How Do We Learn to Hate Each Other?

Shôn Ellerton, December 31, 2019
Watching children play together in the playground is one of few places I've seen a world without hate. Why can't we do the same?

The world of social media in 2019 has had an almost melancholic edge to it; the proliferation of knee-jerk trolling, the ongoing hatred from those who profess that their beliefs and political stances are better than others, all the heated issues from those who are for and against the continual rise of wokeness and diversity, and, of course, being 'carpet-bombed' by the media on a variety of issues, many of which can be sorted out by rational thinking and logical reasoning without resorting to raising unnecessary panic. However, those issues which genuinely warrant high-priority action and awareness must include the vast areas of Australia under bushfire with the recent spat of hot weather. The enormity of what these fires have created cannot be underestimated.

But what really bothers me is the abundance of sheer hatred, especially on social media platforms like Twitter. Even mainstream Australian TV decided to air on their popular Q & A program what could possibly be the most disgusting and vile episode featuring a panel of ultra-feminists who espouse the use of violence and killing of men to destroy the patriarchy. I kid you not. Q & A withdrew the video on Youtube, but here's an alternative link by the reprehensible Mona Eltahawy herself.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DF-RjItEXYk

So what's going on. How have we developed so much hatred for each other? Not all of us of course, but you catch my drift…

Learning from children

One of the greatest pleasures I have is to watch my five-year-old son play with others at the school playground. The innocence, the freedom, the imagination and, most importantly, the lack of deferential treatment based on their colour, race or religion. Much like my days as a five-year-old, my son plays amidst a variety of children from various backgrounds. There's Asian, black, European, Indian, Jewish, Buddhist, atheist, Hindu, just to name a few. In Adelaide, it is most likely that the predominant 'colour' would be 'white', just as in Japan, the predominant 'colour' would most likely be 'yellow'. And, Nigeria, most probably 'black'. For children, it makes absolutely no difference to them. I remember when I was a kid, I used to say to my mother that I have a few black friends at school. No doubt, my black friends would probably have said the same thing in reverse. Kids tell the truth. There's no animosity there, just the facts.

What happened to many of us adults? If a group of adults are socialising, and one says that he knows this black guy who helped him out with his computer, I can guarantee that an 'air' of discomfort will shroud the discussion. One may be thinking, 'Why is he calling him black?'. Another might be thinking, 'Wow. What a racist.' And so on. Children are much more honest and say it without deference or exclusion. Why is it that so many of us, as adults, become suddenly uncomfortable with these discussions?

Now I'm not saying that children are perfect in these regards. Children are brutally honest and, as graphically portrayed by William Golding in his *Lord of the Flies,* can certainly flip to the 'dark side' if unchecked. 'Fatties', 'Four-eyes' (those with thick glasses), 'shorties', nerds, or, anyone for that matter which doesn't fit the norm often gets singled out and picked upon. However, I do not recall ever remembering anyone picked upon as a 5-year-old kid for his religion or race.

Conditioning children in later years

Sure, we had jokes back then as a child in my later years. In my time, for some odd reason or another that I can't remember, it was the Polish community we made fun of; the Pollocks. During the same time in England, it was the Irish, so lovingly played out by the Fawlty Towers episode when the Irish builder stuffed up a job and being unceremoniously ousted by Basil's wife, Sybil, 'You're

nothing but a thick Irish joke! Now get out!' And let's not forget the Germans! But this is the thing. Nearly every group of people will get a thorough ribbing at some point or another, but now, the blade of wokeness is intending to stop all that. Earlier this month, a Dr Sonja Falck was interviewed on Good Morning Britain on the proposal to making it a hate crime to call someone a nerd. What nonsense is this! Here's the link.

Children, certainly in my day as a child, were taught the basics of science, mathematics, reading, writing, geography and history. They were taught, as far as I remember, as objectively as possible. There was never any prolonged discussion on the 'wrongs' or the 'rights'. For example, I recollect my schooldays in the United States on when we learned about slavery and the black/white divide in the Deep South. We were taught the facts on why it happened and when it happened. Children aren't stupid. All of us knew that this, clearly, was not a pleasant bit of history and it was clearly wrong. We certainly didn't need the teacher to tell us that what they did was really wrong and now we have to make up for it, a mindset which has become dangerously predominant in today's education. Most importantly, we did not know the meaning of culturalism, diversity and inclusion. We knew the fundamentals of other religions, politics and ideology but only in the context of the relevant history lesson we were learning at the time. The teachings of culturalism, diversity and inclusion, quite frankly, has no business in the education of young children. These are learnings that are developed through a mature and rational mind and not through a young mind easily brainwashed to fit the current agenda positioned by the politics of the day. Even my five-year-old son comes home and keeps saying that the Kaurna people (a local indigenous peoples in the Adelaide area) were here first and then further questioned me if the road I was driving on was built by the Kaurna people.

Those who believe that our children should be conditioned to understand culturalism, diversity, inclusion and all that mumbo jumbo should seriously observe how the children interact with each other. What they say to each other. How they play with each other. Children are far better integrators than most adults will ever be. Where some sections of our society are hellbent on preserving cultures, not unlike collecting specimens in a museum, children just want to be friends with each other. They don't give a fuck about identity politics.

The role of parents

There is no doubt, that parenting has an enormous role to play in the indoctrination of the young person's mind. As parents, it's incredibly easy to relay ideologies and beliefs to our children. Most of us do it, either intentionally or unintentionally. I try my best not to do myself; however, when a question from your child is difficult to answer at best, I always be as factual and objective as I can. Sure, at five years of age, the subjects of politics and religion are far away; however, there will be a time when such subjects are brought to the table for discussion. Controversial to say the least, I am of the mindset that children should follow their own choices and not be swayed by parents to follow their own ideologies. Given the right education and the facts, children are armed with the knowledge to make rational and reasonable decisions in adulthood. Unfortunately, there are many cases of hate being disseminated to the young through parents, often themselves having gone through the same, that manifests into ugliness in the form of racism and extremism on its own accord.

To conclude

How hate develops from childhood to adulthood is a very interesting, and depressing, topic. I'd love to view a world in the future where race, religion, creed, sex, or whatever is equally respected to the point where it is and, … how should I put this… transparent?

A world without gender politics.

A world without political correctness.

A world without wokeness.

A world without identity politics.

A world without hate.

Without hatred, none of the above would exist in the first place!