

SHOULD PEOPLE BE FORCED TO DISCLOSE THEIR
TRANSGENDER STATUS TO THEIR SEXUAL PARTNERS?

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TMZ reported on something that happened the other day. While I failed to catch the entire story, courtesy of turning the TV on late, I nevertheless managed to catch enough of it to get the overall gist. Apparently, someone named DuVall (I may have spelled that wrong), presumably a rapper, was being interviewed on something called The Breakfast Club. During the interview, the subject of transgenders came up, and he was asked what he'd do if he hooked up with someone he thought had been born a woman, only to later learn the individual had in fact been born a man. He replied something to the effect that he'd "kill" her, to which the transgender responded by marching outside The Breakfast Club's studios in protest. They weren't upset with the idea that this hypothetical situation involved a transgender failing to be completely forthcoming with their background, but was instead with the idea that, after having been tricked in such a way, someone might be upset enough to react violently.

While a hypothetical scenario for DuVall, it's nevertheless the kind of thing which is not only possible, but likely, and as such, it merits some thought now, as opposed to later. Sexual reassignment surgeries have become almost routine now, which means that things which weren't an issue will become issues. For instance, where does a transgender individual use the bathroom, and does this depend on where they're at in their medical procedure? And what about the hypothetical scenario presented to DuVall? Should transgenders who've completed the sexual reassignment surgery be under any sort of obligation to inform their partners? And if they don't, what happens if their partner finds out about it after the fact? Does this negate any action taken by that person in the heat of the moment?

Personally, I think that those who've showed up to protest against The Breakfast Club or DuVall are nothing but a bunch of hypocrites. Why do I say this? Think back to the arguments made for and against gay marriage, for a moment. There were many groups, especially religious conservatives, which made a number of arguments in support of outlawing gay marriage. Exactly what these arguments were is, for the moment, immaterial for the purposes of this discussion. The only thing that has any bearing is the response made by the LGBT community, which, boiled down, was that they too had a right to live their lives according to their beliefs, and you know what? So far as I'm concerned, they're right. If the law allows straight people to get married, then gay people should also be permitted the same opportunity. This is only fair, this is equality, this is religious freedom. Now, by showing up to express their moral outrage via protesting The Breakfast Club, some members of the transgender community are implying that the rights of straight people, particularly their religious rights, are immaterial, which is why I say they're hypocrites.

While it's true that we're all unique, not just in looks and personality characteristics, but also in what we choose to believe, it's also true that many of us enjoy a common set of beliefs, particularly in regards to spirituality and religion. For many, this belief system involves a God who is anything but forgiving when it comes to homosexual acts. In fact, no matter the version, Catholic, Christian, Protestant, Baptist, Muslim, etc., all of these Bibles are pretty consistent when it comes to how God views homosexual acts, and the people who participate. Do so, and your ticket to Heaven is off the table, with your soul being doomed to spend an eternity in Hell.

Some like to argue that today's version of the Bible isn't technically accurate, that words and meanings have been added where none existed before, but at the end of the day, neither the accuracy of the interpretation nor the likelihood this particular religion is the "one true religion" is important. The only thing that matters is that the believer accepts as true what (s)he's read because his/her beliefs are every bit as important as the transgender's beliefs. With that said, look at things from the believer's point-of-view. According to their beliefs, not only is homosexuality an abomination, but participating in a homosexual act means an eternity in Hell. Knowing this, is it right for someone to fail to disclose to their partner the fact that they had their gender surgically changed? Is not the right of the straight person to live life as a straight person every bit as important as the right of a gay person to marry someone of the same sex?

I spoke with a number of transgenders on the prison yard before writing this particular entry, and without exception, they all said the same thing, while they'd be forthcoming about their past, they didn't think this meant that they, or any other transgender, should be required to. They feel that forcing them to disclose their status is a violation of their privacy rights, especially when it comes to their medical records. While this may technically be true, doesn't this overlook the fact that, without all of the facts, a person can't truly give their consent to sex? Or that something like this could, under his/her beliefs, doom their soul to Hell? And one wonders why, knowing this, someone would choose to trick someone they supposedly care about into having sex with them. What is it, "I love you and everything, just not enough to tell you I was born a guy? Not enough to give you the facts you need to determine whether or not you want to risk your soul to eternal damnation?"

Personally, I don't believe God would send someone to Hell for having sex with a transgender, or for participating in any homosexual act, for that matter, but then, as I said earlier, it's not about what I believe, it's about the beliefs of the person the transgender's having sex with, or raping, if you want to be technically accurate.

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