

A Strange Brew - Pam's House Blend Now Serving: Privilege

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Abstract

There's been a controversy brewing over at Pam's House Blend, and the flavor of the day is privileged. It all started with the post "Jumping Into The Deep End Of The Language Pool", then "Aravosis Needs To Issue His Own Apology To Trans People Before Citing TGs Regarding Fed LGBT Issues", and continued with "Enough [...]"

Article

There's been a controversy brewing over at Pam's House Blend, and the flavor of the day is privileged. It all started with the post "Jumping Into The Deep End Of The Language Pool", then "Aravosis Needs To Issue His Own Apology To Trans People Before Citing TGs Regarding Fed LGBT Issues", and continued with "Enough Already". You can read it all yourself but the bottom line is this, if you dare cite white gay male privilege, you're not welcome to comment.

Lisa Harney over at Questioning Transphobia has a good overview of the controversy:

A regular (a cis gay man) at Pam's House Blend expresses that he feels "cis" is offensive and demeaning, and that trans people who use it are basically bad people (plus we're bad people if we're unhappy with John Aravosis' transphobic remarks)

Denise Leclair said on Facebook:

"All labels divide, it is the very purpose of language. The only question is whether a given label demeans the labeled. "Cis-" has never been used as a term of hate, so it is irrational to make an issue of it. If the term in question were the diminutive "Cissy" they might have a point. Own your privilege."

Kelley Winters said:

The cis prefix, in the context of cis-gender privilege as Julia Serano described it), provides a necessary vocabulary for the vast disparity of social privilege that exists between people who are born gender transcendent and those who are not. While I agree that it is inappropriate to impose labels without their consent, the issue here is terminology about behaviors, attitudes and biases. To capriciously shut down dialogue about the role of cisgender privilege in marginalizing transpeople is to marginalize us further."

More than anything, this goes back to the same thing discussed in Peggy McIntosh's White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.

"Through work to bring materials from women's studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men's unwillingness to grant that they are over privileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. They may say they will work to women's statues, in the society, the university, or the curriculum, but they can't or won't support the idea of lessening men's. Denials that amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages that men gain from women's disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully acknowledged, lessened, or ended."

God forbid you identify privilege. By identifying it, you must then do something about it.

- other discussions on this topic:

Cis

I Have An Angry Inch

Stop The Bleeding, Pam

[yet more appalling coddling of privileged cis folk at Pam's House Blend]

Cis the third

Fauxpology

Editors note:

The stiffling of discussion around this topic is exactly why I created Transadvocate, and it's one of the reasons I still keep writing this blog. I continue to hope that we'll be able to create a trans style Bilerico or Pam's House Blend without the G&L filter that tamps down discussion of issues that are uncomfortable to those carrying their privilege. One thing I can promise, there will be no locking of posts or banning of topics. Civil discourse is really the only boundary here on TA. - Marti Abernathey

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