Another example of how the culture wars are over — or, at least, radically different — is found in the politics of higher education. The culture wars that dominated discussions of higher education in the 1980s and 1990s had enduring historical significance. Shouting matches about academia reverberated beyond the ivory tower to lay bare a crisis of national faith. Was America a good nation? Could the nation be good — could its people be free — without foundations? Were such foundations best provided by a classic liberal education in the humanities, which Matthew Arnold described as "the best that has been thought and said"? Was the "best" philosophy and literature synonymous with the canon of Western Civilization? Or was the Western canon racist and sexist? Was the "best" even a valid category? How, exactly, should Americans think?

Debates over these abstract questions rocked the nation's institutions of higher education during the heyday of the culture wars. But in our current age of neoliberalism, Americans are not asked to think about such questions at all.

Neoliberalism, which prioritizes economic utility over a commitment to the public good and is so pervasive that it is touted by politicians ranging from right-wingers like Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker to liberals like President Obama, is fine with revised canons. Neoliberalism is fine with more inclusive, multicultural understandings of the world — a position at the left edges of the culture wars during the 1980s and 1990s. But neoliberalism is not fine with public money going to support something so seemingly useless as the humanities. In the age of neoliberalism, people who call themselves conservatives, often the most ardent supporters of the humanities in the 1980s and 1990s, have abandoned their traditionalist defense of the Western canon in favor of no canon at all. Capitalism, in this way and many more, is swamping the culture wars.

Response to Andrew Hartman

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I am grateful to Andrew Hartman for his thoughtful and generous review of *Defenders of the Unborn*. The review accurately captures the central argument of my book and its contribution to the field. As Hartman

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noted, my book's central claim is that there was a vibrant pro-life movement before *Roe v. Wade* and that the broadly based appeal of that movement was primarily due to its liberal political orientation. *Roe*, along with other related political developments of the 1970s, pushed the pro-life movement to the political right, a shift that was accelerated when evangelicals became a dominant voice in the movement after 1980. I think that Hartman found much of this argument persuasive, but he did raise several thoughtful questions that deserve a response.

Question 1: Did I exaggerate the appeal that the pre-*Roe* pro-life movement had outside of Catholic circles? Hartman and I would agree that the pro-life movement of the early 1970s was overwhelmingly Catholic. The largest state pro-life organization, New York Right to Life, was 85% Catholic in 1972. Even as late as 1980, 70% of National Right to Life Committee members were Catholic. For that reason, my book is primarily the story of Catholics. But, as I point out, Catholic pro-lifers were able to forge a larger coalition by promoting Protestants to positions of national leadership in their organizations and by invoking liberal principles that appealed to non-Catholics. Catholics had not done this in their campaigns against contraception, but they did do it with abortion. As a result, they won important legislative victories in many states where Catholics were not a major presence.

Question 2: Were the Catholic pro-lifers of the 1960s and early 1970s really liberals? This depends on how one defines the word "liberal." As Hartman noted (and as I pointed out in my book), most pro-lifers of the early 1970s eschewed second-wave feminism and held a view of gender that had not been accepted by anyone in the feminist movement — even "difference" feminists — for nearly a century. Yet in their advocacy of the welfare state, they were often to the left of other New Deal Democrats, and they framed their opposition to abortion in the liberal rhetoric of universal human rights. They also sometimes linked their defense of the fetus's right to life with other human life causes of the left, such as opposition to the Vietnam War. The Catholic pro-lifers of the early 1970s were certainly different sorts of liberals than Betty Friedan or Shirley Chisholm were, but I don't think that we can fully understand their message or its lasting appeal unless we recognize that it was grounded in a Catholic social welfare liberalism that was allied with the values of the New Deal, the Great Society, and, in some measure, the antiwar movement.

In fact, it is precisely because the pro-life movement originated as a *liberal* human rights campaign that it has come into such conflict with

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the pro-choice movement. As Hartman acknowledged in the concluding paragraph of his review, the pro-life and pro-choice movements have both invoked competing human rights claims. Because both movements view their human rights claims as universal and inviolable, compromise has appeared elusive. Quite likely, abortion politics in the United States would not be so polarizing if the two sides in the debate had not each grounded their claims in a similar version of postwar liberal human rights ideology. But this is a counter-factual. All we can say for certain is that each side in the debate owes its origin in part to the intellectual currents of 20th century American liberal ideology, and that the competing human rights claims that this ideology has produced have continued to polarize the nation for nearly half a century.

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