

Why Can't I Be Transracial?

Speaking at Oberlin College in 2001, transgender activist Lynn Hyckman stated that, "The basic assumption of transgenderism is the transgressing of gender norms. Whether that means completely passing from one end to the other, or finding a space that combines or defies the binary in our society, it comes down to exploring outside of the norm you were assigned because of the discomfort that you feel in it."

This prompted me to ask in 2011, "But why stop with combining or defying *sexual* categories? Why not create self-identified categories of race or color or nationality? How about, 'Even though I was assigned the ethnic identity of a white American at birth, I identify myself as a black Viking.' Why not? Perhaps on the inside I really am a black Viking! Or why limit our self-identification to *earthly* categories. Why should that boundary be sacrosanct? Why not identify yourself as an extraterrestrial (or maybe 'interterrestrial,' combining both earthly and alien identities)? Are ridiculous concepts such as these all that different from 'the transgressing of gender norms' and 'def[ying] the binary in our society'?"

Of course, I understood the parallels were real but inexact, because of which I added, "I do realize, of course, that there are people who truly struggle with their sexual identity, and I'm fully aware that others are born with indefinite (or dual) sexual identities. *In no way do I intend to minimize those struggles.* Given the choice, however, of embracing the philosophy behind this transgender, genderqueer, omnisexual rhetoric seriously or of raising my voice to saying that something is seriously amiss, I take the latter choice."

Well, as outlandish as these words may have sounded in 2011, they can hardly sound outlandish today.

Not with the massive strides made by transactivism in the last

few years.

Not with a white woman (Rachel Dolezal) identifying as black, hence transracial.

Not with some people (allegedly hundreds of thousands) identifying as part animal (just look up otherkin or therian), hence transspecies.

And not with the headline news that, "A man in Florida who was born white now identifies as Filipino as part of a reportedly growing 'transracial' community."

Note the last three words of that sentence carefully: "a growing 'transracial' community."

The man, who was given the name Adam at birth but goes by Ja Du, "said he's part of a growing 'transracial' community in which people are born one race, but identify with another."

He explained that "he truly identifies with the Filipino culture, adding that when he's around its music and food, 'I feel like I'm in my own skin.'

"I'd watch The History Channel sometimes for hours, you know, whenever it came to that, and you know nothing else intrigued me more but things about Filipino culture," and this is part of the reason he now identifies as Filipino.

But why not? If Bruce Jenner is a woman and Rachel Dolezal is black (remember that she, too, has her supporters), why can't a Caucasian-American be a Filipino?

As I and others have stated over and over again, if perception is substituted for reality, there is no end to the social madness that follows. (This video on *The Man Who Became a Woman Then a Dragon* documents some of the more extreme examples.)

There are even medical professionals who affirm the possibility of being transracial. After all, if it makes you

happy, why not?

In the words of psychologist Dr. Stacey Sheckner, "If someone feels that they feel at home with a certain religion, a certain race, a certain culture, I think that if that's who they really feel inside, life is about finding out who you are. The more knowledge you have of yourself, the happier you can be."

She added, "If that's who they are, and they want to celebrate it and enjoy it, then you have to think what harm is it doing? All they want to do is throw themselves into that culture and celebrate it."

But it's one thing to enjoy a culture and throw yourself into a culture and celebrate a culture. It's another thing to imagine that you are biologically part of that culture. Is there no such thing as "reality check" anymore? In many circles, the answer is no.

That's why there are women's schools accepting male-to-female transgenders and male-to-female athletes breaking women's sports records and women's prisons housing biological males who identify as women (but are still attracted to women). Is it that far of a leap, then, to imagine blacks identifying as whites or Asians as Caucasians?

And since transgender identify—technically known as gender dysphoria (formerly called gender identity disorder)—is determined by psychological evaluation alone (there is no biological test), why not something similar for being transracial? If I can convince the doctor that I really identify as a black Viking, why not?

Again, I do not mean to minimize the pain of those who struggle with gender identity confusion, nor do I mean to denigrate Ja Du's love for everything Philippine. I'm simply saying this has got to stop somewhere, and it has got to stop soon. Otherwise, we might all have to identify as Martians and

go populate Mars. Unless, of course, we actually are Martians ...