Awake Thou That Sleepest: The Wokeism That Matter

Saturday, October 21, 2023

2023 West Michigan Grace Bible Conference

A Short History Of The Word “Woke”

- According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*:
  - “1. Awake; not (or no longer) asleep.” So being “woke” is the opposite of being asleep.
  - “2. Figurative and in figurative contexts. Originally: in a state of awareness or vigilance; spec. well-informed, up-to-date. Now chiefly: alert to racial or social discrimination and injustice. Frequently in stay woke (often used as an exhortation).”
- According to a July 19, 2023, article written by Domenico Montanaro for NPR the term “woke” originated within “Black culture,” in order to convey the idea of “being politically conscious and aware.”

A Short History Of The Word “Woke”

- Google extends the meaning of “woke” to include LGBT rights with the following definition:
  - “Woke is an adjective derived from African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) meaning "alert to racial prejudice and discrimination". Beginning in the 2010s, it came to encompass a broader awareness of social inequalities such as racial justice, sexism and LGBT rights.” (Google)
- After providing definitions that are very similar to the ones outlined above Merrian-Webster.com provides the following definition under the heading, “disapproving:” “politically liberal or progressive (as in matters of racial and social justice) especially in a way that is considered unreasonable or extreme.” (Merrian-Webster)

A Short History Of The Word “Woke”

- Personal Illustration
- Generally, the word in modern parlance includes concepts of social and racial justice the entire LGBTQ+ agenda as well as extreme environmentalism.
- How did we get to the place where the issues commonly associated with the word “woke” were commonplace within our society?

Untangling The Terminology Matrix

- Wokeism in all its forms is based upon something called Critical Theory which is a more recent recast of Conflict Theory first enunciated by Karl Marx.
- Marxian Conflict Theory can be summarized as follows:
- Society = Different classes competing for limited/scare resources.
- Haves vs Have Notes; Capitalists vs Workers; Bourgeoisie vs Proletariat.
- Have Notes/Workers—rise up and overthrow their oppressors = Dictatorship of the Proletariat.
- Classless Society—all things held in common.

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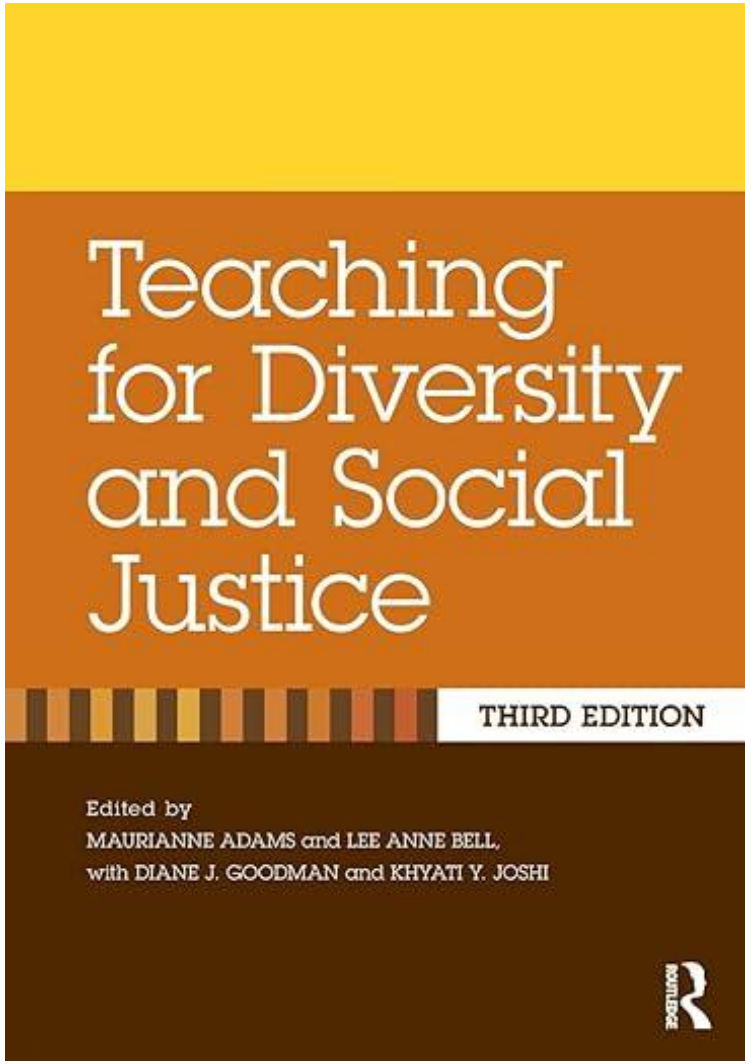
- Except for the Russian Revolution these Marxian Revolutions did not occur in the manner that Marx forecasted. This caused some Marxists intellectuals in Frankfurt, Germany (Frankfurt School) to rework Marx's Conflict Theory into what is known today Critical Theory.
- Critical Theory = reworked Conflict Theory of Marx.
- Oppressors vs Oppressed
- Hegemony—". . . developed this concept to explain how domination and control not only through coercion, but also through the voluntary consent of both the oppressed and their oppressors to maintain the status quo. Gramsci redefined hegemony as "a complex interlocking of political, social, and cultural forces [i.e., education, law, politics, economics, and religion.]." (Baucham, xiii)

Untangling The Terminology Matrix

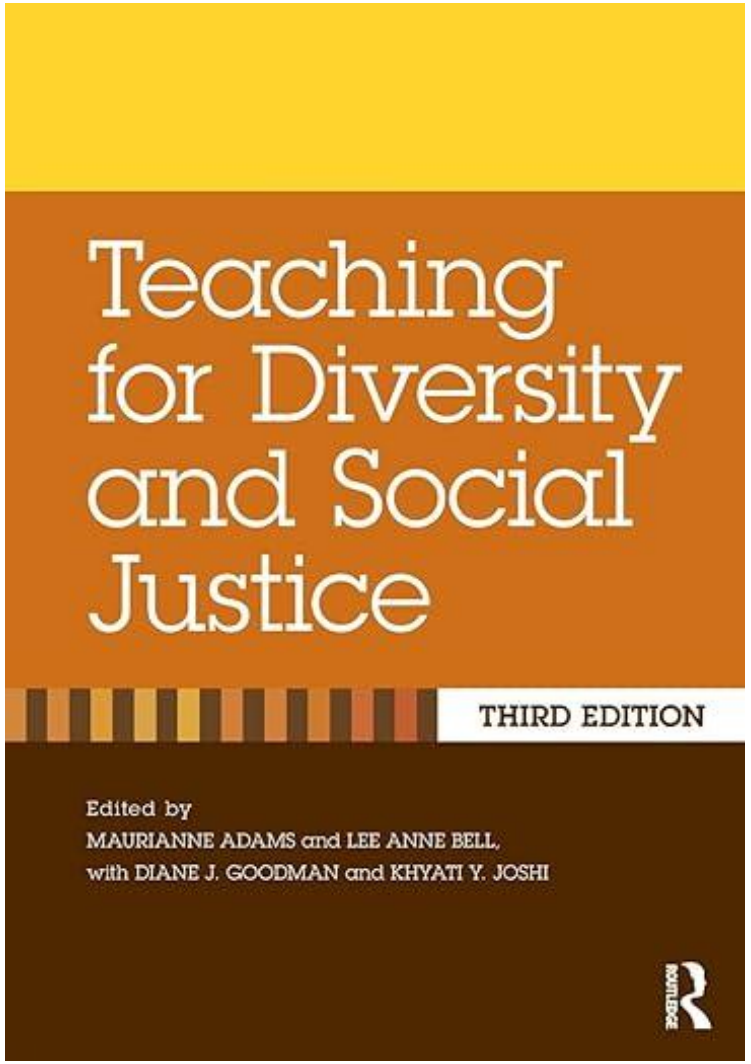
- According to Critical Theory, “hegemony” is what takes place when a dominant group imposes its ideology on the rest of society. The application of Critical Theory to society has become known as Critical Social Justice (CSJ).
  - CRT = Critical Theory applied to race.
- According to Voddie T. Baucham, author of Fault Lines: The Social Justice Movement & Evangelism Loom Catastrophe the CSJ mindset extends the concept of “hegemonic power” to all of the following:
  - “. . . white, male, heterosexual, cisgendered, able-bodied, native-born, and Christian.” (Baucham, 207)

Untangling The Terminology Matrix



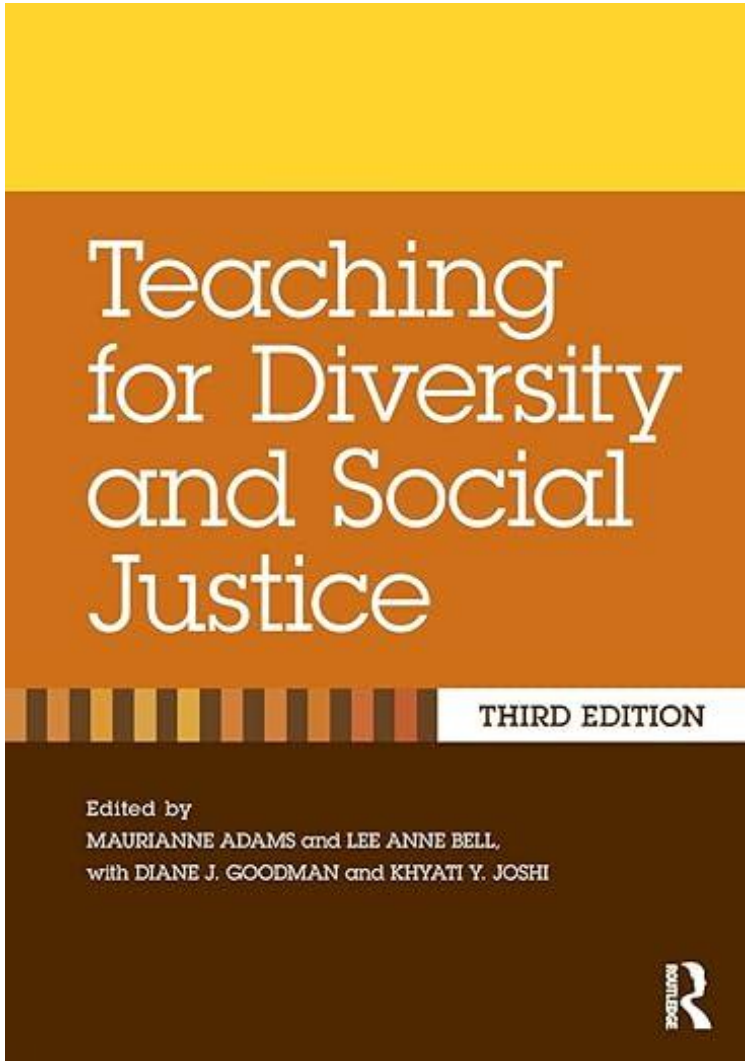
- "*Christian hegemony* refers to the dominance of Christian observances, hold days, and places of worship without regard for those of non-Christians. In the U.S., Christian hegemony refers to normalized Christian norms that are accepted as intrinsic to our national identity, even as a test of patriotism." (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 256)

Untangling The Terminology Matrix



- "*Christian privilege* refers to the social advantages held by Christians in the U.S. who experience social and cultural advantages relative to non-Christians. Having privilege with respect to normative Christianity means participation in "the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules." Christian privilege is generally unacknowledged by those who hold it, because it is maintained through the pervasive but largely invisible culture of normative religious practices." (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 256)

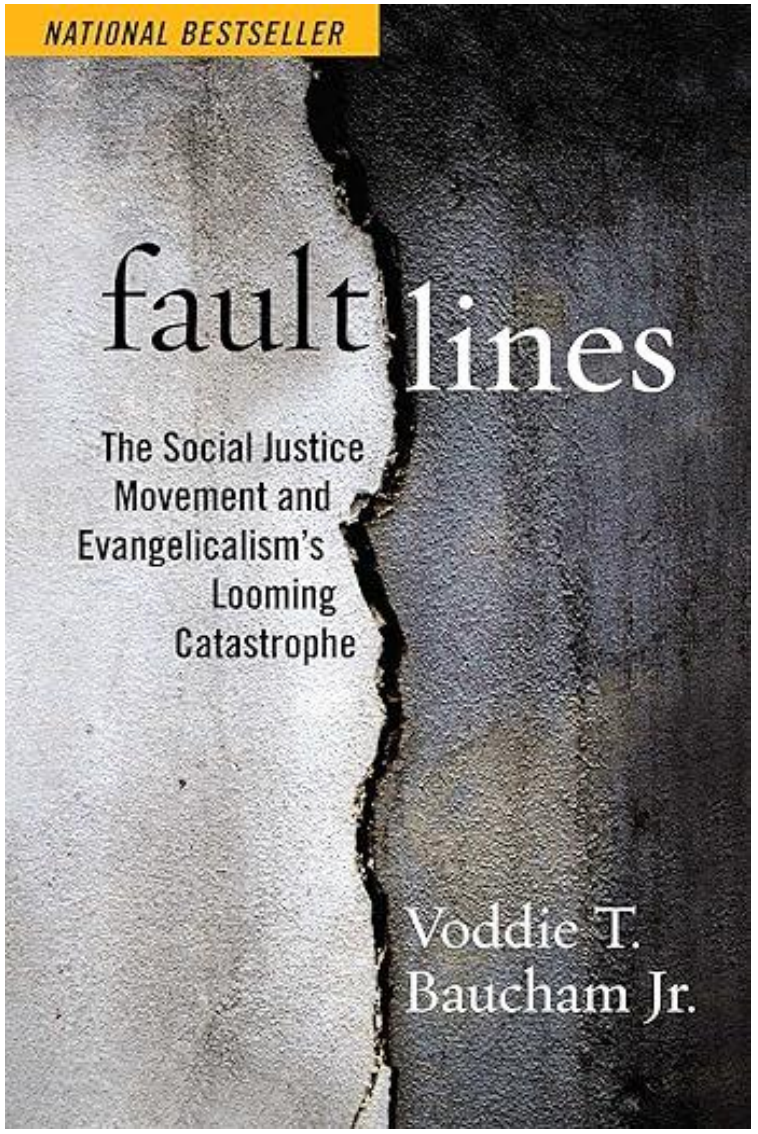
Untangling The Terminology Matrix



- "**The significance of Christianity in U.S. life and the challenges it poses for minority religions is a social justice issue** that requires the kind of historical knowledge and structural/cultural analysis we use to understand **other forms of oppression that stand in the way of social justice**." (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 255)

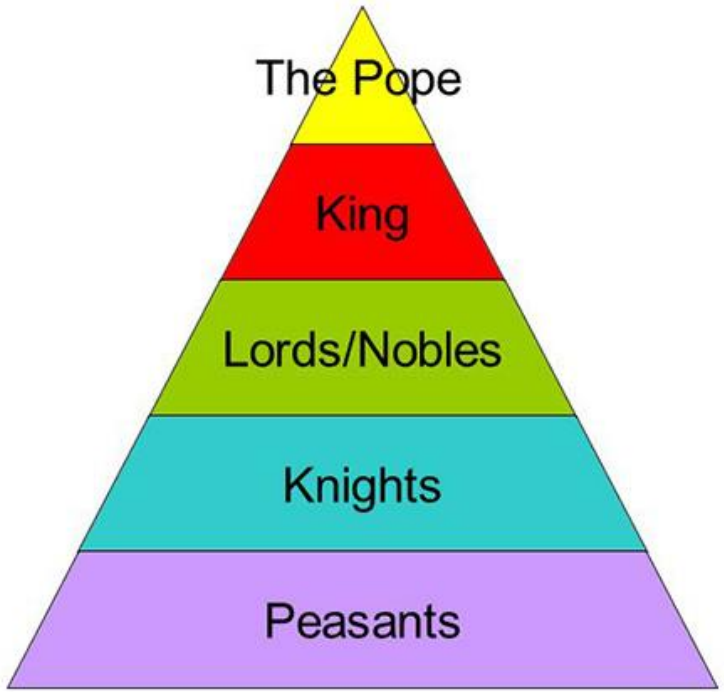
Untangling The Terminology Matrix

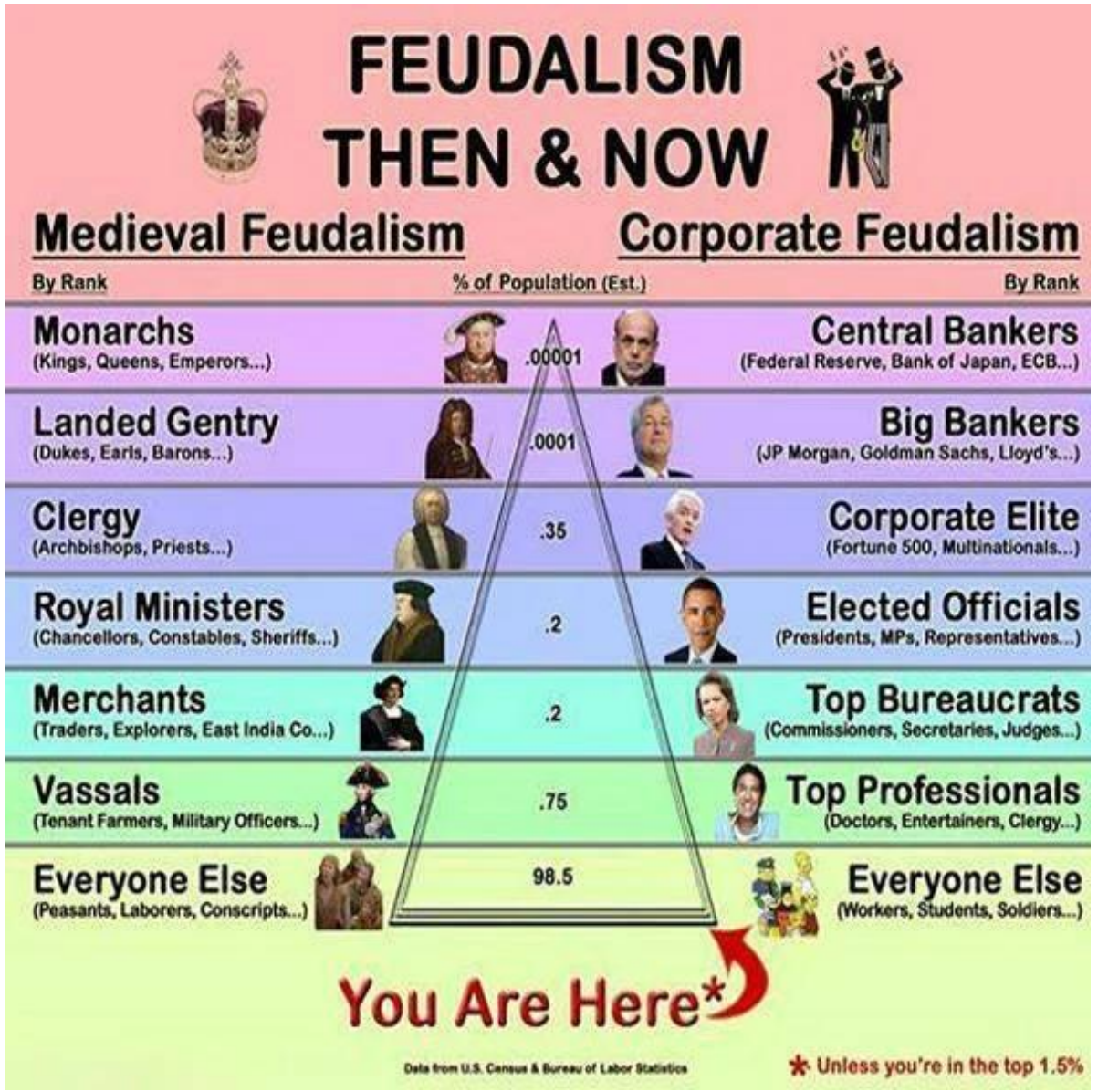
- “In other words, substitute “Christian” for “white” and “people of color” for “other religions,” then apply the exact same CSJ definitions, principles, standards, and approaches in order to deliver the oppressed form their oppressors. Houston, we have a problem.” (Baucham, 209)



Refeudalization & Cancel Culture

Feudal Europe Power Pyramid





Biblical Wokeism

- Recall from the beginning of this message that “woke” means “awake,” according to the OED.
- The Bible never uses the word “woke” but it does use similar words.
  - Wake
  - Awake
- The King James Bible uses the word “wake” 4 times in 4 verses.
  - Jeremiah 51:39, 57—used in the context of God’s judgment of Babylon.
  - I Thessalonians 5:10—used in the context of being alive as opposed to dead.
  - Joel 3:9—used in the context of waking up the men of war to prepare for battle.
- Meanwhile the word “awake” used 42 times in 32 verses in the King James Bible. It is used in a variety of different contexts in the Old Testament.

Biblical Wokeism

- Romans 13:11-14—Paul instructs the body of Christ to “awake out of sleep” and “cast off the works of darkness” and “put on the armour of light.”
  - I Thessalonians 5:4-11—we are to be “woke” in the sense of not being asleep at the switch but rather watchful and sober knowing what is going on and the times in which we live.
- I Corinthians 15:4—Paul commands the body of Christ to be “awake” (imperative commend) when it comes to righteous living.
  - Romans 16:19—how much time do we spend focusing on what is wrong versus what is right?
- Ephesians 5:14—Paul’s commend to the body of Christ to “awake” is an illusion to similar calls issued to Israel in the prophets.
  - Isaiah 51:17; 52:1; 60:1
- Ephesians 5:8-16—the body of Christ is not to partake in the darkness with the lost. Rather we are command to redeem the time because the days in which we live are evil.

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