your dictionary-reference has “4. absence of diversity”? / In defending the (original-originalist) American Mind, I’ve been speaking for what in your dictionary is “5. oneness of mind....”

As for “the Jew who got put in his place,” you imply I’m antisemitic. The truth is that I’m so prosemitic that I was chosen to preach in a NY synagogue on the occasion of the Munich Olympics slaughter of Jews by Palestinians; & I taught a course for rabbis (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform) involving the language of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament).

PRIVER

Your premise is that “all religions require equal representation” in “the public square.” That is precisely what is in question, & I consider it an anti-American notion (as destructive of the unique American Mind).

No, I’m not trying to “turn back the clock.” I’m a progressive Democrat! But Santayana was correct: Those who forget the past are condemned to repeating it.

It's funny, then, 'Reverend', that you still hide behind your degree and never actually addressed the point that was made to you- that you would love to turn back the clock and take away the gains that women and minorities have made over the past century because to you, it's 'disrupting' the 'order' in a quest for what you laughingly term 'false freedom.' You can dress it up with pretty yet useless language, but it boils down to bigotry, in its purest form.

Funny also that it says 'the US is not founded on the Christian religion' and not 'the US government is not founded on the Christian religion'. Projection again, sir. And we are still here to make the point that if elements of



Christianity are to be pushed into the public square, then all religions require equal representation. Including those you don't agree with.

And Christianity is not in any of the founding documents.  
Sorry, nice try.

Again, I hope your students are smart enough to recognize the fact that once again, you teach about belief systems that a) are not yours and therefore your 'references' are chock full of bad information and b)incapable of seeking information from others who might know better than you. And that adds up to a bad teacher.

POSTED BY: PRIVER | DECEMBER 21, 2007 7:05 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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"You speak of pagans who "gave" us Christians "this holiday." They're all dead; but if you could ask them, they'd say "We didn't give them our holiday; they TOOK it!" Yes, & we intend to hold it against your re-taking of it. How can you claim that the competition is optional?"

You know, I questioned whether it was just bad writing that blurred your intent with the wink and nudge about the Jew who got put in his place. I've always tried to give you the benefit of the doubt. But you betray yourself, or rather reveal yourself, with that statement. Bad writing or not, contrarian or not, hair splitter or not, I think that is your true soul right there, and I think it is despicable.

I don't toss those words out lightly either.

POSTED BY: MAD LOVE | DECEMBER 21, 2007 6:05 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Just for the record, sir, here is what dictionary.com has to say about "unity". I don't really see where "majority rules, all others shut up" fits in. In fact "unity" sounds a whole lot more like what we're asking for that what you're offering. Unity is much closer to "egalitarianism" than whatever it is that you are advocating.

u·ni·ty /'yuniti/ Pronunciation Key - Show Spelled Pronunciation[yoo-ni-tee] Pronunciation Key - Show IPA Pronunciation

—noun, plural -ties. 1. the state of being one; oneness.

2. a whole or totality as combining all its parts into one.

3. the state or fact of being united or combined into one, as of the parts of a whole; unification.

4. absence of diversity; unvaried or uniform character.

5. oneness of mind, feeling, etc., as among a number of persons; concord, harmony, or agreement.

6. Mathematics. a. the number one; a quantity regarded as one.

b. identity (def. 9).

7. (in literature and art) a relation of all the parts or elements of a work constituting a harmonious whole and producing a single general effect.

8. one of the three principles of dramatic structure (the three unities) derived from Aristotelian aesthetics and formalized in the neoclassic canon in which a play is required to represent action as taking place in one day (unity of time), as occurring within one place (unity of place), and as having a single plot with a beginning, middle, and end (unity of action).

POSTED BY: MAD LOVE | DECEMBER 21, 2007 5:56 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I don't remember too many black folks in Norman Rockwell's America, do you? I'm sure they were around, but 'ol Norman didn't paint their separate but equal part of town, did he? Still, you would of thought that at least one black person might have wondered into the white dentist office, or one of the friendly white folks would have

pulled out a chair and offered up a game of checkers, wouldn't you? Something? After all these are good All American White Christians, right?

But that was a quieter, gentler time, before black people started to really trouble the still serene waters of American life. Yes sir, the sixties were pretty hard times for Norman Rockwell's America, alright. Used to be a good Christian man could set his religious icons up anywhere he pleased. Hell, he could even set it on fire if he had a mind to.

That's when the culture war really started if you ask me. But what do I know? I'm just a godless liberal after all. I'm sure if I had any conscience at all I would see that these God fearing Christians are just trying to restore America to her former glory. I mean whether it's the wrong greeting on a subway train, or the wrong row of the bus, what's the difference? Know your place or face the consequences. These brave culture warriors are going to make sure that the American way survives, God Bless 'em.

POSTED BY: MAD LOVE | DECEMBER 21, 2007 4:42 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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And whatever perceived contradiction there may be to 'Christmas Elf,' I do just walk into it, \*every time.\* Cheers. :)

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 21, 2007 2:11 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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And everywhere the ceremony of innocence is drowned, while the worst are full of passionate intensity:

"You speak of pagans who "gave" us Christians "this holiday." They're all dead; but if you could ask them, they'd say "We didn't give them our holiday; they TOOK it!" Yes, & we intend to hold it against your re-taking of it. How can you claim that the competition is optional? Conflict was not public until the revival of paganism (i.e., Neo-Paganism): can't you see the irony in your false claim that we Christians caused the present culture-war conflict?"

I see a lot of irony, here, Reverend, but, no, I see nothing to dispute the fact that you are the aggressor in your own 'culture war,' here.

I see you clinging to things in unbecoming ways, and claiming others are trying to take them when they were never in your grasp in the first place.

If you believe you took these ideas by force of might, and that entitles you to something, well, Reverend, again I'm sad for you. I see a child throwing a tantrum over holiday decorations.

I do not see a justification for the beatings and disenfranchisement of others you advocate here every year, and \*forget\* about any sense of self-proclaimed moral superiority.

I suppose you'll be claiming you stole \*common decency\* from the Pagans or the Deists or the regular society that we've lived in these score centuries or so, fair and square, and ain't giving that back, either, 'Mine, mine, mine,' won't you?

Or have you already?

That's what you've been doing with your revisionism, you know, Reverend.

I don't know why you feel such need to declare others 'enemies,' but it's clear you have found some need to do so, perhaps to justify the degradations of people you support, or something that's happened to you, or that you've done to others.

But, no, Reverend. You may claim that Christians 'stole this tree or wreath or spirit of giving fair and square,' ...but it doesn't mean you control these things, ...you can't.

And, yeah. How can you \*steal a spirit of giving?\* Totally lost on me. But you claim many logical impossibilities.

Only question is how many people you hurt over this clinging and ambition of yours before you realize it.

Or do you \*want\* to?

Either way,

This is all you.

"If you look into your mirror you'll see that nobody  
Has ever ripped you off, it's all in your mind."

Blessed Yule, Reverend.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 21, 2007 1:53 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

TERRA 12.19 / 6:44p

"Evil Santa" must complain about your use of the genetic fallacy to attack the founders' understanding of "God." One of the tasks of historians of religion is to trace the uses of images & ideas in successions of religions; but it's unhistorical to imagine that devotees of any particular religion are aware of such historical precedents. You may think "Ra" when you see God's eye on our nation's Great Seal, but our founders thought only "God" as they spoke of him in the discussion prior to the adoption of the Great Seal. (Yes, we have the record of that conversation.)

So much of such recidivist thinking derives support from the pseudo-history of deities concocted by Neo-Paganism. The notion that the Goddess preceded God is sheer fantasy, but it has become Neo-Pagan orthodox mythology.

You say my "unity is death to those who want freedom." It's a wash: I say your "freedom" is death to us who want the U.S. to survive in unity. Now, we might advance our conversation by my calling you a "Wicked Witch" & you calling me an "Evil Santa" if we both laughed—otherwise the uncivil conversation could move only in the direction of the polar opposite of "truth & reconciliation," viz. violence.

Three days ago, the U.S. House of Representatives passed HR 847, which affirms Christmas & Christianity (the religion of America's founders). Go figure. "Evil Congress"? When you say "We [Pagans] will win," you're admitting there's a war on. It's childish to state or imply that I (we Christians) started it!

PRIVER

You say of me, "you don't want TRUE freedom. You want 'unity'...." Fightin' words those: true/false. I might reply, "you want FALSE freedom," an anarchic, unity-destroying all-religions-are-equal multiculturalism. Great sociologists (e.g., Robert Bellah) declare dangerously utopian the dream of a post-particular (i.e., a universal) culture & nation. America's particular culture is, & always has been, Christian (rather than Muslim or anything else). The political claim is not that Christianity is the best religion, but only that it is ours as the religious component of the American Mind (the other component being the Enlightenment). It is just poor "history" to keep repeating that Christianity is not specifically in our OFFICIAL founding documents (except for the "our Lord

[Jesus]" at the end of the Constitution): competent historians read also the multitudinous UNofficial materials, which contain quite specific Christian references.

Since God's "eye" is a biblical image explained by the Great Seal's designer as "the Eye of Providence" ("Providence" being a Christian name for God [as in Baptist-preacher Roger Williams' naming of the R.I. capital]), there's no historical justification for reaching back to its use in non-biblical religions, though your doing so illustrates the fact that there's ANTI-biblical motivation in doing so.

The Treaty of Tripoli says (in context) that though Muslim nations are politically Muslim, the U.S. is not "founded on the Christian religion": the church/state relationship in the U.S. is NOT PARALLEL to the religion-politics relationship in any Muslim country, so a political confrontation on the basis of religion between the U.S. & any Muslim nation is not a danger. What this precise-technical wording did was to cut off at the pass the Tripoli politicians who wanted to make this a war of religions. By "the United States," this political document meant "the U.S. government." While the U.S. is a predominantly Christian nation (people), as a state (government) is separates "church" (a Christian word) & "state": thank God for the First Amendment! It was Christians, however, who formed the government—a reality HR 847 recognized three days ago in speaking of "the role Christians and Christianity played in the founding [sic] of the United States and in the founding of western civilization." I give you back your words to a different end: "you can take that to the bank."

As for "ideas that can be of assistance to the common good," how come you think I'm against THAT? As water seeps in wherever there's a level-or-lower opening, ideas flow; & good teachers further the flow of good, creative ideas as servants of God, who loves all his creatures. In an institution of higher education on Manhattan, I was "Dean of Exploratory Programs" because of my heuristic competence & enthusiasm: good ideas from whatever source, here I come! As for "those who can't do, teach," I was invited to teach on the basis of creative doing: for me, doing preceded teaching. How little you know about me, & how quick you have been to arrive at negative judgments!

PAGANPLACE

"Justifying thuggery" matches nothing I've said; but if I'd said it, it would indeed be "evil." How about confining your comments to reality?

In quotes, you speak of "superior and exclusive morality." As that matches nothing I've said, how about confining your comments on what I've said to what I've said?

You said I made a negative comment about the greeting "Happy Holidays." I did not mention that greeting.

Trojan Horses need attacking, but no nonChristian religion is a Trojan Horse except when it threatens unity by claiming equality with Christianity in the public sphere. Egalianity (since everybody's equal, all cultures & religions are equal) is a religion challenging Christianity for predominance in America, including in the public sphere; & of course Christianity has accepted the challenge to engagement: it's a Trojan Horse threatening UNITY, & we Christians are fighting it. Otherwise (in words of Wm. Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming"), "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world..."

If our distinctive American UNITY (with Christianity as the religious component) "fall[s] apart," it will be replaced by a secular unity with humanistic secularism as the religious component. That unity would not be the same as that of the former USSR with its Marxist-utopian unrealistic optimism, but it would be post-American (replacing the American Mind with another mind). In his just-published A SECULAR AGE, the great philosopher Charles Taylor spells out the doom that can be expected from any deepening success of secularism; he hopes (as I do) for the victory of a reconceived theism. / You seem unaware of the fragility of America's unity, & of the present multi-religious egalian threat to the continuing of the American Mind & Way of Life.

You speak of pagans who "gave" us Christians "this holiday." They're all dead; but if you could ask them, they'd say "We didn't give them our holiday; they TOOK it!" Yes, & we intend to hold it against your re-taking of it. How can you claim that the competition is optional? Conflict was not public until the revival of paganism (i.e., Neo-Paganism): can't you see the irony in your false claim that we Christians caused the present culture-war conflict?

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 20, 2007 11:47 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Hmmm, "Deflawing" a contraction of the phrase "Correct The Flaws" apparently is not understood by The Jihadist. Strange since she appears to understand all there is about every thing else (except her warmongering, warped religion).

But I hear she is going through the Five Step Program to Correct the Flaws in the koran and Islam so maybe her mind is severely challenged these days.

And last time I checked Eboo Patel, Mo, Ahmed from Bahrain and Mo from Canada were male Muslims.

POSTED BY: CONCERNED THE CHRISTIAN NOW LIBERATED | DECEMBER 20, 2007 11:38 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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\*just PP trying on a new screen name\*

Does this make me look old?

Hrm.

Ah, I'll get back to it.

POSTED BY: JELLOWASRIGHT | DECEMBER 20, 2007 9:34 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Oh, and, Reverend, this is not in some imaginary spirit of a Pagan trying to take away your holiday.

This is in the spirit of our mutual ancestors, who gave you this holiday once before.

And I'm here to offer it to you again.

It's not like you say.

It's something else.

The kind of hope you can't exegize your Bible and try to control.

It's simpler than that.

Much simpler.

You're not 'defending America,' you're... after something else.

You could just come home.

Ease up.

Anyone comes to try and take your God from you in reality, they'll have to go through me, first. That's one of those things you don't understand about my people.

But you'll have to take us at our word on that.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 20, 2007 7:06 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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"DEFLAW the koran?"

Ohhhh, I seee.....!!!!!!

I had thought Concerned the Christian Now Liberated meant he want to "Deflower" Muslim virgins, so fast did I just skip over his posts in On Faith, and so obsessed is he with Muslim women who drop by in On Faith threads.

Only one match? Do you both need gasoline too? Might as well go all the way and burn the Bible, the Torah, the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads, the Dhammapada, Age of Reason, Mad Magazine.....

Just take that match and light up candles for Jesus if you're Christians, or for world peace if you're atheists during this festive holiday season.

"J"

POSTED BY: JIHADIST | DECEMBER 20, 2007 6:39 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Concerned The Christian Now Liberated:

You want to DEFLAW the koran?

You're going about it all wrong!

Try ((((((anybody got a match))))))

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 20, 2007 4:15 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I'm sorry, Reverend, you can talk around it, but calling people 'party poopers' who are 'disturbing the peace' cause you want to blame \*them\* for g\*not\* being part of your 'Christian unity' ....when they get beaten by a mob for \*not\* saying 'Merry Christmas,' ...that's not just 'evil Santa,' that sounds like the SA, to me. This talk sounds to me \*just like fascism, justifying thuggery.\*

Now you say Pagans are a "Trojan Horse" that need \*attacking\* in the name of your "peace" and 'superior and exclusive morality,' because we \*don't\* want to be hiding in our own country?

So you call it "UNITY is nonnegotiable—so unity-threatening minority behavior is unacceptable to the majority."

So, you try to say it is 'unity-threatening minority behavior' when someone says 'Happy Holidays,' ...but of course, not unity-destroying minority behavior when \*you\* try and tell the \*majority\* that the 'blame' should fall equally on the hate crime victim for saying 'Happy Hannukah.'

There's a difference between a nativity creche and a pentacle and wreath, even. Pentacles do not have the implied message 'Worship this,' any more than does the same star when a Christian puts it up over a nativity creche. Let's not forget, too, that the Pagans and others there were \*invited\* to take part in an interfaith display, and for their troubles got their stuff \*vandalized,\* and then the occasion of that vandalism used as an excuse for the Mayor of Green Bay to repeat bigoted things about us, and exclude everyone but the Christians from the 'community' display.

Probably this is a good reason to keep the overtly-religious out of the public square in the first place, because \*obviously\* some people can't handle it.

Just like I think you're a little unclear on what constitutes a 'Merry Christmas.'

You're always saying how much you think Christianity is to credit for everything good in the world, like our freedom, diversity, any morality or fairness or goodness in the world.

I'm frankly not seeing it. I'm seeing a lot of Dominionist crap \*disguised\* as something else.

You say hateful 'Christian Nation' things, and \*teach\* hatred and exclusion, then try to say \*No, no, no, silly minorities, this is really something else,\* \*while repeating the outrages.\*

I think you're the one who needs to re-adjust what unity means. You're the one seeing \*war and competition\* where none is intended. When you attack, you claim someone else's mere \*presence\* constitutes an attack. I know your religion tends to believe all other Gods are \*rival\* Gods, and that even the process of \*science\* is a 'rival religion, but this is \*your particular religious belief. Not the nation's, and not the people's, and certainly not ever religion or sect within it's.

"Erecting alternative religious icons launches "Christmas war"—unity destroyed by plurality (contra "e pluribus unum")."

That \*means\* "From many, one." It doesn't say, 'One religion uber alles and that's 'unity.'

"The shock of icons competing with the crèche is like a foreign flag set in a public place next to Old Glory."

What, like at the U.N.?

Shock? Who's teaching people to be \*shocked?\*

Who's teaching people to see 'competition?' 'Trojan horses?' 'Attacks?'

You are.

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POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 20, 2007 1:46 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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In keeping with The Jihadist's desire for accuracy:

"Until the koran is DEFLAWED, no one is safe !!!!!"

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POSTED BY: CONCERNED THE CHRISTIAN NOW LIBERATED | DECEMBER 20, 2007 12:29 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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And therein lies the rub: You don't WANT true freedom. You want 'unity' and everyone who is a minority of some kind to be 'seen and not heard'.

Stand in front of a group of minorities and say that and you'll receive the same treatment that Ahmedinijad did when speaking at Columbia. If you're not run out of town first.

The symbols on the money come from the protective symbols of the eye of Horus, as Terra stated. You are projecting at best, and ignoring what actually are symbols that have nothing to do with Christianity whatsoever. The treaty of Tripoli states unequivocally that America is not founded in any sense on the Christian religion. And you can take that to the bank.

I think what disturbs me is not that these are merely your projections of what you 'wish' America was, but that you are in a position to teach things that you obviously know nothing about to young people. Hopefully they have the good sense to see right through your obfuscation. Any teacher worth their salt would not attempt to teach things that they do not understand, and would seek assistance from those with a better handle on it.

Your ego is too big to see that true freedom means working to understand what makes this country great is the opportunity for those who don't think the same as you to offer some ideas that can be of assistance to the common good.

I never thought I'd say it as someone who has myself been a teacher, and is married to one, but you are the living example of the saying that 'those who can't do, teach.'



Perhaps you should take a look at that 'make me an instrument of thy peace' again and ask yourself why is it so important for you to create division when none is necessary?

POSTED BY: PRIVER | DECEMBER 19, 2007 7:01 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Dr. Elliot..

That eye of "god"...Egyptian pyramid...try Ra/eye of horus..the Sun God. Pagan...

Why do you assume that the founders placed Your god on the seal...and not the Eye of Ra (a symbol of protection and power). After all why the pyramid? Not exactly a symbol of Christianity.

They did not place anything about Christianity in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution.

You Christians see the word God and assume it is your's. And I love how you read the Founders minds. They said this so it must mean that...

You are like a doctor that has a cure, and needs to create a disease to use it on.

Sir, you are a racist, a bigot and like Paganplace said..an evil santa...the gifts you bring are discord and segregation, and the same kind of attitude that kept blacks down..after all they would disrupt the unity/power structure of those in power.

Our Founders ran from what you want...old europe was soaked with blood...the air full of the smell of burning flesh and bodies rotting;sacrifices to your god. This is what you would have...your unity is death to those who want freedom. A New Age, indeed.

You would have a revolution on your hands if this was a national policy, and Mr. Elliot, we would win. See we are invisible...I take off my pants and I would be the elderly lady out in the country. The doctor down the street from you would just have to slip his BOS into the file cabinet...the lawyer in New York that was in the White House...she will make your life a dreary mess of courts and supenas. And the rest of the Boys and girls...the wild men and wilder women...the bards and the Iraq warriors home...we will win.

We are Americans all. Paganplace, Wiccan, Lepi,Priver...the Pagan and non Pagan that do not want to live in a land of religious Rightness...we will win. I guarantee.

terra

terra

POSTED BY: TERRA GAZELLE | DECEMBER 19, 2007 6:44 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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**\*\*More than almost anywhere on earth, in America minorities are free to be visible; but they should self-visualize in ways unthreatening to unity.\*\***

In other words, mind our place. Next time I want a drink of water, I'll double-check to make sure I'm using the right fountain.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | DECEMBER 19, 2007 4:31 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

ANONYMOUS

You throw sodium into peaceful water & blame the water for the war (the commotion that continues until one or the other becomes invisible [depending on relative quantities]). The Norman Rockwell America would have been shocked & offended to hear you say that “America...is not founded on Christian principles.” That is a proposition derivative from your way of telling America’s origin-story, & it is at war with the story as we originalists tell it: the likes of you started the etiomachy (WAR OF ORIGIN-STORIES).

1 As families gather at this time of year, each family hears angles on its origin-story amid gales of laughter & playful logos/mythos argument (i.e., how much “really happened” & how much is historically questionable though perhaps “true to life”). This element in family gatherings is important, for it expresses past UNITY just as does the trunk of a tree. / As with families, so with communities of all sizes and levels, including nations. Unity is essential to a community’s existence, diversity is optional.

2 Unity & diversity are agonic, in necessary tension. Centripetal forces keep a community from being destroyed by FREEDOM, which is order’s enemy (so, in 1860, Lincoln denied freedom to S.Carolina): centrifugal forces keep a community from the tyranny of excessive ORDER, which is freedom’s enemy. A humane government will act to balance order & freedom, as the gravity “governor” on old engines keeps them from self-destruction (centrifugal flying-apart) by excessive speed. (By military attack on rebel S.Carolina, Lincoln kept the engine of the federal government from flying apart: unity is fragile.)

3 An ex-prisoner of war, St.Francis saw the Christmas crèche he invented as an instrument of peace-in-unity, not just a religious icon in the narrow sense. (“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace....”). In America, the crèche in public places was an annual statement of both religious & cultural [not political] unity. (The American culture is predominantly Christian, though politically “state” & “church” are separate.) Erecting alternative religious icons launches “Christmas war”—unity destroyed by plurality (contra “e pluribus unum”). The shock of icons competing with the crèche is like a foreign flag set in a public place next to Old Glory.

Consider, too, the relation of the crèche in public places with the greeting “Merry Christmas!” The latter, one might rightly say, is a conversion of the former into sound; & the former, a conversion of the latter into sight. Cultural unity, essential to community, is now more endangered than is diversity—so the next president of the U.S. will have been seen by “we the people” as a cultural-unity warrior.

4 I thought of S.Carolina’s attack on Ft.Sumter (i.e., attack on U.S. unity) when I read your statement that “America...is not founded on Christian principles.” Doubtless, you innocently thought you were uttering a statement of fact, not a declaration of war. And doubtless you would reference the U.S.Constitution’s absence of God-reference in support. But it’s historically incorrect to view the Constitution as a defining entity rather than as an item in a document-flow, at least the three-document flow of Declaration of Independence (1776) – Great Seal (1782) – Constitution (1787).

5 Let’s have a look at the Great Seal, adopted by Congress five years before the Constitution was. It tells the world our founders’ view of what America was “founded” on. On the GS, the eye grabber is the eye of GOD (or “Providence”): Congress said America centers (pyramid apex) in GOD, who “approves” (annuit) of America’s “beginnings” (coeptis). This was combined with deo favente (“by the grace of God”) to make this: “(God) has favored [our American] undertakings.” Congress saw itself as God-motivated to create, under God, a public order which five years later Congress spelled out (as the Constitution) in words assuming, without directly referencing, God (except in the closing’s reference to Jesus as “our Lord”). On the GS’s same side (dated 1776) as annuit coeptis is another official motto pointing to the Eye of God, viz. novus ordo seclorum, the U.S. as “a new order of the ages” (“the new American Era”). The phrase, from the 4th of Virgil’s “Eclogues,” had long been understood in the Christian West to refer to Jesus’ virgin birth (“Virgin...a new Child,” which in Virgil referred to the birth of Rome). Aeneas’ prophecy of the birth of Rome was Christianly read as a prophecy of the birth of Jesus, now (by our founders in 1782) re-read as a prophecy of the birth of America! This three-stage prophetic flow is an open door into the founders’ heart (& so what I call the American Mind as Bible[Christianity]+Enlightenment[here,Rome]).

On the obverse of the GS appears the third official U.S. motto, viz. e pluribus unum (“one from many,” diversity in unity—the original diversity-reference being the 13 states; then the melting pot of peoples, races, ancestries, languages, cultures, religions, philosophies. / The essence of the “unum” (unity) was theocentricity, God-centeredness (“God” being understood by the founders as the Bible+Enlightenment deity). This was more simply

reworded by Congress in 1956: The three Latin-phrased official U.S. mottos were replaced by “In God We Trust.” That was & is the center of the American Mind.

6 Until the Bill of Rights (1791, 4 years after the Constitution), DIVERSITY was endangered. Since then, UNITY has been more endangered. Politically, the greatest threat to unity is civil war (which, in 1865, unity won—three millenia earlier, unity lost in the Hittite civil war, & the Hittites disappeared from history). Religiously, the greatest threats to unity are (1) alternative deities & (2) amnesia (forgetting the American Mind’s “God”—the forgetting being passive [lazy neglect of our culture’s specific piety] & active [secularist subversion, as in the Humanist Manifestos]).

7 Caution! You wrongly accuse me of wanting America to be “exclusively Christian.” I am against such unity (which is rightly called theocratic or dominationist), as I am also against an egalitarian multireligionism (the religion dimension of multiculturalism). The first is tyranny, runaway ORDER; the second is anarchy, runaway FREEDOM. We originalist Americans are for the functional balance of “God”-centered UNITY & liberty-centered DIVERSITY (diversity-within-unity, e pluribus unum). America cannot remain America, we claim, if our historic liberties are compromised or our historic unity (unum) is re-conceived to eliminate its “God”-center.

You conclude with a common leftist trick, viz. “explaining” the opposition’s assertiveness as due not to strength of conviction but to the weakness of “shaky” faith. Tell that (e.g.) to Romney or Huckabee—or, for that matter, to Clinton or Obama!

## PAGANPLACE

Since I had you also in mind as I wrote ANONYMOUS (immediately above), I hope you read that comment before this, which is a shorter addition to it.

1 Your “gotcha” made me smile. Of course “someone appeared” I “wanted to make war on”! The Trojan Horse appeared, & Troy was destroyed because its citizen didn’t realize that horse was something it should have made war on. But—to return to my sodium/water analogy—the sodium had the initiative, so it’s revisionism by reversal to claim that the water made war on the sodium.

2 You are again unfair to me in claiming that I “defend[ed]” that subway Jew’s attackers, & claimed that it was his “fault for being Jewish and returning the well-wishing in his own way.” Two screwed-up projections from what I said! Is it too much for me to expect you to read me fairly—clearly, instead of through lenses colored by you own prejudices? What I did say was that the Jew (1) had “equal right” to say what he said & (2) occasioned, by what he said, a melee the police broke up.

A further excessive projection of yours: You identify the attackers as “Christians.” I’ve read numerous reports of the incident, & none identified the attackers as Christian. Not all proChristmas Americans are proChrist.

“The peace” is not perfect, & “disturbers of the peace” are not always wrong. Further, the peace-disturbers are not always easy to identify. In different ways, both that Jew & his attackers were disturbers of the peace. A nonChristian entered the fray either on the nonChristian’s side or (as did the police) to break up the melee; no report I read mentioned the Muslim’s motive.

3 No, I do not claim that nonChristians should be “totally invisible” in America. Only radical theocrats would want that! My U.Hawaii students in “The World’s Religions” would laugh at the notion that the nonChristians among them (most of them were nonChristian) should be “totally invisible” in America. Majority/minority behaviors are up for continuous negotiation, but UNITY is nonnegotiable—so unity-threatening minority behavior is unacceptable to the majority. What that Jew did in the subway was unacceptable minority behavior, & what his attackers did was unacceptable majority behavior. More than almost anywhere on earth, in America minorities are free to be visible; but they should self-visibilize in ways unthreatening to unity.

I say it again: We originalist Americans maintain that threats to unity & to diversity are equally unacceptable.

4 The Green-Bay-pentacle incident was an unwitting attack on American unity, which is (as I said at length to ANONYMOUS) “God”-centered. The crèche is “God”-centered, a reality deliberately canceled by the pentacle (for the “constitutional” reason!). / You are wrong in assuming a crèche is an “icon” but a pentacle isn’t: both are (in the word’s common meaning) iconic, signaling each a distinct religion. (In the word’s technical meaning, neither the crèche nor the pentacle is an icon.)

BGONE

Thanks for your witness to what happened to you in that little Baptist church. Most of the thousands of Baptist churches are little in building-size & membership.

You conclude, "There's always something one can thank God for."

YES, & "Merry Christmas!"

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | DECEMBER 19, 2007 1:50 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I detect a bit of quibbling about who started the culture war. It's a bit like trying to figure out whether the last car bomb in Jerusalem was a new attack or a response to the last mortar shell from the other side - you need a cease fire just so it's (at least sometimes) clear who broke it first. Let's work backwards instead, from the bogus (IMHO) culture war described by O'Reilly, which to me is insecure christians looking for an enemy to rally against. Aside from a few kooks who really do want to get religion to stay inside the doors of churches and never be seen in public at all, I don't know anyone else declaring war on christians or christian expressions of religion in public. If non christians just woke up and discovered that the winter wasn't owned by Jesus and asked for some respect for their existence and traditions, that did not have to be taken as a declaration of war against Jesus, rather just a restoration of a balance that perhaps should have been there before. As I have noted elsewhere, if you think my opposition to 5 ton granite commandments in the courthouse lobby placed there by the chief judge who says that's the law in his courthouse is a war on christianity, then you're right, I'm in that battle all the way.

As for prayers in the public school, while it's perhaps a reflection of the American Mind as described by Dr. E that our public schools did have prayers said, it is fallacy to argue that the Supreme Court was necessarily wrong to ban it just because it was prevalent at our founding. And America didn't lose its center because third grade teachers can't make their students pray before math class any more. No amount of acknowledgment of the predominance or centrality of christianity at our founding compels us to insist that children of all faiths be compelled to perform the ritual of another's faith as a condition of receiving a state provided benefit, as if being compelled to acknowledge its source.

POSTED BY: JOET | DECEMBER 19, 2007 12:13 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Evil Santa!

Okay, that actually made me laugh, thanks...

POSTED BY: MAD LOVE | DECEMBER 19, 2007 2:46 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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\*Amusing,\* though. Amusing is the fact my dear one and I have been referring to Rev. Elliott as 'Evil Santa' all year. :) (look at the picture and his words. :) )

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 19, 2007 2:30 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I really don't know, Mad. I just don't know.

Some 'Merry Christian' called all us Non-Christians 'traitors to the ancestors,' presumably for no longer forswearing the \*Gods\* of the ancestors, and also, apparently, not supporting 'joyful unified Christians' beating on 'killjoy Jews' in the name of a 'Merry Christmas.'

Make no mistake, poster. my \*Christian\* ancestors were \*never\* about \*that.\*

And if they were, then, forgive em or forget em, anyway.

But, no, the 'treason' is not in American fairness, pluralism, and civility. Whoever I've been, or my ancestors were, I'm an American now.

And I don't think I'm the one who's forgotten what that means.

Cause I can't. This is the dream of Lady Liberty and the love of the Old Gods that's sustained me in the face of bullies, and even beatings by mobs, far more formidable than you, or than Rev. Elliott.

\*ahem.\*

So, I dunno, Mad. Hard to be amused, but what is this 'sideline' you speak of? :)

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 19, 2007 2:25 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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So are killjoy and party-poopers new code words for heretic? I'm trying to wrap my head around this. I suppose I had better throw some Christmas lights up on the house before someone decides to burn a cross in my yard. Clearly the message being put forth here by Dr. E and the mob he sympathizes with is "Play along or else it's war."

It getting harder and harder to remain amused on the sideline.

POSTED BY: MAD LOVE | DECEMBER 19, 2007 1:57 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Of course, what do I know. According to the Reverend, I'm not really American and 'have no morals.'

Yah.

Merry Christmas.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 18, 2007 11:31 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I dunno, J. Gods help the Christians if it's gotta be Pagans and anonymous Muslims who say, 'Yes, Reverend, or random violent mo it's \*wrong\* to blame a Jew for his own beating by virtue of him being Jewish and giving the wrong answer to 'Merry Christmas.'

Happens too much. They'll whine about 'PC oppression,' justify the actual violence and hatred they preach, and expect the big silence from the masses after they rationalize \*hurting people\*.

Or \*while\* they're hurting people.

Shame.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 18, 2007 11:30 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Dr. Willis E Elliot,

Tis the season of goodwill? Never mind. I'm on holiday till the end of the year in this festive season for many faiths and some time on my hand.

I was thinking that this is one of your rare essays where you have the confidence in your own Christian faith to let it stand on its own merits without mentioning Islam and Muslims for a "comparative analysis" of Christianity as

better than other faiths. This tendency seem to emanate most from evangelical churches based in the United States and spread globally where they have their proselytising activities.

Hence, I let all your assertions on Islam, Muslims and the Shariah pass even when they are less than accurate as it is perfectly understandable for evangelical-minded church leaders and members to regard Islam as a "competing faith" in their quest for adherents.

To regard Christianity as a "competing faith" is less of a Muslim theological tradition than in Christianity. The Muslim ulema don't harp on it, and neither do lay Muslim believers. Only on what they perceive, rightly or wrongly, as western social "permissiveness" gleaned from the media, and of course, western foreign policy.

It is my sincere hope that Christianity will continue to stand on its own by the examples of good, humane and self-confident Christians who have no need to compare their faith with others to make them feel better about themselves and their own beliefs.

Merry Christmas to your family and you.

Thank you and best regards

"J"

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POSTED BY: JIHADIST | DECEMBER 18, 2007 10:10 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I was invited to attend a Christmas "thing" at a Baptist church. I couldn't remember ever being in a Baptists church before so I decided to go and was surprised at how "poor" it was. For instance, Al Gore has a much larger house. I doubt if this church which looked more like something on a Christmas card would hold more than a couple hundred people squeezed in. The building was visibly in need of repair as well.

There was no entry fee and they didn't pass the plate. I had decided to pay at the door if asked rather than just walk away but had not decided what I would do if there was a collection so I can't say for sure about that. I've been successfully panhandled in parking lots a time or two and laughed at about it by my friends.

The play was excellent and not all that religious in plot which it actually had, a plot of a sorts which surprised me twice as I was expecting the customary manger scene thing. There was prayer before and after as well and we were asked to join in singing Christmas carols while we waited for the play to begin but otherwise I may as well have been at Al Gore's house, except the house was too small for that.

Anyhow, I'm glad I went if for no other reason than it was a good show which I enjoyed. It was free. I've paid to see Christmas shows I would have gladly paid twice as much and more to be let go. And the "pews" were padded. There's always something one can thank God for. Of course I didn't have to go. Thank God for that for sure.

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POSTED BY: BGONE | DECEMBER 18, 2007 7:14 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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And, oh, people get Christmas off cause it would simply be \*impractical\* to expect much to go get done that day, anyway. Pagans actually religiously-celebrate on the actual Solstice, or as nearly so as practicality allows. (I think the date difference is a result of of calendar changes, but Christians had their holiday on the date of the Saturnalia, contrary to what the on shepherds in your own book would be doing that time of year.)

There's \*always\* been a Winter Solstice holiday, and you're the only one who sees it as an 'attack' for people to honor the traditions where most of the common trappings of that celebration came from in the first place.

In trying to claim 'This is only for Christians, and if we turn it into 'war' when others celebrate in their ways, it's your fault for not being Christian,' I think you have a funny way of showing the 'spirit of the season.'

If the only thing that brings you 'joy' is feeling that you can exclude others from their own public squares, I think you may have lost the point somewhere along the way.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 18, 2007 3:14 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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(I missed an end-quote after the first paragraph up there.)

Anyway, Reverend. Let's get this clear:

"You missed a possibility, viz. that that killjoy Jew's shout may have elicited nothing but a glum silence. I might have sided with those whose unity-in-joy was killed."

You do understand the *\*actuality\** that the 'killjoy Jew' *\*was in actual fact actually assaulted by those 'unity-in-joy' Christians, and that in fact it was a Muslim who stepped up to defend him?*

You've *\*already\** sided with the religious bigots.

You talk about 'unity,' ...I take a little joy in that our *\*diversity\** in America means there was someone *\*else\** there to step up and do the right thing while mob-and-sheep mentality apparently took over the 'festivities of the unified.'

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 18, 2007 3:01 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Think this about sums it up:

"You are so right about those "Norman Rockwell" general goodwill Christmases & so wrong about what went wrong. It wasn't the intro of "culture war" by rightwing ideologs. It was quite specifically the intro of nonChristian challenges. It was indeed "a day of peace" until visuals of nonChristian religions began to appear.

So, you mean it was a day of peace until someone appeared you wanted to make war on, gotcha.

Actually, though, Reverend, the pentacle is not a war on your God, you're the one who interprets the presence of anyone else as an 'attack,' ...just as you defend the people who *\*did in fact physically attack a Jew\** cause he gave the wrong response to 'Merry Christmas...' And again you say it's his fault for being Jewish and returning the well-wishing in his own way.

In Green Bay, at least, the pentacle was placed there because the person who *\*put up the creche on public land \*asked\* for holiday displays from other faiths to go up so that this display would be constitutional.*

This wreath with a ribbon pentacle was not put up as an *\*attack,\** it was put up in a spirit of *\*community participation and diversity,\** (a concept you seem to have difficulty with,) as would have been the UU symbols, and any Jewish ones (A little late for Hannukah, that, but maybe) Or whatever.

No, we did not start the 'culture war,' Reverend, by having the temerity not to obey Christianity or be totally invisible in the country you want to claim.

It's the Christian culture warriors who do and always have done the *\*attacking\** and repressing, and marginalizing, and disenfranchising, and defaming. You're the ones who place your holiday displays up on public property and try to exclude all others.

*\*You're\** the one who can only see people having a different faith as an 'attack on God' somehow. If it's being a 'killjoy Jew' to say 'Happy Hannukah,' but not to put up a display of religious icons on our *\*public\** property and then say, 'I'll consider this an *\*attack\** if you don't exclude *\*yourselves\** from the public square,'

Well, where's the 'joy' in that?



I feel sad for you.

Also, the pentacle is not an icon. It's not worshipped or 'adored' as Christians do a creche. The wreath in question is in fact a symbol of the season for us, just as it is for you. In fact, you got it from 'us' in the first place.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 18, 2007 2:52 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Anonymous - you said it all, but never forget

'Let's Pretend' every Saturday AM.....the first time I ever heard the word 'troll'. In those days they lived under a bridge. Now they're everywhere!

Didn't know we had Coke to thank for Santa Claus but I kind of thought his forebearers, Kris Kringle and Old St. Nick were ultimately pagan in origin....referring directly to the god Saturn aka Father Time - some would say the first anthropomorphic emanation was Old Nick or Lucifer himself & reviled for bringing us the hell of growing old (amazing to think that Santa might be hiding a forked tail under that red outfit!)

As you said, thank Peter Pan for the heaven of never growing up - aka the god Mercury....a very changeable fellow indeed. I met him once in a dream.

This really is a mythical time of the year.

Dr. Elliot - thanks for the post as always.

All the best in the coming year -

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ONE AND ALL!!

POSTED BY: TERRY | DECEMBER 18, 2007 2:36 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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"It was indeed "a day of peace" until visuals of nonChristian religions began to appear."

Really? Other traditions wanting to share in the holiday season with their own celebrations and celebrating diversity inherent in the American system caused the 'day of peace' to go away? Are you serious?

Wrong. It was claiming 'persecution' by the groups who were assuming everyone believed as they did (or should) that forced others to have to remind them that America is NOT exclusively Christian, and is not founded on Christian principles.

Is your faith so shaky that the presence of a menorah or other religious icon is destroying your way of life? Are you truly incapable of honoring your guy there knowing that others celebrate in different ways?

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 18, 2007 2:12 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

JIM CARLSON

Islam is the "dominant" religion of Saudi Arabia: no other is permitted.

In the U.S., Christianity is only the "predominant" religion: all are permitted. Or would you prefer "preponderant" or "paramount"?

Ideological egalitarianism—all persons/cultures/religions are equal—complains against all inequalities: society should never expect any minority to "sit down and shut up." I am no egalitarian (though I'm for "equity" [not "equality"]), but I believe that no minority should ever be expected to sit down and seldom be expected to shut

up. ("Egalian" is a portmanteau word indicating the secular replacement of "Christ" by "egal" before the "-ian" suffix: "CHRISTian" becoming "EGALian.")

ATHENA

You mention a category that does not exist, viz. "a second-class citizen": CIVILY (politically), the U.S. is classless. But CULTURALLY, Americans are at various distances from the original American Mind. As I have said, the two types at greatest distance from the founders are the theocrats (a.k.a. "dominationists," hoping to eliminate secular government, i.e. "state") & the secularists (a.k.a. "humanists," hoping to eliminate "church"). They are least American, but not "second-class."

PAGANPLACE

You missed a possibility, viz. that that killjoy Jew's shout may have elicited nothing but a glum silence. I might have sided with those whose unity-in-joy was killed. Further, the killjoy Jew almost certainly did not intend to be a killjoy, but only (as I said of his "equal right") to make a parallel affirmation. I was shocked at your jumping to the conclusion that I might have favored violence against the Jew: that was unfair of you.

As for a "pentacle next to a...crèche," the Goddess challenging God (paganism making a visible comeback), that's asking for trouble. But I'm glad pentacles are now permitted in government cemeteries, where—with no statement about today—they are contiguous to crosses and stars of David. / You accuse me of "culture war rhetoric" which leads to "hate crimes," then you approve of pentacles stuck into the ground next to crèches! Do you not see that this is a visibilization of the culture war? Francis of Assisi eight centuries ago invented the crèche to focus people's attention on Jesus Christ at Christmas, & of course Christians can be expected to resist diversion of the public's eyeballs to any of Christianity's competitors. Francis taught us to pray "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace." Poor St.Francis, now in the culture war!

You have history backwards in saying "This is your doing, not ours, turning your religious icons into territorial markers in the public square." The truth is that crèches were in the American public square for generations before iconic competitors horned in. "You should be ashamed." You pagans lost the culture war, now you've revived it. And I'm not saying you shouldn't have: cultic competition is a fact of human history. But it's ironic that Neo-paganism accuses Christianity of starting a culture war revived by the current revival of paganism.

HENRY JAMES

"Merry Christmas" is a greeting to Christians & strangers, not to those known not to be Christians.

CHRIS EVERETT

You seem to have a thing against "cognitive dissonance" (Wikipedia, "the uncomfortable tension that may result from having two conflicting thoughts at the same time"). While the Enlightenment was a development within the Christian "West," in the minds of America's founders it was in creative tension with their Bible heritage—thus my description of the American Mind as Bible+Enlightenment. What is to be feared is not dissonance but assonance, which Rabbi Kula (in his current column) calls "our religious fundamentalists and secular fundamentalists."

Your accusation of "veiled hypocrisy" was made possible by your taking out of context what I said about conscience, which was "As conscience permits, let's say a hearty 'Merry Christmas!'" In other words, it should not be said hypocritically, i.e. in violation of conscience. My context was how to greet, what to say during Christmastide. If conscience doesn't permit "Merry Christmas," I suggested silence rather than any in-your-face (truly dissonant!) counter-greeting. / You transposed to the context of "displays of religion," where (of course) I support protesters.

Knowing that you think me "a nut" helps me to read you. E.g., to understand how you could see hypocrisy where there was none.

PAGANPLACE

You are so right about those “Norman Rockwell” general goodwill Christmases & so wrong about what went wrong. It wasn’t the intro of “culture war” by rightwing ideologists. It was quite specifically the intro of nonChristian challenges. It was indeed “a day of peace” until visuals of nonChristian religions began to appear.

JOET

You are correct that Christmas is not a “state-ordained celebration of the state religion.” But it is a “state-ordained celebration” of a specific religion, America’s predominant religion, Christianity. No commenter so far has mentioned this fact: Christmas, a specifically Christian holiday, is the only holiday of any religion that is recognized--& authorized as a holiday—by the federal government. In 1960, JFK was wrong to call “absolute” the separation of church & state. One result, three years later, was the federal (U.S. Supreme Court) elimination of teacher-led prayer in public schools. For 30 years, a sister of mine had opened her 3rd-grade class day with Bible reading & prayer. The 1960 killing of that opening was for her an opening on “three years of hell,” uncontrollable schooldays. For 30 years, she’d daily reminded her pupils where the historic American Center is, viz. GOD. Instantly, the Center disappeared, & in American public education no replacement-center has appeared—so we’re living with a chaos of contending center-claims. 1963 was a battle won for secularism in the culture war which officially began with the public schools as battlefield 30 years earlier (the first Humanist Manifesto). One result has been the increasing alienation of the public from the public schools, with horrendous implications for America’s future.

I agree with your culture-diagnosis as “the radical secularists, the American mind folks, and the radical fundies.” You & I would like “some semblance of balance.” But I see also a balance in the culture war, the American Mind equally against eliminationists left & right (left, eliminating “church” by antitheistic secularism; right, eliminating “state” by theocracy). Which is the greater danger? You think right, I think left (which has already captured public education).

(Thank you for the civility of your comments. Sad that I would have to notice & remark it.)

TERRY

Amen to everything in your comment!

PAGANPLACE

Wrongly, you accuse me of “wanting America to be exclusively Christian.” America is--& I hope will remain--predominantly Christian & INclusive of other religions.

LEPI

Being pro-Halloween, I agree with you against those anti-Halloween culture-warriors!

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | DECEMBER 18, 2007 1:23 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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lepidopteryx:

Constantine picked Dec 25th for the birthday of Jesus because it was a big Pagan holiday. That way Pagans were forced to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Now the shoe is on the other foot?

Pagans should schedule big events with pop music stars etc for their holiday, Dec 25th. Then we can ask, "what's this world going back to?"

All issues are economic and right now the economy is at the top of the list of things to worry about. Wall Street watches retail sale the way chickens watch hawks. The economy was held up by housing that's collapsed. Now it's spending on Christmas that will decide the future health of the US economy. Pagans are helping out? Making Christmas what it once was, a Pagan celebration with "gifts for people as well as the gods" would likely be well received on Wall Street.

TERRY:

Few things in life are free. Growing old is one of them. And remembering the "good old days" comes natural. "Out of the west comes the thundering hoofbeats... The Lone Ranger rides again." It's "Howdy Doody Time" and of course, (((Henry))) (((((((Henry Aldrigch)))))

Those were the days my friend - we thought they'd never end - and they haven't yet for those with memories. I'm actually older than Santa Claus. Do you know when Coca Cola invented Santa? I was there, got one of the first coloring books.

There was a time when Dean Martin insisted that "memories are made of this" and maybe true then but today "memories are made of MOS and number one on Sants' list - with a computer attached of course."

There's Peter Pan and me. We can't help growing old but growing up is optional.

If we consider nativity scenes as just more fictional and/or embellished accounts about good people and myths (e.g. Santa Clause and his elves, Gabriel, Moroni et al), "do no harm to such scenes" or to the associated commentary. Even pagans have their fictional accounts to celebrate on their hallowed days of Halloween etc.

from: <http://members.tripod.com/~TaraMiller/halloween.html>

"Halloween: The Pagan Festival of Samhain

Paganism, and Druidry especially, recognise eight feasts during the yearly cycle or the Eight Fold Year. These celebrations are based upon a deep and mysterious connection between our individual lives and the source of this planet's life. Like any other religious occasion, these Pagan holidays are marked by special observances.

The most popular festival, in ancient times as well as modern Pagan society, is Samhain or Samhuinn, (pronounced Sou'in) the Celtic new year.

Halloween Myths

- 1) The pumpkin God, Samhain ( pronounced Sam'hane) DOES NOT exist.
- 2) Pagans DO NOT sacrifice babies or animals on Halloween. The Wiccan Rede states "Do what thou wilt, but harm none."
- 3) Pagans DO NOT worship the Devil or Satan on Halloween.
- 4) PAGANS ARE NOT SATANISTS.

These myths have been perpetuated by people who have seen too many horror movies and the Christian idea of horrific and mythical forms of Satanism. "

And contemporary Wiccans note: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halloween>

"Also, some Wiccans feel that the tradition is offensive to "real witches" for promoting stereotypical caricatures of "wicked witches".[45] However, other Neopagans, perhaps most of them, see it as a harmless holiday in which some of the old traditions are celebrated by the mainstream culture, albeit in a different manner."

BGONE: "Anyone who objects to "Christ in Christmas" should also object to "Witches in Halloween.""

No one objects to Christ in Christmas. But those of us who do believe in Witches DO object to the fact that certain groups of Christians accuse us of persecuting them by having the nerve to have our holy days in the same month as theirs, despite the fact that they originated with us. And this past year, there was a move by some groups to try to keep Halloween decorations out of the stores. It failed, of course, but these same folks are making noises about trying to outlaw the celebration of Halloween. Since they know they can't do it at a federal level, their aim is to do it one city ordinance at a time. Who is waging war on whom here?

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | DECEMBER 18, 2007 8:36 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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What a 'party-pooper,' yaknow?

The nerve of some people.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 18, 2007 12:01 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I just can't wait to see how the Reverend is going to try to say his rationalization of wanting America to be exclusively Christian isn't \*hate,\* after \*blaming the Jew for getting beaten up cause he gave the 'wrong' response to 'Merry Christmas.'

You know who came to help that Jew, by the way?

A Muslim.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 17, 2007 10:15 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Anonymous - Wow!! Gabriel Heater?? I thought I was old - Inner Sanctum was my favorite radio show, but you've got to go all the way back to Arthur Godfrey and beyond. In truth my imagination has never been the same since the death of real radio - I feel sorry for folks that have never experienced actual radio wave-invoked fantasy stimulation of the cerebral cortex - those were the days.

TV is truly for the brain-dead now, although the early transition was a hell of a lot of fun in the 50's. Ed Sullivan anyone?? You might actually see Bing Crosby or Elvis singing White Christmas!!

POSTED BY: TERRY | DECEMBER 17, 2007 10:00 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Dr. E is a tad too erudite to be understood. I think he is suggesting that the truly radical secularists, in reacting to the rabid fundamentalists who are upset that everyone doesn't accept Christmas as if it's the state ordained celebration of the state religion, have done a bit of historical revision themselves. Problem is, it's not a terribly exciting point, because the current debate is between the fundies and those who would like some semblance of balance. Whether we overstate the secular origins of America in the process is irrelevant. Dr. E has missed the third party in the argument. There are the radical secularists, the American Mind folks, and the radical fundies. The first and the last are both guilty of a little or a lot of revisionism, but to my mind, correcting the fundies is a bit more germane to the current social scene than correcting the secularists.

POSTED BY: JOET | DECEMBER 17, 2007 8:46 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I think what really cheeses me off about this paranoid and aggressive right wing Dominionist nonsense is that Christmas \*used\* to be the time of the year when Christians were thinking of birth and motherhood and family, ...their guy as a \*baby,\* ...hope, not apocalypse and tongues of fire and culture wars.

Used to like the Norman Rockwell image, the peace on Earth and general good will. It's also the holiday where the Christian and secular and Pagan traditions are really most \*closely-aligned.\* When the divisions and isolation and vitriol don't seem so great. When you can walk around, go where the lonely Christians who can't be with loved ones are, have a cup of good cheer, enjoy the lights.

Then this lot had to go and ruin \*that, too\*

Now it's become a time in America when right-wing Christians are screaming how I'm the 'evil enemy,' when they get in a twist about their own consumerism, (...I don't own the Muzak machines and Wal-Marts, sports, btw. You do.)

I'd warn Britain against going down the same road.

It's supposed to be a day of peace. To this lot, it's just another battle in their culture war.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 17, 2007 7:02 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Anyone who objects to "Christ in Christmas" should also object to "Witches in Halloween." I don't believe in witches but they keep coming to my door every Halloween. Jesus hasn't showed up yet at Christmas but that doesn't mean He's not coming.

Come to think about it, didn't a Baptist preacher say that Jesus was coming complete with a date during the year 1843? Baptist preachers and preachers in general are never wrong so Jesus must have come and the world ended. That accounts for us living in "The Kingdom of God" right now - elections are just symbolic since God picks the president etc. Wonder why God has so much trouble getting Christ into Christmas. Christ isn't some kind of Grinch is He?

<http://www.hoax-buster.org/sellyoursoul> could be what's troubling God. Lucifer tried to take over God's kingdom. Maybe getting Christ all the way out of Christmas would please God?

God is a Republican? Republicans are Capitalists so God must be a Capitalists too - for sure not a Communists. God like all other Capitalists never misses an opportunity to make money and that's why God tolerates Christ in Christmas, such as Christ is in Christmas.

Season's Greetings everyone and especially Rev Willis.

POSTED BY: BGONE | DECEMBER 17, 2007 6:59 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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The radio was playing and  
Gabriel Heater was saying  
Peace on earth, good will to men  
But then, somebody slugged uncle Ken  
And the fight was on again

((((((((((((((Seasons Greetings everone))))))))))))))

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | DECEMBER 17, 2007 6:39 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I'm sorry, but the bottom line with Dr. Elliott is that he's a nut.

POSTED BY: CHRIS EVERETT | DECEMBER 17, 2007 6:09 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Once again, the veiled hypocrisy of the cognitively dissonant American Mind. On the one hand do "as conscience permits." But on the other hand "don't be anti-Christmas."

Nevermind that those who protest government displays of religion are doing so AS AN ACT OF CONSCIENCE!!!!

Hello????!!! McFly????!!!

POSTED BY: CHRIS EVERETT | DECEMBER 17, 2007 6:03 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Do we say "Happy Birthday" to someone when it is not their birthday.

Should we say "Merry Christmas" to an Orthodox Jew who is NOT celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ?

am I missing something?

POSTED BY: HENRY JAMES | DECEMBER 17, 2007 5:30 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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As for 'party-pooing,' Reverend, it's people like \*you\* who have turned the \*words\* 'Merry Christmas' into a political statement, one you can't be sure isn't meant to try and isolate and alienate minorities... Don't extend other holiday greetings in return or you might get beaten up, or have a noose hung on your door, or at least have religious conservatives call you an 'enemy.'

I always \*used\* to wish Christians a merry Christmas right back. Just well-wishing, not a religious or political statement. \*Now\* it's become something where I feel either coerced or at risk.

This is your doing, not ours, turning your religious icons into territorial markers in the public square, ...no other faiths welcome, of course.

I wouldn't dream of being a party pooper, unless of course, it's turning into a lynch mob.

You should be ashamed.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 17, 2007 2:22 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Wow, Reverend... Before I even \*read\* on, did you actually side with the people who beat up a Jew cause he said 'Happy Hannukah!' when they said 'Merry Christmas?'

How merry a Christmas could these violent people have even been \*imagining\* with that in their hearts?

You're actually blaming the Jew, who got beaten up by a mob of Christians, and acting like the Christians are the oppressed ones?

Forget about it. Try putting up a pentacle next to a Nativity creche (so the Christians can claim the display on public property is nonsectarian,)

....Without some 'fun-loving' Christians driving over the thing or tearing it down and throwing it in the bushes.

Must have been the 'spirit of the season.'

Gods, oh, no, no, can't have a wreath and a \*star\* near a Christmas display, can we?

Phooey.

This 'War on Christmas' mirage and culture war rhetoric has started leading to a lot of \*hate crimes,\* Reverend.



Is that how you 'Put the Christ back in Christmas?'

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | DECEMBER 17, 2007 2:07 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Once again, Dr. Elliott states that any American who is not a Christian is a second-class citizen.

POSTED BY: ATHENA | DECEMBER 17, 2007 12:18 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Dr. Elliott -

That was a wonderfully erudite treatise. But the florid language doesn't conceal the intent.

You could have made your point much more succinctly by saying what you really mean: Christianity is the dominant faith in the U.S. and those who practice a different religion - or those with none - should just sit down and shut up!

POSTED BY: JIM CARLSON | DECEMBER 17, 2007 11:24 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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