

3 Things Miley Cyrus Just Doesn't Get

Pop star Miley Cyrus is all about shock value. She gyrates on stage in a nude bikini. She sticks her tongue out with bad-girl attitude in glitzy photo shoots. She peppers every interview with at least a dozen F-bombs. She's the queen of sassy. She's rude, crude and angry at the world—and many people follow her stage antics, if not out of appreciation then out of sheer curiosity.

The former Disney-clean singer, who is now 22, has completely shed her innocent *Hannah Montana* image. Today Cyrus has evolved into a one-woman media circus. She's part vaudeville clown, part porn star and part angry poet—and she has millions of young followers who can't wait to see her latest wardrobe malfunctions or read her unprintable comments.

But this girl is just getting started. The attention-loving performer (and daughter of country singer Billy Ray Cyrus) has now become a social justice crusader. Her cause? She's speaking out on behalf of transgender teens who feel misunderstood.

Last month Cyrus launched her Happy Hippie Foundation, an effort to showcase transgender youth and their struggle for acceptance. Since she has 23 million followers on Instagram, she posted artsy photos of 11 transgender people. The subjects included a 19-year-old film student who has transitioned from female to male; a blond woman who used to be a guy; and a 24-year-old who identifies as neither male nor female. (He/she prefers to be called “queer, bi-racial and agender.”)

Why does Cyrus care so much for this issue? She says she's tired of gender labels. She thinks if you were born a boy but feel like you're a girl, then you should be free to embrace

your new identity. "People try to make everyone something," Cyrus says. "You can just be whatever you want to be."

To underscore her point, Cyrus has told reporters in the past few weeks that she has had sexual relationships with both men and women—and that she might have a husband or a wife in the near future. She also says she felt androgynous long before she ever heard the hip new term "gender fluid"—which describes someone who doesn't identify fully with being male or female.

"I didn't want to be a boy," she told *Out* magazine. "I kind of wanted to be nothing. I don't relate to what people would say defines a girl or a boy, and I think that's what I had to understand: Being a girl isn't what I hate, it's the box that I get put into."

I can't compete with Miley's huge following on social media, and my opinion will never be as popular as hers. But I wish more people would think before they drink her Kool-Aid. There are three basic truths Miley Cyrus just doesn't get:

1. Gender is fixed. For thousands of years people have been fairly content to function as male and female. We didn't need categories for "bigender," "pangender" or "genderqueer"—three of the 56 new gender categories you can now choose on Facebook. Look at nature and you can see that all living species are male and female. It is insane—and really, really bad science—to pretend that human beings are exempt from this rule.

2. You can't just "be anybody you want." I appreciate Miley Cyrus' ambition to help confused teens find acceptance. But she's not helping anybody by telling them they can change their gender just by having surgery, hormone injections or wardrobe changes. A male who has a sex change is still a male inside. And to tell a teenager that he or she should get a sex change operation should be considered child abuse.

Back in June we all learned that a white woman in Washington,

Rachel Dolezal, pretended for at least 10 years to be black. When she was questioned about her fraud, she said she “identified as black.” She was laughed off the public stage because everyone knows you cannot “decide” to change your race. So why are we applauding people who “decide” to change gender? And why, why, why would we encourage immature teens to do this?

3. Ultimately, gender is God’s idea. Sorry to get religious about it, but the argument finally comes down to fundamental ideas from the Bible. God created the world, and when He made people He created gender. “So God created man in His own image ... male and female He created them” (Gen. 1:27). He didn’t create gender to put us in a box of limitation; on the contrary, we will never know true freedom if we don’t embrace the identity He gave us.

Miley Cyrus wants to help people with gender confusion, but she’s actually confusing them even more with her latest campaign. It’s time we tuned her voice out of this discussion.

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