

Love the sin:sexual regulation and the limits of religious tolerance



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The book *Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance* discusses the history of the judicial system of the United States of America and the mesh of religion and sexuality. The authors Janet R. Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini have come up with a concrete case of loving the sinner and the sin. They argue for true religious and sexual freedom in the country by rejecting the views of religious conservatives for sexual regulation as well as the views of liberals that speak for religious and sexual tolerance. The arguments in the book are presented intelligently and with humor. This book pushes us to reconsider our mistaken beliefs and assumptions about morality, freedom, Christianity and sexuality. It is a critique of the inborn paradigm within us and a challenge for us to create a new paradigm that holds the prospect of a truly new America. While the book majorly speaks about the rights of gays and lesbians, the arguments presented in it apply just as well to all religious minorities (Jakobsen & Pellegrini, 2005). The authors point out that the basis of all federal and state laws is religion. Everything stems out from religion, even the laws regulating sexual activity. Secular laws that regulate American marriages point out that marriage is the proper institution of having intimate physical relationships. But marriage was a religious institution until the evolution of civil law. The authors further address the question of whether everyone should be given the right to marry or should the constitution and hence, the government be kept out of the marriage business altogether (Jakobsen & Pellegrini, 2005). The First Amendment requires both the disestablishment of religion and protection for the free exercise of religion including the right not to practice the religion. Marriage should also be disestablished if it is based on religion and hence, protecting the free exercise of sexuality. The authors further

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question as to why religion is considered as the basis for laws and policies governing sex only and why not other moral and social issues such as poverty, environmental issues, death penalty, etc. they point out that for some sex is seen as a private matter whereas for others, it seems to have amazing powers that can either make or break the whole nation's welfare. The authors also point out that by regulating sex, family life is also regulated (Jacobsen & Pellegrini, 2005). Advocates of homosexuals indicate that just like people cannot choose their race and color, similarly gays and lesbians are just "born that way". The authors further argue that it is not their fault if the same sex appeals to them, gays just can't help being gay. People should accept that there is nothing wrong with being "Gay". They believe that sexual freedom should be linked to religious freedom and not to race so that people should not have to justify themselves to enjoy the same freedom in regards to sexual practices (Jacobsen & Pellegrini, 2005). The authors also highlight the drawbacks of the idea of "tolerance". They point out that tolerance is extended to homosexuals on the pretext that they become just like everybody else that is enter into the institution of marriage. Tolerance does not extend towards sexual minorities i. e. gays and lesbians if they don't want to be like everyone else and choose to value something else (Jacobsen & Pellegrini, 2005). In nutshell, Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance is a refreshing piece that debates on topics regarding religion, sex and morality. The authors hope that America will live up to its promise of freedom and social justice for different type of people all over the world (Jacobsen & Pellegrini, 2005). Bibliography

Jacobsen, J. R., & Pellegrini, A. (2005). Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance. New York: New York University Press.
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