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Steering Them Wrong: How Schools Push Kids to Accept Pro-Gay Dogma

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Indoctrinating impressionable school children with pro-homosexual beliefs is an easier way of changing public attitudes than persuading adults. However, since promoting acceptance of homosexuality or of sexual activity by students would be controversial, pro-homosexual activists routinely deny or downplay those aspects of their agenda. Instead, they begin with the school policy proposals that are likely, politically, to win the most agreement. The first issue raised by the advocates of homosexuality is always the same--"safety."

'Safe Schools'

Pro-homosexual activists contend that our schools have large numbers of students who are (or are perceived by their peers to be) gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered,[1] (GLBT or LGBT) and that such students are frequent victims of verbal or physical harassment or even acts of violence. The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), for example, reports that 83 percent of the GLBT youth they surveyed reported at least verbal harassment because of their sexual orientation.[2] They also point to reports that gay youths are more likely to commit suicide than their straight peers, and claim that this is a result of harassment and discrimination as well. They argue, therefore, that victims of harassment or violence targeted for their real or perceived "sexual orientation" should be singled out for specific protection under school disciplinary codes.

Yet there is evidence that harassment of gay teens may neither be as frequent, as severe, nor as disproportionate, as some pro-homosexual rhetoric would suggest. GLSEN fails to note, for example, that a survey by the American Association of University Women showed that 83 percent of all girls and 79 percent of all boys report experiencing physical intimidation or sexual harassment at school.[3] Of the "gay" teens surveyed by GLSEN, less than half--40 percent of the total--said that "verbal harassment" occurs "frequently" or "often,"[4] and less than 7 percent claimed to have experienced "physical assault" either "frequently" or "often." [5]

Reports of gay teen suicides also appear to have been exaggerated. A recent study by a pro-gay researcher found, "Gay and lesbian teenagers are only slightly more likely than heterosexual kids to attempt suicide," according to *USA Today*. [6] And the author of *Suicide in America*, Dr. Herbert Hendin, reportedly "found no evidence that social discrimination was a major factor behind the suicide attempts of the homosexual students he studied." [7]

No student should ever be the victim of unprovoked violence or be subjected to taunting or the use of vulgar epithets--whether for their sexual orientation or for any other reason. But if all forms of harassment are wrong, then all forms of harassment--without distinction--should be banned.

'Anti-Discrimination' Codes

Pro-homosexual activists also promote policies that forbid "discrimination" against students or teachers on the basis of "sexual orientation."

However, singling out "sexual orientation" for special protection (along with the usual categories of "race, color, national origin, sex, and disability") is illogical. The latter qualities are usually inborn, involuntary, immutable, and innocuous--none of which is true of homosexuality, despite the claims of its advocates.

Nevertheless, pro-homosexual activists believe that homosexuals should be permitted not only to teach, but to proclaim their sexual preference openly. One California school district adopted a policy to "insure that gay youth and staff can come out" and that "teachers can provide positive images of gay people in the classroom." [8]

One of the poster children for "anti-discrimination" policies is Wendy Weaver, a homosexual teacher from Salem, Utah. She was fired from her position as a school volleyball coach (but not as a psychology teacher) after admitting her lesbianism. Weaver, however, sued the school district, and eventually won reinstatement to her coaching position. [9] Apparently, the thought that some of the teenage girls on the volleyball team might feel uncomfortable about sharing the locker room with an

adult coach who could see them as objects of sexual attraction did not carry sufficient weight.

The supposed "right" of teachers to be "out" about their sexual orientation even extends to "transgendered" staff--and costs taxpayer money--as well. Eastchester High School in New York was recently treated to the spectacle of a male teacher taking a year off--with pay--for a sex-change surgery, and then returning to the same school to teach as a "woman," going by the name Randey Michelle Gordon. (Gordon is now again on leave--and receiving state disability benefits).[10]

Teacher Training

Pro-gay activists also lobby for opportunities to present pro-homosexual propaganda to teacher and administrators through mandatory training sessions.

Exploring the GLSEN website, however, one finds the principal evils they seek to overcome are not harassment or violence, but "homophobia" and "heterosexism." "Homophobia" is a term that stigmatizes those with traditional values by implying that they (not homosexuals) are the ones with a mental illness (even though recent research has concluded that "homophobia" in this clinical sense actually does not exist).[11]

"Heterosexism"--the belief "that heterosexuality and a binary gender structure are the norm"--is now classified with "ideological systems that deny, denigrate, and stigmatize people"[12] as something to be "undone."

The outline that represents GLSEN's "basic approach"[13] to school staff training indicates that nothing less than complete "support"[14] for homosexuality is the goal (the outline includes a specific scale of attitudes and makes clear that "tolerance" and "acceptance"[15] are unacceptably weak stances to adopt). Its goal is not just to keep homosexual students "safe," but "to elevate the status of LGBT students from a protected class to a valued group" by actively affirming homosexuality, because for GLSEN, "The pursuit of safety and affirmation are one and the same goal." [16]

'Gay-Straight Alliances'

A more important task for pro-homosexual activists--indoctrinating the children themselves--usually begins with formation of a student club called a "gay-straight alliance" (GSA). GSA's are often said to promote "safety" and give gay, "questioning," and "straight ally" youth a forum to "discuss sexual orientation and gender identity issues." [17]

However--as with other pro-homosexual school policies-- gsa's often take on roles that go far beyond insuring safety and a place to talk. For example, GLSEN's article on "20 Ways Your GSA Can Rock the World!" includes: getting pro-homosexual books in the school library; protesting examples of "heterosexism" (such as "gender specific" bathrooms); participating in gay "pride" marches; and "outreach to middle schools." [18] The Massachusetts Department of Education has even given taxpayer money to GSA's to subsidize pro-gay political activism and social events. [19]

Some are concerned that GSA's will encourage young people who are unsure of themselves to experiment sexually or to prematurely identify themselves as homosexual or bisexual. *The Boston Globe*, for instance, reported on a high school junior named Rachel, who says she had some questions about her sexuality when she joined [her] school's **gay-straight alliance**. . . . As the school year went on, however, the questions about her own sexuality grew more intense. A crush on a girlfriend made Rachel "more and more sure I wasn't completely straight." Now Rachel, who has a boyfriend, considers herself bisexual. "I don't think I would have been as comfortable if I hadn't been in the GSA," she said. [20]

Student Indoctrination: Special Events

To raise an entire new generation of young people who will have an unquestioning acceptance of pro-homosexual dogma, however, requires activities that will reach the entire student body.

These usually begin with special assemblies or one-day or one-time events. For example, when a school in Massachusetts celebrated "To Be GLAD Day," parents were not told that it stood for "Transgender, Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Day," and would feature workshops about "Life Outside the Gender Norm," "Being Gay in the Professional World," and "fighting homophobia." [21]

Another approach has been to ride the coattails of "multiculturalism" by including "LGBT History Month" among other "celebrations of culture and heritage." [22] Pro-homosexual activists in schools trumpet their claims that "there are countless historians, politicians, social activists, scientists, mathematicians, artists, philosophers, inventors, even world leaders" who were gay. [23] (One pair of gay activists has pointed out: "Famous historical figures are especially useful to us . . . [T]hey are invariably dead as a doornail, hence in no position to deny [their homosexuality] and sue for libel." [24])

Perhaps the most notorious one-day event was GLSEN's annual conference in Massachusetts in 2000. This event, attended by young people at least as young as fourteen, made it clear that the homosexual agenda in schools is about sex, not just "safety." Margot E. Abels, a state employee, opened one workshop by saying, "We think that sex is central to every single one of us and particularly queer youth."

Student Indoctrination: In Every Classroom

The truly breathtaking sweep of the gay education agenda is described by GLSEN: Educators need to integrate LGBT issues throughout the curriculum--not just in classes such as health education, but in disciplines such as English, History, Art and Science.[25]

Pro-homosexual activists also try to fill school libraries and required reading lists with books that not only present homosexuals in a positive light, but describe homosexual acts being committed by young people in explicit terms.

One such book, assigned to a high school class in Massachusetts, is written from the perspective of a teenager, who describes (according to the Associated Press) "his friend's first homosexual experience, a kid who got so drunk that he had sex with a dog, and a girl and boy who have sex on a golf course." [26]

Another book, recommended by California's "Gay-Straight Alliance Network," features a section on "positive first sexual experiences" by "lesbian and gay young people," including these:

[by Doe] [T]his experience was amazing. . . . Oh, wow, this feels so good. . . . And I knew this had to be good. There was no way that there could be anything wrong with how I was feeling.

[by Jason] [W]e just fell on each other. He was leaving the next day and we knew it would be just that night so we made the most of it.

[regarding Richard and John] In the middle of the night we had sex. I wasn't in love with him, but it was a nice experience.[27]

Deciding that "if it feels good it must be right" and "one-night stands are OK" hardly constitute "positive first sexual experiences" in the minds of many Americans--especially the parents of high school students.

Unfortunately, It's Elementary Too

Perhaps the most shocking aspect of this activist assault on our schools is that they are determined to bring their pro-homosexual propoganda to the children even in the lowest grades--from kindergarten on up.

This agenda is depicted clearly--and slickly--in a film for adults called *It's Elementary: Talking About Gay Issues in School*. It features a schoolwide "Lesbian and Gay Pride Day," as well as a "Gay Pride Assembly." It highlights the achievements of purported homosexuals "from Michelangelo to Melissa Etheridge" [28]-- "leading the young students" as one critic said, "to the false assumption that being gay can't be bad because of the good things gay people have done." [29]

Chasnoff has since produced another film, *That's a Family*, which encourages schools "to be inclusive of all kinds of families" (such as "gay and lesbian-headed households"). [30] This film is presented as protecting the self-esteem of students whose adult caretakers have non-traditional lifestyles. (Of course, similar respect should be granted to children whose parents are alcoholics, drug dealers, or criminals--but such respect does not imply that it's necessary to be affirming of the choices made by the adults in their lives.)

The latest tool being used by pro-homosexual activists in elementary schools is a theatre presentation and book called *Cootie Shots*. [31] While pro-homosexual activists usually express great sensitivity to the harm done by insulting or violent words, they apparently aren't bothered by songs like "In Mommy's High Heels," which includes a cross-dressing boy singing:

[L]et them jump and jeer and whirl
They are the swine, I am the pearl. . . . [32]

Let them laugh, let them scream,
They'll all be beheaded when I'm queen. [33]

As with older youth, the pro-homosexual message is also pushed in a burgeoning crop of books directed at children, ranging literally from A (*Amy Asks a Question: Grandma, What's a Lesbian?*) to Z (*Zack's Story: Growing up with same-sex parents*). [34]

Pro-Homosexual 'Discrimination'

While pro-homosexual activists are usually the first to complain about alleged instances of "discrimination," the truth is that in many cases, it is people who hold more traditional views about homosexuality who become victims of discrimination. For example: 1) Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays--a ministry which believes homosexuals can change their desires and behavior--was not allowed to lease an exhibit booth at a meeting of the National Education Association; [35] 2) Debra Loveless of St. Louis was removed by a security guard from a pro-homosexual assembly at her daughter's school; [36] 3) High school freshmen in Arcata, California were made "to feel very demeaned" and "put down" if they expressed religious objections to homosexuality in a health class presentation by a speaker from Planned Parenthood; [37] and 4) A Christian student club at Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor, Michigan is resisting demands by the school administration that they sign a "non-discrimination" policy that includes religion and sexual orientation. The club was also excluded

from a panel discussion on "homosexuality and spirituality" held during the school's "Diversity Week." [38]

What Can Be Done?

We have seen how an agenda that enters the schools supposedly on the basis of keeping children safe is used in fact to promote the celebration of homosexual behavior and the silencing of any opposition. Is there any way that this relentless onslaught can be stopped?

The Family Research Council published a paper with detailed recommendations for concerned parents and other citizens who want to keep their local public schools from promoting homosexuality, "How to Protect Your Children from Pro-Homosexuality Propaganda in Schools." [39]

In some states, parents have found no other recourse but to turn to the courts. There may be a number of grounds on which schools could be held legally liable for damages for teaching about homosexuality to children. In addition to parental rights issues, they include: 1) Endangering the physical health of a child; 2) Endangering the mental health of a child; 3) Contributing to the delinquency of a child; and 4) Unconstitutional restraint of First Amendment rights through restrictive student speech or anti-harassment codes.

More information is available in a publication available from Citizens for Community Values (CCV) of Cincinnati, Ohio entitled: *The Legal Liability Associated with Homosexuality Education in Public Schools*. [40]

Kevin Jennings, Executive Director of GLSEN, has suggested that criticism of the homosexual agenda in schools rests on "the myth that homosexuals recruit children." [41]

But in at least one sense, pro-homosexual activists in our schools do indeed "recruit children." What they seek to do is "recruit children"--100 percent of our children, "gay" or straight--as soldiers in their war against truth, common sense, and traditional moral values. That's one recruitment drive that has no place on the campuses of America's public schools.

END NOTES

1. Defined as "people who do not identify with the gender roles assigned to them by society based on their biological sex," encompassing "all those who choose not to conform to society's often stereotypical notions of gender expression, including transsexuals, cross-dressers, two-spirit people, and drag queens and kings." Nicolette Siragusa, "The Language of Gender: A Discussion and Vocabulary List for Educators on Gender Identity," Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, p. 4, s.v. "Transgender" (www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ARTICLES/pdf_file/1013.pdf).
2. Joseph G. Kosciw and MK Cullen, *The GLSEN 2001 National School Climate Survey: The School-Related Experiences of Our Nation's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth* (New York: Office for Public Policy of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, 2001), p. 13, Figure 25 (www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ARTICLES/pdf_file/1307.pdf).
3. *Hostile Hallways: Bullying, Teasing, and Sexual Harassment in School* (Washington: American Association of University Women Educational Foundation, 2001); www.aauw.org/2000/hostile.html.
4. Kosciw and Cullen, *The GLSEN 2001 National School Climate Survey*, op. cit., p. 13, Figure 25.
5. Ibid., Figure 27, p. 15
6. Marilyn Elias, "Gay teens less suicidal than thought, report says," *USA Today*, November 26, 2001.
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14. Ibid., p. 2.
15. Ibid., p. 7.
16. "Beyond the Safety Zone," Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, October 1, 2000 (www.glsen.org/templates/resources/record.html?section=18&record=147); accessed September 17, 2002.
17. "Frequently Asked Questions," Gay-Straight Alliance Network (www.gsanetwork.org/faq.html); accessed September 17, 2002.
18. "Twenty Ways Your GSA Can Rock The World!" Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network

- (www.glsen.org/templates/student/record.html?section=45&record=545); accessed September 17, 2002.
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 25. "Ten Things Educators Can Do . . . : Ten Action Points to Ensure Respect for All is Taught in Your School," Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, January 1, 2002 (www.glsen.org/templates/resources/record.html?section=14&record=397); accessed September 20, 2002.
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 29. Gounard, op. cit., p. 2.
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 33. "Fox Special Report with Brit Hume," op.cit.
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