

What's Wrong with Those Kids?

The Shaping of a Generation

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I recall watching a trailer for a documentary which covered the story of a young teenage boy who had been so mercilessly bullied by his classmates that he committed suicide. The trailer showed footage of the parents testifying before Congress on behalf of anti-bullying policies and a candle-light vigil held at the boy's school. I was disturbed in my mind and emotions by the trailer. The emotional reaction is, no doubt, natural and just the one aimed at by the filmmakers. But the uneasiness of my mind took me some time to sort out.

The next day I realized what had unsettled me. It is the utter incongruity of a society that simultaneously endorses Darwinism, Moral Relativism, and Anti-bullying policies. This may seem like a *non sequitur* to some so let me elaborate. Orthodox evolutionary theory says that humans are the product of biological chance or happenstance. There is no Creator God who fashions humans according to a divine 'blueprint' and who has in mind how humans ought to be and ought not be. Moral relativism is the idea, roughly, that those values that we have that bear on human practices or conduct that we call 'moral' are no more and no less than matters of taste. Saying "it is wrong to commit adultery" is on par with saying "I don't like vanilla ice cream."

The incongruity should be emerging in the mind of the reader. Darwinism and moral relativism seem to coincide nicely (one might say the latter was the ideological descendant of the former), but anti-bullying seems to cut against these other two ideas. If we are all what we are by mere accident and no divine intention, then as one of the brothers Karamazov says, "all things are permissible." Moral relativism says that what is good for me is just that, a subjective judgment on morality that travels no further than the sphere of my own, isolated person. How then could one possibly justify or more technically "ground" one's belief that it is *wrong* to bully and therefore such behavior should be discouraged and/or punished?

The fact of the matter is that bullying just is social Darwinism among young adults. It is the way they establish their own pecking order. If you are athletic or intelligent or handsome (or fortunate enough to have hit the Trifecta of intelligence, athleticism, and beauty), then you are at the top of the social Darwinian food chain. If you, like the victim of the documentary, are unfortunate enough to be skinny, short and social awkward, then fate has placed you at the bottom covered in that which proverbially "rolls down hill."

How then do we stop bullying in schools? The solution to bullying in schools and school shootings and teen suicide and date rape and cheating is the same. Namely, as a society we must re-embrace the idea that every human being has intrinsic worth because they are a creature of the

divine Creator. Moreover, that because humans are created by God and are not products of biological chance or merely resources for other powerful humans, each and every one of us must be held accountable for our actions. Some of those actions include violations of objective moral goods and are objective moral evils and therefore should be sanctioned against and the violators punished.

The problem is that we still recognize things like “bullying is bad” and “not bullying is good” but we have no idea how to justify these values which force themselves on us with objectivity.

We want the good but we do not want God. The only solution, therefore, is the very thing that we have already rejected: A Creator God who demands moral accountability from His creatures.

“As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.” (John 13:30)