

KHADR PROSECUTORS TRYING DESPERATELY TO HIDE BIGOTED ARTICLE

I eagerly await Jeff Kaye's take on the defense cross-examination of Dr. Michael Welner, whose anti-Muslim bias Jeff laid out here. Thus far, the defense has shown Welner didn't read one of the studies he relied on for his Khadr profile, shown his work was not peer reviewed, and challenged Welner on his research methods: "Your sample size was Omar Khadr?"

But in the meantime, I wanted to point out something about this interview the prosecution is "fiercely" trying to prevent coming in as evidence. It reveals the anti-Muslim views of Nicolai Sennels, a Danish psychologist on whose work Welner relies. The interview as a whole is a pretty repulsive demonstration of bigotry. But I was particularly interested in the claims Sennels made about differences between "Western" and Muslim approach to anger.

Sennels: The most important characteristics that I found concerns aggression, self-confidence, individual responsibility and identity.

Concerning anger, it quickly becomes clear that Muslims in general have a different view on aggression, anger and threatening behaviour than Danes and probably most of our Western world.

For most Westerners, it is an embarrassing sign of weakness if people become angry. This view on anger is probably consolidated already in early childhood. I have been working as a school psychologist for several years and bullying is a continuous problem at the schools that I work in. The interesting thing is that the children

who are most likely to be the target of being bullied are the children that get angry the easiest. **If people get angry we have a tendency to lose respect for them** and in many cases we try to tease them to provoke them even more – with the pedagogical aim of helping the person to realize the childishness of his or her behaviour. Trying to get one's will by acting aggressively or using threats is seen as immature and our reaction is often to ridicule or simply ignore them. **Thus, the shortest way to lose face in our Western culture is to show anger.**

It is completely opposite in the Muslim culture. While most of my Danish clients who had problems with anger felt embarrassed about it, none of my Muslim clients ever seemed to understand our view on anger. I spent countless hours doing Anger Management therapy with both Danish and Muslim clients and hence I had very good opportunities to experience the cultural differences concerning this specific emotion, ways of handling it and reacting to it.

In Muslim culture, it is expected that one should show anger and threatening behaviour if one is criticized or teased. If a Muslim does not react aggressively when criticized he is seen as weak, not worth trusting and he thus loses social status immediately.

This cocktail of cultural differences has sparked the ongoing debate on free speech all over the world. [my emphasis]

Sennels claims to be making an observation about a distinctly Muslim approach to anger. But it seems laughable, reading it even as the right comes out in support of Rand Paul's supporter's attack. Not to mention so shortly after eight years during which George Bush sustained respect

from his supporters by carefully performing anger.

If a willingness to express anger is a sign of dangerous anti-social behavior, then Sennels might as well be condemning a great number of angry Americans. If respect for those who become angry makes one Muslim, then I guess we've got a lot more sleeper Muslims in the states than even the fearmongers claim!

And given that much of our insistence on military commissions comes out of an anger-driven desire to humiliate our opponents, I can see why Khadr's prosecutors want to prevent it from being introduced as evidence.

For more on this cross-examination, follow Carol Rosenberg, Muna Shikaki, and Michelle Shephard.