

≡ Pulse

Publish a post

So-Called "Religious Freedom" Laws Increase Conflict Through Isolation

Mark B. Baer

When Should You Say No To Your Boss?

Dr. Travis Bradberry

What it's actually like to be a Black employee at a tech company

Mark S. Luckie

Lessons From A Decade In Media Entrepreneurship

Rafat Ail

The complex formula of Growing Naturally.

Activitya Sharma

It Pays to Praise Employees. Here's How to Do It Right

Justin Bariso

Meet The Class of 2017 at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business

John A. Byrne

PM Narendra Modi in Silicon Valley: Can he fulfill the hopes of Indian Startups?

Steeraman Thigarajan

Daily Pulse: Kickstarter Won't Sell or IPO, Viola Davis Makes Emmy History, Volkswagen CEO

Isabelle Roughton

What Can We Do About A Toxic Work World?

Rita J. King



Mark B. Baer

Family Law Attorney, Mediator, Collaborative Divorce Practitioner / Author / Lecturer / Keynote Speaker /

Edit post

View stats

So-Called "Religious Freedom" Laws Increase Conflict Through Isolation

Apr 1, 2015 | 301 views | 6 Likes | 7 Comments |

The enactment of so-called "religious freedom" laws, such as that enacted in Indiana on March 26, 2015, are deeply troubling for a great many reasons. The greatest concern about such laws is not whether or not they are Constitutional, but the disconnection they create.

Unfortunately, the level of conflict in the world has been increasing. In order to address this very serious problem, it is imperative that we do things to combat the underlying cause. Ultimately, many of these conflicts are the result of disconnection created by focusing on perceived differences between people, rather than their similarities.

In 1958, Joan Williams had been selected to ride on the float sponsored by the City of Pasadena, until city officials discovered she was black. The interesting thing about members of the LGBT community is that they can all hide in plain sight. Who benefits when society causes people to hide?



≡ Pulse

Publish a post

So-Called "Religious Freedom" Laws Increase Conflict Through Isolation

Mark B. Baer

When Should You Say No To Your Boss?

Dr. Travis Bradberry

What it's actually like to be a Black employee at a tech company

Mark S. Luckie

Lessons From A Decade In Media Entrepreneurship

Rafat Ali

The complex formula of Growing Naturally.

Advitiya Sharma

It Pays to Praise Employees. Here's How to Do It Right

Justin Barso

Meet The Class of 2017 at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business

John A. Byrne

PM Narendra Modi in Silicon Valley: Can he fulfill the hopes of Indian Startups?

Sreeraman Thiagarajan

Daily Pulse: Kickstarter Won't Sell or IPO, Viola Davis Makes Emmy History, Volkswagen CEO

Isabelle Roughol

What Can We Do About A Toxic Work World?

Rita J. King

Tragically, those engaged in such shaming don't even see it as such because of their belief that homosexuality is a choice. As was discussed in a three part series of articles previously published by the Huffington Post titled, "The Same-Sex Marriage 'Debate' Is Based Upon Ignorance and Inaccurate Information," "The Cause of Homosexuality Is Irrelevant," and "The Term Homophobia Is Improper," this belief has no basis in fact. This explains why socially conservative states "have higher rates of gay couples raising kids." Since those states also don't allow same-sex couples to adopt children, this occurs because those children were born while such parents were married to "beards" and procreated.

According to Brené Brown, Ph.D., LMSW, "empathy and shame are on opposite ends of a continuum. Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging. Shame is how we see ourselves in others' eyes. Shame results in fear, blame (of self or others), and disconnection. Shame tells us that our imperfections make us inadequate. Shame separates and isolates."

During the course of her research, Dr. Brown discovered the following twelve categories of shame: (1) appearance & body image; (2) money & work; (3) motherhood/fatherhood; (4) family; (5) parenting; (6) mental & physical health (including addiction); (7) sex; (8) aging; (9) religion; (10) speaking out; (11) surviving trauma; and (12) being stereotyped & labeled.

Religious ideology disconnects those people who fall outside the limited worldview of any given religion. In fact, religion itself is one of the twelve categories of shame. Of course, religion also leads to "stereotyping & labeling," another category of shame. Depending upon the circumstances, other categories of shame may also be implicated as a result of religious issues.

Religious ideology most certainly causes conflict. It's only a matter of time before one thing leads to another and the resulting increase in conflict turns to violence. We don't have to look at the various conflicts occurring in the Middle East to see the result of such disconnection.

For example, on Jan. 14, 2015, the New York Appellate Division, Second Department, held that "a plaintiff alleging discrimination in employment on the basis of religion in violation of Executive Law § 296 can establish a prima facie



☰ Pulse

Publish a post

So-Called "Religious Freedom" Laws Increase Conflict Through Isolation

Mark B. Baer

When Should You Say No To Your Boss?

Dr. Travis Bradberry

What it's actually like to be a Black employee at a tech company

Mark S. Luckie

Lessons From A Decade In Media Entrepreneurship

Rafat Ali

The complex formula of Growing Naturally.

Advitiya Sharma

It Pays to Praise Employees. Here's How to Do It Right

Justin Bariso

Meet The Class of 2017 at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business

John A. Byrne

PM Narendra Modi in Silicon Valley: Can he fulfill the hopes of Indian Startups?

Sreeraman Thiagarajan

Daily Pulse: Kickstarter Won't Sell or IPO, Viola Davis Makes Emmy History, Volkswagen CEO

isabelle Froughol

What Can We Do About A Toxic Work World?

Rita J. King

Another recent example and directly related to violence stemming from religious ideology pertaining to homosexuality is the brutal gay bashing incident that occurred in Philadelphia on September 11, 2014. A gay couple was brutally beaten, solely because of their sexual orientation, by a group of group of individuals, including an assistant high school basketball coach and a number of former students of Archbishop Wood Catholic High School.

A final example involves a racially based murder of a black man that occurred in Mississippi on June 26, 2011. U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves' powerful speech to the three young white men convicted of the crime is a must-read. In his speech, Judge Reeves explained that "The victims were doomed at birth.... Their genetic makeup made them targets."

For some people, beating or murdering individuals because they are different is insufficient. Matt McLaughlin, a Christian lawyer in Huntington Beach, California, is one such individual. As a result, he has proposed a ballot measure titled the "Sodomite Suppression Act," which provides that "any person who willingly touches another person of the same gender for purposes of sexual gratification be put to death by bullets to the head or by any other convenient method," among other things. "California Attorney General Kamala Harris says a lawyer's proposed anti-gay ballot measure is 'utterly reprehensible' and 'patently unconstitutional,' and she doesn't want to take steps to prepare the measure for the initiative process. Harris is asking a court in Sacramento to issue a declaratory judgment relieving her of the duty to write a title and summary for the measure, a step she is required to take before signatures can be gathered to place the initiative on the ballot."

In 2004, Mr. McLaughlin "said he has read the Bible almost every day since the first grade and considers it both inspirational and great literature. 'It enriched my learning,' he said. 'I grew up reading the Bible with my parents and sister. The cultural and literacy lessons we learned from it had an impact on us.' He said reading the often complex and provocative passages sharpened his cognitive skills." It seems that his reading of the Bible clearly affected his thinking; however, not in the way in which he believes. This is exactly why religious ideology is a very serious problem, regardless of the religion involved. Religious ideology has no place in a civilized society.

Shockingly, Indiana is the 20th State to enact "religious freedom" laws. The other



≡ Pulse

Publish a post

So-Called "Religious Freedom" Laws Increase Conflict Through Isolation

Mark B. Baer

When Should You Say No To Your Boss?

Dr. Travis Bradberry

What it's actually like to be a Black employee at a tech company

Mark S. Luckie

Lessons From A Decade In Media Entrepreneurship

Rafat Ali

The complex formula of Growing Naturally.

Advtiya Sharma

It Pays to Praise Employees. Here's How to Do It Right

Justin Bariso

Meet The Class of 2017 at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business

John A. Byrne

PM Narendra Modi in Silicon Valley: Can he fulfill the hopes of Indian Startups?

Sreeraman Thiagarajan

Daily Pulse: Kickstarter Won't Sell or IPO, Viola Davis Makes Emmy History, Volkswagen CEO

Isabelle Roughol

What Can We Do About A Toxic Work World?

Rita J. King

Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Virginia. Moreover, "lawmakers in 28 states have introduced more than 85 bills in the 2015 legislative session that penalize members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gender community, according to the Human Rights Campaign, a Washington-based LGBT rights organization." In fact, on March 30, 2015, the Arkansas legislature passed a "Religious Freedom" bill, which is similar to the Indiana law.

Assuming that we want to live in a civilized society, we must stop focusing on our differences and start focusing on our similarities. Doing so requires that we expand our worldview, which can't be done by isolating ourselves from those who differ from us. We cannot change other people, we can only change ourselves. Research has shown that prejudice is countered when environments foster critical thinking, empathy development and positive self esteem. What the world needs now is empathy, not isolation. Please do our society a favor and work on your own biases through gaining empathy by expanding your worldview. Let's toast to the "Power of Empathy!"

Lgbt Rights, Equality & Diversity, Religion



Written by Mark B. Baer

Like Comment

6 likes 7 comments



Add your comment

Newest



Alexandra Castle, Ph.D. 1st

My passion is helping clients develop financial skills, mitigate the negative impact of the divorce process

Great article Mark. These laws make me so sad. When will we understand that empathy with others doesn't detract from us...it enhances us.

Unlike(1) Reply(1) 5 months ago

You



Mark B. Baer **AUTHOR** YOU

Family Law Attorney, Mediator, Collaborative Divorce Practitioner / Author / Lecturer / Keynote Speaker / Legal Analyst

Thank you, Alexandra.

Like 5 months ago