



**SPECIAL
SUBSECTION**

Comment on The Target Article: Social Miasm Theory

Stanley Krippner
sckrippner@gmail.com

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“Suppression” is widespread in the modern world. As Stephinity Salazar points out in this brilliant target article, it is the source of miasma, or chronic dysfunction, in many aspects of both personal and social life. For decades, I have observed the attempts of mainstream medicine to denigrate the value of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy and, when this was no longer viable, to squeeze it into the Procrustean Bed of the medical model instead of giving it the holistic perspective it deserves. Effective use of psilocybin and similar substances needs to take account of substance, set, and setting – something discovered by Indigenous practitioners millennia ago. The same can be said for other forms of “alternative” treatments, such as hypnosis, as their utility is finally being acknowledged (Krippner, 1976, 1997).

But, suppression is not limited to Big Pharma; it can also be seen in the manipulations of Big Ag, Big Oil, Big Tech, and other powerful conglomerates. Sometimes overlooked is Big Faith, but the contemporary scene in the United States makes this the critical focus of this essay. The most visible example (but not the only one) of Big Faith is “Christian Nationalism.” It does not represent mainstream Christianity but is in direct violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits the establishment of a state religion or the favoring of one religion over another. However, repression by Big Faith has attempted to circumvent the Constitution, and the conflict is ongoing.

In listing examples of the encroachment of Big Faith on the Second Amendment, one needs to realize that the situation is fluid, with developments constantly occurring on various sides of the issue. For example, some advocates of Christian Nationalism deny that their movement is racist or bigoted but insist that it is the only viable alternative to secularism (the political ideology that separates church and state), which they see as a threat to Western civilization (Wolfe, 2022). Nonetheless, the following examples illustrate the issues characteristic of Big Faith, not only those fired by Christian nationalism, but similar movements as well.

In December 2024, Liz Hayes summarized successful efforts to counter Big Faith by Americans United, a non-partisan, non-denominational advocacy and education group:

- In June 2024, a district court blocked a recently passed Louisiana law that required permanent posting of the Ten Commandments in all public schools.
- In the November 2024 elections, voters in Missouri voted to protect abortion rights; the proposed total abortion ban had been opposed by groups declaring it a violation of church and state separation. Abortion is still forbidden after “fetus viability,” and Big Faith groups continue to exert pressure for a total ban.



- In June 2024, the Oklahoma Supreme Court barred St. Isidore of Seville, a Catholic virtual school, from operating what would have been the nation's first religious public chartered school. The school immediately disputed the issue and filed petitions with the United States Supreme Court.
- Also in June 2024, protestors secured a victory for an atheist from Colorado whose parole officer had sent him back to jail after he refused to take part in Christian worship services and other religious activities.
- In May 2024, the Tennessee Supreme Court allowed charges filed by a couple to proceed against a foster care agency that denied them services because they were Jewish.

Another tabulation was prepared by Dierenfield (2024), who focused on the state of Minnesota, where the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union ended state/church infringements and became a model for the rest of the nation. The practices terminated included:

- teacher-led prayers in public schools
- reading from the King James Bible in school classrooms
- holding church night services during Christmas in public schools
- classroom lectures by Youth for Christ representatives
- Bible distribution by Gideon's International
- tuition reimbursement for parents sending their children to parochial schools
- prohibition of the practice in prisons where state governments favored Christian and Jewish religious groups over Native American religious ceremonies that were held in the basement boxing ring at inconvenient times, and
- the state-supported kidnapping by parents of their adult children to "deprogram" them from their affiliation with so-called "cults."

Wiesenfeld noted that there were other forces at work, including a more diverse population in the state and the increased secularization of mainstream religious groups, as well as allies from other organizations supporting church/state boundaries. Nonetheless, he gave credit to the "indispensable role" played by civil liberties activists.

Proponents of Big Faith acknowledge Christianity's roots in Judaism and hope to convert Jews to their belief system. Other religions such as Islam are often branded "demonic," and their members would be regulated as second-class citizens. Big Faith proponents are making plans for the distant future, believing that they will emerge victorious after stripping away protection for sexual minorities as well as women's rights such as abortion. They hold that public schools are too secular; hence the U.S. Department of Education should be abolished.

Pertinent to this discussion is the Christian Nationalists' *God Bless the USA King James Bible* that includes the U.S. Constitution, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Bill of Rights. In 2024, a video was released in which Pastor Loran Livingstone, an evangelical Christian leader of the Central Church of Charlotte, North Carolina, called it a "political Bible." Titled "The Sermon the Church Needed," the book led Pastor Livingstone to state, "Don't be telling me that I have a spiritual responsibility to vote. My real citizenship is in Heaven." The sermon came as a shock to many Christian Nationalists, but it was praised by many conservative and liberal Christian clerics, and one podcaster called Livingstone a "modern day John the Baptist" (Arnold, 2025).

Another example of the denial of church/state separation occurred on January 14, 2025, during the opening session of the Texas State Assembly. The Republican Chair of the Texas State Assembly declared church/state separation "a myth," as pastors and worshippers gathered in a Capitol meeting room to prepare for "spiritual war" and to pray that legislators be protected from "demonic forces." A gospel band played and sang, as many worshippers went to the walls to conduct a "laying on of hands" conferring blessings on the proceedings (Downen, 2025).

Proponents of Big Faith insist that Christians and Christianity founded the United States. However, most of the founders, such as Washington, Franklin, Madison, and Monroe, were Deists who believed in reason as their guiding force. As Deists, they followed the teachings of Jesus, but felt that he was human, not divine. They insisted on neutrality regarding religion, writing it into the founding documents. Thomas Jefferson, a Deist, was the co-author of the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom, which became the basis for the First Amendment, specifying that there would be no government support of religion and that the government would not take away citizens' rights because of their religion (Ricento, 2025).

CONCLUSION

The target article posits that, when society exists in harmony with the environment, humanity will live mellifluously within society. The universe is one giant open system; all parts are connected, and a global civilization that open-sources its sciences and offers transparency in its technologies will eliminate the need for suppression and secret agendas. This will shift humanity out of a social miasmatic state of enslavement and into a more sovereign, sophrosyne state of being. This statement is more in accord with the founders of the United States than it is with Christian Nationalism and its allies.

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