

Welcome to The Reign of “Gay”



Members of a gay activist group hold up signs outside St. Peter's Square at the Vatican in this December 2012 photo. (CNS photo/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters)

In the summer of 1992, I took my first real job, working as a graphic designer for the venerable Meier & Frank department store chain in downtown Portland, Oregon. Those three years proved to be quite educational for a fairly naïve young man fresh out of Bible college and figuring out the ways of the world in the very beautiful, exceedingly secular Northwest. Within just a few days, I found myself having long conversations—arguments, actually—about [Proposition 9](#), a measure sponsored by the Oregon Citizen's Alliance (OCA) which sought to add the following to the state constitution:

All governments in Oregon may not use their monies or properties to promote, encourage or facilitate homosexuality, pedophilia, sadism or masochism. All levels of government, including public education systems, must assist in setting a standard for Oregon's youth which recognizes that these behaviors are abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse and they are to be discouraged and avoided.

My most intense interlocutor was Bob, the copy chief in advertising

department, who was openly homosexual. He insisted that supporters of Prop 9 were “homophobic” and therefore filled with hatred toward anyone who was “gay”. My response, in short, was to insist that I could both be his friend and disagree with him about homosexuality (and Prop 9). This led to a year-long debate that opened my eyes to how disingenuous, irrational, and spiteful are certain supporters of homosexual “rights”. I emphasize “certain” because I worked closely with other homosexuals (they, of course, preferred the term “gay”) who seemed content to leave well enough alone, with no interest in converting or coercing those with different beliefs.

And Bob did, in fact, seek to convert me, to the point that when I announced my engagement, he made a final, desperate play: he declared that I was actually “gay” and was not being “truthful” with myself. In hindsight, his gambit should not have surprised me; at the time, however, I was so startled that I laughed out loud. At that, he angrily told me that I was “dead to him” and stormed away. A few months later, he took a job in another state.

I thought of those events while [recently reading about the resignation of Brendan Eich](#), CEO of Mozilla Corporation (maker of the popular Firefox browser). It turns out that Eich had given \$1000 in support of Proposition 8, the 2008 California ballot proposition and state constitutional amendment that consisted of a simple statement: “Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California.” Prop 8 is, of course, widely described as a “anti-gay marriage” law, and Eich committed the unpardonable sin of refusing to confess his bigotry and bow low before the Altar of Homosexuality. The company released a statement, which included dutiful nods toward “equality and freedom of speech”, while lamenting that “[f]iguring out how to stand for both at the same time can be hard.” The company's “organizational culture”—that sounds friendly, doesn't it?—“reflects diversity and inclusiveness. ... Mozilla supports equality for all.” The organizational culture doth protest too much, methinks.

The well-known blogger, Andrew Sullivan, who is “[openly gay and a practicing Roman Catholic](#)”, was apparently shocked by the banishment of Eich. Clearly angered by the entire affair, [Sullivan wrote](#), “It turns out that Eich might have saved his job had he recanted, like all heretics must. But given the choice of recanting, he failed. Hence the lighting of the fires...” Sullivan further stated:

There is only one permissible opinion at Mozilla, and all dissidents must be purged! Yep, that’s left-liberal tolerance in a nut-shell. No, he wasn’t a victim of government censorship or intimidation. He was a victim of the free market in which people can choose to express their opinions by boycotts, free speech and the like. He still has his full First Amendment rights. But what we’re talking about is the obvious and ugly intolerance of parts of the gay movement, who have reacted to years of being subjected to social obloquy by returning the favor.

My simple question is this: Why is Sullivan surprised? Why is *anyone* surprised? Seriously. I sensed this sort of “purging” in the wind over twenty years ago, and countless events since (Paul Kengor [provides a short overview](#) of recent events) that The Reign of Gay is here—and here to stay. One comment by Bob, in particular, has remained with me: “We don’t have any interest in being married. We just want the same civil rights. Anyone who thinks that gays will try to change marriage is paranoid and stupid.” Huh. Maybe Bob believed it—or maybe he didn’t give a damn about being “married” (I found out later, however, that he had been engaged years before—to a woman). Some homosexual activists, of course, scorn the idea of marriage; others see “gay marriage” as a necessary part of the moral makeover that has been underway for several decades now.

That makeover is described with clarity and analyzed with brilliance by Robert R. Reilly in his new book, [*Making Gay Okay: How Rationalizing Homosexual Behavior Is Changing Everything*](#) (Ignatius Press, 2014). One of the book’s

opening pages bears the following quote from Edith Stein: “Do not accept anything as love which lacks truth.” That, in a nutshell, goes to the heart of the matter. We are told, constantly, how the fight for “gay marriage” is about “love” and the desire to simply be accepted like everyone else. As Reilly notes, however, while some homosexuals are content to live quietly and keep their private lives, well, private, there are many others who insist on “coming out” and making their private desires and actions openly public. They “wish not only to be tolerated in terms of their private sexual behavior,” writes Reilly, “but to have that behavior publicly vindicated and recognized as normal.” Those who push for “gay marriage” want legal recognition that “obliges *everyone* to recognize the legitimacy of their act.” Reilly provides some instructive quotes:

According to Jeffrey Levi, former executive director for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, “We [homosexuals] are no longer seeking just a right to privacy and a right to protection from wrong. We have a right—as heterosexuals have already—to see government and society affirm our lives.” Homosexual author Urvashi Vaid declared, “We have an agenda to create a society in which homosexuality is regarded as healthy, natural, and normal. To me that is the most important agenda item.” Paula Ettelbrick, former legal director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, stated: “Being queer means pushing the parameters of sex, sexuality, and family, and . . . transforming the very fabric of society. . . . We must keep our eyes on the goals of providing true alternatives to marriage and of radically reordering society’s view of reality.”

Reilly does what many commentators—including many Catholics—fail to do: he points out that homosexual acts are immoral and contrary to the good, and that the rationalization of those actions leads logically and steadily to “revolutionary changes.” It cannot be otherwise, and it is startling and sad how few people seem able or willing to recognize this clear fact:

Rationalizations for moral misbehavior work like this. Anyone who chooses an

evil act must present it to himself as good; otherwise, as Aristotle taught, he would be incapable of choosing it. When we rationalize, we convince ourselves that heretofore forbidden desires are permissible. As Hilaire Belloc wrote, in this case, “Every evil is its own good.” In our minds we replace the reality of the moral order to which the desires should be subordinated with something more compatible with the activity we are excusing. Or as Professor J. Budziszewski put it, “We seek not to become just, but to justify ourselves.” In short, we assert that bad is good. Conscience often wins out afterward, and the person repents—first of all by admitting to the evil nature of the act committed. The temporary rationalization crumbles, and moral reality is restored. Habitual moral failure, however, can be lived with only by obliterating conscience through a more permanent rationalization, an enduring inversion of morality.

Reilly points to abortion as “the ultimate in the larger rationalization of the sexual revolution...” The same Sexual Revolution that brought us “free” love, the Pill, abortion, rampant divorce, broken marriages, and serial monogamy, has also spawned the radical homosexual movement. “The acceptance of each variant of sexual misbehavior reinforces the others. The underlying dynamic is: If you'll rationalize my sexual misbehavior, I'll rationalize yours.” And then Reilly makes a statement that should be cause for some serious reflection, for it digs down into the deep and dark regions of this entire travesty:

If you are going to center your public life on the private act of sodomy, you had better transform sodomy into a highly moral act. If sodomy is a moral disorder, it cannot be legitimately advanced on the legal or civil level. On the other hand, if it is a highly moral act, it should—in fact, must—serve the rationalization and how it works as the basis for marriage, family (adoption), and community. As a moral act, sodomy should be normative. If it is normative, it should be taught in our schools as a standard. If it is a standard, it should be enforced. In fact, homosexuality should be hieratic: active homosexuals should be ordained as priests and bishops. Sodomy should be sacramentalized.

The new “morality” is squarely founded on the belief that homosexuality is normal, perhaps even superior to heterosexuality. This means that those who dissent from this “truth” not only distance themselves from the norms of good society, they participate in attacking it. They are, in short, enemies of society, for they oppose what is a sort of religious belief system. If that sounds outrageous, I can only conclude that you haven't been paying attention. Read, for instance, [this Huff-and-Puff Post piece](#) in response to Sullivan. Or consider this remark, [sent to Sullivan in response](#) to his defense of Eich:

Morality has always been about keeping society on the same page. If you violate the norms, then you are shamed and ridiculed. The ultimate “victory” of the gay rights movement will be that those discriminating against homosexuals will be ridiculed and isolated as bigots. Ultimately we can only hope that the best values win out, and that we will always find outcasts in society that share our values, should our values violate the norm.

To which Sullivan responded: “There you have the illiberal mindset. Morality trumps freedom. Our opponents must be humiliated, ridiculed and 'isolated as perverts'. I mean 'bigots', excuse me.” But the “morality” involved is the willful, irrational rejection of reality. As Reilly notes [in his Introduction](#), it is the choosing of will over reason. When will is given primacy over reason, “we can make everything, including ourselves, anything that we wish and that we have the power to do.” Do most Catholics understand what is going on? I don't think so. When you [congratulate a football player for “coming out”](#) and announcing that he is “gay,” you are playing by the rules of the new “morality”, regardless of how kind and upbeat you want to be. When [Catholic parents rail against a Catholic school](#) for having a Catholic nun present Catholic moral teachings about marriage and sexuality, you are not just waving the white flag—you are completely unaware of the battle or the stakes involved.

If homosexual acts are, as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, “acts of

grave depravity” (par 2357), then everything constructed upon their claimed goodness is misdirected and deceptive, regardless of the sincerity or subjective innocence of those involved in the construction and promotion. After all, the *Catechism* says, “Under no circumstances can they be approved.” We would never congratulate a man who publicly boasts that he is a serial adulterer, or affirm a man who zealously promotes the healthiness of viewing pornography every day. Why, then, do otherwise with homosexuality? One simple reason, of course, is that we don't want to be labeled a “bigot” and called a “hater”. It's hard to be hated, and it's especially hard when the bullies not only get their way, but are declared “victims” whenever anyone stands up to them.

In a certain sense, the Sexual Revolution is over; at the very least, the walls have been breached and the consequences are serious and long-lasting. The Reign of “Gay” is proud, loud, and quite unwilling to tolerate dissent or discussion. And until we face that fact and come to grips with the situation as it really is, we will not be able to respond, regroup, and rebuild in any meaningful way. After all, if the kings and queens of this reign—assisted by their grim, willful lackeys—are going to denounce and shout down Andrew Sullivan, who is openly homosexual, what do you think they want to do to the Catholic Church?