

In search of a no-brainer

When thoughts or actions were deemed to be clear, transparent and understandable we used to call them 'obvious.' While the nomenclature we now use to describe those things may have changed (we call them *no brainers*), it doesn't change the fact that we still view many actions taken as being universally acceptable and fit neatly within our cultural framework without objection.

THAT is precisely what the Left counts on - the unwillingness of the American people to question an idea's validity and resist pushing back against coercive virtue-signaling. We can see this strategy play out in all aspects of our daily lives as the media, special interest groups and even our governments exert relentless pressure to persuade us of what they see as the obvious like: systemic racism, White supremacy, homophobia/transphobia/genderphobia, open borders, healthcare mandates and amnesty for repeat (and dangerous) offenders. The most egregious and indeed most unforgivable among them, however, is the push to indoctrinate our children.

For parents, and indeed for all of our society, the protection of our children's physical, emotional and mental well-being is the ultimate no-brainer, but the Left doesn't see that protection as sacrosanct. They are on a do-or-die mission to radically alter the balance, perceptions and thought processes of our children. To them, the lives, hearts and minds of America's youth are the new battleground for them to insure their success in re-engineering our culture through our youth. It's not that they've given up trying to persuade other demographic groups of their cause to 'make America more equitable, apologetic and subservient' and opening them up to socialism and a one-size-fits-all type of governance. On the contrary, the Progressives actually believe that they can change all of us, simultaneously. They also believe that the fall of socialism and communism was a fluke, and like any autocracy or dictatorship, with enough pressure, persuasion and persistence, it could have worked in those countries where it was tried. A case in point are two smallish nations: Cuba and Venezuela along with several others in the African and Asian continents where the wealth disparity is considerable. Without listing the well-known and observable human nature-related problems with such forms of governance, the Left believes that those societies didn't concentrate their efforts on population indoctrination early enough...in the schools.

For 40 plus years there were several examples of that approach that seemed to be working well (on the surface at least) like the former East Germany. It eventually faltered when the people had had enough and when their economy imploded. In the German Democratic Republic (DDR), children were taught the 'values' of being totally devoted to the prevailing wisdom that uniformity and allegiance to the state was not only a worthwhile goal but an imperative which also included informing on those who didn't toe the line. Children snitched on their parents. Their parents snitched on their co-workers and even extended family members, and everyone was permanently frightened to express a conflicting or controversial opinion. And if they did, the Stasi (the Ministerium für Statssicherheit - think KGB) was right around the corner, ready to pick you up and drag you from your home to a cell with no forwarding address all with the thanks of a 'grateful nation' and maybe 100 German Marks as a reward. *For an interesting article on this subject, go to the Financial Review's website at: <https://www.afr.com/life-and-luxury/arts-and-culture/stasi-snitches-all-around-records-reveal-true-extent-of-telling-on-others-20151116-gkzu44>*

I am not saying that the Left wants to resuscitate the former DDR secret police here, but I am saying that they believe that by tapping into our children's impressionable minds early on they can save themselves a lot of trouble in re-educating and policing them as adults. That's the no-brainer in a nutshell, and it is the little red schoolhouse that America's radical Left has chosen as the venue to begin the new cultural brainwashing. Americans love their children (another unassailable fact), but we have not always been vigilant about weighing in on what they were learning in school. We've trusted our educators to keep them quiet in the classrooms and keep them interested in learning about the world around them. And then, we tested them, regularly, to make sure they remembered what they learned.

Granted, some of us have even helped our children with their homework and attended parent/teacher conferences, but most of us have stayed away from school board meetings, leaving that to the 'professionals'. Those days are gone as many parents have awakened to the new reality of how radical educators and their liberal bosses have taken aim at little Johnny and Suzie and Juan and Letitia and are now attempting to force all forms of cultural claptrap into their little brains.

Why is this happening now and why to such an intensified degree?

The answer is because there is a vacuum that can be filled. The last time we really rose to the occasion to protect our children was back in 1968 when the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) established a system of movie ratings. Parents were then able to use these ratings to determine the appropriateness of a film's content for their children and teenagers. While the system is strictly voluntary and there is no actual legal requirement that filmmakers submit their films for rating, the industry has kept it in place. The Motion Picture Association contends, and cites a survey conducted in 2015 as substantiation for their belief, that 93% of the 1,488 parents surveyed found the film rating system somewhat helpful in making decisions about films for their children. That survey and report may be found at:

<https://www.motionpictures.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Usefulness-of-Movie-Ratings-and-Descriptors.pdf>.

Many films have been made since 2015 that have increased and intensified the amount of violence and explicit sexual behavior contained in motion pictures, and this violence and sex has undoubtedly made the motion picture raters' jobs (ratings are determined by the Classification and Ratings Administration (CARA), via a board comprised of an independent group of parents) more difficult. The reason is that our culture has become more permissive and more willing to show our young people the seamier side of life (albeit in dramatizations) in the United States. While much can be said about the wisdom of doing so, it doesn't change the fact that the incidence of violence has also increased and intensified in our schools. Is that the films' fault? The parents' fault? Society's fault? Unfortunately, we can't point to a firm cause and effect here because there are too many variables and outside influences at play. Given that uncertainty, do we really want to add even more challenges to our children who are already experiencing high anxiety and emotional trauma from mass school shootings, bullying and peer-pressure from the earliest stages of their education all the way up to and through high school?

Do we not owe our children their childhood without introducing 'foreign' concepts that they cannot fully fathom, simply to placate the Progressives that want them to grow up to be carbon copies of themselves? Have we not learned OUR lessons from other countries and from times past when special interest groups (or governments) put their thumb on the scale and insisted on 'their' cultural imperatives while ignoring those of the majority or the status quo?

The bottom line is that we parents are stewards of our children's minds and development until they reach maturity, and we are also stewards of our own cultural values. Though we may make some allowances for changing times and changing mores along the way, we have a duty to treat our children as budding responsible citizens who respect those core values and keep learning, free from destructive propaganda from any quarter. We must stay vigilant and engaged in our children's lives and continue to watch their back by refusing to politicize their education. While there is no guarantee that an open mind will not embrace concepts or beliefs different from our own, the alternative will certainly insure it.

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