

GAYS AND GAY ACTIVISTS

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According to the Centers for Disease Control, 1.6 percent of Americans are homosexual. Yet that very small minority projects an influence on our culture that is extraordinary. A few years back, gay reporters at the *New York Times* were bragging how many of them were working on front-page stories. Hollywood studios employ a significant number of gays, especially as writers for prime time and late-night talk shows. Colleges and universities welcome gay faculty, and the corporate world does the same. Indeed, in the big Wall Street firms, hiring gays is not only considered cool—it is a must.

Gay activist organizations, as well as other non-profit civil rights groups, draw support from these elites, and together they help to set the contours of our culture. What the elites and activists want is not more tolerance: they want affirmation. Increasingly, they have made it clear that they will not settle for anything less than a whole loaf. Get it straight: They are not making requests—they are making demands. And they are winning.

Gays are not a monolithic group, but even if they were, there are too few of them to pull off a string of victories all by themselves. To win, the activists must rely on like-minded heterosexuals to score, and there is no shortage of them willing to assist. What do they want? Together with heterosexual activists who share their agenda, they want the wholesale restructuring of society, from marriage and the family to the workplace and the military.

Unhappy with the Judeo-Christian ethos—these activists deplore any sexual ethic that prizes restraint—they want a full-fledged celebration of sexuality. It does not exaggerate to say that there is no conceivable sexual practice, including

those that are positively dangerous, that gay rights advocates, and their straight allies, don't counsel. Beginning in the early grades, students are now being introduced to sexual acts that until recently were seen as taboo, even for adults.

Americans are a decent people who want everyone to be treated equally. This includes homosexuals. Whether as a family member, friend, fellow student, or work colleague, nearly all of us have encountered a gay person, and most of those encounters have no doubt been positive, or at least not objectionable. Great. But it is not so great when we allow those relationships to skew our vision of gay activists.

Activists for any cause frequently do not accurately reflect the constituents they claim to represent. Feminist leaders who are consumed with abortion rights do not speak for most women. Black spokesmen who are against school vouchers are out of step with most African Americans. Gay activists who seek to silence the proponents of traditional marriage are not speaking for most homosexuals.

Advocates for women and minorities run the gamut from moderate to extreme. Unfortunately, moderate gay leaders are hard to find. How many of them have ever condemned church break-ins, men parading nude in the streets, blasphemous attacks in public, and the like? How many have been willing to recognize the religious liberty rights of those they oppose? How many have protested the heavy hand of the state from policing the internal affairs of the Catholic Church?

The reason these gay activists can get away with this is due largely to straights: they cannot see the difference between their gay friends and gay activists. To put it differently, gay leaders get a pass from straights because they are seen through the same lens as their gay acquaintances; they are the only reference base most heterosexuals have. While it is true that most gays do not harbor an agenda (any more than most

straights do), it is also true that most gay activists, owing to their extremist stripes, do.

In October, Houston Mayor Annise Parker, a lesbian activist, sought to subpoena the sermons of pastors, looking for “anti-gay” comments. She backed off only because of a threatened lawsuit and bad PR. Also last month, two ordained Christian ministers in a small town outside Boise, Idaho were sued for refusing to perform a gay wedding. If convicted, they face going to prison for three years and a fine of \$7,000. In neither case did a single gay activist condemn these outrageous moves.

The Human Rights Campaign, billed as the nation’s largest gay rights organization, is now monitoring Catholic bishops, rating them on their views; eight were selected for special condemnation. This same group, which is not Catholic, had a contingent in Rome seeking to pressure the bishops. They also held “rosary vigils” in several cities trying to promote the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender persons.

Saint John Paul II was fond of saying that the Church is not here to impose anything—we are here to propose. No matter, the media paint the Church as the bad guy trying to shove its agenda down the throats of others. The fact is that gay activists, and those who share their libertine vision, are the ones who are bent on whipping everyone else into line.

Today more than ever, Catholics are asked to treat homosexuals with the dignity they deserve. Fine. But there is a big difference between accepting gays as equals and agreeing with the agenda of gay activists.