

Duquesne University

Duquesne Scholarship Collection

Hallowed Secularism

The Collective Works of Bruce Ledewitz, Adrian
Van Kaam C.S.Sp. Endowed Chair in Scholarly
Excellence and Professor of Law

12-14-2018

December 14, 2018: What Will Post-Christianity Look Like?

Bruce Ledewitz

Duquesne University, ledewitz@duq.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism>



Part of the [Constitutional Law Commons](#), and the [Law and Philosophy Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Ledewitz, B. (2018). December 14, 2018: What Will Post-Christianity Look Like?. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/1213>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the The Collective Works of Bruce Ledewitz, Adrian Van Kaam C.S.Sp. Endowed Chair in Scholarly Excellence and Professor of Law at Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in Hallowed Secularism by an authorized administrator of Duquesne Scholarship Collection. For more information, please contact beharyr@duq.edu.

Title: What Will Post-Christianity Look Like?

Date: 2018-12-14T06:27:00.000-05:00

12/14/2018—I guess I should ask, what does it look like, since we are already in it. The answer of course is that we don't know. But Ross Douthat is wrong about one direction in may take. Douthat wrote a column about paganism, which refers to Steven Smith's new book contrasting Christianity—transcendent religion—with paganism—imminent religion: *Pagans & Christians in the City*. It's a replay, says Smith, of an old story. Tony Kronman told a similar story in *Confessions of a Born-Again Pagan*. But notice that both Smith and Kronman leave out a much simpler possibility—a secularized version of Christianity itself. This is something of the effort Tom Krattenmaker is taking up in his 2016 book, *Confessions of a Secular Jesus Follower*. Krattenmaker describes that effort as “translating the language of Christianity to make it accessible, meaningful, and believable to me.” Now why does Douthat leave this out? Why do Smith and Kronman? In the case of Douthat and Smith, it is because they are traditional Christians. Paganism is no threat, but any sort of transformed Christianity would be—or so they might think. Tragically, they are not asking the question Paul asked, the question that Dietrich Bonhoeffer asked, “What is God saying now?” Douthat in fact already has named the movements of this direction a Christian heresy in his book, *Bad Religion*. In Kronman's case, it is the opposite problem. He is Jewish and has never known Jesus. He thinks he knows Christianity and is reacting against it. But he has no experience of the greatness of Christianity. If I remember his book, which I need to look at again, Christianity is a comic book. No, there is no pagan revival. Any religious movement today will be Christianized or anti-Christian. In other words, Jesus is the starting point. An imminent Christianity, but with the magical imminence of Alfred North Whitehead and the being of Heidegger. Something like that. Pretending Christianity never happened is sort of ridiculous.