

“The LGBT Fad” by Kaylee McGhee White, *Washington Examiner*, June 7, 2022.

“Putin’s Anti-Gay War on Ukraine” by Emil Edenborg, *Boston Review*, March 14, 2022.

White is a visiting fellow at Independent Women’s Forum and writes commentary for the *Detroit News*, *RealClearPolitics*, the *Weekly Standard* and the *Washington Examiner*.

She notes that a report from The Center for the Study of Partisanship and Ideology finds that, between 2008 and 2021, “the percentage of young people who identify as LGBT tripled to 21%. Transgender and nonbinary identification increased as much as 1,000%.” She mentions de-stigmatization and secularization as explanations that are offered for the increases. They’re reasonable explanations. Yet, she distracts herself with the finding that “less than half” of those under 30 who so identify since 2008, report “having a same-sex partner or engaging in same-sex behavior”. She sums, “In other words, there are a lot of people claiming to share the LGBT label who simply are not gay, bisexual, or transgender.” Hold on! There are better explanations than to leap to that conclusion. There’s now *less desperation, more breathing room for discernment, and concerns* over STDs and COVID. Also, a transgender’s *focus* is on *gender identity* more than on sex acts *per se*, and their opportunities for sex partners are more limited.

Putting her, “In other words” dismissal, in yet another strained way, she claims, “The answer is simple: Queerness, in any one of its forms, has become a fad – both politically and culturally. It is associated with progress, leftism, and most importantly, a rejection of the heteronormative values forced upon us by straight white men. It’s cool, important, even necessary to be a part of such a movement, even if your sexual preferences don’t exactly align with it.” What “*martyrs*” of “cool” her *overreaching* rendition makes of them! Instead of *empathizing* with those who’ve been spared the homophobia of the past, she “reads into” their motivations, her own political agenda.

White then tries to make her point in another roundabout way by mentioning Grace Lavery, a transwoman married to a transman. She mocks that, now, the two “can have a normal heterosexual relationship and be considered queer.” She smirks, “It’s the best of both worlds apparently.”

White doesn’t mention it, maybe she doesn’t know, but our evangelical readers may find it interesting: this Grace Lavery has married Danny Ortberg, who identifies as “queer”. He is a son of California’s popular evangelical pastor, John Ortberg, and wife, Nancy. Danny’s *alma mater* is the evangelicals’ Azusa Pacific University

These days, with other evangelicals, including Tim Keller’s Redeemer City to City ministry, the Ortbergs are working toward “connecting and equipping leaders to help catalyze a holistic Gospel Movement in the Bay Area.” What a most worthy venture!

White lets her thin grasp of these matters and *lack of empathy* for those who must deal with their *intrinsic* experience in their psychosexual sense of self, what others label as “sin”, “disgusting”, etc., and compares these “fads”, as she belittles them, to those who dyed their hair weird colors and wore “low rise denim” in times past. She chalks all their hard *struggles* up, so *superficially*, as what’s simply, today’s “cool”.

At the end of her article, White tries to associate *her own* approach with those of folks who’ve, by now, been “around

the block” of *reality* for a bit longer spell than she has, e.g., Caitlyn Jenner, J. K. Rowling and Bill Maher. She latches on to their meaningfully mid-course corrections, as if they’re *in sync* with her *total dismissal* of all of these who, formerly, were such *total outcasts* in society.

Edenborg, a political scientist and Russia scholar at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, notes that, in Putin’s announcing Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, he included a paragraph on the West’s undermining “our traditional values” leading to “degradation and degeneration.” But this paragraph has been ignored in the Leftist media. Edenborg explains: “In the rhetoric of the Kremlin and state-loyal media, LGBT rights, feminism, multiculturalism, and atheism are identified not only as foreign to Russia’s values, but as existential threats to the nation.” He says that, “The Kremlin has constructed a pernicious ideology of homophobia as geopolitics.” American college students may find their own assumptions of Marxism’s rejection of religion out of sync with Putin’s rhetoric, and may be shocked that their pro-LGBT Marxist professors haven’t prepared them for Putin’s homophobia. But their professors, too, are too young and naive to recall Marxism’s *misuse* of the Russian Orthodox Church as a *puppet*, in the days of Stalin’s deadly dictatorship.

According to Edenborg, Putin’s speech shows that the Russian invasion of Ukraine—and its security policies broadly, “cannot be understood in isolation from politics of gender and sexuality. The reality is that the Kremlin has constructed a pernicious ideology of homophobia as geopolitics, and in official Russian rhetoric the war in Ukraine is framed as the continuation of this politics.”

Edenborg is quite clear: “It is not necessary to dig deep or read between the lines to make the argument that national security in Putin’s Russia is a gender and sexuality issue. The Kremlin, for one, explicitly defines national security in gendered terms.”

He traces this “full embrace of ‘traditional values’”, from the early 2010s, when “the Putin regime instrumentalized a nationalist, authoritarian form of gender conservatism that had gradually grown stronger in Russian political life since the late 1990s. As ‘traditional’ family and gender ideals were framed as matters of national survival, adherence to hetero- and cis-normativity became qualifying conditions not just of respectability, but of national belonging.”

Edenborg cites Masha Gessen’s *The Future Is History: How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia* (2018), on how “false accusations of pedophilia became a way to demonize political opponents, and LGBT movements and feminists increasingly became targets of scapegoating. The 2013 law banning ‘propaganda for non-traditional sexual relationships’ among minors not only restricted possibilities to speak and inform about sexuality and gender issues in public, but also designated homosexuality as a danger to children and to society.” This can be as shocking to antigay Right wingers as to Leftist students enthralled with what their outdated Marxist professors spout to them.

