



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on September 28, 2023

Gen Z Too Intolerant to Work With People With Different Views, Says Brit TV Head

“Each new generation born is in effect an invasion of civilization by little barbarians,” Professor Thomas Sowell once noted, “who must be civilized before it is too late.” This all-important process, however, has clearly been effected less well with each of the last several succeeding generations, and one consequence is that many Gen Zers are sorely lacking in a quality that, ironically, has been emphasized nominally their whole lives: tolerance.

Perhaps the latest person to lament this is Alex Mahon, chief executive of U.K. broadcaster Channel 4. In fact, says the British TV boss, too many young people entering the business world today are wholly incapable of working alongside colleagues with differing opinions. Mahon blames this phenomenon on social-media influence and pandemic restrictions. But is that really all there is to it?

The Telegraph [reports](#) on the story:

Social media has left Gen Z without the skills needed for the workplace, Channel 4’s boss has said.

Young people are increasingly consuming content via short videos on TikTok, YouTube and other platforms, rather than sitting down to watch full-length programmes.

[Mahon] said this had impacted the ability of young people to consider and debate ideas, and to accommodate opinions that differ from their own.

“What we are seeing with young people who come into the workplace, Gen Z, particularly post-pandemic and with this concentration of short-form content, is that they haven’t got the skills to debate things,” she told the Royal Television Society conference in Cambridge.

“They haven’t got the skills to discuss things, they haven’t got the skills to disagree.”

Young people can struggle to work alongside people who do not share their opinions, she said. “That is a really dangerous step-change that we are seeing.”

“But Gen Zers (those born between 1997 and 2012) aren’t entirely to blame,” [writes](#) Yahoo Finance. Mahon “pointed to social media and the pandemic’s disruption to education as the main cause of the workplace challenge.” The site continues:



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On the likes of TikTok and Instagram, videos under a minute long are fed straight into viewers' feeds based on content they have previously enjoyed, possibly creating an echo chamber among youngsters and impacting their ability to consider opposing ideas.

Meanwhile, as Gen Zers were forced to study alone and limited to interactions on Zoom during the pandemic, the broadcasting boss cited "being out of colleges" and away from "people with a difference of opinion" as the reason lockdown-era students can't hold down a heated discussion.

... Last year, research commissioned by Channel 4 similarly found that young people today are less tolerant of others' views than their parents or grandparents and as a result are less liberal than previous generations.

The study revealed that a quarter of the Gen Z respondents said they have "very little tolerance for people with beliefs I disagree with," while nearly half agreed that "some people deserved to be canceled."

"Mahon isn't the first executive to shine a light on Gen Z's communication skills — or lack thereof," Yahoo adds. "Workers who came of age during the pandemic have repeatedly been told they lack the 'basic' social aptitudes needed to work in an office with other people."

While social media's influence is likely a factor here, blaming the pandemic seems suspect. After all, Yahoo mentions workers "who came of age," but what is "of age"?

Virtually all those now entering the workforce were at least 18, and more likely 19 through 21, when the Covid situation commenced. Yet as the well-known Jesuit saying informs, "Show me the child at seven, and I'll show you the man." This is a long-recognized, age-old truth, too, and is why seven has been considered the beginning of "the age of reason."

The point is that whatever happened to cultivate such intolerance in the young people in question surely began long before age 18. Pandemic restrictions could have *perhaps* been a *slight* exacerbating factor, but the die had to have been cast long before. So what's really going on?

A Failure to Grow Up

Small children are remarkably intolerant, which is one reason we speak of "the terrible twos"; to echo Sowell, toddlers are little barbarians. Civilizing them requires exercising discipline and the *cultivation of virtue*, with the tolerance-breeding virtues being ones such as Mercy, Love, Charity, Humility, and Forbearance.

Yet we have forgotten the virtues. Moreover, permissive modern parenting — with children being pandered to and with their feelings treated as arbiters of reality (as God) — fails to effectively breed out barbarianism. The result: Narcissistic kids who act like little princes and princesses.

This analogy is most apt, too: The *stereotypical* spoiled royal of yore got that way because he was raised in comfort and total deference to his feelings. Consequently, he'd throw a tantrum when not "getting his way." And realize that with our great material comfort and, again, that permissive parenting, many children today are raised like stereotypical royals.

Exacerbating this is that with the West's declining fertility, "only children" are not uncommon today. Growing up with siblings requires you to deal, from the earliest ages, with differing wants and opinions; you learn tolerance and to compromise. Only children are more likely to be the nucleus of their parents'



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lives and get the “royal treatment.”

Another exacerbating factor is “self-esteem” training, which became common in schools some decades ago. Overlooked, however, is that “self-esteem” here is just a euphemism for pridefulness. Thus, the sin of Pride is precisely what this training inculcates.

There’s likely even more to it, of course. Whatever the case, those unable to abide contrary opinions ought to ponder one of G.K. Chesterton’s observations:

“It is not bigotry to be certain we are right; but it is bigotry to be unable to imagine how we might possibly have gone wrong.”



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