



By

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George Yancey (PhD, University of Texas) is professor of sociology at the University of North Texas, specializing in race/ethnicity, biracial families and anti-Christian bias. He is the author, coauthor or coeditor of books such as *Compromising Scholarship: Religious and Political Bias in American Higher Education*, *Dehumanizing Christians: Cultural Competition in a Multicultural World*, *There Is No God: Atheists in America*, *Beyond Black and White*, *Beyond Racial Gridlock* and *Just Don't Marry One*. He is working to start the first academic unit on a secular campus that focuses on research that serves Christians and Christian organizations. ([InterVarsity Press author introduction](#))

Dr. Yancey's new book, *Hostile Environment: Understanding and Responding to Anti-Christian Bias*, is important for all Christians to read because it explores the growing anti-Christian bias in our society. Yancey calls it 'Christianophobia;' defined as 'an irrational animosity towards or hatred of Christians, or Christianity in general.' (Macmillan Dictionary)

If you've been a Christian for more than 20 years, you should be aware that something is changing in the religious landscape of the United States. If you've been a Christian for more than 40 years, you 'know' things are changing and changing fast. Surveys conducted by experts like Yancey are demonstrating an increasing negativity toward Christians and Christianity, especially the conservative branch of Christianity.

Yancey and fellow sociology professor David A. Williamson (University of North Texas) recently wrote *So Many Christians, So Few Lions: Is There Christianophobia in the United States?* ([Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014](#)) that was based on research with thousands of culturally progressive activists.

One of the benefits of good research, in addition to statistical findings, is verbatims – exact quotes from people surveyed in the research. Many clues to the animosity are found in the verbatims from Yancey's research:

“Churches and houses of religion should be designated as nuclear test zones.”

“Kill them all, let their god sort them out.”

“The only good Christian is a dead Christian.”

“Religion in the political arena is dangerous to freedom and should be not allowed.”

“They are relentless, and I believe if we don’t stop them now, we will be living in another Nazi Germany.”

“We need more money spent on secular education, so less people become religious bigots.”

“They should be absolutely forbidden to have any role in politics, including collecting money and espousing platforms.”

“Keep your beliefs out of the public arena; they have no place in government.”

“Don’t want to hear about your choice of religion! AND it’s none of your business what I believe. Leave me the hell alone! Worry about yourself.”

It’s one thing for Christians to know that many members of society want them to shut up about their ‘faith.’ It’s quite another to know the best way to respond to that opposition. Dr. Yancey summed up his purpose for writing *Hostile Environment* this way:

“The focus of this book is Christianophobia and how Christians need to deal with it. It is a critically important topic that deserves our full attention. My goal is to point out the reality of this phenomenon to Christians and help them to think about how to adjust to it.” (*Hostile Environment*, p 23).

I believe Dr. Yancey succeeded in accomplishing his goal for the book and highly recommend *Hostile Environment* to any and all Christians who want to understand both the cultural opposition to Christianity and how to best respond in a way that bridges the spiritual gap and brings glory to God.

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References

Reviews

“Everyone should read George Yancey’s pioneering work on extreme hostility toward Christians. It is data-based, balanced and practical.” —Tony Carnes, publisher and editor, *A Journey through NYC Religions*, nycreligion.info

“George Yancey is a sociologist of consequence, and *Hostile Environment* represents his most significant research yet. In the book, Yancey provides a perceptive scholarly analysis of Christianophobia. He unpacks the root causes of anti-Christian hostility and helps Christians understand how to respond with wisdom, love and equity. Highly recommended.” —Bruce Riley Ashford, associate professor of theology and culture, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

“Hostile Environment is a clearly-written summary of the increasing harassment of Christians. Some will want to withdraw from American society and become the twenty-first century Amish, but it will be better to learn from George Yancey and peaceably but firmly confront anti-Christian bigotry.” —Marvin Olasky, editor in chief, World News Group

“Christians working in the seats of power of the culture (e.g., universities, media, government) regularly experience challenges from those who oppose any sign of Christianity in the public arena. George Yancey’s book *Hostile Environment* combines empirical evidence with fair-minded, exacting analysis. Yancey has written a set of carefully reasoned principles and examples for Christians to consider in advancing their voices in what Richard John Neuhaus called ‘the naked public square.’ The book describes the underlying reason for the nakedness of the public square and the characteristics of those who aim to maintain its secularity. It offers principled remedies to all those who struggle to share the unique and productive knowledge that is in Christ to a society that thinks it has

outgrown him. The work is fair minded, carefully researched, clearly reasoned and courageously argued.” — Mary Poplin, Claremont Graduate University, author of *Is Reality Secular?*

“Yancey urges us to get in the war in an honorable way, adding our courage and insight for cultural survival and renewal. At times we’re to fight fire with fire. That might mean calling out bigotry and hate where you see it. Love speaks. Love tells the truth. Love risks. Love does not fail.” —Kelly Monroe Kullberg, founder, The America Conservancy and The Veritas Forum, author, *Finding God at Harvard*

“Yancey is a clear and careful writer, defining terms, explaining research results, and differentiating between different types of prejudice. He provides a timely and thoughtful approach to understanding and responding to Christianophobia.” —Daniel Johnson, CBA Retailers + Resources, June 2015

Hostile Environment: Understanding and Responding to Anti-Christian Bias, IVP Books, 2015, 183 pages

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