

# Gay Leadership Would Threaten Boy Scouts' Future

If the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) departs from its longstanding policy and allows openly gay scoutmasters and scouts, it will destroy the legitimacy and security of this American institution. A change in policy would cause a mass exodus, transforming Scouting into an unprincipled and risky proposition for parents.

The Scouts were plagued with more than 1,800 cases of abuse of boys by Scout leaders, according to a 1994 book, *Scouts Dishonor*. It's sheer fantasy for the BSA board to think this will not multiply its problems exponentially.

The biggest problem will be a wave of boy-on-boy sexual activity on campouts and other overnight trips. Claiming to be "gay" and questioning your gender has become so popular in public schools that kids are "becoming gay" and acting out because it's hip and edgy. Ask any middle-school teacher. This sad phenomenon would soon pervade Scouting.

Truth be told, there are scouts and leaders who are gay. But they have to be appropriately private and discreet about their sexuality and not "loud and proud." Imagine openly gay men kissing and snuggling around the campfire in front of young boys. This policy would produce utterly inappropriate and dangerous results.

The problem with the compromise of allowing local units to decide whether to allow gays is that Scouting involves many regional activities. Camporees, Jamborees and summer camp involve multiple units. No parent in his or her right mind would allow a son to go on overnight campouts led by openly gay men who by their very "nature" and identity somehow

sexually crave other males.

Why has the BSA lost its way? The ugly answer is money and politics. The board has been infiltrated by wealthy, pro-gay corporate CEOs who haven't been properly screened to ensure commitment to core BSA values. The board has caved to blackmail by corporations threatening to pull money and support. Top Scouting executives now are paid up to \$815,000 a year. Having accepted golden handcuffs, the BSA fears financial hardship if it doesn't capitulate.

I say better a Boy Scout program with much less funding and much more integrity than one that is willing to sell its soul by compromising on the timeless principles that have inspired millions of boys to become responsible men.

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