
Will Universities Comply with SCOTUS’ 6 – 3 Decision?

“In other words, the student must be treated based on his or her experiences as an individual – not on the basis of race. Many universities have for too long done just the opposite.... Our constitutional history does not tolerate that choice. The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and of the District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina are reversed. It is so ordered.”

– Supreme Court of the U.S. (SCOTUS) Opinion June 29, 2023, Cases 20-1199 and 21-707

Chief Justice Roberts, who wrote the Court’s Opinion, began his comments with this:

“In these cases we consider whether the admissions systems used by Harvard College and the University of North Carolina, two of the oldest institutions of higher learning in the U.S., are lawful under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.” Psst! They weren’t.

The Cases: In November 2014 Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. (SFAI) filed separate lawsuits against Harvard College and the University of North Carolina, arguing that their raced-based admissions programs violated Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. SCOTUS ruled for SFAI in both cases.

Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin under a program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance, as does the Fourteenth Amendment.

UNC, Harvard and the 14th Amendment: SCOTUS evaluated the admissions program of both Harvard College and the University of North Carolina under the Fourteenth Amendment.

The District Court in both cases held bench trials – Harvard’s lasted 15 days, N.C.’s lasted eight days. The Harvard Court concluded that Harvard’s admissions program was acceptable and the North Carolina Court said UNC’s admissions process was permitted under the Equal Protection Clause. Both decisions were reversed by the June 29, 2023 SCOTUS Opinion.

Statistics of UNC’s “Favored Student” Application Process¹

65 of 67 (97.01%) in-state black students were admitted to UNC (2016-2021)

Top-ten black: Over 80% of top-ten black applicants were admitted to UNC.

Top-ten non-black: Less than 70% of the top-ten white and Asian applicants were admitted.

Second-ten: 83% of black applicants were admitted.

Second-ten: 58% of white applicants and 48% of Asian applicants were admitted.

“The same is true of Harvard.”²

Harvard’s four-step admissions process adds “race” as a *plus* to each category “to make sure that Harvard does not have a dramatic drop-off in minority admissions from the prior class.”

“An African student in the fourth lowest academic decile (ten) has a higher chance of admission than an Asian American in the top-ten.... Black applicants in the top four academic deciles are between four and ten times more likely to be admitted to Harvard than Asian applicants in those deciles.” The last stage in the admissions process is, simply, called “lop-off.”

At “lop-off,” race is a “determinative” factor for admitting African and Hispanic applicants.

¹ UNC Admissions Data for 2016-2021

² SCOTUS Opinion 20-1199 and 21-707 (page 5)

Blocked! Biden's Forgiveness of Student Loans

SCOTUS Vote: 6 – 3, June 30, 2023

“People think that the President of the United States has the power for debt forgiveness. He does not. He can postpone. He can delay. But he does not have that power. That has to be an act of Congress.”

– Office of the Speaker of the House, Biden Administration, Press Conference, July 28, 2021

Although Congress introduced two resolutions “calling on the President...to take executive action to broadly cancel Federal student loan debt,” they never got a vote in Congress.

Congress authorized the first federal student loans in 1958 – up to a total of \$1,000 per student each year. Per a September 26, 2022 letter from the Congressional Budget Office to Members of Congress, outstanding federal student loans now total \$1.6 trillion to 43 million borrowers.

In 2022, the Department of Education Secretary created the first comprehensive student loan forgiveness program, claiming authority under the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003 (HEROES). Biden's plan would cancel roughly \$430 billion of federal student loan balances, completely erase the debts of 20 million borrowers and lower the median amount owed by the other 23 million from \$29,400 to \$13,600. Six states sued, arguing that the HEROES Act does not authorize the loan cancellation plan. *“We agree,”* said Chief Justice Roberts on page one, as he began writing the June 30, 2023 Opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Three types of student loans were established under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965: (a) Direct Loans made directly to students; (b) Perkins Loans, government-subsidized, low-interest loans made by schools to students with significant financial need; and (c) Federal Family Education Loans (FFELs), made by private lenders and guaranteed by the Federal Government. Although Perkins and FFELs are no longer issued, many remain outstanding.

The Education Act specifies in detail the terms and conditions of federal loans. It authorizes cancellation or reduced loans in certain limited circumstances, and forgiveness of loans to borrowers who are bankrupt or have died or have been “permanently and totally disabled.”

After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Congress extended the HEROES Act to include any war or national emergency, not just the September 11 attacks. That allowed the Secretary of Education to “waive or modify” laws or regulations of the student financial assistance programs under Title IV of the Education Act, “as the Secretary deems necessary in connection with a war or other military operation or *national emergency*.” A national emergency for purposes of the Act is “a national emergency declared by the President of the U.S.”

On March 13, 2020, President Trump declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national emergency. One week later Education Secretary DeVos suspended loan repayments and interest accrual for all federally held student loans. The next week Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, requiring DeVos to extend the suspensions. Before they expired, President Trump directed the Secretary, “In light of the national emergency,” to “effectuate appropriate waivers of and modifications to” retain the suspension until the end of 2020.

In August 2022, Biden's Department of Education announced his intent to reduce and eliminate student debts directly, although the Office of General Counsel issued a memo concluding that “the Secretary does not have statutory authority to provide blanket or mass cancellation, compromise, discharge, or forgiveness of student loan principal balances.”

Since SCOTUS has no enforcement power, compliance with the Opinion is not guaranteed.

A Cultural Clash, *Biblical Worldview vs. Other Worldviews*

“A worldview is a set of basic beliefs, assumptions, and values that arise from a narrative about the world and produces individual and group action that shapes human culture. This definition of worldview can be broken down into three parts: basic beliefs, a master story, and action. Every worldview you evaluate will contain these elements.”

– BJU Press Blog

Pollster Dr. George Barna and the Cultural Research Center in Arizona Christian University list seven major worldviews that influence most Americans: biblical theism, Eastern mysticism, Marxism, moralistic therapeutic deism, nihilism, postmodernism and secular humanism.

Dr. Barna, who has measured the worldview of American adults for over 30 years, began his annual *American Worldview Inventory (AWVI)* survey in 2020, revealing that 82% of American adults are in the “World Citizen” category; they may embrace a few biblical principles but generally believe and behave in ways apart from biblical teaching. The 82% in 2020 has fallen to 69% in 2023.

“Syncretism” is a term applied to the blending of personal preferences with ideas and applications from a variety of other worldviews.

Biblical Theism (on which the U.S. was founded) is the worldview based on biblical principles as the foundation for personal decision-making. The biblical worldview should be the standard of 100% of Bible-believing Christians. However, Dr. Barna’s 2017 report revealed that practicing Christians are influenced by four major worldviews – new spirituality, secularism, postmodernism and Marxism – in amazingly high percentages. Their brief explanations follow.

New Spirituality

61% of practicing Christians agree with ideas rooted in new spirituality. For instance, almost three in 10 (28%) practicing Christians strongly agree that “all people pray to the same god or spirit,” and 27% believe “meaning and purpose come from becoming one with all that is.” One-third of practicing Christians (32%) strongly agree with “if you do good, you will receive good and if you do bad, you will receive bad.” Overall, at least 61% of practicing Christians embrace at least one of the ideas rooted in new spirituality.

Secularism

29% of practicing Christians believe at least one of the secular statements and 20% believe ideas based on secularism. The secular worldview deems science as the way to explain life and promotes a rational and materialistic view of the world. “Working hard to earn as much as possible so you can make the most of life” is the goal of the larger category of secularists. Materialism is practiced by 20% of practicing Christians. Millennials (34%) and Gen-Xers (32%) are three times more likely to strongly agree with this than Boomers (10%) and Elders (11%). City residents (31%) are twice as likely to agree as rural and suburban (14%) residents.

Post Modernism

54% of practicing Christians embrace at least one postmodernist statement in Barna’s research. Postmodernism believes science can explain everything. It advances the idea that there is no such thing as objectivity. 19% of practicing Christians strongly agree that “no one can know for certain what meaning and purpose there is to life.” Almost 23% of practicing Christians strongly agree that “what is morally right or wrong depends on what an individual believes.”

They may defend objective truth, but accept this idea: Capital “T” truth leads to oppression.

Marxism

36% of practicing Christians accept ideas associated with Marxism, which, as a worldview, is the total opposite of the economics of capitalism. Though 0% of practicing Christians would vote for a communist candidate, 3% would vote for the socialist party, while some practicing Christians support key economic and political tenets of a Marxist worldview. 14% of practicing Christians strongly agree that government, not individuals, should control as much of the resources as necessary to ensure that everyone gets a fair share. 15% of practicing Christians believe significant government regulation is necessary for the good of society.

COVID's Effect on the Biblical Worldview

"The first national study of Americans' worldview since the COVID-19 lockdowns shows that the incidence of biblical worldview has fallen to a mere 4% - a drop of one-third from the 6% recorded just three years earlier."
– Dr. Tracy F. Munsil, February 28, 2023, AWVI 2023, Cultural Research Center, Arizona Christian University

Dr. Tracy F. Munsil paints a profoundly disturbing picture of practicing Christians in the U.S. Quoted immediately above is the first paragraph in his article entitled, "Biblical Worldview Among U.S. Adults Drops 33% Since Start of COVID-19." Many of the following statements are lifted verbatim from Dr. Munsil's article.

"The bulk of the American adult population – 82% – falls into the "World Citizen" category, described as people 'who may embrace a few biblical principles but generally believe and behave in ways that are distinct from biblical teaching.' According to the report this group has grown substantially from the 69% registered in 2020.

"The research also found a decline in biblical worldview in almost every geographic subgroup in America. The most striking shifts in biblical worldview levels were recorded among born-again Christians (down 6 percentage points) and people from households earning \$60,000 to \$100,000 (down 5 points) according to the report."

Munsil quoted Dr. Barna: "When you put the data in perspective, the biblical worldview is shuffling toward the edge of the cliff. As things stand today, biblical theism is much closer to extinction in America than it is to influencing the soul of the nation. The current incidence of adults with the biblical worldview is the lowest since I began measuring it in the early 1990s."

Study finds 37% of pastors have biblical worldview, Spiritual awakening "needed in our pulpits"

– *The Christian Post*, May 16, 2022 Headline

That article reported research released by the Cultural Research Center of Arizona Christian University, revealing 41% of senior pastors – compared to 28% of associate pastors – have a biblical worldview; only 13% of teaching pastors and 12% of children's and youth pastors have a biblical worldview. Executive pastors ranked lowest; 4% had a biblical worldview in 2022. Pastors without a biblical worldview may practice (unwittingly?) "Syncretism, the blending of ideas and application from various holistic worldviews" based on their personal preferences.

The article quoted Dr. Michael Youssef of the Church of the Apostles, Atlanta, GA, as follows: "We're seeing deconstruction, pastors watering down the Gospel, and other things going on. I realized this is a time for me, at the age of 73, to leave a legacy to the younger generation of pastors. And it's not really my legacy; it's the Word of God, it's the Apostle Paul's legacy."

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