

Inclusivity gone crazy

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Inclusive ? it's a word that has been tossed around a lot over the past few years.

For some reason some people think no one should ever be excluded from anything.

That sounds nice and in many situations it is appropriate that everyone be included in an event, party or organization.

However, being excluded is a part of life.

You will be excluded from the LPGA pro tour if you're a man. You'll be excluded from joining the military if you're not physically fit or mentally sound. You'll be excluded from joining an astronaut training program if you're 70 years old.

It happens.

Not everything in life can be inclusive or fair.

However, when you exclude people for all the wrong reasons, that can be a problem.

The Gay Pride event in Toronto has again announced they will not be allowing Toronto police to take part. Not even officers who are gay but happen to work for the police force are welcome if wearing a uniform.

This is from people who for years have been screaming for inclusion and the right to not be discriminated against.

Suddenly, according to them, discrimination is fine, as long as you are the one doing it. What hypocrisy.

The Toronto police have been in the parade in years past in varying levels of participation, and from all accounts were welcomed by both participants and the crowd.

The small group who run the parade don't represent the gay community ? they represent a parade.

Even the core group of the Pride event organizers are split on this decision. They had a vote to determine if the police should be allowed in the pride. The 'no' side won by two votes ? 163 ? 161- meaning fully half of the committee doesn't share the same opinion of keeping police out.

Allowing politics and agendas to hijack an event that receives public money as funding goes against the whole point of having a parade in the first place.

To add insult to injury, the public money that funds the parade comes from the same source that pays the police officers ? public money.

After it was announced that police would be excluded from the parade in 2017, a committee comprised of police officers from Toronto police's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer internal support network released a letter stating 'We, as city employees, would feel completely devalued and unsupported by our employer should they fund this event at this time. How can we possibly feel appreciated by our employer while they sponsor an event that its own employees have been disinvited from participating in as full, equal and active participants in their role as city employees.?'

It was well stated and made a very good point.

There's not a chance in the world the city would fund any other kind of event that publicly declared only certain members of society would not be welcome.

Last year Orangeville had its first Celebrate Your Awesome day ? which is actually a catchy way of saying it was a pride event.

I attended as a reporter, not sure of what to expect, and just hoping to get some good photos for the newspaper.

What I found was a street full of people out enjoying the day. There was no politics, no one handing out leaflets, and no one yelling from a soap box.

Some people wore rainbow colours to make a bit of a statement but that was about it.

The difference in this event was that everyone was welcome ? including local police who showed up and mingled with the crowd. The event was meant to be 'inclusive' and that meant everybody was welcome.

Celebrate Your Awesome day organizer Jim Waddington admitted there is a difference between an event in a city the size of Toronto and smaller town like Orangeville but he made it clear everyone was welcome.

?It is inclusive and diverse. Everyone in our county and afar are invited to have a positive, inclusive, fun experience. Colours, religions, backgrounds are not important. I guess that is why there is a rainbow flag. If you have a positive outlook and accept, and support inclusivity then you are invited to celebrate with us.?

If you're going to host an event the preaches inclusiveness then deliberately exclude a group you don't like, then fund it on your own dime.

Even after being told they can't march, the Toronto police will still be required to provide security along the parade route.

Maybe that's one day the police should abide by the wishes of the parade organizers and exclude themselves and tell the parade to hire their own security.