

4-11-14

Dear Ms. Munn, Mr. Barnett and Mr. Danger:

I am writing to express my anger and frustration over the radio show Kimberly and Beck, and the hosts' expressions of glee regarding the fire death of Mr. Robert Harris, a PERSON with a level three sexual offense. The old song from the 60's comes back to me "Everybody's got to have somebody to look down on". A notable person, Jesus of Nazareth, said while talking of a woman involved in adultery, "Let him (or her) who is without sin cast the first stone".

It is interesting that Mr. Harris had been living in that neighborhood for many years, according to the woman who called in to the show to "celebrate" his death. If, during those years while her daughter was growing up he had committed any additional offenses, I am sure that he would have been arrested and taken out of the neighborhood and put in prison. Apparently that is not the case, or this woman would have mentioned it.

The vast majority of people who commit sexual offenses do NOT recidivate (in this case re-offend sexually). In fact, those who have committed a sexual offense are the least likely of any group of persons with felonies to recidivate except for murderers. That means that drug addicts, DUI drivers, burglars, those who commit larceny etc. are much more likely to re-offend than those who commit sexual offenses (literature available that states these facts). People who commit other felonies hurt people too through stabbings, gunshots, stranglings, hit and runs and the list goes on.

The vast majority of sexual offenses are committed by family members, neighbors, relatives i.e. people close to the person who is victimized. Most of those offenses are never reported, or are reported only when the person(s) victimized are grown. Since that is the case, it is very likely that many people living around this same neighborhood who were not identified as people who had committed a sexual offense, are just as dangerous as this man who was identified. I'm sure you will shake your heads and say, how is that possible, but the literature makes it clear that up to 80% of sexual offenses are not reported or discovered. "Stranger Danger" offenses, after which laws are frequently named (i.e. Jessica's Law, the Adam Walsh Act), are a tiny percentage of sexual offenses.

We spend millions of dollars trying to make sure that those who have been identified, supervised by parole or probation or the Department of Corrections, and treated, do not recidivate with a sexual offense. With treatment and supervision, the recidivism rate is almost non-existent. What if we took all the money we could save on over-treating those who are at low risk to re-offend, who are actually hurt by too much treatment, and used those dollars for community/school/church/synagogue education re: incest and other within family/friend/neighborhood offenses that go on for years, as well as for services to those who have been victimized? Could we guarantee no further victimizations? Of course not, but we could definitely reduce the number who are victimized and enhance the safety of the public.

The public has it all wrong. It is only through 1) Rehabilitation and restoration of the person who has offended that 2) victimization can be reduced, and 3) the safety of the public is enhanced (but NEVER insured).

We had a similar "roasting" of those with sexual offenses through the Peter Boyles Show on KOA Talk Radio here in Denver a number of years ago. Mr. Boyles called people "Chester the Molester" and other unsavory names. I am happy to say that he was asked to leave the station and is no longer a voice in the Denver metropolitan area.

Hopefully you will revamp your approach to covering these kinds of events. Ever have a dirty thought? Ever been tempted to have sex with someone under 18? All human beings are extremely capable of making a bad choice in a moment of high emotion. Let's make sure that we are free of wrong thoughts and actions before we cast stones at others.

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