

DIFFERENT WORLDS

William A. Donohue

It sometimes feels as though I am living in a parallel universe. Quite frankly, I cannot believe some of the things I am hearing and seeing these days. What follows is an account of what I recently experienced one morning.

I wake up to the news every weekday around 5:30 a.m. Today I heard that in New York City they are going to launch a new multimillion dollar campaign to induce self-esteem in girls: they want them to feel good about themselves. They interviewed one girl who went through a pilot program and she said she no longer feels badly about her weight; she conceded she is fat.

New York, like most cities, is deeply in debt. It cannot afford to pay its enormous pensions anymore, but it somehow came up with money to pay girls to feel good about themselves. Boys don't count, obviously. Note: males are in a minority in the colleges and are doing less well in school than females.

Self-esteem campaigns started in earnest in the 1980s. A few years into the campaign, a study was done comparing American youth to their counterparts in other nations. At one end of the spectrum were the Americans; at the other were the Taiwanese. We scored the lowest on math, but were first in measurements of self-esteem; young kids from Taiwan were first in math, and last in self-esteem. In other words, those who had the least right to feel good about themselves felt the best, and vice versa.

Fat kids, save for those who have a genetic disorder, should not feel good about their weight. They should recognize that there is a problem, and do something about it. It's called dieting. To encourage them to feel good about themselves is on a par with telling those who have a problem with alcohol, smoking, drugs, gambling or promiscuity that they should feel

good about themselves. No, they should admit to themselves that they have a problem and start doing something about it.

I take the train to work, and unlike most other riders, I am one of those dinosaurs who still reads a newspaper. Most play with their gadgets; it is an addiction. Everywhere I go they have their smartphones, tablets, cell phones, earphones, and the like. They cannot stop texting. They walk directly into you on the street—totally oblivious to pedestrian and auto traffic—and they take great umbrage if upbraided. I just heard on the radio that they are falling off the curb and injuring themselves at an unprecedented rate. And, of course, when they get to the hospital, they have to wait in line for hours because illegal aliens are using the ER room as their family doctor. Serves them right.

The first article that I read this morning was about union workers going on strike at Carnegie Hall. Their job is to open the saxophone cases, move the pianos, set up the drums, etc. Their average compensation is over \$400,000 a year, but they say they are underpaid. The news story did not say whether they have low self-esteem, but if they do, tough luck. Besides, they're all male.

I turned to another article. It was about ObamaCare. It just went into full gear in October and only now has the *New York Times* learned that millions of the previously uninsured will still be uninsured. Moreover, anyone with half a brain would know that if employers must pay prohibitively high health care packages for full-time workers, the way around this monstrosity would be to have more part-time workers and less full-time workers. The *New York Times* treated this pedestrian observation as if it were breaking news. It probably was for them: they don't live in the same world I do.

When I got to work, I turned on the computer and the first article I saw was an open letter by one drug abusing troubled gal to another drug abusing troubled gal. Sinead O'Connor was

warning Miley Cyrus to keep her clothes on while performing (I would also counsel her to leave her tongue in her mouth).

Competing with this story was an article, "Sinatra Widow Calls Suggestion Frank Fathered Mia Farrow's Son a 'Bunch of Junk.'" They can't leave Frank alone. More important, it brought back into the news Mia's strange relationship with Woody Allen, and his even stranger relationship with Mia's adolescent stepdaughter, as well as their own stepdaughter. But no matter how depraved this man is, he will always be loved by those who are said to be shocked by the sexual abuse of minors.

Then I read a report by Katelynn Schmitterer, one of our policy analysts. She previewed a video put out by evangelicals, "The Last Pope." It suggests that Pope Francis is the anti-Christ because a) he is a cardinal of Italian descent b) he chose the name Francis after St. Francis of Assisi and c) he is the 266th pope. It also says he may not be the anti-Christ because a) his name is not Peter b) he is not from Rome and c) he is not black (this does not coincide with St. Malachy's vision that the last pope will be black).

This confirms my conviction: I don't live in the same world as these people. I wish they could all rent a space ship and find their own planet. And bring their gadgets with them.