



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on June 25, 2026

Have Conservatives Ever Seen a Culture War Battle They Couldn't Lose?

"Republicans are conservatives," said author and CEO Kenin Spivak recently.

"Conservatives are *conservative*." This tautology was uttered to answer a question: Why do Republicans lose social and cultural wars despite winning elections?

The topic was raised on the Wednesday edition of *Bill Martinez Live*. (Note: Bill, on whose show I've appeared numerous times, is one of the really good guys in media.) Spivak, who's also a financier, attorney, and consultant, addressed a line he penned in a June 15 RealClear Politics article. He'd [written](#) that



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despite an edge in winning elections and appointing 60% of Supreme Court justices confirmed over the last 65 years, since the 1960s conservatives have been on the losing end of nearly every social and cultural battle and most policy disputes.

Explaining how this happened (and is happening) on Martinez's program, he [stated](#):

The Democrats, and progressives in particular, have spent 75 years advancing themselves ... throughout all of our major institutions: education, federal government, state government, the media. And they've really gotten a hammerlock on those institutions. And they've used their control to pass regulations, not laws, where someone else in another institution has to comply with a rule they issue for a benefit to accrue. And then in the other institution they pass that rule, and it goes back and forth.... And that's what's given them their victory on all of these cultural and other policies.

How does this work? Grok artificial intelligence provided the following example and explanation (which I evaluated for accuracy):

Government Pressure on Social Media Platforms (Media/Tech/Information Flow)

Mechanism: White House officials, the Surgeon General, CDC, and FBI engaged in repeated communications, meetings, and demands with platforms (Twitter, Facebook/Meta, YouTube, etc.) to censor or suppress content on topics like COVID-19 origins/treatments/vaccines, the Hunter Biden laptop story, election integrity, and certain conservative viewpoints. This was often framed as combating "misinformation" or "disinformation," backed by implicit or explicit threats of regulatory consequences (e.g., changes to Section 230 liability protections or antitrust scrutiny).



Cross-institution cycle: Platforms modified content moderation policies, algorithms (visibility filtering/shadowbanning), and enforcement to align with government priorities to maintain access to officials, avoid penalties, or preserve “partnerships.” This affected what millions saw, influencing public opinion, elections, and trust in institutions. Documented extensively in the Twitter Files and related congressional investigations/court cases (e.g., *Missouri v. Biden*).

Outcome: Reduced visibility or outright removal of dissenting views on major cultural/political issues, effectively shaping the information environment in ways aligned with progressive priorities — without new laws from Congress.

The above is especially egregious because, since it inhibited people’s ability to discuss cultural issues, it could affect the culture. Speaking of which...

Win the Culture, Own the Future

Spivak is singing my tune, and his point about regulatory institutional cross-infection is a good one. Yet there’s still more to it.

Spivak’s line “Conservatives are *conservative*” is a legitimate warning. It’s why I long ago ceased identifying as conservative. And no one explained the issue better than philosopher G.K. Chesterton.

“The whole modern world has divided itself into Conservatives and Progressives,” he wrote in 1924. “The business of Progressives is to go on making mistakes. The business of Conservatives is to prevent mistakes from being corrected.”

Yes, I’ve often quoted the above (and will continue doing so until everyone gets it!). It relates, too, to conservatism’s and liberalism’s true natures.

These two isms [are not ideologies so much, but processes](#). This is why the actual positions each term represents vary with time and place. (For example, conservatives in Sweden largely accept the “LGBTQ+” agenda; American conservatives largely reject it.) Liberalism is the process of ever trying to change the status quo. Conservatism is the process of ever trying to maintain it. The upshot:

As the status quo changes, so will the positions the conservatives are trying to conserve. Of course, the liberals are the change agents, the catalysts for status-quo alteration. Conclusion?

Conservatives are simply defending yesterday’s liberals’ social and cultural victories insofar as today’s status quo reflects them.

“The Best Defense is a Good Offense”

Imagine this as a lib-con war for cultural territory — except, only one side ever takes the offense. The libs come and attack the cons’ land. The latter resist, of course, but there’s pressure to be “reasonable,” to “compromise.” Oh, the cons may not relinquish their entire territory immediately, perhaps not even half. But whether ceding 10 percent, three percent, or one, the ultimate outcome is identical.

The libs capture 95 acres today, 505 the next year, 387 later, etc. As the process continues, the libs will have eventually conned the cons out of Traditionland entirely. It will still be *called* Traditionland, though, and the cons will still defend it, oblivious to how it’s not their ancestors’ realm anymore except in name.

A real-world example: Leftists demanded same-sex “marriage’s” official recognition. Conservatives



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eventually softened (in the head) on the issue and capitulated. True warriors for tradition would've proceeded differently. They wouldn't have merely rejected the marriage attack.

They would've also demanded we remove government from marriage entirely and restore it as a solely religious institution. They'd have been, too, as passionate about their restoration as the Left was about their degradation. And that's what you call taking the offense.

Another factor I'll mention, briefly, was addressed by ancient Chinese sage Confucius. "I have never seen one [person]," he said in *The Analects*, "who loves virtue as much as he loves sex." (Ergo, China's 1.4 billion population.) The left is marketing vice — a much [easier sell than virtue](#).

And that's why conservatives always lose cultural and social battles. Remember here that if the Founding Fathers had been conservatives they wouldn't have been founders or fathers (of a nation). They would've been Loyalists, faithful to the crown.

So when pondering whether you're conservative, always ask a question:

What, exactly, would I be conserving?



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