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Gay rights activists descend on schools

Tolerable societies are governed not only by laws, but also by “norms,” long-established and widely accepted standards of conduct. Although most of us never give the matter a thought, our actions are constantly regulated, if subconsciously, by a sense of obedience to norms. For instance, during the national anthem, most of us stand quietly and respectfully. Invariably, however, there are a few among us who defy the norm and, say, become engrossed in animated conversation. Because their behavior is “abnormal” (which is to say that it violates the norm), these chatterboxes are frequently ostracized—in this case, “shushed”—by the majority.

Every form of human interaction, from political discourse to sexual relations, is regulated by norms. It is because of the majority’s obedience to norms that the common good prevails over mere individual appetites; that community prevails over self-gratification; and that order prevails over chaos.

But norms are no longer fashionable. In many quarters today, the alleged benefits of diversity trump the proven benefits of conformity; the abnormal is becoming the norm.

This is often the case in our public schools. AgapePress reported last week that Enloe High School in Raleigh will be participating in a “Day of Silence” sponsored by the school’s Gay Straight Alliance.

On Wednesday, students at Enloe (and at thousands of schools nationwide) will “take a nine-hour vow of silence to protest what they perceive as discrimination against people who choose to live homosexual, bisexual, and transgender lifestyles.”

There may be discrimination at Enloe, but more than likely, those who practice it merely prefer traditional gender roles over those of the enlightened modern era. In other words, they discriminate in favor of the norm; heterosexual relations.

But defending norms is a perilous enterprise. The champion of “alternative lifestyles” is quick to label his adversaries intolerant or bigoted. Consequently, those who endorse traditional gender roles often do so covertly, in order to avoid unpleasant headlines.

According to many of the homosexual community’s spokesmen, there is only one plausible explanation for society’s resistance to the gay agenda: ignorance. Objections based upon religious or moral convictions are promptly dismissed.

Activist organizations therefore dedicate themselves to “educating” those of us with an insufficient understanding of the homosexual lifestyle.

One such organization is the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, which two weeks ago conducted a panel discussion (“The School Experience Through Their Eyes; Gay Teens” at the public library on Church Street. According to an article in these pages March 27, GLSEN “offers training and workshops to EDUCATE the public, especially students and teachers, about dealing with homosexuality in daily life and in schools.” Speaking of the bias, bigotry and racism in our local schools, one student panel member declared that “The root of all these problems is really ignorance.”

From the same News & Record article we learned that “new groups such as Gay-Straight Alliances, meant to foster understanding- have formed at several high schools in recent years.”

Indeed, these clubs are operational today at Northwest and Grimsley. They are in the formative stages at Smith and Page. According to Agape-Press, there are more than 1,000 and perhaps as many as 1,600, in public schools nationwide.

Which brings us to "indoctrination," a term that is both inflammatory and often recklessly deployed. Yet it seems to be an accurate depiction of the "Day of Silence" proceedings that will take place in many schools this week. According to our friends at Webster's, to indoctrinate is "to imbue with a partisan or sectarian opinion, point of view, or principle." The objectives of GLSEN, the Gay-Straight Alliance and the Day of Silence are flagrantly partisan, sectarian, and contrary to the teachings of most parents.

Defenders of norms have no personal qualms with homosexuals. Rather than individuals, our objection is to a particular behavior. Isn't it odd that smokers are legitimate targets of ostracism (even outright hostility), but the gay community is beyond reproach.

In public schools, the smoker is reviled while the homosexual is celebrated. But homosexuality, like smoking, is a voluntary behavior. (Many gay rights activists argue that homosexuality is genetic, but there is no evidence to support the claim.)

Peter LaBarbera of Concerned Women for America's Culture and Family Institute, obviously a defender of norms, issues a timely reminder that "schools are supposed to be for learning how to read, write and do math-not to promote homosexuality."