



## Amy Coney Barrett and the Zealots

Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett is in the grip of “dogmas.” So goes a criticism made by, ironically, the most dogmatic of people. In fact, the gripe reflects a certain dogma-born prejudice. Oh, I don’t speak of the anti-Catholic, anti-“religious,” anti-pro-life, and anti-conservative varieties, though they’re also present. Nor do I refer to how a Muslim nominee would never be subjected to such scorn. Rather, the prejudice here is seldom recognized and something even good people may exhibit.



Photo of Amy Coney Barrett (AP Images)

“The dogma lives loudly in you,” Senator Diane Feinstein (D-Calif.) told Barrett in 2017 during the latter’s nomination hearing for the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. My answer to the senator would have begun with a simple but sage statement:

“In truth, there are only two kinds of people; those who accept dogma and know it, and those who accept dogma and don’t know it.”

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This was written by potentate of profundity G.K. Chesterton in 1923, and he was, of course, correct (and still is). One of Feinstein’s apparent dogmas, for instance, is a common one: that only religious people have dogmas.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary [lists](#) “dogma’s” very first definition as “**a**: something held as an established opinion,” and, boy, the Left’s minions aren’t short on established opinions. They take as self-evident, for example, that “racism,” “sexism,” “homophobia” and “transphobia” are wrong.

Moreover, the Left’s latest dogmatic model — labeled “wokeness” with typical *Idiocracy*-level sophistication — upholds many additional dogmas: “white privilege,” Critical Race Theory dictates, that police unfairly target blacks, abortion is a civil right, etc. The Left also dogmatically punishes “heretics” with a societal enforcement mechanism called “cancel culture.”

Some may respond that, unlike “religious” dogmas, the aforementioned have not been officialized. But this is a false argument. First, many leftists’ dogmas are part of the Democratic Party’s and other liberal organization’s platforms/guiding principles. More significantly, however, a belief’s correctness or incorrectness isn’t altered by its organizational adoption.

Its nature is what it is, and, in fact, beliefs are always embraced “informally” (at least by some) before they’re ever declared official organization positions. Why, Catholic beliefs, some of which so trouble the left-wing dogmatists, were themselves held as true by many faithful Catholics long before being declared dogma (e.g., the Trinity, not established as official church doctrine until the Council of



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Nicea in 325).

Furthermore, it is personal, passionately held dogma that's far more relevant to an individual's job performance than dogma officially declared by an organization with which he may have some association.

Consider "Catholic" Justice Sonya Sotomayor. Since her judicial opinions certainly aren't constrained by constitutional dictates, ask yourself what appears to most inform them. Catholic teaching ... or what we currently call "leftism"? Because something does.

The point is that everyone has a world view — a philosophical foundation — that *shapes his positions on everything else*.

For example, if you believe man is divinely created and infused with a soul upon conception, you'll almost assuredly be pro-life. But if you're an atheist, declared or *de facto*, and consider man just a soulless organic robot comprising some pounds of chemicals and water, you may subscribe to the baby-as-unviable-tissue-mass thesis. Both these positions reflect dogmas. But the dogmas are only recognized as such with respect to the pro-life position because they happen to be dogmas the culture-shaping pseudo-elites, ever blind to their own dogmas, don't like.

Either way, though, you'll vote to overturn *Roe v. Wade* if you're true to the Constitution because it does not guarantee a "right" to abortion. This is where it gets interesting, however.

It's clear that so-called "religious" justices — such as Clarence Thomas and the late Antonin Scalia — who certainly believe there's a higher law than the Constitution and are supposedly "enslaved by dogma," are nonetheless far more likely to adhere to our founding document than their more "secular" colleagues.

This isn't merely because, [as I've explained](#), the Constitution is by its nature a "conservative" document. It's not even just that "religious" justices apparently take oaths more seriously, especially those concluding with "So help me God."

It's also, first, that since they recognize ours as an ordered universe of moral absolutes, they're oriented toward absolutes and are more likely to accept legal absolutes as just that — like them or not. Second, having the humility born of worshipping God and accepting that they're not Him, they're less apt to deify themselves and play God.

This constitutional adherence, by the way, is precisely what leftists *don't want* despite their claims to the contrary. They instead want likeminded justices who view the Constitution as, to quote Thomas Jefferson, "a mere thing of wax ... which they may twist and shape in to any form they please."

Speaking of which, it is these "liberal/secular" judges who upon nomination to a higher court should be grilled mercilessly. They should be asked: "With what dogma do you justify, *wholly contrary* to the framers' intent, treating the Constitution as a "living document"?"

The most fundamental answer is one they wouldn't offer even if they were introspective enough to grasp it. To wit: They reject Truth (absolute by definition) and thus are relativists — and, ultimately, such people too often make everything relative to themselves (My will be done!). Hence the judicial thing-of-wax rationalization called "[pragmatism](#)."

Speaking of illusions, there's another common prejudice here, one related to that concerning dogmas. It's the idea, implicit in Feinstein's Barrett criticism, that authentic "religiosity" should be a disqualifying factor. It's also reflected in our "separation of church and state" (which is *not* in the



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Constitution) dogma, which places “religion” on the back of the bus. But consider:

If the ideas in question really are handed down by God, the Creator of the Universe and Author of All, don't we have an obligation to infuse our public square and schools with them? To this the secularists will say, “Well, that's your belief — in sky fairies. But these ideas are just man-made.”

Yet if so, why discriminate against them? Why say that ideas we happen to call “secular” may be in the public square but those we happen to call “religious” may not be? If they're all man-made, wherein lies the relevant difference?

The truth hiding in plain sight is that in the most important sense, the religious/secular distinction is a *false distinction*. Note here that the current predominant usage of “secular” dates back only to the mid-19th century. In fact, once upon a time in the West the religious vs. secular dichotomy would have made no sense to people at all. Our remote ancestors viewed the relevant distinction as being, most simply put, the *true vs. the untrue*.

Now, you may take issue with, let's say, medieval man's conception of Truth, but the logic is airtight. Consider: If Marxism is essentially false, what's most significant: that we call it “secular” or that it's untrue? If God is real, what's most significant: that belief in Him is labeled “religious” or that it is true? Oh, and for those assuming there's some greater correlation between so-called “secularism” and what's true, the birth of Nazism, fascism, Marxism and other sordid and sundry isms says otherwise.

There is only the true and the untrue — anything obscuring this reality is dark unreality.

And the truth about Amy Coney Barrett is, quite possibly, not that the Democrats are afraid she'll impose Catholicism. They're perhaps afraid that because she honors God, she'll also honor her oath and impose constitutionalism.

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