Twitter Thread by Wokal Distance

Wokal Distance
@wokal_distance

1/

Mini Thread:

Every time I think there is no more postmodernism in Christianity, I find more postmodernism in Christianity.

This time @KaitlynSchiess



2/

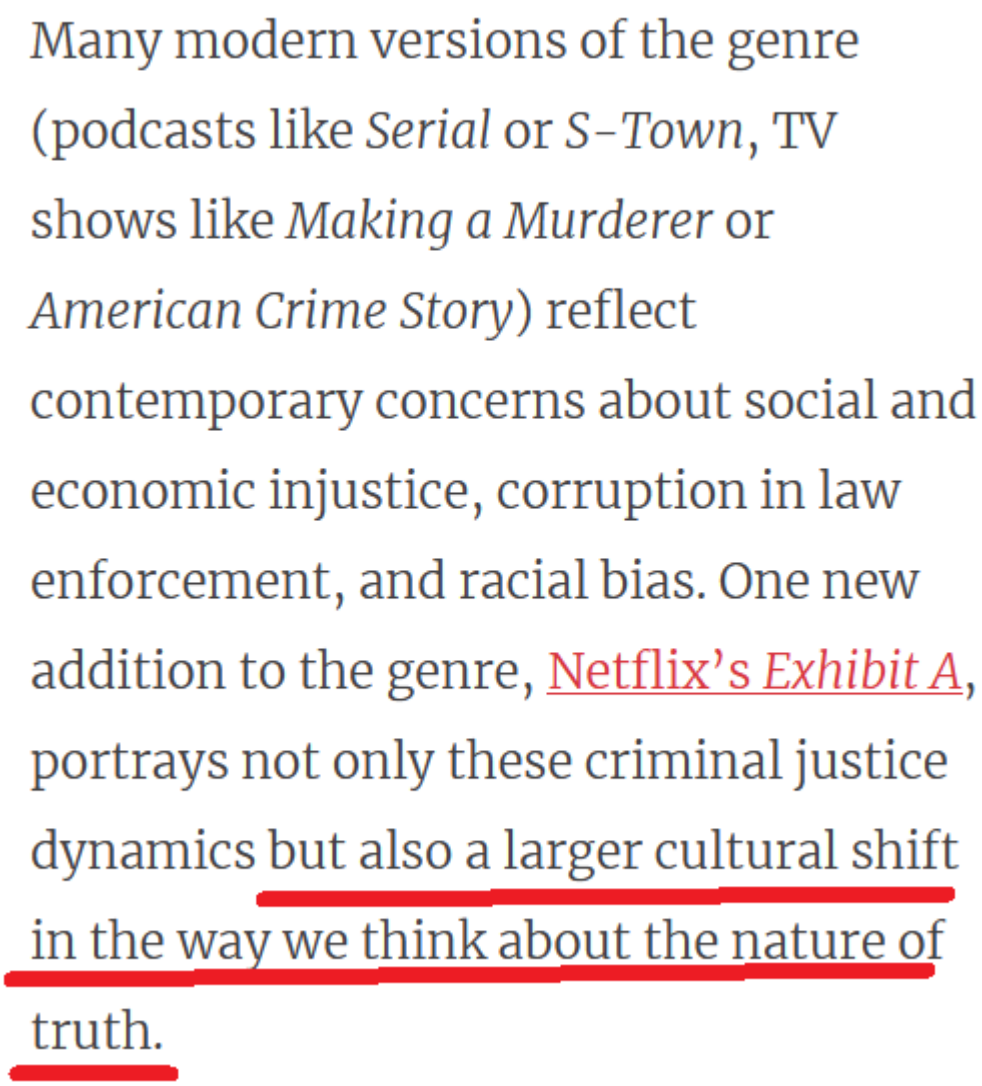
We start out with acknowledging a shift in how "truth" is thought about.

Which, I mean, yeah just read some Stanley Grenz and you can see it coming. It is called *taps mic*

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POSTMODERNISM

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3/

Pic 1: We are sinful and as such we are epistemicly flawed

Pic 2: Because we are flawed and imperfect we must adopt the philosophy of Richard Rorty: "The truth is out there but we can't get it."

Although she hedges slightly with "every time."

> Like the forensic science technician at the beginning of *Exhibit A*, we can believe that absolute truth exists without making any kind of pretense as to our ability to access it. Instead, our fear of the "relativism" boogeyman caused a reaction that betrayed what Smith calls a "theological tic that characterizes contemporary North American Christianity—namely, an evasion of contingency and a suppression of creaturehood." In our enthusiasm to defend truth, we have denied a doctrine at the heart of our faith: that we are finite, sin-corrupted creatures with senses and intellect that are both inherently limited by our creatureliness and marred by the introduction of sin into the world.

4/
Next "There is no universal basis for evaluating our environment."

This is her argument for that:

1. our perspectives are limited,
2. our communities suffer from generational and structural biases,
Therefore:
3. there is no universal basis for evaluating our environments.

> It is Christians that have the greatest justification for recognizing that our perspectives are limited, our communities suffer from generational and structural biases, and there is therefore no universal basis for evaluating our environments. We know that sin has infected our own minds and hearts, our institutions, and our own creative work in the world. We also center our communities and lives around truths that require the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit to believe. Rather than remaining fearful of the ever-decaying belief in objective means of assessing reality, the church has an opportunity to welcome those who are searching for a community to provide its own narrative, background, and constitutive elements that give members identity and truth.

5/
This whole argument (much like the whole essay) is totally confused.

For one, the conclusion does not follow from the premises. She goes from different perspectives and people have bias directly to there is no foundation for the discovery of truth.

now....

6/
The cheap dunk is to ask "if there is no universal basis for evaluating the environment, on what basis do you know your communities suffer from generational and structural biases?"

She had to evaluate her environment to figure out her community suffers from structural bias...

7/
If she can't evaluate her environment, she can't know her community suffers from structural bias.

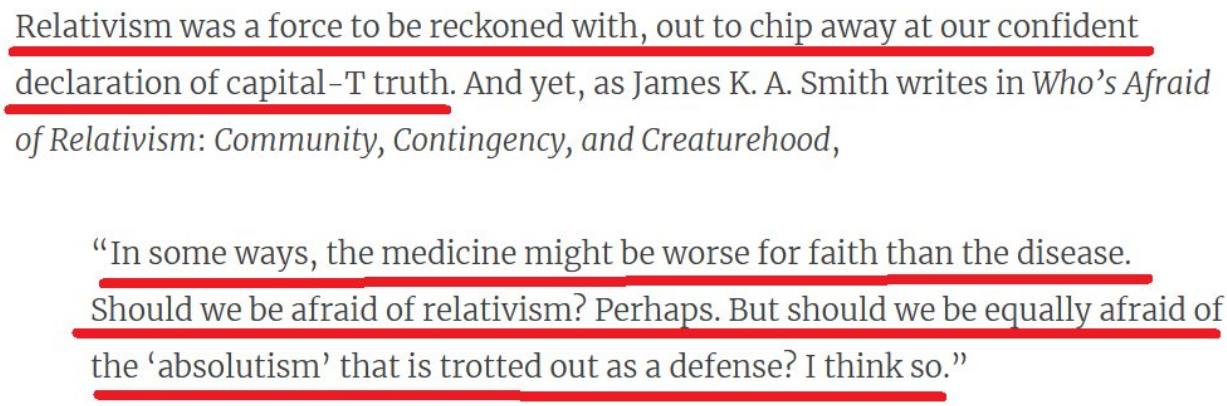
She makes all kinds of claims about the world while claiming that a universal Basis for evaluating the environment does not exist.

Her argument is self-refuting.

8/
Next, she trots out the idea that "absolutism" is just as bad for faith as relativism.

Damn it.

The problem is not the property of truth that is it absolute, the problem is the psychological fact about humans that sometimes we have *CERTAINTY* that is unjustified. But...


Relativism was a force to be reckoned with, out to chip away at our confident declaration of capital-T truth. And yet, as James K. A. Smith writes in *Who's Afraid of Relativism: Community, Contingency, and Creaturehood*,

> "In some ways, the medicine might be worse for faith than the disease. Should we be afraid of relativism? Perhaps. But should we be equally afraid of the 'absolutism' that is trotted out as a defense? I think so."

9/
Although it is true that Christians sometimes claim to have complete certainty when they ought to content themselves with blessed assurance, this does not mean that truth is no longer absolute, or that we should abandon a "belief in objective means of assessing reality."

> It is Christians that have the greatest justification for recognizing that our perspectives are limited, our communities suffer from generational and structural biases, and there is therefore no universal basis for evaluating our environments. We know that sin has infected our own minds and hearts, our institutions, and our own creative work in the world. We also center our communities and lives around truths that require the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit to believe. Rather than remaining fearful of the ever-decaying belief in objective means of assessing reality, the church has an opportunity to welcome those who are searching for a community to provide its own narrative, background, and constitutive elements that give members identity and truth.

10/
The fact that truth is absolute does not imply that our certainty is always justified. This is an argument for humility. It is not an argument for abandoning absolute truth in favor of local narratives which is what @KaitlynSchiess appears to be suggesting here.

> It is Christians that have the greatest justification for recognizing that our perspectives are limited, our communities suffer from generational and structural biases, and there is therefore no universal basis for evaluating our environments. We know that sin has infected our own minds and hearts, our institutions, and our own creative work in the world. We also center our communities and lives around truths that require the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit to believe. Rather than remaining fearful of the ever-decaying belief in objective means of assessing reality, the church has an opportunity to welcome those who are searching for a community to provide its own narrative, background, and constitutive elements that give members identity and truth.

11/
She then says "hard facts can lead us astray"

deep breath

Lord, give me strength

exhale

She then says Christians need "storytelling communities that use particular narratives, practices, and norms to instill in us a truth that could not be reached by reason alone"...

> *Exhibit A* is just one example of storytelling that reinforces for my generation that we cannot trust our own evaluations and judgments, that we can be easily deceived, and that "hard facts" can lead us astray. What initially appears to be a frighteningly strange new world where our old apologetics tactics fall short, can actually be a wonderful opportunity for faith to grow in churches: storytelling communities that use particular narratives, practices, and norms to instill in us a truth that could not be reached by reason alone.

12/
She says we can't get to absolute truth and hard facts lead us astray, so she wants us to abandon both absolute truth and hard facts in favor of narratives and story telling.

How, exactly, does this woman think Trump got elected? Let me tell you:

HE TOLD THE BEST NARRATIVE.

13/
Trump won the first time by winning the Narrative warfare. And Trump Lost this time because he lost the narrative warfare. Trump is our first postmodern president precisely because his presidency was based on, built around, and powered by narratives, not truth.

14/
If we accept the idea that absolute truth is impossible to grasp, all we are going to get is ever deeper and more insidious forms of narrative warfare on all sides.

That is, and I cannot stress this enough, very bad.

So, @KaitlynSchiess please, lets *NOT* abandon truth...

15/
The deeper we get into postmodernism the worse this is going to get and the winners are not going to people like you, the winners are going to be people who can tell a story, who can use persuasion, who can create a mirage with words....

You know, like Trump...

16/
unless you want more of Trump, lets get back to the facts, because if you think people can be led astray with hard facts, just

wait till you see what people can do with a narrative....

/fin

PS/

Be nice to @KaitlynSchiess please. Don't be mean. She actually seems honest so let's give her the benefit of the doubt that she means well.