

Wokeness Is No Laughing Matter

I remember once hearing someone who dealt with such things point out that there was one particular trait characterizing all cult religions: the lack of a sense of humor, not only with regard to others, but in relation to themselves as well. Cult religions, after all, are usually obsessed with one doctrine, to which all others are subordinate, leaving room for little else.

This characteristic, [G. K. Chesterton observed](#), is one common to insane people. The madman, he said, “is in the clean and well-lit prison of one idea: he is sharpened to one painful point. He is without healthy hesitation and healthy complexity.”

The new Cult of Wokeness shares this peculiarity. It is obsessed with race and gender. All other things are to be set aside as irrelevant. The grim schoolmarms of the “woke” left, armed with denunciations and practicing censorship, approach every issue decidedly lacking in the sense of humor department.

So lacking are they in levity that they apparently don’t understand irony (the root of almost all humor) at all, for [The New York Times reports](#) that the censors at Facebook are having trouble dealing with satire. Facebook, using only the austere logic of “wokeness,” identifies and eliminates posts that explicitly take positions it finds unacceptable. But, when it comes to the satirical humor of sites like the Babylon Bee, the censors are like the apes in Arthur C. Clarke’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Confronted with the black obelisk, they are left confused and angry at the strange object.

Even those of a more progressive persuasion understand this problem, as evidenced by the left-leaning cartoonist featured in the *NYT* article on satire, Matt Bors, proprietor of The Nib. “If social media companies are going to take on the responsibility of finally regulating incitement, conspiracies and hate speech,” Bors said, “then they are going to have to develop some literacy around satire.”

In other words, over at Facebook—and, by extension, Twitter—where you apparently have to have permission to laugh, they are in dire need of remedial humor training.

No joke.

When everyone else becomes afraid to say what he thinks, the comedian is the last one standing to publicly defy oppression. This is a truth which the humorless proponents of political correctness are now having to deal with.

But perhaps there is hope. Already comedians like Dave Chapelle and Bill Burr have launched a comedic assault on “woke” platitudes, saying things that few of the rest of us could get away with, and doing it on mainstream media outlets. Chapelle’s routines puncturing the PC balloon have been carried by Netflix, and Burr was given a spot on this year’s Grammy Awards show (coming onstage right after Cardy B’s “WAP” performance).

“One horse-laugh is worth ten thousand syllogisms,” [said H. L. Mencken](#), “It is not only more effective; it is also vastly more intelligent.”

This is why it will be ridicule, rather than argument, that will ultimately bring political correctness down.

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