

Did Gay Men Liberate the Benham Brothers?

Are you a heterosexual man who enjoys dressing stylishly, who likes staying in shape and sometimes wearing tight T-shirts while working out; who has no problem showing brotherly affection to other men? If we are to believe what a leading gay journalist says, it's all because you have been liberated by gay men.

Are you wondering what I'm talking about? Allow me to explain:

I have known Jason and David Benham since 2003, and as long as I have known the Benham twins, they have been outgoing, gregarious, positive, complimentary, devoted to the Lord and their families, and in very good shape.

As former athletes (drafted to play in Major League Baseball), as business entrepreneurs, and as fearless Christian witnesses, they have always stood out from the crowd—especially as a twin-team.

A few days ago, we were catching up over lunch when David asked me if I had seen the article in the *Huffington Post* entitled, “What Makes Men ‘Gay’?”

When I told David I hadn't, he explained to me that during a recent speaking engagement, they were flooded with interview requests from the media, and so they did the interviews, one after another, not knowing who the journalists were, including the writer for *Huffington Post*.

True to form, they complimented this journalist on his sharp outfit and were extremely friendly to him, later posing for a picture with him (for his article), putting their arms around his shoulders as they normally would with another man.

To their surprise, they found out later he was gay (he never said he wasn't; they just had no idea who he was), and it was only when they showed me the link that I said to them, "That's Michelangelo Signorile, a leading gay journalist and radio host!"

For Signorile, the Benham brothers were an anomaly.

He realized that they were not gay—they are happily married with nine kids between them, and they hold strongly to biblical morality—but he couldn't help but notice "their buff, chiseled looks, their sense of style and their flair for design."

And when HGTV canceled the Benhams' planned reality TV show, Signorile noted that the many gay viewers of HGTV couldn't help but notice "the pristinely groomed North Carolina brothers in their pastel-colored dress shirts defending themselves on CNN, or when they saw other photos of them in their just-a-bit-too-perfectly-styled T-shirts and baseball caps, looking like they were headed to the gay bar down the street. Americablog's John Aravosis noted they were dressing 'as gay as possible' and commented on their 'perfectly coiffed' hair."

Did you get that? If you're nicely groomed and you wear styled T-shirts, you must be gay. After all, what straight men dress like that? (Please forgive my sarcasm.)

We're not talking about being effeminate—spend a little time with Jason and David and you'll know that immediately. We're talking about being stylish. Classy. Buff.

Since when did that become the property of homosexuals only?

Signorile notes that, "The Benham brothers have attributes and just a general vibe that, for years, have translated as 'gay.' But obviously there are a lot of straight men, even homophobes, who now exhibit these characteristics, seemingly

free to act on their creative instincts and are more comfortable about it—precisely because of the queer movement’s challenge to conventional ideas about masculinity.”

This leads him to wonder out loud, “So have gay men actually liberated many straight men to the point that they can appropriate ‘gayness’ even while still being virulently anti-gay? And is that a good thing or a bad thing?”

With all due respect for Signorile’s journalistic skills and ability to think rationally, I find these questions laughable.

This has nothing to do with appropriating “gayness” or with being “liberated” by gay men.

Gay men may be known for style, flash and being buff, but there are plenty of straight men who are also stylish, flashy and buff, and they have been around long before gay men came out of the closet.

And unless David and Jason starting dressing like Liberace and swiveling their hips, it is the height of absurdity to claim that their athleticism, their sense of style and their outgoing personalities are the result of gay men paving the way.

You might as well say, “I saw two straight men hugging at the football game after their team scored. They have obviously been liberated by gay men!”

In response to the *Huffington Post* article, David wrote a blog post by the same title as Signorile, except he used “gay” in its traditional sense of “happy” and “joyful,” explaining that what makes men “gay” is the joy of the Lord.

Regarding their meeting with Signorile, David wrote, “He’s a sharp guy with a great smile, and we had no idea he was gay. But that wouldn’t have changed a thing—we still would’ve treated him with kindness, love and respect. Why? Because the

joy of the Lord fills our hearts. And because, like all of us, he is truly a man who needs God's love."

Unfortunately, many gay readers commenting on Signorile's article expressed their certainty that Jason and David were gay (and even accused them of all kinds of lewdness), claiming that the Benhams were suppressing their alleged homosexuality with their alleged homophobia, just as they regularly accuse those of us who oppose homosexual activism with being closeted homosexuals (even if, like me, they are not stylish!).

Using that same "logic," gay activists who bash the Bible are obviously covering up their deep faith in God and their affirmation of Christian morals, while those who harass us on social media must have secret crushes on us.

Ironically, for years, gay activists have been telling us that we should not stereotype their community, only to turn around and say, "You better believe those stereotypes are true! In fact, they are so true that we can't believe heterosexual men would share any of those characteristics without our help."

David put that myth to rest, writing, "First it was the rainbow, then the arts, then style—and the list goes on. Now it's genuine love for others and joy. I guess being a good parent is next on the list, or running a successful business. Recognizing the beauty of rainbows, participating in the arts, having a sense of style, being filled with joy and loving others are not gay attributes, they are God attributes."

Exactly. So go ahead and shine brightly, my brothers. It is Jesus, not gay men, who has liberated you.