

CHURCH TRASHED AFTER DRAG QUEEN PROTEST

Recently, when the leader of the South Bay Pentecostal Church in Chula Vista, California learned that the city was sponsoring a Drag Queen Story Time event at the local public library, he protested. Pastor Amado Huizar, and his congregation, found it inappropriate to use taxpayers' dollars to fund a Drag Queen Story Hour. The mayor sided with the LGBTQ activists.

Vandals subsequently trashed the church. "Lucifer" and other Satanic messages were spray-painted on the church, alongside sexual vulgarities. The police are investigating the incident as a hate crime. As of now, there is no direct evidence tying the two events, though obviously the pastor and his flock are suspicious.

Leaving aside the vandalism, the larger question is the propriety of using public funds to sponsor such events. This is now the subject of debate in conservative quarters. *National Review* author David French takes the libertarian position, arguing that Drag Queen Story Hour events should be protected by the First Amendment. *New York Post* op-ed editor Sohrab Ahmari takes a social conservative position, saying they should not be protected. These kinds of debates are hardly new, but this latest one has sparked considerable controversy.

The stance outlined by French sees freedom of speech as an end. It is not.

The Founders saw the First Amendment provision on free speech as a means to an end, not as an end in itself. The end is the makings of the good society, a goal that is best achieved by allowing robust political discourse. This explains why the

Founders opposed an absolutist reading of the First Amendment: not all exercises of speech are equal, and some are worthy of censorship. Indeed, the same Congress that passed the First Amendment in 1791, passed the Alien and Sedition Acts, barring seditious speech, seven years later.

There are many exceptions to the First Amendment that make good common sense. We have laws against libel, slander, perjury, obscenity, incitement to riot, “fighting words,” speech which presents a “clear and present danger,” copyright infringement, racist notices put in homeowners’ mailboxes, harassing phone calls, false advertising, lying about one’s credentials when seeking employment, verbal agreements in restraint of trade, contemptuous speech in the courtroom, treasonous speech, lying on tax returns, solicitation of a crime, etc.

No serious person regards these expressions as contributing to the makings of the good society—they actually retard that end—which explains why their proscription is uncontroversial.

The mayor of Chula Vista, Mary Salas, defends the Drag Queen Hour by saying the event is not designed to “propagandize a lifestyle.” She is sadly mistaken. It is nothing but propaganda. Don’t take our word for it—read what the stated goal of the Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) is at dragqueenstoryhour.org.

“DQSH captures the imagination and play of the gender fluidity of childhood and gives kids glamorous, positive, and unabashedly queer role models.” By “gender fluidity” it is meant that sex is not an immutable characteristic. To put it differently, the LGBTQ goal is to teach kids that a person can switch sexes, being a boy today and a girl tomorrow, depending on one’s self-identification (and/or surgical changes).

DQSH focuses on children 3-8. Yes, there are readings, songs, and the like. There are also “dress-up” exercises aimed at

celebrating “gender diversity and all kinds of difference[s].” To what end? The objective is to see that kids are “free from the constraints of prescribed gender roles. In other words, there’s no such thing as ‘girl clothes’ and ‘boy clothes,’ or ‘girl toys’ and ‘boy toys.’ DQSH teaches children that there are many ways to express themselves and their gender, and they are all OK.”

This is pure propaganda for the LGBTQ agenda. Of course they say there is no such thing as boy and girl clothes or toys—they teach that there is no such thing as a boy or a girl!

Teaching that gender is fluid is a lie. Gender is a sociological term that describes socially learned roles that are appropriate for boys and girls. Importantly, such roles take their cues from nature—their social construction is rooted in the biological differences between men and women.

For example, boys are more aggressive than girls, but not because they have been taught that way—they have more testosterone. Similarly, motherhood is not a cultural invention (as the president of Smith College maintains)—it is an expression of what nature ordains. Which explains why male and female attributes are so common in every society in the history of the world.

Most important, a free society depends on nurturing virtue, or good habits, all of which depend on inculcating a modicum of restraint. What does DQSH nurture? “DQSH teaches children to follow their passions and embrace gender diversity in themselves and others.”

That’s just what our narcissistic society needs more of—teaching kids to follow their passions. They do that quite well, thank you, without tutoring. What they need is the ability to harness their passions, directing their energy toward socially constructive ends. That takes discipline, a

property not advanced by the devotees of Drag Queen Story Hour.