

Questions and Answers on Homosexuality

by Gary L. Bauer

April 13, 1998, at Harvard University

Question 1: This is my second year at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Speaking of the heart and soul of this country, I find it ironic to hear you invoking phrases like "All men are created equal" or talking about things like fighting Nazism, since the Nazis supported the persecution of gays and lesbians just like your organization supports the persecution of gays and lesbians. My question is, does your vision of American foreign policy include this type of bigotry and hatred spreading throughout the world?

Answer 1: That wasn't a loaded question, was it? As a Harvard student, you, I am sure, will be able to understand this. There is a difference between opposing the political agenda of the "gay" rights movement and being an oppressor of gays. The way that you choose to live your life or that others choose to live their lives is up to you. [But] when you come into the public square and suggest that the rest of America needs to redefine marriage as being between two men and two women or when you come into the public square and insist on the right in the public schools in America to teach my children that the way you have chosen is no morally different from the way I have chosen to live with my wife, you should in a rational, reasonable world expect opposition. I will, in fact, oppose that agenda, and no amount of name-calling will deter me from doing that.

Question 2: I am also a second-year student here at the Kennedy School. I want to press you a bit on your answer to the second prior question which concerned oppression within this country of gays and lesbians, among many other groups of people. I wanted to draw particular attention to the policies which the Family Research Council and other conservative groups are proponents of, which have to do with ex-gay conversion therapy. I wanted to inform the audience that there is a quote from the Family Research Council's web page that says, "The Family Research Council applauds the efforts of men and women who provide counseling and support for people who wish to leave homosexuality and find fulfillment in a healthy lifestyle." [The student then went into a rambling discourse, suggesting that homosexual children are being subjected to kidnappings and electric shock therapy, before returning to his question.] [F]rom my perspective, it seems like you favor the cessation of oppression, as I do, of Christians and other religious worshipers overseas and in China in particular. I want to know whether you favor human rights for people that you agree with and tend to like and discard them for people that you don't like.

Answer 2: You have got me on electric shock therapy. Generally speaking, I am not a fan of electric shock therapy for anyone, although I can think of a few politicians in Washington that might benefit from it. [Laughter.] Look, you all have a problem, I think. When you belittle the idea that people can get out of the homosexual lifestyle, your problem is that those people exist. I spoke at their convention just a few weeks ago.¹ There were hundreds of them now happily married and with families of their own. It seems to me that if you are talking about oppression, I can't think of a greater oppression than to try to force somebody to continue to live as apparently you and some others here are living. Again, if that is your choice, you will bear the consequences of it, but how you can be against somebody else trying to get out of that way of life if they choose to do so and find happiness some other way is bizarre to me. I will encourage anybody I can to get out of what I think is a destructive lifestyle. I don't believe a healthy society can endorse, subsidize, or encourage it. I am sorry if this disappoints you, but again, on this, I am immovable.

Statement from questioning student: I think that history will shame you, Mr. Bauer.

Question 3: I am in my first year at the Kennedy School. I guess I am the third of the trio. You talked about the gay political agenda, and I hope there is an organized agenda. I would feel better if there were. You raised marriage and schooling as two things you find particularly objectionable. I want to ask you about two other things, which are that in many states in this country I can be arrested and sent to jail for spending the night with another man and that in many places in this country I can be fired for being gay. I am curious if you