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The Crisis in K-12 Education in America's Religious Day Schools:

The Effects of Wokeism on Jewish
and Catholic Day Schools



The Crisis in K-12 Education in America's Religious Day Schools

A White Paper on

the Effects of Wokeism on Jewish and Catholic Day Schools

by

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K-12 Education today in American public schools is in the hands of educators and administrators indoctrinated in ideologies which have overturned the basic precepts upon which our Constitutional Republic was founded. States incorporate these ideologies in their Standards and publishers include them in their textbooks. Incorporated in these ideologies and their curricula, which continue to wreak havoc on our K-12 education system, are: Black Lives Matter (BLM), Critical Race Theory (CRT), Critical Ethnic Studies (CES), Critical Liberated Ethnic Studies (CLES) and the newly developed Critical Zionist Studies. There are two offshoots of the CRT ideology which are now prevalent throughout K-12 education and academic professions as a whole: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Taken as a composite, these ideologies indoctrinate our children and our society with core anti-Americanism, anti-Semitism, anti-Israelism, and Marxism. BLM, CRT, and DEI present America as a racist, slave Nation which supports systemic racism and white privilege.

All of these ideologies and their precepts are identified as essential tenets of Wokeism. American education, legal, professional, military, and medical systems are now "Wokist" in intent and practice. What then is Wokeism? How and why does it support and implement Marxism? How is Wokeism a product of CRT? Why is Wokeism considered the "new American religion"? How does this impact on the American Religious Day School system?

The expression or call to “stay woke” was virtually unknown in the “White” American community before 2014. Until then “stay woke”, meant in the “Black” American community to stay alert to the deceptions of individuals in society in general and in the White society in particular. At some point in time, after 2014, Wokeness evolved and became Wokeism and American society and America itself changed.

The earliest known examples of Wokeness as a concept revolve around the idea of Black consciousness “waking up” to a new reality or activist framework and dates back to the early 20th century. In 1923, a collection of observations and ideas, by Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican philosopher and social activist, included a global call to Black people to become more socially and politically conscious. A few years later, the phrase “stay woke” turned up in a 1938 protest song “Scottsboro Boys,” by Blues musician Huddie Ledbetter, known as Lead Belly. The song described the 1931 tale of a group of nine Black teenagers in Scottsboro, Arkansas, who were accused of raping two white women. Lead Belly used “stay woke” in explicit association with the need of Black Americans to be aware of racially motivated threats and the potential dangers of white America.

With the police killing of Michael Brown, in Ferguson, MO in 2014, “stay woke” became a slogan of the BLM activists, who used it to warn about police brutality and unjust police tactics against Blacks.¹ It was soon to become a guiding force in the K-12 BLM Wokist School Curriculum. This Black activist slogan was co-opted into what has developed into a war of races and cultures. As some ethnically diverse scholars and journalists interpret this, in the West the term “Woke” has become a lightning rod on both the Left and the Right – a symbol of a modern culture war.²

Wokeness, or the awareness of unfairness in the treatment of others, is not dangerous in its original intent. Inasmuch as the concept of Woke came from the language and the life experience of the American Blacks, it really belonged to a specific “heads-up” vocabulary: an important forewarning to the Black

¹ <https://www.vox.com/culture/21437879/stay-woke-wokeness-history-origin-evolution-controversy>

² <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/6/24/what-is-woke-culture-and-why-has-it-become-so-toxic>

community. As applicable to society, it could help to create a culture in which the marginalized receive empathy.

Wokeness, the state of “staying woke”, evolved into Wokeism, the new revisionist political and social reality. In the years following Brown’s death, “Woke and Wokeism” emerged as the summation of Leftist political ideology, centered on Social Justice Politics and Critical Race Theory. On the Left, to be “Woke” means to identify as a staunch social justice advocate, who is focused on contemporary political concerns. It is not a reminder to Black Americans to watch out for police brutality and dangers within society. Wokeness is made potent and therefore deadly by its root idea of justice with which no one can disagree. It is therefore uncontrollable since its proponents are only willing to accept one extremist position. Its original, politically charged usage is one of always being on the lookout for systemic injustice and from there, systemic racism.

To be crystal clear, none of these ideas has anything to do with the idea of demanding that Black people “stay woke” against police brutality. The renewed “activism” against police brutality, following the death in 2020 of George Floyd by police, did nothing to influence how terms like “woke” and “wokeness” are used **outside** of the Black Lives Matter community.³

On the political Left, Wokeness shifted into *Wokeism*—a system of thought and behavior characterized by intolerance, policing the speech of others, and proving one’s own superiority by denouncing others.⁴

Some Basic Definitions of Wokeism:

Wokeism is a term used to describe the promotion of liberal progressive ideology and policy as an expression of sensitivity to systemic injustices and prejudices. *Dictionary.com*

It is often used in a derogatory manner to describe the behavior and attitudes of people who are sensitive to social and political injustice. *Collins English Dictionary*

Some describe wokeism as the ideology of America's contemporary totalitarian left, with four intellectual pillars: anti-white racism, rejection of traditional morality, environmentalism, and intense hostility toward Christian religion. *knightstemplarorder.com*

³ Ibid

⁴ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/feeling-our-way/202108/the-psychology-wokeism>

Wokeism originated from Critical Theory and has Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) as offshoots. What exactly is Critical Theory and how could it spawn such a clearly Marxist ideology? What follows here is one of the best definitions which I have seen.

Critical theory, Marxist-inspired movement in social and political philosophy originally associated with the work of the Frankfurt School. Drawing particularly on the thought of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud, critical theorists maintain that a primary goal of philosophy is to understand and to help overcome the social structures through which people are dominated and oppressed. Believing that science, like other forms of knowledge, has been used as an instrument of oppression, they caution against a blind faith in scientific progress, arguing that scientific knowledge must not be pursued as an end in itself without reference to the goal of human emancipation. Since the 1970s, critical theory has been immensely influential in the study of history, law, literature, and the social sciences.⁵

Wokeism challenges all existing power structures, including those of revealed religions, and seeks to dismantle “universal truths”. Wokeism presents America as rife with racial injustice, gender discrimination and religious subjugation, all of which Wokeism seeks to destroy and replace with its own ideology. The followers of Wokeism demand power for those whom they deem are powerless, based on a racial or ethnic class. They require all of society to abolish traditional gender norms of males and females and assert that gender is a spectrum which the individual can self-determine. It claims its own interpretation of justice, righteousness, sin, and judgment.⁶ It is undeniably Marxist.

From racism against People of Color (POCs), Wokeism’s ideology expanded to include injustices of any type against all identity groups and classes.

“This came from a sociological theory called intersectionality, which holds that society is a multi-layered hierarchy of majority oppressors and minority oppressed on the basis of identities like race, religion, gender and sexual orientation. At the top are the most privileged—the heterosexual man (also white and Christian in the American context). Below him would be a matrix of females, coloured people,

⁵[Critical theory | Definition & Facts | Britannica](#)

⁶ [Wokeism is far more dangerous than secularism | Opinion News \(christianpost.com\)](#)

LGBTQs, those of minority religions, etcetera. The lower one would be in the hierarchy, the greater is the person's claim to a corrective from society. It was an academic theory related to feminism in the late 1980s that gradually made its way out of universities to be conjoined with the Woke awakening of social media.⁷

This now brings us to the final question before we turn to the subject of this White Paper: The Crisis in K-12 Education in America's Religious Day Schools: the Effects of Wokeism on Jewish and Catholic Day Schools. How did a Marxist-born ideology enter the field of K-12 Religious Education?

In a 2020 an article written by Max Funk was published by Converge Media This article, *Wokeism – The New Religion of the West*, opened the door to understanding how American Religious Day Schools were targeted and fell victim to the Wokist Ideology. K-12 Religious Day Schools in America differ from Public Schools in one way: in addition to a standard K-12 English Studies Curriculum, there is a K-12 Religious Studies Curriculum which teaches and enhances each child's own religious education. It does not proselytize. It reaffirms the study and practice of the religion of the child. Wokeism espouses Marxism, which is a "Godless" ideology. Wokeism has two areas of education to impact and then to conquer: secular studies and religious. It infects both with CRT, DEI, and SEL and creates what I call revisionist secular and revisionist religious education. It is Max Funk's article which best summarizes the process.⁸

"There are many names for what we currently find ourselves in; wokeness, political correctness, and cancel culture are some of them, but these only encapsulate a portion of the phenomenon. Cultural Marxism, neo-marxism, social justice, identity politics, and Critical Theory are broader descriptors. We would like to use a term that adequately captures the religiosity of the movement: wokeism.

Wokeism is a religion. Although it has not been organized into any formal religious structure, it has all the functions of religious doctrine. It has a unique epistemology (theory of knowledge), an evaluation of the human condition, and a redemption narrative.

⁷ [A Brief History of Wokeism - Open The Magazine](#)

⁸ [Wokeism – The New Religion of The West - Converge Media](#)

Why call wokeism a new religion? The fact is that the rise of secular humanism over the past 70 years created a religion-shaped hole in our culture. Secularism, for all of its cultural dominance, failed to offer a robust philosophy of meaning and purpose, nor did it provide any moral framework for how to act within the world besides “be a good person because the alternative is undesirable for everyone.” Alternatively, wokeism has developed its view of reality with its own set of values and narratives. From the ashes of secular humanism, a new civil religion rises.

Wokeism offers everything that secularism failed to provide, and has quickly filled the God-shaped hole in our culture. It purports its version of truth, justice, righteousness, sin, and judgement. It provides its adherents meaning, with its meta-narrative of societal conflict, power struggle and the struggle for redemptive freedom. The tearing down those oppressive power structures helps give purpose to the individual and the collective white fragility...There is a strong communal aspect, and people feel like they are part of something greater than themselves.”

With this information at hand, we now enter into an examination of American Jewish Day Schools and then Catholic Day Schools to understand just how Wokeism has impacted both the secular and religious studies.

Chapter Two The Crisis in Jewish Day Schools

It is an undeniable fact that the American K-12 Public School System is in trouble. It has been infected by ideologies antithetical to the principles which our Founding Fathers believed, adhered to, and included within the framework of our Constitution. These are the same ideologies which have as their objectives the undermining of our Constitution, the rise of Shariah Law, the overthrow of our Constitutional Republic, the establishment of Marxism, and the destruction of the Judeo-Christian Foundation, with Wokism replacing it as the new American religion.

What then are these ideologies? Black Lives Matter (BLM), Critical Race Theory (CRT), Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI), Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Critical Ethnic Studies (CES). What do they teach? Anti-Americanism; Anti-Semitism; anti-American White Privilege; anti-American Systemic Racism; anti-Israelism; anti-Zionism. What do they indoctrinate? Wokeism; Atheism; Marxism.

The question before us at this time is when and how did these ideologies and their curricula become a part of the Jewish Day School System. The answer lies within the history of Jewish Schools in America and their evolution into a Jewish Day School System.

In America, Jewish education started small with the teaching of the traditions of Judaism. It developed as an answer to the needs of Jewish immigrants in this country for both synagogues in which to pray and schools in which to educate their children. The small Sephardic Community, which came to New York prior to the American Revolution, educated their children privately in their own homes or later paid for them to attend private schools. What must be understood is that during the Colonial Period and throughout the early 19th century, Jewish education was not considered a Jewish communal responsibility. It was the responsibility of the parents to provide a Jewish education to their children. Synagogues became the logical location for the establishment of Jewish Day Schools. However, they were not called Jewish Day Schools. They were called Hebrew Schools. They were afternoon supplementary religious education, afternoon meaning after the end of the regular American public school day. The public schools were 5 days a week, usually 9AM to 3 PM. Hebrew School usually met twice a week, for 2-3 hours, after the conclusion of the Public School day.

The first official school under synagogue auspices was established in 1731, in New York City, at Shearith Israel, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue. Focusing on Hebrew studies, the school, although attached to the synagogue, operated as a

separate entity with its own fees to pay for teachers, materials, etc. In 1755, Shearith Israel expanded to include secular subjects, such as English composition. With the establishment of a public school system in New York, Shearith Israel operated a religious school for children, endowed in 1802 by a bequest from Meyer Polonies. This school, still bearing the Polonies name, continues to provide supplementary Jewish education to children of the community to this day.⁹

In the Colonial period, the small Sephardic community established their first private school; the German-Jewish community established their congregational schools in the mid-19th century; the community-based Talmud Torah schools were established in the early 20th century to serve the Eastern European immigrants. It is important to understand that these experiments in Jewish education attempted to parallel and complement the American educational system and not to replace it. Their purpose was to create lasting institutions which would ensure Jewish life as a vital force for the next generation. Jewish education in America has been used both for Americanization as well as for the preservation of European Jewish culture and tradition. However, it is also true that Jewish education has been the source of controversy and debate over the relationship between religious and secular education .¹⁰

In early modern America, Jewish Day Schools were the exception. They were few in number, not because of expense but because they were frowned upon by most American Jews. This disdain for Jewish Day Schools was not rooted in secularization. Many were “traditional” Jews, observant according to their beliefs. What then created this dislike? It is easy to explain and to understand. Basically, the Jewish community put its faith in the Public School, an institution that “not only turns out men. It makes the American people,” or so trumpeted *The New York Times* in 1894. The Public School, not the Jewish Day School, was American Jewry’s choice. “There is no greater friend of the American Public School than the Jew,” Rabbi Abraham Simon of Washington Hebrew Congregation enthusiastically

⁹ [Congregational History | Congregation Shearith Israel- Manhattan Orthodox Synagogue](#)

¹⁰ [History of Jewish Schooling in America | My Jewish Learning](#)

noted a few years later. “There is none more eager to grasp its opportunities and none more grateful for its privileges”.¹¹

It should not be forgotten that America’s Jews were immigrants, who understood that the Public School was both the entry to modernization and the price which they had to pay to become full-fledged Americans. Where else would their children learn their “ABCs” along with what Rabbi Simon catalogued as “honor and honesty, chivalry and cleanliness, humaneness and justice, personal purity and social service”?¹²

In spite of the respect for their tradition on the part of new immigrant families, most parents wanted their children to learn the language, traditions and values of their new home. Determined to acculturate, these multi-generational immigrant Jews had to overlook the reality that what Americanization demanded of them was often heavy-handed, cruel, insensitive, and even anti-Semitic. Then again, they had little choice. Where the Public School spoke of freedom, a Jewish parochial school was reminiscent of the ghetto, or perhaps of religious sectarianism. By the late 19th century, a growing number of German Jews began to believe that Jewish Day schools would create an unhealthy division between Jewish and Gentile communities at a time when Central European immigrants and their children were themselves becoming part of the American mainstream. American culture and integrated schooling were embraced as a tool of socialization.

Gradually, Jewish Day School education became an acceptable and then explainable option. By the beginning of World War I, only one-quarter of school-aged children received any Jewish education in New York City. The realization among rabbis and traditional Jewish parents that barely any traditional or practicing Jews were emerging from the prevailing system, in which Jewish education took second place to public school education, helped to fuel this shift in viewpoint. Jewish identity was falling victim to the public school system, where the so-called “separation of Church and State” did little to increase the Jewish comfort level. In addition, the American concepts of cultural pluralism and ethnic diversity were appealing to those who sought acculturation, but not assimilation. A philosophy which made room for heritage, tradition and custom in the

¹¹ [History of Jewish Schooling in America | My Jewish Learning](#)

¹² Ibid.

classroom of the same school where English studies were taught, made the Jewish Day School feasible and doable.¹³ It also made the Jewish Day School vulnerable to the changing politics and ideologies of the parents and of the teachers.

Jewish education required an infusion of modernization and new blood. It came in the person of Samson Benderly, who became professionally committed to Jewish education while studying medicine in Baltimore. In the 1920s, Benderly came to New York to develop and lead the new Bureau of Jewish Education. As its main goal, the Bureau sought to unite the city's Jewish population by joining traditional Jewish studies to contemporary American ideals. Benderly encouraged Jewish educators to view the process of Americanization as compatible with building a viable Jewish culture in the United States. At the same time as Louis Brandeis began to present Zionism as fundamentally aligned with American values, the pioneers of modern Jewish education used much of the same rhetoric to promote Jewish education as blending the best of American and traditional Jewish thought and practice.¹⁴

Between 1917 and 1939, American Jews established 23 such institutions in the greater New York metropolitan area alone. Political turmoil abroad also helped to transform the Jewish Day School into a viable alternative to the Public School. A critical mass of European Jewish families long familiar with and receptive to sectarian forms of education, arrived on American shores, prepared to acculturate but not to assimilate. Coinciding with the arrival of these new immigrants, the field of Jewish education started to come into its own, introducing a new generation of "professional" Jewish educators. These teachers "in appearance, speech and training exemplify the bearing of an American Jewish gentleman," proudly related Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein (1902-1979), the founder of the Upper East Side Jewish Day School, known initially as the Ramaz Academy, who made a point of hiring them.¹⁵ At the same time as the United States struggled to recover from the Great Depression and the Nazi Movement flourished in Yorkville, NY, Rabbi Lookstein sought to establish a Jewish Day School. He first broached the subject to a circle of close friends at a July Fourth

¹³ <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/community/articles/the-rise-of-jewish-day-schools>

¹⁴ [History of Jewish Schooling in America | My Jewish Learning](#)

¹⁵ [Our History - The Ramaz School](#)

weekend in 1936. He spoke about what he saw as a tremendous void in Jewish education. He shared his vision of a new type of day school with a different philosophy of education -- one which demonstrated a better understanding of a Jewish child growing up in the free and open society of the United States of America.¹⁶

During the year 1937, while pursuing his goal of establishing the Ramaz Academy, Rabbi Lookstein faced a number of obstacles, among which was the objection to the Orthodoxy of his Jewish educational objectives. In the 1930's, many people in that area of NY did not believe in a religious yeshivah education. Most were traditionally observant, i.e. keeping Kashrut and observing Shabbat, but very few understood the concept of a religious school. In the yeshivot of that time, there was a strict separation between Jewish and secular learning. He envisioned a school with a program of religious studies, combined or integrated with general studies--a school in which the culture of America would blend with the heritage of Judaism. Rabbi Lookstein wanted a Jewish Day School in which there would not be an intellectual or emotional clash between being a Jew and an American.

Indeed, from its well-mannered faculty and striking name to its cultivation of a “wholesome and integrated American Jewish personality,” everything about the Ramaz Academy spoke of modernity. Inside Ramaz’s well-maintained facility, happy American Jewish boys and girls thrived in an atmosphere where Judaism and Americanism were compatible and complementary.¹⁷

In the years which followed, especially after the Shoah and the rise of the State of Israel, Jewish Day Schools gained in both number and esteem. Once marginalized and derided, they came to be seen, in the words of the *Orthodox Union*, as the “most exciting and hopeful phenomenon in Jewish life in America.”¹⁸

The best definition of the essence and aim of Jewish Day School education is to be found in the following quote. It is also the best definition against which we will now examine and measure what has happened to Jewish Day School education under the impact of Wokism.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/community/articles/the-rise-of-jewish-day-schools>

The spirit and purpose of Jewish education will always reflect how Jews see their place in human history. If Jews and Judaism are insignificant—a parochial people with peculiar rituals and outdated ideas—then Jewish learning will sadly wither from disinterest. If Jewish survival is at stake—as in the early days of the modern Zionist movement—young Jews will rightly train first as farmers, workers, and soldiers. If Jews are proud but permanent outsiders—political and spiritual exiles from a corrupt world that rejects them—then Jewish schools will aim primarily to shield young Jews from the heresies of non-Jewish culture in the name of preserving our transcendent Jewish way of life from generation to generation. Yet if Jews and Judaism are truly summoned to be “a light unto the nations”—a moral and metaphysical Menorah to the world—then the purpose of Jewish education is to kindle that light.¹⁹

From being an immigrant Jewish community, many of whom had survived pogroms, wars, discrimination, etc. and had come to the United States to seek freedom, they grew into a strong American Jewish Community, refined and expanded their American identity, and reestablished their Jewish identity. The growth of Jewish Day Schools can be traced to the belief among many Jewish families, born and educated in America, that it was no longer necessary to send their children to public school to acculturate them as Americans. These parents wanted an American Jewish educational system for their children because they wanted to imbue them with Jewish thought and values and American Constitutional Principles.

The ideal form of Jewish education was one which was implemented to promote three objectives: resist anti-Jewish ideas in the name of Judaism, integrate the best of Western developments into the Jewish way of life, and contribute Jewish wisdom to Western culture.²⁰ If indeed the Jewish education provided in Jewish Day Schools were to fulfill these objectives, it would indeed “kindle the flame of the moral and metaphysical Menorah to the world”. Many Jewish Day Schools in the past have fulfilled this moral imperative. Many Jewish Day Schools today and indeed during the past decade have not fulfilled this moral imperative. To respond

¹⁹ [The Spirit of Jewish Classical Education » Mosaic \(mosaicmagazine.com\)](https://www.mosaicmagazine.com/article/the-spirit-of-jewish-classical-education)

²⁰ Ibid.

to the question “why?”, we must turn to the infiltration of the curriculum of the Jewish Day Schools by the ideologies embodied in Wokeism.

To speak or write about Wokeism in the US Public Schools is one thing. To speak or write about it in Jewish Day Schools is another. Wokeism made its way into the Public Schools by way of Critical Theory (CT), Critical Race Theory (CRT), Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL).²¹ It makes sense that it would make its way into the Secular Studies of Jewish Day Schools via the same route. But how would an ideology like Wokeism penetrate the Jewish Studies of these schools?

While researching this subject of the impact of Wokeism on Jewish Day Schools, I came across an interesting quote which I saved until I found a suitable place for it. I believe that it helps to identify the rationalization for incorporating Wokeism in Judaic Studies.

“Educate the child according to his way,” says the Book of Proverbs (22:6).²² These questions follow the quotation and when answered, they open the door to the Jewish Day Schools to include all of the ideologies taught in the Public Schools and implemented in every professional segment of society: “What is the ideal “way” in which Jewish day school students should be educated? What are the key concepts, goals and methods of instruction that can be put to best use to help develop the next generation of educated Jews?”²³ According to the article, revised in 2022, there are approximately 1,000 Jewish Day Schools in North America, with a student body of over 300,000 students.

Where exactly can we identify Wokeism in the Secular Studies of Jewish Day Schools? I believe that we can find it in exactly the same subject matter taught in K-12 Public Schools and based on the same ideologies predicated by CRT, DEI, and SEL. Whether in Public Schools or Jewish Day Schools, these ideologies indoctrinate our children and our society with core anti-Americanism, anti-Semitism, anti-Israelism, and Marxism. In addition, BLM, CRT, and DEI, as found in

²¹ See Chapter 1 of this White Paper.

²²<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/article-715557>

²³ Ibid

our textbooks, which are used in both secular and parochial schools, present America as a racist, slave Nation, which supports systemic racism and white privilege. The focus of all these ideologies is indisputably Racism against Blacks or People of Color by Whites. The Oppressed versus the Oppressors. Disadvantaged versus Privileged.

Where then should we start?

Based on our subject matter, we must logically turn to schools, the crisis of segregation and the accusation of systemic racism against People of Color.

The best place therefore is an article written by Talya Zax, Innovation Editor for the *Forward*. The article, titled “Will Jewish schools finally address their segregationist past?” was published on January 17, 2021.²⁴ The title in itself embodies the Revisionist impact of BLM and CRT on Jewish Day School education, as it relates to the role of American Jews, the Civil Rights Movement, and the racial integration of the school system.

As protests swept the United States in the wake of George Floyd’s death at the hands of Minneapolis police in May 2020, the topic of his death, quickly deemed a police murder, penetrated the American Public School System as it did the Jewish Day School System.

The “Martyrdom” of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police has become **the** Cause Célèbre, which sealed the accusation that America is a racist Nation, perpetrating systemic racism and endorsing white privilege. In addition to that, when it infiltrated our Jewish Day Schools, it taught that Judaism is a racist religion and that our Jewish youngsters must repudiate their Jewish identity and study the “corrected”, adjusted and reinterpreted history of the Jews in America. One major step in this process of rewriting the history of the Jews in America was the elimination of Jews and their contributions to American society from the textbooks.

Zoom seminars, reading groups, town halls, teachers’ meetings, in class “open discussions” – all of these followed George Floyd’s death and succeeded in polarizing American society, rewriting American History, and demonizing Jewish

²⁴ <https://forward.com/culture/451039/jewish-day-schools-segregation-history>

History. It is understandable that the public conversations were difficult, often heated, often emotion-driven, and often quite skewed by individual agendas.

The media has been despicable in its reporting of the events leading up to his death, in falsifying or misrepresenting facts concerning his character, including his criminal record, and especially his drug record, which showed that at the time of his death, in addition to fentanyl and methamphetamine, Floyd, per the autopsy toxicology report, also had cannabinoids in his system. Furthermore, there was the dehumanizing of the police. The issue here is not what the media did, but why it did it. The answer is simple if we accept the role of the media in American society today – the presentation, support, and indoctrination of the Leftist, Marxist undermining of America, our Constitution, our Institutions, including those of public and private education, academia and religion.

Private conversations within the Jewish Day School System as well as polling of administrators, teachers, parents, and even donors about the challenges which Jewish schools face in confronting the issue of racial justice, were met with demands for instituting DEI and CRT ideologies, the backbone of Wokeism.

Most damaging, in my opinion, were and are the conversations and structured discussions about how the history of Jewish Day Schools reflects America's long and brutal record of racial prejudice and the role or place of American Jews in this.

As I mentioned earlier, the article written by Talia Zax, Innovation Editor for the *Forward*, seems to illustrate the origins and effects of this issue and the roles of both the Religious and the Secular Media.

“In the two months since George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police, American Jewish day schools have begun to rethink how they teach students about the brutal legacy of American racism.

Among the subjects they'll have to examine? Their own history.”

This article, written in 2020 and reprinted in 2021, provides valuable insight into how the issue of Jewish Racism was introduced into the Jewish Day Schools, by Wokist-indoctrinated teachers imbued with CRT, DEI and yes, BLM. The premise upon which this article, and others like it, stands is that the Jewish Day School system is rooted in the anti-Black racism of Jewish parents, who chose to remove

their children from the segregated American public school system rather than expose them to the newly integrated public school system.²⁵

As I showed earlier in this White Paper, the history of the establishment and growth of the Jewish Day school parallels the waves of Jewish immigration to America and follows the two fundamental mindsets of these immigrants: loyalty to the American public school system as their road to American citizenship and devotion to their Judaism and Jewish heritage. The Jewish Day School, in its original form, existed as an addition to the Public School, an afterschool program which would teach Jewish children about their Judaism, the history of their ancestors, and the language of the Torah. It did not compete with the public school system. It enhanced it by teaching the values and morality of Judaism and thereby of dedicated citizenship. To be perfectly clear about this, the Jewish Day School system, as it was first conceived, was attached to or under the umbrella of a synagogue, where the children attended afterschool classes. What occasioned the need for a formal Jewish Day School system in the United States, one which would provide the accredited Secular or English studies of the Public School system as well as a Judaic Studies Program, was the Jewish recognition of the growing anti-Semitism which was permeating the American school system just as it was controlling the housing market in many neighborhoods of many States. All of the history of anti-Semitism, both in American society and American public schools, is missing in this analysis of the development of the Jewish Day School System. It is precisely the recognition of innate anti-Semitism which paved the way for the development of a school which taught what was the purview of the public school system as well as that of the Jewish school system.

Using the death of George Floyd as the impetus for the examination of the topic, “Will Jewish schools finally address their segregationist past?”, this article distorts, misrepresents, and in fact presents revisionist history of the Jewish Day School system, thereby raising and making a case for the accusation of systemic Jewish racism against the Blacks. What the author has chosen to focus her analysis on is the integration of the public school system and she reveals the depth of her Woke CRT ideology, which is racist in itself.

“But the origins of some [Jewish] day schools, particularly those founded in and after the 1970s, are connected to a dark narrative of 20th century American

²⁵ Ibid.

history: That of the backlash among white families against the racial integration of public schools. And as day schools reconsider how they teach students about the realities of American racism, they face questions about how those realities intersect with their own institutional heritage.”²⁶

It is my opinion that those indoctrinated in Wokeism are in fact anti-revealed religion and anti-Constitution. Wokeism and Marxism walk hand in hand and therefore, we find the assault on our Judeo-Christian Tradition because both Wokeism and Marxism advance Atheism. In addition, the presentation of the integration of the public school system as the impetus for American racial discord, and Jewish racism in particular, presents Wokist administrators, teachers, and curriculum and Standards specialists with an anti-Constitution BLM/CRT forum, exemplifying the failure of the Civil Rights Movement and of Martin Luther King’s ideology and the predominance of systemic racism and racist white privilege.

The author of this particular article uses the following quote by Ilana Kaufman, executive director of the Jews of Color Initiative, to present false facts in order to condemn the Jewish Day School system and to substantiate the call for the introduction of revisionist history and CRT, DEI, BLM, and SEL ideologies in both the Secular Studies and Judaic Studies.

“The Jewish day school movement was founded when the U.S. public schools integrated,” said Ilana Kaufman, in a June 21 conversation hosted by Temple Emanuel’s Streicker Center, “because there was white flight from U.S. public schools.”²⁷ Given those parameters, the movement would have been founded in 1954 through the 1990s.²⁸

A word about the Jews of Color Initiative: The wording in the following two paragraphs is the language and vocabulary of CRT and DEI. It also reflects the language and content of the California Critical Ethnic Studies which should not come as a surprise since it was founded in 2017 in Berkeley, CA.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ [Desegregation of Schools: the History of School Desegregation - 2023 - MasterClass](#)

The Jews of Color Initiative's mission is to advance racial equity in the U.S. Jewish community by centering the leadership of Jews of Color and ensuring that our communities and institutions reflect the multiracial reality of the Jewish people.

The Jews of Color Initiative works to build a truly multiracial, anti-racist Jewish community in which Jews of Color can experience joy and reach their full potential and belonging as leaders and community members. To do so requires creating structural and communal support for Jews of Color and expanding the field of knowledge about our community.”²⁹

As to Kaufman's assertion that the Jewish day school movement was founded when the U.S. public schools integrated and there was white flight from U.S. public schools, we have seen that the chronology of the creation and development followed the various immigrations of European Jewry to the US. Jewish day school education became an increasingly attractive option. Between 1917 and 1939, American Jews established 23 such institutions in the greater New York metropolitan area alone. The Jewish Day School system continued to grow in the States with large Jewish communities. It was a response to the realization that the public school system, with religious enhancement twice a week, was creating Americans but not necessarily “committedly” Jewish Americans. The linkage of the growth of the Jewish Day Schools to Jewish rejection of public school integration and participation of Jewish parents in “white flight” is in itself racist. If one questions the reason for Jews to use the accusation of racism against themselves, one arrives at the uncomfortable explanation that these Jews who did and do so are Wokist and anti-traditional Judaism/Jews. In this same article, the distinction is carefully drawn between Orthodox schools and non-Orthodox ones. This is not really different from the apartheid mentality of Critical Ethnic Studies where European Jewry are designated as racists, attached to white privilege and Oppressors, and Middle Eastern Jews are designated as POCs, People of Color and Oppressed.

According to Talia Zax, the decisive moment for Jewish Day Schools came in the early 1970s, as the Supreme Court issued a series of decisions mandating that school districts use busing to integrate schools. *Brown v. Board of Education*, the 1954 case establishing that school segregation was unconstitutional, did not address the de facto school segregation that resulted from Black and White

²⁹ [Jews of Color Initiative](#)

people living in largely different neighborhoods, usually effected by violation of the Constitution's Housing Discrimination Laws. According to Sara Smith, Assistant Dean at the Graduate Center for Jewish Education of American Jewish University, "There was really a sense — community rabbis certainly spoke about this — that on the one hand we as Jews should be supporting integration, because that's a value that we hold." But, there was "a real fear and paranoia from parents who didn't want to send their kids to be bused across the city to go to schools that were going to be populated by non-whites."³⁰ Per Smith, the fight over school integration became the catalyst for systemic Jewish anti-Black racism and for Jewish white flight and busing the ultimate trigger. Inadequate education in Black schools was also a major influencer in white flight.

Before returning to the impact of Geoge Floyd's death on the implementation of Wokeism in the Jewish Day School, we need to address the Leftist presentation of Jewish White Flight, Jewish Racism, and the growth of Jewish Day Schools. To be very clear, Wokeism needs the victimization of People of Color by White People (of any revealed religion) exploiting White Privilege. Missing from the analysis in the articles published not only in the *Forward* is the verifiable threat of Black violence against White children. While the quality of education in Black schools was a concern of parents, the fear of violence against their children was a major element in the equation. The responsibility for the inadequacy of the education provided in Black schools must be placed directly at the feet of the government. It reflects the scourge of racism.

In doing the research for this White Paper, I was confronted by an outlandish, revisionist, anti-Semitic question which angered me and to which I must respond. "Where is the effort to examine the history of DC Jewry and the ways in which the DC Jewish community engaged in white flight and benefitted from racial capitalism at the expense of African Americans?"³¹ asked by Ronit Stahl, an assistant professor of history at the University of California at Berkeley and quoted by Talya Lax of the *Forward*.

³⁰ <https://forward.com/culture/451039/jewish-day-schools-segregation-history>

³¹ [Jewish schools face the challenge of Black Lives Matter \(forward.com\)](#)

I am a White, Ashkenazi Jew, who was born, raised and educated in Washington, DC. I am a university professor and Senior Academic Advisor and Researcher for Proclaiming Justice to the Nations. I was an active part of the DC Jewish Community, which Ronit Stahl so blatantly attacks, for as long as my family and I lived there, long after the desegregation of the schools. I went to public school in N.W. Washington: Elementary, Junior, and Senior High School and I did my BA, MA, and PhD in Washington, DC. I was in Junior High when the DC School System integrated. I experienced the good and bad of that period of history. I would like to say some things about the Jewish Community of DC. We were not able to live in certain neighborhoods. There was housing discrimination; there schools with almost no Jewish students because the neighborhoods were Jew-free. But where we lived, we were a vibrant community, with synagogues, a JCC, Kosher grocery stores. There was anti-Semitism in schools, businesses, etc., but not of the nature of today's anti-Semitism. Street violence started in Washington when trucks dumped Black Americans, brought up from the South, in SE Washington. School violence started with integration but it depended on the neighborhoods. There were problems in some neighborhoods with people moving to the suburbs after too many incidents of crime. The DC Jewish community stayed basically stable until crime became a major problem, for everyone living there, I must add. Nothing was done to ameliorate the housing discrimination against us. But I grew up with Black friends whom I met in Junior and Senior high school. My father worked in a men's and boys' clothing store in downtown DC, owned by a Jew, with a mainly Black clientele. 1968 saw the riots in DC, Nothing was ever the same after that. White Flight and Racial Capitalism? The guilt of the DC Jewish Community? No. Revisionist, anti-Semitic history, written by Jews.

However, in my view, the history of the integration of our schools reflects the American struggle to end this scourge, a struggle which began in our Constitution, continued through the Civil Rights Movement and the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King and is still in progress. Wokeism, CRT and DEI have enflamed the racism in this country and have put Blacks and Jews in danger once again. Jewish Day Schools, like Catholic Day Schools, have existed in America for centuries. They did not just sprout up as tools of Jewish or Christian White Flight and racism against People of Color, as the Wokists would have us believe. As for the busing crisis, it was a two-pronged problem...the busing of White children into Black neighborhoods and schools, and the busing of Black children into White neighborhoods and schools. Both communities had severe concerns about busing

their children into what were considered to be hostile communities and schools. Racism compounded by fear of violence or vice versa? I have yet to see an answer to these questions. In fact, I have yet to see these questions asked in any analysis dedicated to proving the Systemic Racism of the Jews. The integration of schools in contiguous neighborhoods of Blacks and Whites went more smoothly because no busing was needed. The history of the Jewish Day Schools reflect trends of immigration, religious development, i.e. denominations of Judaism, and sociological changes within American society.

To this, we must add the rise of the specter of anti-Semitism and the history of these Jews, who fled to America to find safety and the freedom to practice their religion. These were immigrants who sought to acculturate and instead often found themselves discriminated against and victims of Jew-Hatred, American style. These were Jews who came with love for America and devotion to our Constitution. Jewish Day Schools perpetuated the love of Judaism and of America until CRT, DEI and Wokeism were brought into their classrooms by teachers and administrators indoctrinated in them. Jewish White Flight and Jewish Racism? No. A severe frontal attack from the Left on Jews and Judaism. Reverse anti-Semitism.

What was the scholastic influence of George Floyd's death on the Jewish Day School? Simply put, his death brought the Jewish Day School system under the control of the proponents of Wokeism, represented through CRT and DEI. It is the latter, DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) which became the modus operandi of the Wokist take-over of both the public and religious school system.

How was the ideology introduced? First of all, by way of major Jewish Left-leaning National organizations such as the Jewish Federation of North America.³² JFNA is a multibillion-dollar nonprofit working to represent hundreds of local Jewish community organizations across the United States and Canada. One of the first things, which the JFNA did in the days after the death of George Floyd, was offer a job to Isaiah Rothstein, a Black rabbi active on Jewish diversity issues. As the newly employed rabbinic scholar and public affairs advisor at JFNA, Rothstein was asked to steer the organization's equity, diversity and inclusion work. According to their PR division, JFNA diversity initiatives have reached 30,000 employees and

³² [The US Jewish communal response to George Floyd's murder, 1 year later | The Times of Israel](#)

community members across 170 organizations including synagogues, **day schools** and senior living facilities, according to Rothstein. JFNA also created Moed, a network for Jews of Color, and Kamochah, a gathering of Black Orthodox Jews, both fitting additions to their DEI and CRT initiatives.

The JFNA was not alone in adopting DEI efforts as the response to Floyd's death. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency spoke to professionals, mostly Jews of Color, working to combat racism in the Jewish community. Many said that they had seen progress in the willingness to have uncomfortable conversations and to listen to People of Color, whether Jewish or not. But they also said that a year is not enough time to create the lasting changes needed in American Jewish communities. Another interesting offshoot is that many organizations, schools included, believe that the best way to bring about change is to put Jews of Color on their boards. However, the organizations, especially the schools, have not gone back and looked at their institutional history to examine the conditions which created a white-dominated social justice Jewish institutional environment. To this I would add that some of the organizations and/or institutions which have gone back to do so have been driven by revisionism, as the way to implement their ideologies.

Other Jewish institutions and entire Jewish communities began assessing themselves when George Floyd died. The video of his death was so horrific that it galvanized much of the country to confront the legacy of American racism. Jewish Organizations representing virtually every Jewish constituency — from Orthodox to the Reconstructionist movement, from the Anti-Defamation League to Hillel — released statements. Hillel, which serves Jewish students on college campuses, created two staff positions to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion work. Hundreds of Hillel staff and student leaders have undergone training on racial justice by outside experts, according to chief experience officer Mimi Kravetz, who also said Hillel set up a network for about 100 Jewish students of color from campuses across the country.³³

130 Jewish organizations signed a letter pledging to fight “systemic racism” and therefore Jewish systemic racism. An even larger Jewish coalition of 600+ organizations and synagogues, at the one-month mark of his death, declared that “the Black Lives Matter movement is the current day civil rights movement in this

³³ [The US Jewish communal response to George Floyd's murder, 1 year later | The Times of Israel](#)

country, and it is our best chance at equity and justice.”³⁴ This endorsement of the BLM movement is indeed the ultimate renunciation of Martin Luther King’s Civil Rights Movement and its substitution of radicalized Wokeism.

Finally, another important conduit for Wokeism into the Jewish Day School system is Prizmah, Center for Jewish Day Schools. The project described below shows how Prizmah trains teachers and administrators and provides materials needed to teach the ideologies of Wokeism and therefore to indoctrinate.³⁵

“That’s one of the reasons the Charles E. Smith school decided over the winter to enroll in a unique initiative on race and school culture created by Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools.

As a first step in what is envisioned as a multilayer, multiyear approach to help schools foster greater diversity, equity and inclusion, educators from about 40 schools gathered five times online over the course of a month for trainings focused on overcoming implicit bias, why equity work is important and how schools can create a welcoming climate for discussions on race.

The five initial sessions in Prizmah’s Race and School Culture Deep Dive, which ran in February and March, focused on continuing to build a culture and community of change; strategies for building a diverse Jewish community, including welcoming Jews of color; addressing implicit bias; learning about current successful anti-racism programs in Jewish schools; and mapping out ways to advance work in these areas that is already underway.

Beyond those initial sessions, each participating school is working with a consultant to further the effort, and lay and professional school leaders are joining collaborative working groups to move their race and school culture work forward with specific, goal-oriented next steps. Those groups are focused on topics that include creating a professional development agenda on race and school culture for faculty; teaching about identity, bias and race in elementary school; and

³⁴ [600+ Jewish Organizations and Synagogues Say: Black Lives Matter | Medium](#)

³⁵ <https://www.jta.org/2021/04/13/united-states/with-new-initiative-on-changing-school-culture-jewish-schools>

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identifying interdisciplinary curricular resources on race and equity. Prizmah also offers a peer-to-peer professional development community for sharing resources, asking questions and celebrating successes related to race and school culture.”

Before turning to the impact of Wokeism on the Curriculum of the Jewish Day Schools, we need to consider what appears to be the deification of George Floyd throughout the Jewish Day School system.³⁶ This moment of silence and program to honor the memory of George Floyd was held at SAR Academy of Riverdale, NY, a respected and well known modern Orthodox Day School.

“During the silence, we paid tribute to his memory and considered our role in the steps ahead. May the memory of Mr. Floyd spur continued introspection, activism and inspiration for our students and our entire community to help imagine and create a better future, a future in which black people are treated justly and in which all human beings are seen as a *tzelem elokim*,” they wrote, using the Hebrew term for “in the image of God.”

One must ask how the memory of George Floyd can be in any way inspirational to anyone. If indeed created in “tzelem elokim”, in the image of God, he defiled that Holy Image throughout his life, even at the time of his death.

How do we identify and/or define the impact of Wokeism on the Secular and Judaic Curriculum of the Jewish Day Schools? It is actually simple to do if we are familiar with the ideologies, tenets, and vocabulary of CRT, DEI, SEL BLM. The website of any Jewish Day School can “reveal” these ideologies through the use of certain buzzwords or expressions.

- As an example, one Jewish Day School in Florida [name has been removed and substituted by “our school”] reveals the presence and influence of Wokist ideology on its website when it emphasizes the development of ethical and moral values from a Judaic point of view. “Our school places great importance on the concept of *tikkun olam* (social action). The focus is on how students, as individuals and as a community, can help improve themselves and their world. Our School stimulates an awareness of Jews around the world as well as a strong focus on human rights for all people. It acknowledges the inequities in

³⁶[Alumni call on Jewish day schools to do more to fight racism - Jewish Telegraphic Agency \(jta.org\)](https://www.jta.org/2020/06/05/alumni-call-on-jewish-day-schools-to-do-more-to-fight-racism/)

our society and emphasizes *tzedakah* (philanthropy) in its fullest sense. Civic responsibility and communal participation are standards set for every School student.” Similarly, these ideologies can be found in the textbooks, materials and extra-curricular handouts chosen by the school to use in an area of study such as Civics.

- Here the same school’s website openly presents SEL (Social Emotional Learning), from the Jewish perspective: Social Emotional Programming focuses on the whole child, developing character, and making positive choices supporting Jewish Values. The students are taught skills that they will be able to use throughout their lives to persevere with courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion.

An interesting article, written in 2021 by Samuel J. Abrams and Jack Wertheimer delves into Wokeism as a threat to America and to the American Jews.³⁷ It is one of the finest summaries which I have seen and I am extracting parts and including them here. These two extraordinary scholars leave no doubt about the dangers inherent in Wokeism and the ideologies of which it is composed and they show how Wokeism is destructive to American society and to those designated as oppressors – whites and Jews.

“Jewish students at American campuses (and increasingly in high school and even lower school) are indoctrinated with lessons about the range of victims who have suffered oppression, principally people of color, of a non-“cisgender” sexual orientation, and women... Increasingly, Jews are defined as being on the wrong side: They are castigated as privileged, white, and part of the oppressor class, never the victims—even as the incidence of anti-Semitism has exploded in America, including on campuses and in class discussions. Tragically, many American Jews naively internalize this hostile critique and blind themselves to the scarcely veiled anti-Semitism motivating it.

When students beginning in early-childhood programs and continuing through their school and college years are intentionally made to feel guilty

³⁷ The Woke Threat to America— and to American Jews | American Enterprise Institute – AEI

about their “white privilege,” they are thrown back on their heels and left confused or feeling defensive. It’s bad enough that Jewish college students are exposed to this indoctrination, but they at least may have the intellectual resources to reflect on their own family histories: These alleged beneficiaries of “white privilege” are in the main but a few generations removed from their immigrant forebears. But what sense might school children as young as three and four make of the lessons they are taught about the guilt all white people allegedly must bear for the sins of racism, enslavement, and “white supremacy?”

Worse still, some Jewish day schools and other Jewish educational institutions are conveying to their young charges that by virtue of their skin color, they are responsible for wronging others and must atone. This is the stuff now being taught to preschool and elementary-school children who do not yet have a sense of history or an ability to think critically about the race theories. Do proponents of new curricula seriously believe that evoking guilt in students for being white will make them more tolerant? What, aside from demoralization, can such pedagogy hope to accomplish?

The growing number of mandatory programs supposedly promoting justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion (JDEI) pose their own set of challenges. Only certain minorities are deemed worthy of protection, and Jews are not among them. To the contrary, Jews are automatically defined as part of the white oppressor class.”

This seems a good place to talk about CRT and the Jewish Day Schools.

My research has brought forward three additional areas heavily impacted by Wokeism in Jewish Day Schools. Let me clarify that the deleterious impact of the

Wokist ideology is found in both the Secular and Judaic Studies. It must by its nature and ideology control both branches of Study, in order to damage both the Constitution and the Torah, and contaminate young Jewish minds, turning them into oppressors of People of Color, even Jews of Color and thereby making them ashamed of their own religion, heritage, Peoplehood, and Homeland. Wokeism presents the Jews of Color as one of the groups of People of Color (POC) oppressed by white Jews, thereby instilling dislike or even guilt because their identity as Ashkenazi Jews is synonymous to Oppressor. This is “apartheid by Wokeism.” This parallels the ideology and language of Critical Ethnic Studies, which teaches anti-Semitism through white Jewish oppression of People of Color and skillfully divides the Jewish people - European Ashkenazi Jews versus the Jews of Arab Lands or Sephardi, Mizrahi Jews, who for this purpose have been included in the category of the Oppressed. This is one of the three areas impacted to which I just referred. Another one is most definitely the Holocaust. The anti-Semitism of CRT and BLM definitely fits into Wokist ideology which accepts the hypothesis that the Jews were enemies of the German State. It does not have the specificity of what was done to the Jews by the Nazis. In Wokeism and therefore taught both in Secular and Judaic courses, it is invoked to attack the Jews and blame them for their systemic racism against Blacks and other People of Color.

In an article written by a graduate of a K-12 Jewish Day School in Florida, I found an example of how the meaning of the Holocaust has been coopted by Leftist ideology and used as synonymous with genocide, with specificity to the history of the Jewish People removed. In many Jewish Day Schools, the Holocaust is cited as the example why Jewish students must fight systemic racism against Blacks.³⁸

“What is even the point of teaching students about the horrors of the Holocaust if there is no serious discussion about contemporary issues of the same vain? I cannot recall any discussions in my Jewish or Holocaust classes about contemporary genocides like the slaughter of Tutsis in Rwanda or Omar al-Bashir’s ruthless campaign in Darfur, or any discussion about a totalitarian regime in China that is currently using concentration camps in Xinjiang to ethnically cleanse Uyghur Muslims. It took me until an undergraduate level History of the Holocaust course to realize that the Nuremberg Laws and the Nazi’s fetish over race politics is rooted in American race law, most eloquently

³⁸ [The Failure of Holocaust Education in Jewish Day Schools | Jakob Levin | The Blogs \(timesofisrael.com\)](https://www.timesofisrael.com/jakob-levin-the-failure-of-holocaust-education-in-jewish-day-schools/)

chronicled in James Q. Whitman's *Hitler's American Model*. These are pieces of history, indisputable facts, that we absolutely *must* teach our students. It's not just enough for Jewish students to go to Poland, hear the last generation of Holocaust survivors, or know that six million of their brothers and sisters were liquidated for the crime of being a Jew. Our students and teachers too, who clearly have not gone far enough in the past forty years *must* have contemporary discussions about racism and genocide. Holocaust education is a failure if it does not address how a totalitarian regime came to embrace race-based policies as the core to its ideology."

First of all, some of the information here is incorrect³⁹ and needs to be corrected. According to the author of this piece, he learned this in his first year of graduate school and fortunately not in his Jewish Day School. The claim that "Nuremberg Laws and the Nazis' fetish over race politics *is rooted in* American race law" belies an ignorance of European history, American history, the Nuremberg Laws, and National Socialism. Race theorists such as Arthur de Gobineau and Paul de Lagarde were much more influential with regard to Nazi thinking about race, and Nazi antisemitism was influenced not only by Christian antisemitism but also by the great German thinkers such as Kant, Hegel, and Schopenhauer. The Americans had no concept of race that was comparable to the Nazis' *Rassenseele* or "race-soul", whereby race and soul, thought and character, are all synonyms, as explained by Nazi race theorist Alfred Rosenberg. While the Germans were aware of American studies in eugenics, they did not need the Americans in order to arrive at their exterminationist antisemitism. Saying that the Nazi thinking about race or Jews is *rooted in* American race law turns the blame on America and reflects an anti-American bigotry. This last point is very much rooted in Wokeism.

As for the Nuremberg Laws, in those laws the Jews were identified as much by the Judaism as by their "race": a "Jew" was defined as anyone with a Jewish grandparent, and the grandparent was Jewish if he or she belonged to a synagogue; also, converts to Judaism were regarded as Jews under the Nuremberg Laws. The Nazis had no "fetish" over racism or antisemitism; rather, antisemitism was fundamental to their *Weltanschauung*, more fundamental than their racism. The Nazis were not antisemites because they were racist; rather, they were racists

³⁹ Dr. David Patterson, Hillel Feinberg Distinguished Chair in Holocaust Studies, Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies, University of Texas at Dallas

because they were antisemites. They had to establish an antisemitic, anti-Judaic premise in order to arrive at a racist outlook.⁴⁰

Finally, his assertion that neither the students nor the teachers have distanced themselves from the Holocaust in the past 40 years, means only that they should no longer be concerned with the specificity of the Holocaust and the Jewish People, instead should have only contemporary discussions about racism and genocide.

Perhaps this is a good point at which to examine the place of CRT in the Jewish Day School Curriculum. There is an excellent article, “Jewish Day Schools Should Not Teach Critical Race Theory As Established Dogma”, written by David Bernstein. In it, he writes that “numerous Jewish day schools, like so many other educational institutions, now present a singular approach on social issues, in particular race and racism. Like many public and private schools, they have adopted Critical Race Theory (CRT), as the one true lens through which to see and judge the world.⁴¹ His research and explanations are direct and to the point and they underscore the severity of the problem of CRT, not only in our public school system but in our Jewish Day Schools as well.

CRT purports that all racial oppression is embedded in the structure of American society. That is the base for the CRT assertion that America is a nation of systemic racism. Adherents of CRT regard America as a white-supremacist society and accept racism as the only legitimate explanation for the social disparity among various groups. CRT insists on its own unquestioned, inviolable truth and the accusation of racism in the death of George Floyd is one such “inviolable truth. In the wake of the George Floyd killing by police last year in Minneapolis, many educators have acceded to the demand for the unconditional acceptance of the accusation of systemic racism.

According to Mr. Bernstein, the Heschel School, for example, one of the nation’s premier pluralistic Jewish day schools in New York City, seems to embrace a CRT

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ <https://www.algemeiner.com/2021/06/08/jewish-day-schools-should-not-teach-critical-race-theory-as-established-dogma/>

framework⁴². “We will learn from all of our attempts to strengthen an anti-racist stance in our curriculum and our community and, true to Rabbi Heschel’s teachings, to embrace the imperative to take responsibility for systemic racism and injustice, as well as our roles in perpetuating these systems of inequality,” say school administrators.

Mr. Bernstein agrees that Jewish day schools should teach their students to be respectful and tolerant, to oppose racism and prejudice, and to work for a fair and just society. But it is *how* they teach this that is important. “The “anti-racist” language suggests that the school is viewing these values through the prism of Ibrahim X. Kendi’s “How to be an Antiracist,” a staple of modern CRT. Whether, as the school asserts, there is “systemic racism” in America, how much systemic racism exists and where it manifests are matters of *opinion*, not an expression of values. These are questions that should be discussed and debated, not answers that should be promulgated and instilled. How would teachers regard a student who argues that systemic racism is overstated? Would they treat the student’s arguments as legitimate inquiry or lecture him or her for heresy? Is Heschel teaching about systemic racism as truths or theories? The language they use suggests the former.”⁴³

The mission of Jewish day schools should be to teach students how to think, not what to think. I am sure that Heschel and other day schools see themselves as doing just that. But the school’s anti-racism statement suggests otherwise, at least in the domain of the most important social issue of our time.”

In a similar vein, Brandy Shufutinsky wrote in *Sapir Journal* that CRT has added radicalized and polarizing terminology such as White Jews and Jews of Color, both of which are antithetical to Jewish traditions and have created divisions which were not there before. Divisions which I have labelled as apartheid. An interesting comment in her article states that “anti-racist” themes of CRT were showing up in her children’s curriculum under the name of DEI. This is not the first time that I have come across this change of name but not of content. Shufutinsky states clearly that CRT is “anti-Jewish to its core, as it casts Jews as the “whitest” of white oppressors, simply because Jews are wealthy and successful. CRT as DEI is just a change in ideology. DEI programs have supplanted what were once nuanced examinations of race, color, ethnicity, and culture with the simplistic, binary

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

language of oppressor and oppressed. It is a form of black-and-white thinking that excludes the experiences of vast numbers of Jews. It is one that makes Jews feel ashamed of their so-called privilege rather than proud of their heritage.”⁴⁴

The third area of study impacted by Wokeism is the History of Israel. It is not difficult to understand how Wokeism, CRT and DEI determine and control everything about Israel, whether in the media, in public, private, or religious schools, academia, or in society as a whole.⁴⁵ Ethnic Studies curricula single out Israel as the as the worst human-rights offender and distort the complex history of the **Israel–Palestinian** conflict. CRT and DEI Public and Jewish school curricula out one group, the Jews, for vilification. Intersectionality, a key element in CRT, means that America’s history of systemic racial inequality is projected onto the standoff between Palestinians and Israelis, with the former defined as nonwhite victims and the latter as white supremacists. In CRT language: Palestinians as the Oppressed and Jews as the Oppressors. Or Palestinians as the Occupied and Israelis JEWS as the Occupiers.

In August 2023, an interesting article “I’m a Jewish day school student. We need to learn Palestinian history” appeared in *The Forward*.⁴⁶

“In my Jewish school setting, there has never been mention of the Palestinian people. I’ve been taught nothing of their history in what is now the state of Israel, nor anything about the dual meaning of Israeli Independence Day and Nakba Day, which recognizes the removal of Palestinians from their homes upon the creation of the Jewish state. Learning about Nakba and Palestinian history should be a formal part of the curriculum at all American Jewish day schools.

My Jewish day school’s website lists core values, which are likely shared by most other American Jewish schools: *tikkun olam*, betterment of the world, *gemilut chasadim*, acts of loving kindness, and, of course, *ahavat yisrael*, a love of Israel. While my school has tried to instill the latter value

⁴⁴ [Are Orthodox Day Schools Being Infected with Anti-Jewish “Woke” Philosophy? | Americans for Peace and Tolerance](#)

⁴⁵ [The Woke Threat to America— and to American Jews | American Enterprise Institute - AEI](#)

⁴⁶ [Jewish day school students need to be taught Palestinian history – The Forward](#)

through observance of many Israeli traditions and learning about Israeli history, a vital history of another people in the land has been missing: that of the Palestinians.”

These two paragraphs contain the language, vocabulary, and the definitions of Judaic concepts as well as the thematic Jewish and Israeli content of Wokeism, CRT, DEI and SEL. This is Leftist. This is Woke. This comprises, in two paragraphs, the Wokist state of both the Secular and Judaic education in many of our Jewish Day Schools.

The following article “You don’t have to choose between loving Israel and opposing the Occupation”, appeared in *The Forward* in 2021.⁴⁷ By its title, we know the Wokist ideology, its demonization of Israel, and its covert support of the Two State Solution. Most important, this article speaks directly to the strength of the Leftist indoctrination of American Rabbis and Cantors, studying in Israel on a year-long Leftist program.

“I recently joined a rally to protest the horrific conditions at Rikers’ Island, where 14 people, all awaiting trial, have died in the past year. I walked away in tears at the pain of these families and individuals, and angered yet again by the racist structures that put a disproportionate number of people of color in prison. Yet I also left inspired to continue fighting for the United States to become a country committed to equity, and to the safety and dignity of everyone who lives here.

This experience of both recognizing the ingrained and persistent racism of this country and committing to building a better future likely does not strike many as a paradox. However, when it comes to Israel, conversations too often assume a false dichotomy in which one must choose between caring about Israelis or Palestinians, and either supporting Israel or opposing occupation.

As the article notes, many rabbinical and cantorial students come face to face with occupation for the first time through T’ruah, which runs a

⁴⁷ [You don’t have to choose between loving Israel and opposing the occupation – The Forward](#)

yearlong human rights program for American rabbinical and cantorial students studying in Jerusalem. Each year, more than 80% of future rabbis and cantors spending the academic year in Israel, as required by the major non-Orthodox seminaries, take part in the T'ruah program.

Over the course of a year, we show them human rights challenges on the ground and introduce them to Israeli and Palestinian civil society leaders working for a different future. They visit Hebron with Breaking the Silence, an organization of Israeli veterans who testify about their experiences enforcing the occupation, to see for themselves how settlement there has resulted in evictions and violence against Palestinians. They plant saplings in the South Hebron Hills with Combatants for Peace, a group of former Israeli and Palestinian combatants who advocate nonviolent resolution to the conflict, in order to replace trees uprooted by settlers. They visit Mizrahi Jewish activists in Haifa, Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem and Bedouin Israeli citizens in the Negev.

Yes, the future clergy who participate in our programs come away upset and angry about the reality on the ground in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. But crucially, in every one of these programs, they meet Israeli and Palestinian human rights and civil society leaders who are choosing hope over despair and working for a better future for their own families.”

Conclusion

Before embarking on this study of the state of Jewish Day School education, I was asked a question which penetrated and then resonated deep in my Soul. A loving Jewish grandmother, who was deciding whether to leave money in her Will for her grandchildren's Jewish Day School K-12 education, asked whether her grandchildren would still be Jewish when they graduated. I thought about how and what to answer her and decided to research Jewish Day School education and write my findings and also my conclusions. Once I finish, I will give it to her to read and to draw her own conclusions.

I found almost immediately an article, “Inside Jewish Day Schools’: How should North American Jews be educated?” which signaled a problem within the system and provided details to support the authors’ assertions.⁴⁸ The first issue covered is that of Tefila, Prayer, the essence of Judaism.

“While many of the schools covered are located in cities with large Jewish communities, such as Chicago, Los Angeles and Miami, a number of schools are located in areas with smaller Jewish populations, such as Nashville, Tennessee, San Rafael, California, and Detroit, Michigan. In most cases, community schools in these areas accept students with greatly varying levels of religious observance, which can complicate the level of religious commitment that the school requires. A recurrent theme that the authors discuss at almost every school is how educational institutions deal with prayer (tefila) within the organized framework of the school.”

“The time devoted to tefila is fraught with tension,” write the authors, Pomson and Wertheimer.

“Teachers try to involve students in the services but are often required to spend much of the time monitoring and disciplining students. Some teachers report that it is the most difficult part of the day for them. Interestingly, the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy in Toronto, known as Tanenbaum CHAT, does not require its students to participate in prayer services at the school. While the school follows Orthodox policy and has a rigorous Jewish curriculum, 80% of the students, the authors write, identify with a liberal denomination or no denomination at all.”

The second issue presented here is that parents today place more importance on the general studies curriculum than on the Judaic studies,

“Parents today place great importance on the general studies curriculum in Jewish day schools and want their children to gain access to additional

⁴⁸ ['Inside Jewish Day Schools': How should North American Jews be educated? - The Jerusalem Post \(jpost.com\)](https://www.jpost.com/Inside-Jewish-Day-Schools-How-should-North-American-Jews-be-educated?utm_campaign=JPost&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook)

educational opportunities in high school and college. As a result, many Jewish day schools have embarked on extensive programs emphasizing STEM – science, technology, engineering, and mathematics – with the goal of creating curious learners who seek creative solutions.”

Another article which I found dealt with an Orthodox Day School, which chose to go against traditional religious procedures in an attempt to fit into the Wokist world, which is strongly anti-religion.⁴⁹

Shortly after The Idea School opened in the fall of 2017, students lobbied to change the dress code. Some of the boys didn’t want to wear the collared shirts required by most modern Orthodox schools. Some of the girls wanted to wear pants instead of skirts.

The Idea School would break other tenets of modern Orthodox education. Daily prayer would not be required. Students could take part in meditations and group discussions instead. In interviews, more than a dozen students and educators described the school as a haven for kids who felt hemmed in by more traditional Orthodox schools and for LGTB students.

The most important article which I read, written by Dr. Naya Lekht, gave me tremendous insight into the problem and helped me to formulate my answer to the question asked of me by the Jewish grandmother.⁵⁰ It covered many aspects which showed exactly where the Jewish Day School system stands today and where it more than likely will stand in 10 years’ time. The author wrote clearly and to the point.

- “Within Jewish families in North America, one reason to send kids to Jewish day schools, and/or to Jewish youth programs is to avoid anti-Israel bias in the classroom. This strategy, however, has proven to not only be ineffective, but more alarmingly, produced a generation of

⁴⁹ [Was a modern Orthodox school too open-minded for its own good? – The Forward](#)

⁵⁰ [The Crisis in Jewish Education | Naya Lekht | The Blogs \(timesofisrael.com\)](#)

anti-Zionist Jews, recently called un-Jews by Natan Sharansky and Gil Troy. Likewise, having Israeli parents or joining Israeli youth movements such as *tsofim* provide little to no real shelter from the dangers of radical leftism, which ushers in anti-Zionism, today's most potent form of Jew-hatred.

- Jewish day schools in North America practice “social justice in content, Jewish in form.” Indeed, all major Jewish groups that oppose the “Israeli occupation” or promote the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction movement (BDS) have been started by Jews who either graduated Jewish day schools or were involved in Jewish youth groups.
- A stark example is graduate of K-12th grade Jewish day-school, Simone Zimmerman, the founder of IfNotNow, a Jewish organization whose goal is to oppose “Israeli occupation.” Zimmerman is but one, although a vivid, example of how Jewish education provides little refuge from an education steeped in Marxist thought. But the phenomenon of Jewish young adults graduating Jewish day schools and joining anti-Israel groups such as J-Street, Jewish Voices for Peace (JVP), IfNotNow (INN), and even Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) has been in the making for decades now. Indeed, Jewish day school graduates are at the helm of anti-Israel and anti-American movements on college campuses. They aren't just members, they are leaders.”

How did this happen? The author, Naya Lekht states unequivocally that this is a pattern which comes from Jewish educational institutions which focus not on Judaism and antisemitism specifically, but rather promote anti-racist education, restoring climate justice, and gender and racial inequity. According to Lekht, these topics are sanctioned by the following triad: *Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof*, Tikkun Olam, and *Derech Eretz*, based on teachings in the Tanach, as interpreted by the Rabbis.

- *Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof*—“Justice, justice shall you pursue...”

“This phrase, taken from Deuteronomy 16:18-20, appears in most Jewish schools’ mission statements, at times even emblemized on the front gates of the school. The original text reads: “Justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may thrive and occupy the land that Adonai your God is giving you.” In its entire context, it is an imperative from God that the Jewish people occupy and settle in Eretz Yisroel by appointing magistrates and officials who will “not judge unfairly.” Willfully forgetting the remainder of the passage, Jewish educators apply these words, “justice, justice shall you pursue,” as an ethical permission slip to embrace social justice causes such as racial and gender inequity, inclusivity, and immigration reform, to name a few.”

- Tikkun Olam—“Repair the world”

“A signature theme of Jewish tradition in North America, somewhere along the way, Jewish educators believed that the goal for the Jewish people was to help repair the world through solving world hunger, campaigning against occupations, ending gender wage gaps, and fighting climate change. However, in its original formulation, “tikkun olam” is achieved through ethical and ritual mitzvot such as keeping the laws of kashrut and observing the Sabbath. Similar to those who invoke “tzedek, tzedek tirdof” piecemeal, tikkun olam, which comes from the *Aleinu*, a seminal prayer in Jewish liturgy, appears in a passage that extends hope in “You, Adonai our God... to completely cut off all false gods; to repair the world, Your holy empire.” We make a grave error, therefore, in thinking that *tikkun olam* means embracing a woman’s right to choose, open immigration, or supporting equity of outcome policies.”

- Derech Eretz—“Way of the Land”

“Although the literal translation is “way of the land,” Jewish educators have applied *derech erez* to embrace compassion, kindness, and “common decency.” The problem, however, is that compassion and kindness are universal values and to each person mean different things. I once asked my students to define kindness and received disparate responses. To one, kindness was taking something from oneself in order to benefit another person; to another, it was saying kind words in order to make someone else feel better.

Derech erez appears in several iterations in rabbinical literature. Take, for example the midrash from Exodus Rabbah, (wherein we are instructed to “refrain from using wood from a fruit-bearing tree to build a house and calls that rule a lesson in *derech erez*.” Here, *derech erez* is not a commentary on kindness, but rather a frame to help people make better economic and ecological choices.

But, as I once heard among a cohort of Jewish senior educators, at a conference, practicing *derech erez* was finding a way to incorporate LGBTQ awareness into the Jewish middle school curriculum.”

What I found most important in all of the author’s explanations was her final statement that the common denominator in what she calls the Triad: tzedek tzedek tirdof, tikkun olam, and derech erez, **is the removal of God from each of the Jewish ideas**. In each invocation of the Triad, God is not present. The consequences of an absent God is that man must step in to restore order. Here we are in the presence of Wokeism, the new religion, replacing God in all revealed religions.⁵¹

My answer to this grandmother’s question about her grandchildren is: your grandchildren may be Jewish at the end of their K-12 Jewish Day School education, but they will not be the same kind of Jewish as you and your family were and the Judaism will not be Torah Judaism.

⁵¹ <https://www.thestandardsc.org/bill-connor/wokism-becoming-established-religion-of-america>

CHAPTER 3 THE CRISIS IN CATHOLIC DAY SCHOOLS

We must ask ourselves an important question: if Jewish Days Schools have been indoctrinated and are indoctrinating their children, how are Catholic Day Schools faring? The answer should not and will not surprise us. These schools are infected with the same toxicity. Wokeism, CRT, DEI, SEL are as dangerous to the doctrines of Catholicism as they are to those of Judaism.

The Church has a sophisticated, thorough and historically radical body of theology, teaching the universal dignity of all persons, and condemning racism as an intrinsic evil.

A true Catholic education shares common aims with families, knowing that they share the same and only purpose: the formation of the students in Catholicism's moral, intellectual and theological virtues. The place of Catholic parents has until now been within the framework of the Catholic education system. Their input and assistance were of paramount importance as was their knowledge of Catholicism. They brought their Catholic children to Catholic schools to have their religious beliefs and traditions reinforced and enhanced. The parents had the right to demand that and they were expected to discuss any problems which their children were experiencing.

But as Wokeism infiltrates schools, the relationship between school and parents is thrown into chaos. Woke education assaults Catholic education by replacing critical thinking with critical theory. The difference is significant and impactful.

The intent of critical thinking is to arrive at what is true. Therefore, a critical thinker welcomes every possible objection to his position in order to arrive at the truth through discussion or debate. Without this mental discipline, the desire to be correct easily corrupts our thought processes. However, the intent of critical theory has as its end, not truth but power. Dialogue and intellectual strength are required if one's aim is truth. Suppression of dissenting voices and coercion are demanded if one's aim is power. If critical thinking is the activity of the free man, then critical theory is the activity of the controlled and controlling man.⁵² Wokeism indoctrinates through the imposition of critical theory, which accepts only one truth or one answer. Reports of Woke indoctrination are coming out of

⁵² <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/woke-catholic-school>

respected Catholic Day Schools, such as Loyola Academy, outside of Chicago, where parents are now talking to one another about the swiftly-escalating political ideology pressing into all corners of their children's education.⁵³

High-paid DEI consultants were brought into Loyola Academy to train faculty and students. Teachers started to include their gender pronouns in Zoom meetings. Students were racially segregated by the DEI consultants for school assignments on "Privilege". A working-class student was baffled to learn that because of his skin color he is an "Oppressor" of his "Oppressed" peers, some of whom live in multi-million-dollar homes. Systemic Racism, based on skin color, entered this Catholic Day School through CRT and then DEI. There was no discussion encouraged, let alone allowed, between the diversity consultants and the student. The designation "Oppressor" was applied dictatorially by the consultants and remained unchallenged by the student. Imposed in this fashion upon the student, it introduced to the student's mind one key Woke tactic and a central Woke dogma. The tactic is to make people doubt their ability to interpret reality and plain language without a Woke expert guiding them to the approved interpretation. This is a perfect example of mind-control for the purpose of indoctrination.

The dogma is that there is no such thing as a universal principle. Most people understand that a principle must be applied universally if it is to be a principle at all. Undoing that moral understanding is done by design, and it is an essential step in reeducating people into the ideology. In a Catholic Day School, Woke Dogma is in direct opposition to Catholic Dogma and allows no opportunity for discussion or dissent.

Oppressor vs. Oppressed, based on skin color, is one of the strongest premises of CRT, DEI, and Woke Social Justice. Noelle Mering, the author of this article in the *National Catholic Register*, provides an excellent analysis of the conflict between Woke Social Justice and the Social Justice of the Catholic Church.

"Many parents at Catholic schools, from high schools to even some grammar schools, have been rightly sensing that there is something very unjust in this justice movement. Injustice can and should be fought, but

⁵³ Ibid.

why, they wonder, do the schools need to go beyond the canon of Catholic social teaching to address this?

The Church has a sophisticated, thorough and historically radical body of teaching — theological and philosophical — upholding the universal dignity of all persons, and condemning racism as an intrinsic evil. What do Woke consultants and Critical Theory add that the Church has not covered?

This question remains unanswered because it cannot be answered in an honest way. The truth is that critical theory does not add to the Church’s teaching. It assaults it in three fundamental ways.”

It is perhaps the explanation of how Wokeism assaults the Church’s teaching which provides us with the essence of the danger from this Marxist ideology, which is in essence atheist. It also shows us that there is a theological response to this ideological assault on society.⁵⁴

1. **“Rejection of the Person**

One, it is not oriented to the flourishing of the individual, but rather to the flourishing of the ideology. Consequently, it is inevitably out of harmony with the natural parental desire for the flourishing of their child. In a Wokist institution, parents are a threat to the school’s mission.

A truly Catholic education shares common aims with families, knowing that they share the same purpose: the formation of the students in the moral, intellectual and theological virtues of Catholicism. But as schools get Woke, prioritizing ideological power over human flourishing, that relationship between school and parents is thrown into chaos.

2. **Rejection of Reason**

Second, Woke education assaults Catholic education by replacing critical thinking with critical theory.

3. **Rejection of Reverence**

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Finally, the Catholic Church and Wokeism have fundamentally irreconcilable definitions of the human person. What it means to be human is traditionally answered by looking to universals, with a reliance on a shared humanity. Theologically, the Church defines a human person in relationship to the love of God.

In contrast, the Woke define each person in relationship to the evil of society. Rather than invited into familial intimacy, we are defined into opposition — as victim or perpetrator or some combination of the two.”

Wokeism is defined or referred to as an ideology, i.e. “a set of ideas, beliefs and attitudes, consciously or unconsciously held, which reflects or shapes understandings or misconceptions of the social, political, [and religious] world. It serves to recommend, justify or endorse collective action aimed at preserving or changing political practices and institutions, [including religious]. The concept of ideology is split almost irreconcilably between two major senses. The first is pejorative, denoting particular, historically distorted (political) thought which reinforces certain relationships of domination and in respect of which ideology functions as a critical unmasking concept. The second is a non-pejorative assertion about the different families of cultural symbols and ideas [which] human beings employ in perceiving, comprehending and evaluating social and political realities in general, often within a systemic framework.”⁵⁵ I added in brackets the word “religious” because Wokeism is anti-revealed Religion - anti-Judaism and anti-Christianity. Wokeism is anti-Semitic. However, it cannot be anti-Islam, just as CRT, DEI, SEL, BLM, and Ethnic Studies are anti-Semitic but cannot be anti-Muslim, because Muslims are considered POCs – People of Color and they are part of the category of Oppressed. However, and this is an important **however**, they must by definition be anti-Christian because white Christians fit into the issue of “white privilege” and belong to the category of Oppressors. Just as CRT and Ethnic Studies created the category of Jews of Color, they will by necessity have to create the designation of Christians of Color to fit into the category of Oppressed.

Catholic Day Schools are a danger to the Marxist takeover of America by Wokeism, just as the Jewish Day Schools are a danger. The Religious Day School system, regardless of affiliation, has been successfully targeted by proponents of Wokeism. Unfortunately, in my research I have found that the Catholic Day Schools,

⁵⁵ [Ideology - Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)

including cleric and lay leadership, parents and concerned teachers, have been far more open about the infiltration of Wokeism than have been their counterparts in the Jewish Day School system.

An article, published in the Catholic World Report,⁵⁶ openly and objectively discusses what American Catholics now face in society and in their Catholic Day School system. Scholars and lay people alike have noted that “Woke” ideology, which views inequality as an intolerable evil caused by pervasive racism, sexism, homophobia, and the like, has taken on a religious quality: it defines good and evil, explains life and the world, and tells us what we should aspire to and how we should act. It also tells us what we are no longer free to reject Woke ideology based on the theology of our religion.

According to the author of this article, Wokeism is also aggressive and intolerant. These qualities make it worrisome for Catholics. For the most part, the worry has more to do with its manner and ultimate logic than with the basic concerns to which it has appealed. To the extent that the latter have to do with actual injustice and the hope of improving people’s lives, they, like many other left-wing concerns, can easily be shared by Catholics. This is an important observation because it implies, correctly so, that there can be a compromise on acceptance of topics but not on their implementation.

Wokeism has now permeated all significant social, academic, political and religious institutions. An aspect of its strength is the difficulty of contesting any Wokist agenda in public discussion. Wokist controls are aimed, among other things, at beliefs and attitudes. Woke ideology requires suppression of Wokist-forbidden thoughts and of those who harbor them. These are defined in ever more far-reaching ways, so much so that it becomes difficult to avoid the conclusion that people generally cannot be trusted with important decisions. In spite of the talk of equality and liberation, Wokist ideology ultimately means rule by a small number of people, who alone supposedly have the superior knowledge, intelligence, and virtue needed to define which views are correct. As always, making abstract principles absolute means tyranny.

In both goals and methods, Wokist ideology reflects that of a technocratic society, one controlled by the government or by a cadre of technocratic elitists. Wokeism sets itself a single abstract and a mathematical goal: equality, and treats social

⁵⁶ <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2020/11/18/critical-race-theory-comes-to-church-and-my-childrens-catholic-schools//>

institutions and human relations as technical means for maximizing that goal. Human beings and their lives are malleable raw materials to be molded, like products of a social machine, and if the results are not what is wanted or needed, then redesign and tighter controls are needed. All these things mean no place for the Church as an independent authority and actor.

James Kalb, the author of this article, presents a crystal clear analysis of where the Church is in the battle with and against Wokeism and what role the Catholic Day School system must play in this battle.

“The social machine becomes all in all, so the Church, as in communist countries, must assimilate or be crushed. She is an historical institution, and all historical institutions are tainted, so she like the rest must be radically transformed on ideological grounds. And very likely many well-placed Catholics would be perfectly happy to have her assimilate. All of which confirms yet again that now is no time for mediocrity or concern for worldly powers. We want to be Catholic, and that puts us at odds with attempts to reconstruct human life to realize a secular absolute. We have our own very different absolute and far more respect for human nature and particularities. But we also want to be comfortable and respected. A technocratic society won’t let us have both, so we must choose.”

An article, titled “Catholic Schools and the Woke Revolution”, published in 2021 in a series of articles called *The Catholic Thing*, provides an exceptional study of the history of Catholic Day School education.⁵⁷ David G Bonagura, Jr., its author, explains how Catholic education in America was completely changed by the cultural upheavals of the late 1960s. Catholic colleges threw out their core curricula, which typically included multiple semesters of philosophy and theology courses for all students and replaced them with a “choose whatever you want” program of elective studies. Catholic high schools and grammar schools replaced solid catechetical instruction in the faith with an amorphous “all religions are the same, faith is all about feeling” approach to Catholicism.

⁵⁷ [Catholic Schools and the Woke Revolution - The Catholic Thing](#)

In my opinion, this is not yet Wokeism but it is definitely Globalism. Now, the Catholic Church and the Catholic Education system, from K-12 through higher education are under assault. It remains to be seen what the Church, its lay leadership, its teachers and administrators, and most important, its constituents will do.

The results of Globalism on the Church have been devastating. For fifty years, the American Catholic Church has experienced a precipitous drop in Mass attendance, vocations, devotion, and basic understanding of the faith. There are no signs that this downward trend will flatten or reverse itself. Now Wokist upheavals threaten to make Catholic education indistinguishable from public education. The changes, which the Woke Revolution seeks, would not upset the structure of Catholic schools as happened fifty years ago. Rather, the Woke Revolution demands changes within existing curricula, which would replace whatever is left of Catholic identity and of Catholic social thought with noxious secular ideologies that seek not the Kingdom of God, but the Kingdom of Men and Women at War with their Creator.⁵⁸

What then is the solution for stopping and reversing the impact of Wokeism and its ideology on Catholicism and its theology? I have found an interview, which seems to provide not only the solution but also the person to lead the theological battle to secure not only the Church from the scourge of Wokeism but also the entirety of its education system: K-12 Catholic Day Schools and Catholic academic institutions.

On November 4, 2023, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, gave an important speech⁵⁹ in a videotaped address for the upcoming 23rd Catholic and Public Life Congress in Madrid. The Congress focused on political correctness and “the dangers of this mega-ideology,” such as preventing debate and limiting freedoms. Archbishop Gomez spoke on “the rise of new secular ideologies and movements for social change in the United States and the implications for the Catholic Church.”

The Church needs to understand these movements “as pseudo-religions, and even replacements and rivals to traditional Christian beliefs,” he said, because “they claim to offer what religion provides.” With this statement the Archbishop

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ [Archbishop Gomez: The church must confront ‘woke’ social justice movements that aim to ‘cancel’ Christian beliefs | America Magazine](#)

has confirmed the position of Wokeism as America's new religion. "With the breakdown of the Judeo-Christian worldview and the rise of secularism, political belief systems based on social justice or personal identity have come to fill the space that Christian belief and practice once occupied," he said. "We all know that while there are unique conditions in the United States, similar broad patterns of aggressive secularization have long been at work in Spain and elsewhere in Europe. An elite leadership class has risen in our countries that has little interest in religion and no real attachments to the nations they live in or to local traditions or cultures."

"There is no need for old-fashioned belief systems and religions. In fact, as they see it, religion, especially Christianity, only gets in the way of the society they hope to build. Secularization means "de-Christianization," as many Popes have pointed out. For years now, there has been a deliberate effort in Europe and America to erase the Christian roots of society and to suppress any remaining Christian influences. [] Today's critical theories and ideologies are profoundly atheistic. They deny the soul, the spiritual, transcendent dimension of human nature; or they think that it is irrelevant to human happiness. They reduce what it means to be human to essentially physical qualities -- the color of our skin, our sex, our notions of gender, our ethnic background or our position in society...[] The Catholic Church must "understand and engage" these movements as "dangerous substitutes for true religion."

Finally, Archbishop Gomez's remarks, made on November 23rd ⁶⁰, show that he not only understands the message but also has the answer. His answer is for the Catholics but it is definitely for the Jews as well: 'I believe the best way for the Church to understand the new social justice movements, is to understand them as pseudo-religions, and even replacements and rivals to traditional Christian beliefs.' He warned of a turning point in history, saying that "for most of our history, the story that gave meaning to our lives was rooted in a biblical worldview and the values of our Judeo-Christian heritage. It was the story of the human person created in God's image and invested with an earthly vocation to build a society where people could live in freedom, with equality and dignity."

CONCLUSION

⁶⁰ [Archbishop Gomez's Message Against Woke 'Pseudo-Religions' Resonates with Bishops | National Catholic Register \(ncregister.com\)](https://www.ncregister.com/Archbishop-Gomez-s-Message-Against-Woke-Pseudo-Religions-Resonates-with-Bishops)

In my opinion, the impact of Wokeism on all religious day schools cannot and should not be underestimated. That impact, whether on Jewish or Catholic Day Schools, is two-fold.

First, it undermines and corrupts the theology of Judaism and of Christianity, regardless of denominations. It removes the foundations which are essential for shaping and developing our children's morals and ethics. It undermines their basic beliefs in God and questions the role of religion in dealing with issues of social justice. In Jewish Day Schools, it teaches that Judaism is a religion of Systemic Racism and that Jewish students must feel embarrassment and even shame at being Jewish. In Catholic Day Schools, it presents Wokeism as taking the place of the family and removes Catholic theology as the source of ethics and morality. Wokeism substitutes the tenets CRT and DEI for Jewish and Christian tenets. Wokeism leads students into the pathway of Atheism. In addition, Wokeism's anti-Semitism, added to Medieval Christian/Catholic anti-Semitism, inflames and indoctrinates.

Second, it is a direct attack on the Judeo-Christian Foundation of our Country and therefore a powerful assault on our Constitution and our form of Government.

Together, Wokeism leads our students and religious school system into Atheism and Communism.

However, if we listen closely to Archbishop Gomez, we will hear his message to both Catholics and Jews:

My Catholic Children: Put Jesus back into your life and your Catholicism

My Jewish Children: Put the Torah back into your life and your Judaism.