

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO PROMOTES SEX ENGINEERING

The following article was written by the Catholic League communications director Michael P. McDonald:

While National Public Radio's (NPR) decision to break with its thirty-plus-year tradition of reading the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July to discuss Critical Race Theory has drawn the ire of many commentators, on the very same day, NPR, using the taxpayers' dollars, ran a more pernicious segment on "the importance of inclusion in sex education."

In the course of its reporting, NPR assaulted parental rights, promoted pleasure-oriented sex education, and downplayed the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases (STD). Any radio station advocating for such harmful ideas should run the risk of losing its broadcast license, but for NPR to do so with public funding goes beyond the pale.

To frame this conversation, NPR host Leila Fadel began by attacking parental rights. Fadel noted that on July 1st Florida's Parental Rights in Education law went into effect. Rather than using its proper name, she labeled it the "don't say gay law." Moreover, Fadel said the whole point of the Florida law, and similar legislation proposed in other states, is "to restrict the rights of LGBTQ youth."

A fairer analysis would have pointed out that the Florida law aims to protect young children from inappropriate instruction about sex while also empowering parents to have more control over what their children learn about this subject. However, these facts only get in the way of rehashing trite partisan talking points.

NPR's "Life Kit" reporter Lilly Quiroz spoke with "sexuality

educator Milena Gioconda Davis," who told the audience that sex "would be, like, pleasure-oriented experiences or interactions that involve some sort of arousal."

Quiroz also interviewed Ericka Hart, "a sexuality educator with a focus in racial, social, and gender justice." She, too, believes that sex education should be pleasure-oriented. She argued that "young people should explore their genitals" so that they can "say, like, this is what feels good for my body—right?—and this is what doesn't feel good for my body."

If this was not harmful enough, the segment ended with an effort to remove the "stigma" associated with STDs. For this, Quiroz brought back Gioconda Davis to explain that the idea that STDs "make you dirty...is just a terrible lie. And also...if you get an [STD], your sex life is over. Like, no—most [STDs] are curable or treatable, and it doesn't have to be, like, this mark of shame."

This is not even sound advice, and nothing about it is educational. Rather than teach children that STDs can cause irreparable harm—even death—and the best way to avoid STDs is to practice abstinence, NPR would rather focus on removing the stigma associated with these diseases.

NPR grew out of a movement in the early 20th century to use radio broadcasts to help educate local communities and provide a public service. Today, it appears that NPR has entirely abandoned this calling.

At no point in this segment did NPR offer anything of educational value. Instead, it used the American taxpayers' hard-earned dollars to attack the rights of parents, promote pleasure-oriented sexual education, and downplay the dangers of STDs. It did all of this on our dime. It is past time to defund NPR.