

Sex Change Regret

While some might find the story laughable, I personally find it tragic: Don Ennis, an experienced TV news producer was fired from his job, allegedly for performance-related issues, after reappearing as Dawn Stacey Ennis, marking his third gender change since last year.

With little sympathy, one website reported, "A television producer who has changed his gender three times has now more time on his hands to know who she or he is."

Worse still, the *New York Daily News*, apparently forgetting that Ennis had lived almost all of his life as a male, announced, "Dawn Ennis was canned weeks after her latest transition from her male persona, Don Ennis."

What? It was not Don Ennis who was the "male persona"; it was Dawn Ennis who was the "female persona." And Don is a he, not a she. In fact, before his wife left him when he became Dawn the first time around, they had been married for 17 years and had three kids.

It would appear that Ennis is quite troubled and in need of serious help, but even to suggest such a thing is to be branded transphobic and hateful.

To all who pull the "transphobia" card, I urge you to reconsider your rhetoric. Sometimes compassion causes us to ask the hard questions rather than simply to affirm someone in their gender confusion.

Let's not forget that in May 2013, when Don suddenly appeared at work in a black dress as Dawn, he claimed to have "an unusual hormone imbalance."

And he wrote: "Please understand this is not a game of dress-up, or make-believe, it is my affirmation of who I now am and

what I must do to be happy, in response to a soul-crushing secret that my wife and I have been dealing with for more than seven years, mostly in secret.”

Three months later, when he reverted back to Don, “He said that he had amnesia, claiming his wife dressed him in a wig and created a fake ID card bearing the name ‘Dawn.’

“‘I am now totally, completely, unabashedly male in my mind, despite my physical attributes,’ he said in an email to colleagues.

“Ennis said that while his memories of the past 14 years had returned, his female identity did not.”

And now he has reverted back to Dawn.

Is it transphobic to say that this man needs help?

There was also the tragic story of sports columnist Mike Penner, who became Christine Daniels, only to revert back to Mike Penner, before taking his own life.

You can be assured that any co-worker who did not welcome him as Christine would have been lectured or even disciplined, and yet questioning his new identity, with love and sensitivity, might have been the most compassionate thing to do.

Yet to do so would be to swim against the tide of political correctness. And it would be a dangerous swim at that. Just yesterday (June 18), “the White House announced Obama will sign an executive order that would prohibit federal contractors from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.”

Back in 2012, Brad (aka Ria) Cooper, was set to be Britain’s youngest sex-change patient at the tender age of 18. An October 28, 2012 headline in the *Mirror* read: “‘I was a boy.. then a girl.. now I want to be a boy again’: Agony of teen who is Britain’s youngest sex-swap patient.”

The article, which still insisted on identifying Brad as Ria, noted that, "Her decision, which comes after two suicide attempts, calls into question whether she was too young to be allowed to swap sexes in the first place."

Yet it appears that we have learned nothing from stories like this, stories which I cite not to demean or mock those who identify as transgender, nor to suggest that these experiences are the norm. Instead I cite them to urge us to seriously reconsider the direction in which we are heading as a society.

In recent days, in Canada, a 12-year old girl has received a new birth certificate identifying her as a boy, based entirely on her self-perceptions, while here in the States, millions have watched a viral video in which a family shares how they have embraced their daughter's identity as a boy, despite the child being just 6 years old.

When Dr. Keith Ablow expressed a dissenting view regarding this little one, he was roundly condemned for his comments and labelled "a serial misinformer on LGBT issues."

Is there really no possibility that this girl actually is a girl and that she could be helped to embrace her female identity with proper treatment? Is this really a transphobic position?

Earlier this week, Dr. Paul McHugh, formerly chair of the Johns Hopkins psychiatric department and a longtime opponent of sex-change surgery, penned an op-ed piece for the *Wall Street Journal*, arguing that "policy makers and the media are doing no favors either to the public or the transgendered" by not treating transgender "confusions ... as a mental disorder that deserves understanding, treatment and prevention."

He cited a 2011 study from Sweden that followed the lives of 324 "sex-reassigned" persons over a 30-year period (from 1973-2003), noting that "beginning about 10 years after having the surgery, the transgendered began to experience

increasing mental difficulties. Most shockingly, their suicide mortality rose almost 20-fold above the comparable nontransgender population.”

This confirmed a similar study McHugh had commissioned decades earlier at Johns Hopkins, and for opposing sex-change surgery, he is vilified to this day.

Is it possible that something other than transphobia is driving him?

Walt Heyer has lived through this himself, undergoing years of hormone treatments and then sex-change surgery to become a woman, only to realize over a period of years that he was, in fact, a man and that there were other issues he needed to address in his life.

To help others, he has launched the website, featuring articles like, “The insanity of hormone blockers for kids,” and “1,500 Sex Changers Request Surgical Reversals” (this was in one center in Belgrade alone), and “Regret Is Real—and Transgenders Are Going Back.”

And he too is vilified for his courageous and compassionate stance.

Is it too much to ask that we stop and reconsider our ways before embracing such radical societal change?

Is it only transphobia and ignorance that drives such a request?