



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on December 13, 2019

Greta Thunberg, Person of the Year, Reveals West as Power of Yesteryear

A civilization's heroes are a window to its soul. Then again, when old statues and virtues come down and frivolous figures and vices are held up, some may suspect their land has lost its soul. A good example is teen Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg and her "sainting" by the Left, as theologian Fay Voshell puts it.

Writing at *American Thinker* Friday, Voshell [asserts](#) that by proclaiming the Swede "Person of the Year" and presenting her as some beatific figure, *Time* magazine "has officially sainted Thunberg."

"Thunberg — for now at least — has become the secular equivalent of Joan of Arc, whose portraits and statues are depicted with a similar expression denoting transcendent holiness," writes Voshell, referencing *Time's* December cover.

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Voshell makes the case that this exaltation belies the notion of leftist "irreligiosity." This may be true, in a sense, though as I [explained Sunday](#), the religious/secular distinction is in the deepest sense a false one. What is true is that the godless are not false-godless; *most* people want to believe in something larger than themselves, and the climate con is certainly larger than its con men (though the primary among them would, in their hearts, likely beg to differ).

Voshell, in a nutshell, also says that Thunberg is a useful idiot for the Left and that, once used up, will be discarded for another. As for the girl's future choices, she "will probably fall in love with someone," writes the theologian. "Her present passionate intensity then will be diverted."

While I won't bet the farm on this, Thunberg is being used. It's no shock that she was selected for her current role, either. She's consumed with climate concerns, unsurprising since she's said to have "Asperger's," and such people tend toward obsession.

Just as significantly and as I [explained in August](#), she'll be 17 in a few weeks but looks 12. This is reminiscent of why Hollywood "child" actors are often much older than they look: You generally get much better performances from a mid- or late adolescent who can play a child than you do from a child.

But while Voshell's article concerns the "Fate of Secular Saint Greta Thunberg," as its title puts it, the girl isn't that interesting. Far more so is what this story says about the fate and state of our civilization. It's no surprise that a child would embrace a childish agenda; tragic, though, and pathetic, is that many today are childish enough to embrace a child as a leader of any agenda.

It isn't just the Left, either. Sure, it specializes in "pedophrasty," a neologism referring to the act of using children as ideological human shields to advance bad arguments, and a phenomenon giving us insufferable brats such as anti-gun activist David Hogg. But does the name Jonathan Krohn ring a bell?





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Krohn was a 13-year-old boy who [spoke](#) at the 2009 Conservative Political Action Conference trumpeting conservatism. Then there was Kyle Williams, who was [hired](#) as a weekly columnist by WND.com at age 12. There are other examples, too.

Williams dropped his column in 2005 and I don't know what became of him, and within four years Krohn [renounced his former beliefs](#) and went liberal. The latter resulted in some crowing and [mockery](#) from the Left, which in this case was well deserved.

Of course, it is cute and endearing seeing a boy whose voice hasn't even changed yet getting on a podium and quite articulately singing your ideological tune. Moreover, conservatives so often yearn to seem "cool" and "with it," causing them to sometimes glom on to "spokeschildren."

But as Krohn himself [said in 2012](#) about his ephemeral conservative glory, "I didn't really understand what I was talking about" and was just "repeating a lot of what I'd heard." Of course. He was a kid! (That said, I suspect he still doesn't know what he's talking about.)

There's a reason why children aren't afforded adult rights and mayn't vote, join the military, enter into contracts, etc. And there's a real problem when those too young to vote are fancied old enough to influence others' votes.

There's also a reason why only those at least 60 years old could be members of ancient Sparta's council of elders, the Gerousia. In addition, there's a reason why the Children's Crusade of 1212 occurred. Led by two young boys, one of whom was 12, it was an event in which thousands of unarmed children are said to have marched to the Holy Land convinced they could "convert Muslims with persuasion and divine intervention," as History.com [puts it](#). Ending in disaster, many of them wound up dead or enslaved.

Like Greta, they had faith; unlike Greta, they had faith in something substantial. But owing to the same lack of wisdom, like them Greta would lead others to disaster.

In fairness, the king of France refused to endorse the child crusaders' endeavor, and Pope Innocent III "praised their enthusiasm, but told them they were too young to go on a crusade and told them to go home," writes History.com.

Today, though, adults ranging from childish to Machiavellian say to Greta, "You go, girl!" *Time* writes on its Person of the Year cover, the "Power of Youth" — if only it recognized the power of Truth. That is to say, there's a largely unrecognized reason why we live in what many have called a "youth culture."

The young have many advantages over their elders, such as greater vigor, health, enthusiasm, energy, and mental acuity. In fact, just about the only strength recommending the old, when they're at their best, is greater wisdom. Oh, sure, "Wisdom doesn't always come with age; sometimes age just shows up all by itself," as the saying goes. But take people with the gift of prudence, let them mature for some decades, and you have sages for the ages.

Yet this being perhaps the long in the tooth's lone strength is why we today devalue the old: We devalue wisdom. Note that the word's definition — until dictionary writers lost their wisdom — was "knowledge of what is true or good." But today we live in a morally relativistic universe, a realm with favored mantras such as "That's your 'truth'; someone else's may be different" and "Don't impose your values on me!" And there can be no objective "good" if there is no God; nothing can be truly "true" if there is no Truth. What, though, is left when people no longer perceive Truth's existence and thus cannot use it as a yardstick for behavior? There then is just taste, preference, and what do we call the moment's



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consensus tastes?

Fashions.

And in embodying that treasured modern quality, being fashionable, is where the elderly cannot compete. It's also where the youth shine, as they're more likely to flaunt the fashions even when they're fallacies.

Whatever the case, following child crusaders didn't win the Holy Land, and it won't win preserved nature land. For the power of youth, unrestrained and unguided, can be the power to destroy.

Photo: Detail of [Time cover](#)



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