

BOY ABUSE

Michael Terroni

There seems to be many prejudices against men. One such is that there are very few male teachers working in primary schools. These schools seem to be exclusive female provinces although there have been some moves lately to engage male teachers into primary school teaching. It has been rightly said that many boys at primary school have no father at home and need male support and therefore male teachers. There is a real danger that boys brought up exclusively by women miss out on male activities and I do know some boys who have had nothing but petticoat government have turned out to be homosexual as a rebellion against female superiority and dominance in their lives.

There is the feeling that sexual offenders and perverts and those who abuse children are always male and while this may not be said openly it is clear that the dominance of women in primary schools bears testimony to this.

As an example, there is a elderly man who lives near me. Every day, whatever the weather, he walks down to the corner shop to get his daily provisions and coming back it is uphill and he rests on the school gates to catch his breath. Often this coincides with the children being in the playground and many is the time that female staff have scolded him and told him to be on his way and under their breath have called him a pervert or a dirty old bugger and the children have heard this. I heard one little girl tell her mother, "We had a dirty old bugger at school today!"

Generally speaking teachers in nurseries, playgroups and kindergartens are always female and in their duties they have to deal with little boys and their toilet facilities. You do not hear of men in these circumstances taking little girls to the toilet, not that they would want to, but is this another example of discrimination against men? Schoolgirls in playgroups take little boys to the toilet.

Some time ago I was taking to a young adult male when a youngish woman came along and spoke to my companion.

"Hello, Simon," she beamed, "I haven't seen you for years. I used to take you to the toilet when you were a child and had to hold you as you couldn't pee straight!"

There were other people in the busy High Street who heard this. Simon was embarrassed and deeply hurt. I was too.

Child abuse is any hurt is done to a child. Abuse is any hurt done to anyone.

Was this woman guilty of abuse? She certainly hurt Simon as he stood with me in the High Street.

But to return to the primary school situation.

I went to a school play in which a ten-year old boy with a good clear voice was the narrator between each scene and each scene was short and so he had a lot of speaking to give. The play was a comedy and so there was a lot of laughing but were they not laughing so much at the play but at the narrator because his flies were undone and his pants were on show. He was unaware of this and carried on.

Neither of his parents were present.

All the staff were female. When the interval in the play occurred one young woman, who was a member of staff, took the boy and in full view of everyone put her hand down his trousers adjusted his shirt and pants, tidied him up and did up his zip. It seemed to take a long time. There were hoots of laughter especially from the girls. The boy was very distressed and walked out of the school. Two teachers ran after him, "Come back, John", they shouted.

He did not return.

Surely the boy could have adjusted his clothes himself.

There are many questions:

What should be done to remove the prejudice against male teachers working in primary schools?

Should there be equality among the sexes to allow men to work in nurseries, playgroups and kindergartens?

Why is it that women including schoolgirls can see the nudity of both boys and girls and yet if a man sees this he is condemned as a pervert?

Are the school wrong to condemn the aged shopper leaning on the school gates to catch his breath? Is this the abuse of the elderly?

If an old woman leant on the school gates would anything be said?

Are they wrong to call this elderly man a dirty old bugger and in the hearing of children?

Take the case of the young adult Simon confronted by his ex-playgroup leader. Was he being abused?

As to John on stage should that teenage female member of staff have put her hand down his trousers and attend to him as she did?

Should any action be taken against her?

Should the play have been stopped immediately the problem was spotted?

Should a man in the audience have attended to John ? If he had, would that have been frowned upon as well?

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