

The Counter-Repudiation That's on the Way

Philosopher, writer, and teacher Roger Scruton labeled our age “the culture of repudiation” in his 1998 book *An Intelligent Person's Guide to Modern Culture*. Though I am oversimplifying here, his basic premise was that academics and other influential writers and thinkers had given up defending, much less advancing, Western thought and culture. Many, in fact, had spent years attacking the art, history, faith, and principles of Judeo-Christian civilization. As Scruton [noted a decade later](#),

This culture of repudiation has transmitted itself, through the media and the schools, across the spiritual terrain of Western civilization, leaving behind it a sense of emptiness and defeat, a sense that nothing is left to believe in or endorse, save only the freedom to believe. And a belief in the freedom to believe is neither a belief nor a freedom. It encourages hesitation in the place of conviction and timidity in the place of choice.

Now another decade has passed, and the repudiation gang is in full swing, a wrecking ball smashing everything from the family to statues, from rationality to religion. The ball swings 24/7, pushing critical race theory, gender bending teenagers, advocating full-term abortions, changing the meaning of words like male, female, and recession, and spending billions of dollars on projects that line the pockets of those who support them.

Yet resistance and hope, so often born as scraggly weeds, keep breaking through the concrete slab being poured on our culture. Around the country, colleges old and new—schools like Christendom or Hillsdale, or the recently founded University

of Austin—stand by Western values. Outfits like *The Federalist*, *American Thinker*, and *Intellectual Takeout* saddle up and ride into battle every day against the craziness that grips our country by the throat.

Enlisting in this pushback against those seeking the ruin of liberty and tradition is pretty simple. Here are 10 of my suggestions, some of which I've mentioned in earlier articles. I'm confident others can add to, or improve, this list.

Live in the Truth

"Truth alone does not prevail," Heda Kovály writes in [*Under a Cruel Star*](#), her memoir of life in Czechoslovakia first under the Nazis and then under communism. "When it clashes with power, truth often loses. It prevails only when people are strong enough to defend it." Against today's cancel culture we must hold fast to what we know in our bones to be the truth.

Seek Truth

"It is not hard for a totalitarian regime to keep people ignorant," Kovály tells us. "Once you relinquish your freedom for the sake of 'understood necessity' ... you cede your claim to the truth." The propaganda campaign of the pandemic brought far too few questions and all too many Americans marching in lockstep. We relinquished liberties for understood necessity. Let's not repeat that mistake.

Vote

This one's a no-brainer. But you'll hear some critics say, "A vote for a lesser evil is still evil." Maybe so, but that's the nature of politics.

Form Alliances

Let's ally ourselves with likeminded family and friends. It's easier to stand together than alone.

Cling to Faith

Seek out and practice a faith or a philosophy that gives moral guidance in living, that repudiates the nihilism of our

culture.

Follow After Virtue

Live by the cardinal virtues of courage, prudence, justice, and temperance, and the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Doing so is wholesome, good for you, and can even provide some entertainment. As Mark Twain once [said](#) to a group of young people, "Always do right. This will gratify some people, and astonish the rest."

The Fortress of Home

Make your home, however humble, a castle of civilization, a fortress where when you close the front door you shut out trouble and feel comfort and safety.

Make Time for Meals

Make the evening meal a time for gathering with friends and family. Talk together about the day's events, what happened at the office or school. These conversations are not insignificant, but are instead the ties that bind us to our loved ones.

Teach Your Children

Teach the kids about their history and culture. This road is wide open with read-alouds and books on tape, movies, museums, concerts, visits to national parks, and the reminiscences of grandparents. Preservation begins at home.

Have Fun

Have some fun along the way. Nothing drives the grim-hearted politicians crazier than seeing the rest of us laughing and enjoying ourselves. Revel in the small pleasures. This is important, because these are the things—the delighted shouts of a little one on a swing set, stars over the ocean, even that cup of coffee in the morning—that are worth fighting for.

Now, let the Counter-Repudiation begin!

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