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# Who's Really Intolerant? A Case from Butler University

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Miss Graham used her column to deal with the issue of homosexuality. In "Blatant Homosexuality Pervades Media," Jewel registered her concern and moral outrage over the treatment of lesbian parenthood in a recent episode of NBC's hit series ER. In that segment, Dr. Kerry Weaver was present when her same-sex partner gave birth to a daughter. Weaver is a major character on the program, and ER has made her lesbian self-discovery and lifestyle a major story theme in recent years. "Congratulations Mom...and Mom-its a girl," ran the most significant line from the episode. Anyone listening?

All this led Jewel Graham to ask the following question: "What is the world coming to where homosexual activity is promoted on national prime time television?" She is hardly alone in asking that question.

The young journalist then turned to making her case for the fact that such an endorsement of homosexuality promotes "a wrongful mindset" that runs counter to the moral convictions of millions of Americans.

A Christian, Jewel based her case upon biblical authority, noting simply, "the Bible clearly states that homosexuality is a sin." She also rooted her argument in creation, drawing attention to the undeniable fact that God created human beings as male and female and directed all sexual activity to a one flesh heterosexual relationship called marriage which is itself directed towards procreation. "Not only did He not originally design male/male or female/female relationships, but also physically, our bodies are not made for that." Does that sound radical?

Jewel Graham is hardly out on a limb in making this point. This has been the moral wisdom affirmed by virtually all cultures throughout human experience—at least until just lately. She also made the interesting point that university science classes do not deal with homosexuality in relation to biology, because such relationships are not linked to procreation. Heterosexuality drives reproduction—we hardly need charts and graphs to prove this case.

Throughout the column, Jewel made her convictions clear, but also insisted that homosexuality is not the only sin of her concern. She made a clear biblical case, drawn from both the Old and New Testaments, and argued that "sin is sin," and that tolerance of sin is deadly to society. "The problem is that people do not recognize this as sin when the Bible clearly states that it is."

Jewel also extended a truly Christian response to those dealing with this sin. "In God's condemnation of any-and-all sin, He does not tell us to condemn the people involved in it. He tells us to hate the sin, but love the sinner. That is exactly what He does with us. None of us is worthy of the gift of salvation that He so graciously bestows upon us, but we do have the choice as to how we live our lives in the choices that we make in accordance to His will."

Again, Jewel Graham is not engaged in an exercise of theological creativity when she presents this argument. To the contrary, this has been the clear affirmation of all major branches of Christianity throughout nearly twenty centuries of Christian experience. Only in recent years have churches on the liberal extremes of organized Christianity moved to deny the clear teachings of Scripture on this question. Nevertheless, Jewel's argument was soon treated as a platform right out

of the Spanish Inquisition.

The controversy over Jewel's column has been heated and vehement. At the same time, it also illustrates the irrationality and intolerance of the current regime of political correctness that predominates on America's academic campuses.

The response came first in letters to Dawgnet condemning Jewel's column. One student wrote to say, "I do have a problem with those who use the Bible to support their opinions. To me they sound as though they are hiding behind the Bible's words and not really thinking about the subject for themselves." Evidentially, this student believes that the only way to think for yourself is to think independently of any authority, and specifically to think independently of the divine authority of Holy Scripture. Nevertheless, this student at least offered something of an olive branch. "I believe that if you do [come to terms with homosexuality] there is hope for you, redemption for you, and I would certainly forgive you for your misunderstanding of homosexuality."

That student's attitude was not shared by many others. One prospective student for Butler University wrote, "In a society where people are valued as equals, your story/piece of misinformed opinion has left me as well as my parents upset and sadly mistaken at what the Butler University values as education. I am a prospective student. Well let's reword that, I am a prospective GAY student, who according to you may make society at Butler look bad and unethical." This prospective student cited Meryl Streep as his great moral authority when she commented at the recent Golden Globe Awards: "I accept this with a statement that we have bigger problems than people wanting to marry and steroid abuse." There—Meryl Streep has spoken, and those with moral concerns about homosexuality have been instructed.

Kristopher A. Adkins took an entirely different approach. According to Kristopher, "gay people's rights are starting to get the proper protection they deserve from the Constitution which protects ALL people from the simple minded, corn-fed, redneck, backwater, misinterpretations of an otherwise decent religion perpetrated by a small minority of inbred cousin-marrying [sic.] who are just proud to quote the Bible in a half-hearted attempt to prove they can read." How's that for an enlightened, rational, and mature response? According to Kristopher, Jewel is simply a "Bible-Banger," who is stuck in an antique mindset. His approach was shared by Beth, another student who wrote to register her shock that people "are still taking phrases from the Bible, an ancient text, and using them to trumpet his or her own shock at a modern world's antics."

Ruth, who identified herself as a Jewish student, told Jewel that she should just "keep your big mouth shut." She went on to say that she sincerely hoped "that condemning homosexuality in America isn't one of your main priorities," suggesting that "we have much bigger fish to fry." Ruth did not identify these larger fish she would rather Jewel fry, but she presented the argument that those who oppose homosexuality should just get over such an eccentric moral obsession.

Other writers were more vitriolic. Thomas Butler condemned Dawgnet for running the article in the first place. Directing his attention to Jewel Graham, Thomas let loose a verbal barrage: "Your article not only disgusted me but made me fear for the future. Fear for the future because frankly, I don't want someone like you in the same society that I live in." Well, that's certainly broadminded.

Then again, Thomas doesn't appear to understand much about the Constitution either. He criticized President Bush for opposing same-sex marriage. "The President wants to tie up the amendment process for an amendment to only define the word marriage? Making an amendment that bans same-sex marriage is wrong and is unconstitutional." Sorry, Thomas, but an amendment to the Constitution cannot be unconstitutional.

Other writers inadvertently made Jewel's point for her. One respondent wrote, "I also hope that my homosexual friends have the opportunity to have children of their own when they choose to." Good luck, at least in terms of the normal means of procreation. The only way for homosexual couples to "have" children is to use advanced reproductive technologies involving no more than one of the partners, or to adopt. Homosexual marriage, even if made legal, cannot be made procreative. Liberal frustration aside, the Supreme Court cannot change basic facts of biology.

Jewel Graham found a remnant of defenders among the letter writers as well. A few students congratulated her for honesty and courage. Others actually agreed with Jewel's argument. In the main, however, the letters expressed outrage that anyone with Jewel's politically-incorrect view of homosexuality should be allowed access to a public forum like Dawgnet. This attitude is proof positive that the celebrated culture of "openness" and "tolerance" of America's college

campuses is a sham and a lie. Those who are brave enough to present a case for the immorality of homosexuality—or any “sexual lifestyle”—will find themselves instructed that their values and moral views are not welcome among the “enlightened.”

Young Christians on college campuses may not yet be thrown to the lions, but Jewel Graham was certainly thrown to the culture war’s wolves when she had the courage to speak the truth about homosexuality. Who will be next?

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