

Comfort instead of freedom, morality is tolerance

October 28, 2015, shortly before Halloween, Dean of Yale University Bagwell Howard sent via the University mailing letter, which did not recommend the students to use in festive costumes elements that may offend members of a particular race, sexual orientation or gender identity. It was a detailed report, which described "appropriate" and "inappropriate" costumes mentioned, for example, on the inappropriateness of red or black makeup, and decorations of feathers.

Soon the Professor from Yale and a renowned expert on child rearing Erika Christakis wrote a response letter. In her opinion, such forms of control do more harm than good:

I wonder, and I'm not trying to provoke: is not there any opportunity for students to be a little unpleasant, a little provocatively or — so — offensive? Whose business is it to control the costumes of the young people? Certainly not mine, and I know it.

Erika Christakis
expert on child development, the author of the book "Importance of childhood"

Control over the tiniest nuances of behavior that someone might be offensive, does not lead to anything good. It is better to give students some freedom of expression and to solve problems than to pretend they do not exist. Otherwise, we transform students into children who need to be protected from all forms of hazardous and disturbing the outside world.

Erica's letter triggered a strong wave of student protests: the people were collecting signatures to petition for her firing, sent me messages with insults and threats. Over a million views put together a video in which Erica's husband Nicholas Christakis, standing in front of a crowd of students, trying to convince them that the University is, first and foremost, a free intellectual space. His remarks did not meet a proper understanding. As a result of all these incidents, both teachers voluntarily left Yale.

A student asks the teacher to shut up and blames for the fact that the University was unable for them to create a "homely atmosphere".

Source: youtube.com

Ethologist Konrad Lorenz argued that humans, unlike many predators, there is a highly developed instinctual mechanisms for inhibition of aggression against other members of their species. Before the invention of gunpowder and weapons of mass destruction they just were not needed. The evolution of the us they are not supplied — these functions took on the culture and ritual.

The development of monitoring mechanisms analyzed by another famous scientist — the sociologist Norbert Elias. He showed how to change the standard of aggressiveness with the development of Western civilization. Closer to the present, the more spontaneous emotions are constrained and subject to regulatory public installations.

A person begins to avoid struggle and aggression — they find their place only in enclosed areas like sports. Common standard becomes rational and restrained behavior. In the middle Ages it was quite different:

Who in this society are not loved and not hated with all his heart, who could not to stand up for themselves in a fierce fight, he could leave the monastery, but to the worldly life, he was lost

— Norbert Elias from the work "On the process of civilization"

Today is a pronounced form of aggression we can find, for example, adolescents who have not quite entered into the adult normative culture.

More on this topic:

"Why me?": Survival kit for the "white Raven"

In one form or another with insults and aggression at school age faced by almost everyone. One of the most brutal forms of aggression is bullying, harassment (bullying, from "the bully" — a bully, a bully, a brute, a rapist). Due to the aggression of the teenager is asserting itself and increases your status in the group. Bullying differs from other forms of aggression the following features:

- It is an aggressive and negative behavior.
- It is carried out regularly.
- It occurs in relationships in which the participants have unequal power.
- This behavior is intentional.

Here, special attention should be paid to the last paragraph. To fight bullying, of course, necessary — but what about the unintended insults? Frees you from the responsibility not knowing that your behavior someone seems aggressive and offensive?

The app's creators suggest Reword to think carefully before sending someone abusive messages.

Source: youtube.com

Last year in American education unfolded a large-scale discussion, the main question which can be formulated as follows: whether it is necessary to protect pupils and students against any form of aggression? The students themselves in many cases answer it in the affirmative. In the lead article of the September issue of *The Atlantic* describes how easy this trend is brought to the absurd — and narrows the intellectual space in favour of comfort and intolerance to any, even illusory manifestations of intolerance.

Students in the law faculties, for example, may ask teachers to remove from the program the study of the laws on sexual harassment — or even prohibit the use of the word "violence." Rules of conduct in some campuses require to avoid microaggression. So-called expressions or actions which in themselves probably do not contain the threat that someone might perceive them as aggressive — this is enough for a ban.

Don't think about white monkey! What actually lead bans Under such a policy, immigrants from Asia and Latin America, it is better not to ask where they were born — for this question as it hides the statement that they are not real Americans.

Before starting the discussion on a topic (works of art, historical period, etc.) with controversial content, teachers in many universities have to do warning psychological triggers (trigger warnings). It's something like a sticker with the words "shock content" that informs about a particular topic in some people can trigger memories of previous trauma and negative experiences.

Such warnings are perceived as preparation for the experience of painful emotions, which helps make them less painful. Before examining "the Great Gatsby", for example, need to be warned about that in the book there is an image of misogyny and physical violence.

The future: a bad script.

Source: youtube.com

One can cite many examples. The story [academized review](#) of the celebration of Halloween at Yale is just a vivid illustration of a more global process. All these ways of dealing with aggression and political correctness — the unconscious for those who are their advocates — are themselves a form of violence.

It can be called a consequence of collective selfishness: the desire to avoid negative emotions interferes with the freedom of expression and leads to the fact that students are poorly prepared for the world outside the campus, where not everything is so strictly follow the rules of politeness and political correctness.

Stop worrying and start living: recipes stoicism

As rightly indicated by the authors of the article in *The Atlantic*, these forms of control is based on a number of cognitive distortions. Instead of trying to work out psychological and social problems, we are asked to pretend they do not exist — and to lay them aside for the sake of creating a "home atmosphere".

Instead of trying to discuss complex issues and to allow freedom of expression, which can someone to hurt, we are asked to give up freedom in favor of a comfortable and prosperous status quo.

Those who support the establishment of such rules, always speak for hypersensitive and childish "the other", which is in need of adults who will protect and cherish. Students who require to warn of the shock content in the "Gatsby" or "Mrs. Dalloway" would be unprepared for real violence and aggression, where in the world is more than enough.

The desire to get rid of unintentional aggression does not resolve the alarm, and it becomes the reason.

Source: wikipedia.org

If in 60-ies of student culture was a place of active resistance to conformity and imposed patterns of behavior, but now the process is reversed: students do not destroy the rule, and require all of them more stringent and strict compliance. Teachers often are much more tolerant of dissent and free discussion.

The creation of a security zone around the educational institutions where everyone has to think twice before you speak — after all, his words unable to hurt anybody's feelings and cause psychological damage — can be called maladaptive, exaggerated form of deterrence of aggression, which have ceased to perform their functions.

A culture that replaces our instincts, is able to produce a viable and grotesque behaviors. Laurence, who always remember when talking about aggression, has resulted in a huge wings of the pheasant-the Argus as an example, pointless adaptation. They are large enough that the males of this bird almost can't fly. If not natural selection, they could grow to infinity.

Do you know where we're going? Attempt to turn away from aggression, violence and discrimination, eliminate or provide a lot of reservations and warnings of even the smallest of their manifestation creates a lifeless, sterile space, in which there is no room for spontaneity, newness and freedom of speech.

In the world, as many people, beliefs and way of life which can make us repulsive. Instead of a policy of "zero tolerance" for the violation of public

comfort, you need to learn to live together with people with whom we have little in common — to solve problems and to respond to aggression and not to impose new restrictions.

The struggle for moral purity is not the best reason to limit freedom than to deal with the "microaggressions".

Source: art-nesterov.ru

It may seem that it is solely an American or European phenomenon — we, on the contrary, all kinds of minorities are still in real danger and need protection. But the logic of these prohibitions lies in the fact that on behalf of the "downtrodden" is often a strong majority. Unlike Russia only in the fact that we have bans are imposed for other reasons — in the name of moral purity and innocence. Suffice it to recall the offer of the Russian Orthodox Church to exclude from the curriculum the works of Chekhov, Bunin and Kuprin, ostensibly promoting "free love".

The words of John Stuart mill that "no society in which eccentricity is sufficient cause for reproach, can not be considered healthy", is relevant to us no less than for the United States. And the University is the space in which it is especially dangerous to sacrifice freedom for comfort and moral well-being.

In the design of articles used fragment Pedro Berruguete "Trial by fire" (XV century).