

TO WHOM DO CHILDREN BELONG?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on parental authority versus state authority:

Does the child belong to parents or the state? This issue is nothing new—Plato argued that the community in which children are raised is the proper locus of authority, not the parents. He envisioned a society where parents were denied their right to raise their own children: they would be collectively raised. He explicitly said in *The Republic* that the good society was one where “no parent is to know his own child, nor any child his parent.”

California Governor Gavin Newsom is no Plato, but he is also not a believer in parental rights. He objects to Florida and Texas officials who are seeking to stop the state from promoting “gender-transitioning procedures” for children behind the back of parents. “This is nothing short of a state-sponsored intimidation of LGBTQ children,” he said.

In other words, if parents object to child abuse encouraged by state operatives—that is what puberty blockers and the prospect of genital mutilation are—then they are the problem, not the government.

In many parts of the country, children are being prompted by school officials to question their sexual orientation. Some are then encouraged to transition to the opposite sex, without the consent of their parents. How many? No one knows for sure, but we do know that some public officials, school administrators, school board members and teachers’ unions believe they know better than a child’s parents what’s good for their kids. They are modern-day tyrants who respect no boundaries.

In a sane society they would be put away. Instead, they are awarded tenure.

In the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan supported an anti-Catholic law in Oregon that required all children to attend a public school (thus closing down Catholic schools). The Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary sued, and in 1925 the U.S. Supreme Court sided with them. "*The child is not the mere creature of the state*; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations (*italics in the original*)."

Today's Klan is non-violent and well-educated, but they are just as dangerous as the men in white robes. Newsom and the educational establishment are wrecking the lives of young people, promoting the pernicious idea that it is normal to rebel against one's own nature. It manifestly is not.

Young people are being exploited at a record rate—girls more than boys—by tolerating, if not actively promoting, the notion that switching one's sex is very much like switching one's diet. What's wrong with being a boy today and a girl tomorrow? Isn't that like being carnivorous today and a vegetarian tomorrow?

Modern society is made up of the individual, the intermediate associations that constitute social authority—the family, school, church, voluntary organizations—and the state. Beginning with the French Revolution, the road to totalitarianism has been greased when the state crushes the intermediate associations; when civil society collapses, only the individual and the state remain. As the 20th century proved in Russia, Germany and China, that means the end of liberty. The only bulwark to state power is the social authority grounded in civil society.

Children are not *mere creatures of the state*. They are the natural outcome of a union between a man and a woman, ideally forged in the institution of marriage, and it is the prerogative of parents—not the state—to decide what is best

for them.

Since Newsom is now telling the governors in other states how to conduct their business, it's time for people all over the nation to tell him how to conduct his business.

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