



John Oliver on Homeschooling: “Some Parents Running the Homeschool Institute of Dishwashing and Others Running Lil Nazis R Us”

“Since, therefore, they have their parents for teachers, they not only are taught everything ungrudgingly but also at the same time they give heed to the precepts of their teachers with a most unwavering trust. Furthermore, since they are bred in these teachings from childhood up, they attain a great skill in them, both because of the ease with which youth is taught and because of the great amount of time which is devoted to this study.” — Diodorus Siculus

British comedian John Oliver took shots at homeschooling and homeschool parents the other night, describing the curriculum followed by most homeschool parents as “pretty troubling,” and he laments the lax homeschool laws in the United States, saying that such statutory leeway leads to a situation in which parents “don’t have to teach their kids anything at all.”



AP Images
John Oliver

One wonders what type of childhood Oliver had if he thinks it common that parents wouldn’t want to teach their kids everything and anything that could help them, whether they had to or not.

Oliver continues his criticism, describing the American homeschool community as “rightwing parents afraid of hypothetical third-grade lube demonstrations.” He goes on to criticize unregulated homeschooling, saying that homeschool instruction can be so “bad it can get basically nonexistent.”

Quickly, the idea that the sexualization of children is an official part of the elementary school curriculum is hardly “hypothetical.” Would that it were, Mr. Oliver. Perhaps you’ve not heard of the all-too-true horror stories, stories of children being forced to submit to sexual “education” demonstrations that, frankly, would make Caligula blush.

Consider, for example, the suggested sex-ed curriculum promoted by the United Nations. Here’s a brief description of the proposed perversion as [reported by The Epoch Times](#):

Comprehensive sex education in the United States and around the world is becoming progressively more extreme, with tiny children now being exposed to obscenity, perversion, sexualization, LGBT propaganda, and more.

In 2018, UNESCO released “international technical guidance on sexuality education” urging schools to teach children about “sexual pleasure,” masturbation, and “responses to sexual stimulation” before they even turn 10. By 12, the standards call for children to be taught



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that “non-penetrative sexual behaviors” can be “pleasurable.”

Such sickness being promoted by politicians is compelling evidence of not only the decline of the West, but of the desperate need for more homeschooling.

As for Oliver’s claim that homeschooled children aren’t actually being educated, consider the, by now, undeniable fact that [home-educated children typically score 15 to 25 percentile points above public-school students](#) on standardized academic achievement tests. Not to mention a study led by Clive Belfield, an educational researcher, revealing that the average score on the verbal section of the SAT for homeschooled students was 1,093.1, while the average score in public school students was 1,012.6. That means homeschooling children performed better and got 80.5 more points than the public-school average.

Then, there is this headline from Business Insider:

“While homeschoolers might still live on the margins of the US education system — they only make up 3.4% of America’s student body — the leading research suggests the education they receive is second-to-none.”

Second-to-none. [Television ratings](#) reported on October 7 reveal that John Oliver’s show *Last Week Tonight* is not second-to-none, however. Television Stats reports that Oliver’s show is the 68th most popular TV show online. Maybe Oliver would be more successful had he been homeschooled.

Doubling down on his public display of ignorance, Oliver spews poisoned epithets when denigrating the deregulation of homeschools:

“The argument they will always make against any regulation is you’re just punishing all the parents doing things right to address a handful who are doing it wrong,” Oliver noted. “In theory, sure. But when you have some parents running the Homeschool Institute of Dishwashing and others running Lil Nazis R Us, it seems maybe the reins have gotten a little too loose.”

Nazis? Really? John Oliver is a graduate of the prestigious and ancient Cambridge University and the most clever criticism he can make about homeschooling is to unfurl and untruthfully brand homeschool families as “Nazis?” That trope would be acceptable from a public-school graduate, but Cambridge? Not to mention that Oliver’s degree is in English. English!

Given the tired tone and embarrassingly imbecilic rhetoric employed by Oliver, it isn’t surprising that religion is the target of his next volley.

The Guardian [story reporting on Oliver’s rant](#) included this irreligious remark made by Oliver in his advocacy of regulating homeschooling:

Oliver argued that, at a bare minimum, states should require parents to register a child as homeschooled, so “there’s a record that they exist. That is how low the bar is here — at the earth’s core, which I’m sure according to at least one homeschooling textbook somewhere between soil and the fiery bowels of hell.”

Nazis. Ignorant. Backward. Lazy. Religious fanatics. Sounds like the measured and meaningful



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negotiation of a subject that one would expect from someone taught by strangers.

Finally, Oliver lays out his view of the moral boundaries of parenting and the limits on the sovereignty of parents over their children.

“Being a parent doesn’t automatically make someone moral. And being with a parent doesn’t automatically make a child safe,” Oliver said.

It’s true. Being a parent isn’t a guarantee of morality, and being in the presence of one’s parents isn’t a guarantee of safety. There’s no argument there.

There is an argument, however, that being educated at home and not at a public school makes it over 94 percent less likely that a young person will be the victim of a school shooting. When examining school shootings between 2000-2018, we find that 94 percent took place at a public school. There has never been an armed assault on a homeschool group. Not one. The same cannot be said of public schools. And what does it say about a parent’s morality if that parent sends his children to school, knowing that becoming the victim of a murderer is even within the realm of possibility? Would a parent send his children to eat at a restaurant where there had been a history of food poisoning?

The relative morality of parents who knowingly send their children to a place where there is a possibility of being killed by an armed madman, and parents who choose to keep their children at home for their education is not a debate that will ever end up favorable to John Oliver’s position.

On that note, I’ll leave the last word to the great moralist and theologian, G.K. Chesterton, who wrote, “As regards moral courage, then, it is not so much that the public schools support it feebly, as that they suppress it firmly.”



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