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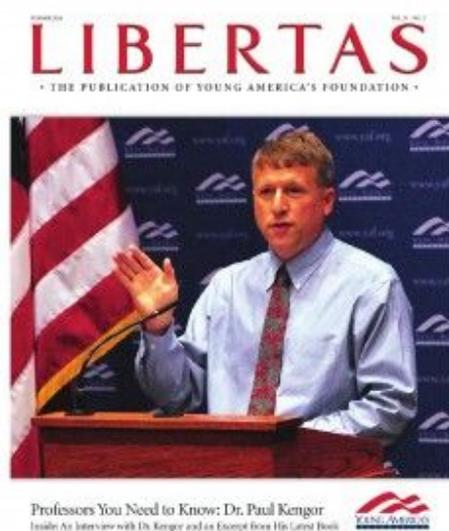
The “Takedown” of Family and Marriage: V&V Q&A with Dr. Paul Kengor on his latest book

Posted By *Paul G. Kengor* On June 8, 2015 @ 3:55 pm In Economics & Political Systems, Faith & Society, Feature, Media & Culture, Vision & Values Concise E-publications | [Comments Disabled](#)

Editor’s note: The following is part one of a series of Q&As with Professor Paul Kengor about his new book, [Takedown: From Communists to Progressives, How the Left Has Sabotaged Family and Marriage](#). If you would like to interview Dr. Kengor on his book, please respond to this email or contact him directly at pgkengor@gcc.edu.

V&V: Dr. Kengor, you’re an established bestselling author who has written over a dozen books on the Cold War, communism, socialism, conservatism, progressivism, as well as biographies of figures as diverse as Ronald Reagan and Hillary Clinton, why this topic in this book? Why wade into this Culture War issue?

Kengor: The answer is precisely because of my background in those areas. I know from decades of research, study, writing, and lecturing that the political left—first with communists, socialist utopians, and then on to secular “progressives”—have sought to reshape, redefine, and effectively take down natural-traditional-biblical family and marriage for two centuries. They’ve long looked to alter the so-called “nuclear family,” which they saw as an outright menace. I know that ideological past. I know how it fits into the present. Most people don’t, including those today who are willing to redefine the historic Western/Judeo-Christian conception of male-female marriage. The vast majority of those who are willing to do that have no idea of the deeper, darker ideological-historical forces long at work in this wider movement. They are signing on to something that, whether they know it or not—most do not—have important links to much older and more sinister attempts by the far left to redefine family and marriage.



“Professors You Need to Know”

V&V: And it was the far left that helped ready the soil?

Kengor: Absolutely. No question.

V&V: As you note, however, the likes of Marx and Engels and the many socialist utopians that you detail were not advocating homosexuality or certainly gay marriage.

Kengor: Of course, not. Sure, some of them, especially the cultural Marxists, were pushing sexual intercourse within the same gender, but anyone advocating something as culturally unthinkable as male-male or female-female “marriage,” in any time other than ours, would have been hauled off by authorities as dangerous public menaces. Marx and Engels were under surveillance by the governments in their countries simply for arguing for non-monogamous marriage. Even gay people weren’t thinking they’d soon live in a culture where not only was the mainstream population supportive of gay marriage but where liberals—in the name of “tolerance” and “diversity”—would be suing, picketing, boycotting, demonizing, and dehumanizing a Baptist grandma who begs them not to force her to make a cake for a gay wedding. Marx and Engels and even wild cultural Marxists like Herbert Marcuse and Wilhelm Reich—who broke down sexual barriers in areas like homosexuality and bisexuality—would be rolling over in their graves. Nonetheless, they would be thrilled to see that every-day (non-communist) Americans have finally found a vehicle to assist the long-time communist dream of “the abolition of the family.”

V&V: But you do emphasize one important source of clear commonality, from the early 19th to early 21st centuries, that unites these old left-wing extremists with modern liberals in their general willingness to redefine marriage and family. What is it?

Kengor: Yes, it is this: As modern liberalism/progressivism and the Democratic Party have become increasingly secular, often anti-religious, or certainly dismissive of traditional notions of morality, this striking willingness of individuals to redefine marriage has become possible. For communists, two centuries ago and still today, that requisite anti-religious secularism has been there all along. That disregard if not outright rejection of Christian ethics has brought all of these forces full circle in a joint willingness to permanently alter the historic Western/Christian understanding of male-female matrimony.

They share the fatal conceit first expressed in the Garden of Eden: *Ye shall be as gods.*



“Bogie and Bacall and Hollywood’s Communists”
(Photo by Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

V&V: What do you mean by that?

Kengor: They are their own determinants of truth, of morality, of what is right and wrong. They render unto themselves the right to determine everything from what is marriage to what is life. These things used to be the province of nature and nature's God. Now, each and every individual renders that right unto himself or herself. And when someone disagrees with them, they are often attacked with fire and brimstone.

V&V: Clearly, you're coming at this from a religious perspective.

Kengor: My position is 100 percent consistent with my faith. But I come at this issue not only spiritually but with numerous other influences that have shaped society's position on marriage and family for, oh, several thousand years. It has long been common sense and experience that the best thing for a society and for children is a home with a mother and father. Pope Francis says that every child has a "right" to a mother and father. To be sure, not all children will get that. But when they don't, it hasn't been because the culture and state are creating a new form of "marriage" that is motherless or fatherless. A fatherless or motherless home has never been what society has strived for as a matter of deliberate policy. That is now changing with this fanatical, no-second-thoughts push for gay marriage.

V&V: We're going to pick up this conversation in our second interview, but tell readers what you describe as the "ultimate kicker" in this rapid willingness to redefine what you call "the laws of nature and nature's God," because it really sums up what you've said here today.

Kengor: It's really a rather stunning development: The radical left could never have achieved this ultimate takedown of marriage without the larger American public's increasingly broad acceptance of gay marriage. The public has been the indispensable handmaiden to the radical left's ability to at long last redefine marriage and the family. That is a realization that ought to give the public pause.

V&V: One additional stunning development, a crucial point we'll pick up in the next interview. You note that today's communist movement is "gung ho" for gay marriage.

Kengor: That's correct. *People's World*, the flagship publication of Communist Party USA (CPUSA), is constantly pushing gay marriage. As I write, it has posts celebrating "LGBT" Pride Month. You can see this at the CPUSA website, in speeches of CPUSA leaders, and even in places like the once militantly anti-gay Cuba. This is a big deal. CPUSA once expelled gays like Harry Hay. Not anymore. Why such a shift? A major reason is that communists are anti-tradition, anti-God, anti-family, anti-marriage, and all about fundamentally transforming society. They see same-sex marriage as a major opportunity.

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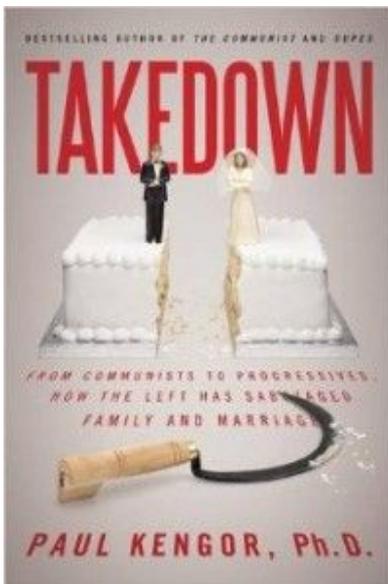
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The “Takedown” of Family and Marriage Part Two: V&V Q&A with Dr. Paul Kengor

Posted By *Paul G. Kengor* On June 17, 2015 @ 10:43 am In Economics & Political Systems, Faith & Society, Feature, Media & Culture, Vision & Values Concise E-publications | [Comments Disabled](#)

V&V: Dr. Kengor, picking up from our [previous interview](#) on your new book, *[Takedown: From Communists to Progressives, How the Left Has Sabotaged Family and Marriage](#)*,” briefly recap your thesis for us.



In case you missed it ... Part One of the Q&A

Kengor: Sure. *Takedown* details the far left’s quest to redefine, and in some cases outright abolish, the traditional family and marriage from the 1800s to today. It notes that gay marriage is serving as a Trojan horse for the far left to secure the takedown of marriage it has long wanted, and countless everyday Americans are oblivious to these older, deeper, destructive forces long at work. The typical gay-marriage advocate is not aware of this much older and more sinister ideological history.

V&V: What do you say to those who dispute your thesis?

Kengor: Well, I hope this doesn’t sound arrogant, but it’s not something that is disputable. Look, the facts are very simple: for some two centuries, extremist elements, from radical socialist utopians to communists to secular progressives, have sought to redefine and reshape and fundamentally transform the natural, traditional, Biblical, nuclear family. In gay marriage, they finally have a vehicle with mainstream public support to enable that redefinition, that reshaping, that fundamental transformation. There’s no disputing that. People may not like to hear it. I don’t like it either. But it’s not a matter of dispute.

V&V: So, which side are the bad actors, or the ones acting in bad faith?

Kengor: Again, it isn't usually gay Americans or the typical millennial stumping for gay marriage; they're motivated by what they believe are beneficent and entirely un-sinister forces: their notions of love, freedom, tolerance, "equality." I get that. I do not agree with their applications, but I fully understand that (for most of them) their intentions are not malicious. They do not see themselves as working on the same page as communists or whatever other type of left-wing radicals. And indeed, this isn't a willful conspiracy. Nonetheless, the far left could care less how the rest of the culture gets there, with whatever slogans or well-intended notions, so long as it gets there.

V&V: You mention in "Takedown" having received an important email about a year ago from someone responding to an article you did on gay marriage. He was once part of the "gay left." Tell us what he said and how it motivated you.

Kengor: He noted that most gay people, who are either not especially political or certainly nowhere near the extreme left, have no idea how their gay-marriage advocacy fits and fuels the far left's anti-family agenda, and specifically its longtime takedown strategy aimed at the nuclear family. He is exactly right, and inspired me to begin collecting the material that became this book. Most of the gay people I have known are Republicans, not leftists. Generally, I have always had no problem dialoguing with them, though it is now getting more difficult, as liberals are doing their best to convince gays that I, as a conservative, hate them. It's an uncharitable smear, based on great crudeness and ignorance, which utterly misunderstands conservatism.

(Click here for Dr. Kengor's piece on [the conservative position on gay marriage](#).)

That kind of nasty intolerance by liberals is terribly divisive, destroying real dialogue and civil debate.

But as for gay people, even when they're socially liberal—and, even then, mainly on matters like gay rights—the gay people I've met have been economic conservatives, not to mention pro-life on abortion, which I always especially appreciated. But in signing on the dotted line for gay marriage, they have, whether they realize it or not (again, most do not), enlisted in the radical left's unyielding centuries-old attempt to redefine the family.

V&V: So, you believe that unlike the older leftist extremists who sought to deliberately undermine the traditional family, the vast majority of today's proponents of same-sex marriage have friendly motives?

Kengor: Yes, I think that's largely true for the typical supporter of same-sex marriage—though there are, admittedly, some supporters who candidly admit that they're looking to take down marriage. They're very open about it. I quote them in the book.

V&V: You write that you, as a Christian, have no right to redefine marriage.

Kengor: I believe that marriage is not ours to redefine. Christians like myself believe that creating our own definition of marriage would blaspheme God, who "created them male and female." What God joined together man cannot tear asunder. That's in Genesis (Old Testament) and Matthew (Jesus himself speaking in the New Testament). And beyond that, words have meanings. A cat is a cat, a dog is a dog, a tree is a tree, and marriage is marriage. If gay-marriage advocates would like, they can call their new spousal arrangements something else, but I personally and religiously cannot concede to join them in designing new configurations of "marriage." To me and billions before me, marriage is a male-female creation determined by nature and nature's God.

V&V: In fact, in the previous interview, you said that those eager to redefine marriage were acting as their own gods, with their own definitions of morality, of right and wrong, of marriage.

Kengor: Correct. In my faith tradition, marriage was instituted as a male-female bond by Christ and is literally sacramental. It would be downright heretical to arrogate unto myself the extraordinary ability to define what is marriage. Liberals can happily take up that task to themselves, but I will not. I already have enough to answer to

God for. It's funny, liberals accuse same-sex marriage opponents of arrogance. That's hardly the case. We have humbled ourselves to an absolute Creator's position that we believe we have no right to change.



Gay marriage, bigotry and the public interest.

V&V: Let's get back to your historical treatment. Give us the three main points that you want people to take away from "[Takedown](#)."

Kengor: First, people need to understand that, for two centuries, the far left—from communists to socialists to various self-styled "progressives"—have sought to reorder the natural-traditional-biblical understanding of family and marriage. From the likes of Marx and Engels to Herbert Marcuse, Kate Millett, Betty Friedan, the Bolsheviks, the Frankfurt School of cultural Marxists, to a host of 1960s radicals and many others still, they created their own definitions of marriage, family, parenting, education, sexuality, even gender. They spoke openly and candidly of what some called "abolition of the family." In fact, those are the exact words of Marx and Engels in the "Communist Manifesto." Marx once wrote to Engels, "Blessed is he who has no family."

Second, for the first time ever, the far left has finally found a vehicle to enable this long-sought takedown of family and marriage: gay marriage. This 21st century novelty is utterly without precedent in the ancient sweep of Western/Judeo-Christian history. Though communists, socialists, and even early progressives could have never conceived of the idea of same-sex marriage, they are now firmly on-board for this fundamental transformation of marriage and family. Amazingly, groups like Communist Party USA, its flagship publication "People's World," and even Fidel Castro's Cuba—once militantly anti-gay—now support gay marriage.

And third, the American mainstream and even the gay community itself have no idea that their support of same-sex marriage actually enables the far left to achieve this takedown. Most chillingly, their support of gay marriage also allows the far left to successfully attack religion—its long-reviled foe—in a way it never thought possible with such wide public acceptance.

V&V: That part is indeed chilling, and a major part of your book. You give numerous examples of how the far left has used these ideas on remolding family and marriage as a tool to hammer religion. Dr. Kengor, perhaps we can pick up with that in the next interview?

Kengor: Let's do that.

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