

Muslim clerics stand their ground against 'progressive' sex teaching.

By John Hilton O'Brien, 29 July 2023

It was beyond patronizing. Justin Trudeau's [remarks](#) that Muslims were protesting LGBTQ because they had "been misled" by the "right wing" implied that Muslims cannot think for themselves. It also implied that any opposition had to come from outside Islam (as we will see, that is also very, very far from the truth.) It is hard to imagine anything more dismissive of an entire religion. But then he took it further.

Trudeau implied that the very right of Muslims to practice their religion depends on their support of universal sex education and teaching of trans ideology in their classrooms. He says, "it's not a buffet. You can't get the protections you want out of the charter and leave aside others. Standing up for people's rights means standing up for everybody's rights." When he said this, he was literally telling Muslims what they must think. When he speaks this way, he's also framing a national educational policy — and it is not friendly to religious groups that disagree with his agenda.

The Islamic community however, is perfectly capable of explaining its own position — no external source was needed. An online document entitled ["Navigating Differences: Clarifying Sexual and Gender Ethics in Islam"](#) is currently circulating amongst Alberta Muslims. It's succinct and clear — written like a careful legal decision — but with the authority of dozens upon dozens of North American imams and legal scholars. And it is absolutely, resolutely opposed to Trudeau's claims.

The document doesn't mince words. At all. Here's a sample:

"As a religious minority that frequently experiences bigotry and exclusion, we reject the notion that moral disagreement amounts to intolerance or incitement of violence. We affirm our right to express our beliefs while simultaneously recognizing our constitutional obligation to exist peacefully with those whose beliefs differ from ours."

The sentiment is worth embracing for people of any faith — or no faith at all. Moral disagreement is not violence. Muslims can disagree — strongly — with people preaching the acceptability of sexual and gender minority standpoints. It isn't violence, and it does not prevent peaceful coexistence.

What's more, Muslims must oppose any attempt to force an agenda driven by sexual minorities on their children in order to be consistent in their religious practice. The document notes that Islam consistently embraces sexual dimorphism. It is in the Qur'an, and repeated in the tradition. The jurists and imams who signed the Navigating Differences document point out that this means that no Muslim can support sex education policies grounded in trans or LGBTQ+ ideology.

The document puts it succinctly: "Such policies subvert the agency of Muslim parents to teach their children their religiously grounded sexual ethics, violate their constitutional right to freely practice their religion, and contribute to an atmosphere of intolerance to faith communities."

This is no exaggeration. News stories about teachers harassing Muslim students are being reported [more](#) and [more](#). The fact that such harassment of Muslim students is consonant with the prime minister's public statements suggests that we are looking at officially sanctioned discrimination. Similar harassment of Christian students also exists, but is so commonplace as to not be worth mentioning — unless a [student is actually arrested](#), as was Ontario Catholic student Josh Alexander.

Alarmingly for Muslims, official secrecy often stands between them and information about what their children are being taught about sexuality. Schools from [Quebec](#) (see 4.10 of document) to [Newfoundland](#) (2.4 and 3.1), [Toronto](#) (page 6), and [Vancouver](#) (page 6) all instruct teachers to keep matters of child sexuality from parents. As [Edmonton Public](#) (2d) demonstrates, most school boards in Alberta mandate "gay-straight alliance" clubs that are not subject to laws regarding parental consent, often with mandatory secrecy, a legacy of the 2015-2019 NDP government. The policies exist largely to "protect" kids from disapproving religious parents — including Muslims.

The truth is that Canadians of Trudeau's ideological bent think that the religious views of parents are the enemy. For Trudeau — as for the jurisdictions mentioned in the previous paragraph — Muslims are acceptable if and only if they don't teach their religion to their children. It is as though Trudeau and his followers see Islam — or any strong religious conviction — as an enemy.

As pronounced by Trudeau and implemented by local school boards, Canada pursues a deliberate policy of suppression. Muslim children are to be re-educated so as not to be Muslims anymore. Policies deliberately pit students against their religious parents. We're not burning mosques — but we're 'taking the children away.'

This sort of stance is not unique to Canadian policies' treatment of Islam. Residential schools across the country speak to historic attempts to erase First Nations Culture — and the abuses that accompanied it. The same policies that apply to Muslim students are also used

against Christians — particularly Catholics, who have [similar religious injunctions](#). The past few years have seen a [rash of burned churches](#), which Trudeau called “[fully understandable](#).” Such official policies of suppression predictably have negative effects at the local level.

In this context, the clarity of the Islamic jurists is refreshing. They point out the policies, explain why Islam cannot possibly conform to them, and call for an end to public attempts to suppress their religion. Not only that, but they call for an end to attempts to suppress or subvert all religions, not

just their own. It is a simple, clear call: one hopes that Christian clergy will follow their example.

Above all, we hope that Canadian politicians from school boards to the highest office in the land will take note. If we cannot navigate those differences, then freedom to practice religion will be a dead letter. And as even Trudeau acknowledges, the loss of one human right threatens them all.

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