

Paul Kivel's Newsletter

Spring 2014



A Note from Paul

Dear People,

My new book, *Living in the Shadow of the Cross* is now available in print and digital formats, at bookstores and on the web. I've done a couple dozen interviews, book talks and workshops recently and the response has been very positive, although not without the usual kinds of resistance and defensiveness.

Loads of resources, including sections of the book, articles, video clips of workshops, bibliography and links can be found at - www.christianhegemony.org - where you can also order the book at a discounted price.

I will be traveling in the coming months to publicize the book. If you'd like to help arrange a talk, workshop, or training in your area please let me know.

Below you will find my current travel schedule. I am also looking for help with reviews (a couple lines on Amazon would be great), email lists, online publicity and blog connections. I appreciate any help you can provide in getting the word out.

To challenge Christian hegemony we must decolonize our minds. The following set of affirmations offers some suggestions for beginning this personal process.

As always, my tremendous appreciation to all those who have supported the Christian Hegemony Project over the last few years.

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In love and struggle,
Paul

What is Christian Hegemony?

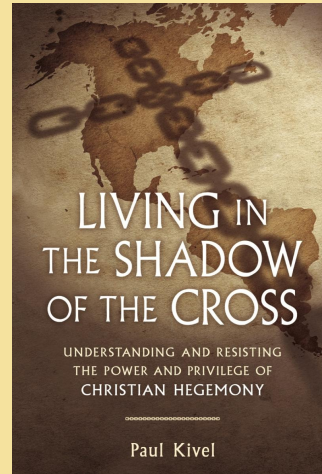
I define Christian hegemony as the everyday, systematic set of Christian values, individuals and institutions that dominate all aspects of US society. Nothing is unaffected.

Christian dominance is a complex and shifting system that benefits all Christians, those raised Christian and those passing as Christian. However, the concentration of power and wealth accumulates to a predominantly Christian power elite. All others experience exploitation and constant vulnerability to violence.

This dominance operates on several levels. First is the subtle internalization of Christian beliefs by individuals. The behavior and voting patterns of millions of people in the United States are influenced by concepts such as original sin, manifest destiny, the existence of "the one truth" contained within Christianity and the notion that humans were given dominion over the earth.

The social, political and economic (as opposed to spiritual) power that individual clergy exert on people's lives is another level of impact. Many clergy condone US expansionism, missionary activity towards non-Christians and exclusion of groups deemed sinful or dangerous.

[Click here for more about the Christian Hegemony Project.](#)



To visit publications page
[click here.](#)

Upcoming Appearances

WISCONSIN:

If you are at the White Privilege conference or in the **Madison, Wisconsin** area **March 26-29** drop by my workshops on Christian Hegemony, visit me at my exhibit space, or attend a reading at Rainbow Books (**Wednesday, March 26th at 7pm** located at 426 W. Gilman St in Madison).

NEW YORK, MASSACHUSETTS AND PHILADELPHIA:

New York - April 6th - Workshop on Christian Hegemony

Co-hosted by Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ) and the Arab American Association of New York

Time: 2-5pm

Location: Union Temple, 17 Eastern Parkway, 3rd Floor Social Hall

Boston - April 7th - Reading at Trident Books

Time: 7pm

Location: 338 Newbury St., Boston

New York - April 8th - Workshop on Christian Hegemony

Hosted by Connect

Time: 6-8pm

Location: 127 W 127th, rm. 432.

New York - April 9th - Book Talk

Hosted by the Interfaith Center of New York

Time:12-1pm

Location: 475 Riverside Dr., 5th fl.

New York - April 9th- Reading at Bluestockings

Time: 7pm

Location: 172 Allen St. NYC

Philadelphia - April 10th - Reading at Wooden Shoe Books

Time: 7-9pm

Location: 701 South St., Philadelphia

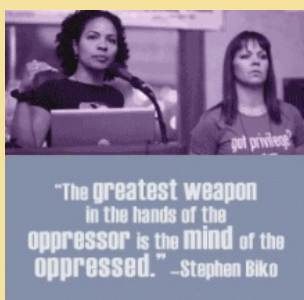
GREAT BRITAIN:

In early May (**approx. May 1-10**) I will be doing talks, workshops and conversation in Great Britain for about 10 days, mostly in London, Glasgow, Leeds and points in-between. I should have a detailed itinerary soon. Please let me know if you have contacts there and let people there know I'm coming.

INDIANA:

If you're at the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Ed (NCORE) in Indianapolis on **May 28-30** stop by my author's talk or the panel on white men as allies on the **29th** or the all-day workshop on Christian Hegemony on the **30th** which I'll be co-facilitating with Amer Ahmed. I'll also have an exhibit space for books and conversation.

I look forward to meeting up with many of you on my travels.



Publication Information

The Language of Christian Dominance - Updated Edition - available in April 2014!

by Paul Kivel

... people in Western cultures do not realize the extent to which their ... attitudes have been conditioned since early childhood by the power of words to ennoble or condemn, augment or detract, glorify or demean. Negative language infects the subconscious of most Western people from the time they first learn to speak. Prejudice is not merely imparted or superimposed. It is metabolized in the bloodstream of society.[1]

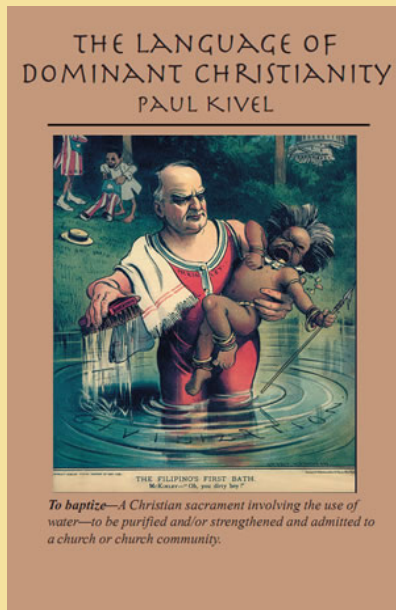
The language we use is an indication of deep structures in our thinking. The vocabulary, phrasings and both explicit and implicit meaning of English words and concepts reflect our long history and the influence of many ideas from both dominant and resistant groups.

When presented with Antonio de Nebrija's Spanish Gramática, the first-ever grammar of a modern European language in 1492, Queen Isabella asked the scholar, "What is it for?" Nebrija reportedly answered, "Language is the perfect instrument of empire."⁷

The ruling elites of Christendom well knew the truth of Nebrija's statement. From the collapse of the Roman Empire to the Protestant Reformation and the introduction of the printing press in the mid-fifteenth century, literacy was unavailable to the general population and only a few clergy could read and write. Mass was said in Latin, which non-formally-educated people could not understand. Modern European languages developed in a culture deeply influenced by Christian values. Many words of Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Egyptian or indigenous European origin were altered or overlaid with Christian meanings.

This pamphlet is about how words and phrases develop out of assumptions about how the world works, what is valuable and how we should live. The meanings encoded in the words and phrases represent deeper levels of thought and belief. Dominant Christianity has used words to normalize what is, and to limit our imagination about what could be.

[1] Norman Cousins. "The Environment of Language." Saturday Review, April 8, 1967, p. 36



THE LANGUAGE OF DOMINANT CHRISTIANITY: Updated Edition

Available for purchase at:

<http://christianhegemony.org/publications>

Groups Resisting Christian Hegemony

Organizations listed below are in the midst of powerful work reflecting on and resisting Christian Hegemony. Follow the links for more information:

[Americans United for Separation of
Church and State](#)



[Religion Dispatches](#)



The Network of Spiritual Progressives



Political Research Associates



Progressive Christianity



Altnet - altnet.org

Altmuslim - patheos.com/blogs/altmuslim

American Atheist - atheists.org

Challenging Christian Zionism - christianzionism.org

Faith in Public Life - faithinpubliclife.org

Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) - fairuk.org

Freedom From Religion Foundation - ffrf.org

Geez magazine - geezmagazine.org

Islamophobia Watch - islamophobia-watch.com

Jesus Radicals - jesusradicals.com

Jews on First - jewsonfirst.org

Military Religious Freedom Foundation - militaryreligiousfreedom.org

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life - pewforum.org

Religion Clause - religionclause.blogspot.ca

Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice - rcrc.org

Religious Right Alert - religiousrightalert.ca

Religious Tolerance - religioustolerance.org

The Revealer: a Daily Review of Religion and Media - therevealer.org

Texas Freedom Network - tfn.org

Sojourners magazine - sojo.net/magazine

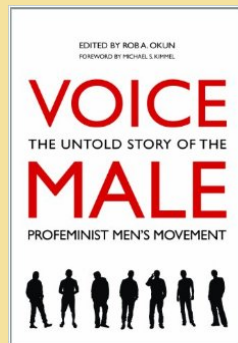
Talk2Action - talk2action.org

Tikkun magazine - tikkun.org

UU World - uuworld.org

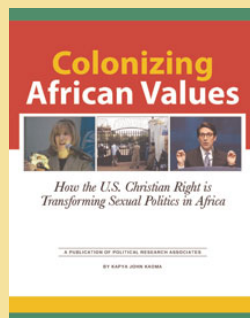
Yes magazine - yesmagazine.org

This month we are also featuring the following texts:



**Voice Male:
The Untold Story of the
Profeminist Men's Movement**

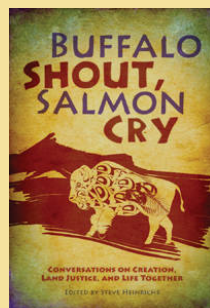
by Rob A. Okun
Interlink, 2014



**Colonizing African Values:
How the U.S. Christian Right is transforming
Sexual Politics in Africa**

by Kapyia John Kaoma
Political Research Associates, 2012

For more: <http://www.politicalresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/10/Colonizing-African-Values.pdf>



**Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry:
Conversations on Creation,
Land Justice and Life Together**

by Steve Heinrichs
Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 2013

