

"Rights"

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by Mary McDowell

The remark of Arizona ACLU executive director Eisenberg (A student's individual rights come first before school safety) revealed a common misunderstanding of human rights. It is a misconception, however grand, that all people can have all their individual rights at all times, regardless of entitlement. Granting your individual rights may cost me mine, as a member of society. Granting your child's rights in school may cost my child's safety. Get real!

This comment smacks of an immature "I-Me-My" mentality. The true measure of maturity is not how "self-centered," but how "other-centered" one is. Self-centeredness is something our children need to grow out of, not be encouraged to hold onto. Self-centered people don't care about anybody else. If offended, they don't get better, they get bitter. And some get violent.

We have learned to combine the "I-Me-My" attitude with violent revenge, as depicted in video games, TV shows, movies, music lyrics, and other printed and internet materials, which promote violent, graphic retribution. We don't need to learn self-centeredness; we need to un-learn it.

At times individual rights must defer to "common good." Neither the Right to Bear Arms, nor the First Amendment were intended as a license to destroy. Freedom needs to be balanced by responsibility toward others. Unlicensed, violent revenge is NOT an All-American, God-given right. We need more effective controls on the media, and tighter school security. Reacting to students dressing like the latest child-killers, or to their mouthing off about gross methods of revenge, is not an infringement on their individual rights it's a common sense security measure. Can the "I-Me-My" attitude. We need to tighten up on both the kids and the media.