

CBS Ditches AP Stylebook for Transphobic Screed

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Abstract

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Article

[Figure] transphob

Apparently CBS has decided that the AP stylebook is too tame for its content, and would rather go the way of Jerry Springer. The title of a post over at CBS News blares “Cross-Dressing Killer Robert Kosilek Wants You To Pay For Hair-Removal Treatments Behind Bars”. I applaud the writer, Ryan Smith, on his ability to be offensive (multiple times) before getting to the content of the article. First, he uses Michelle Kosilek’s former name even though it is no longer her legal name. This is a blatant act to reinforce that Michelle “isn’t really a woman.” Does he refer to David Bowie as “the former David Robert Hayward-Jones”? Secondly, he refers to Michelle as a crossdresser but Kosilek has been treated for GID in prison with hormones.

Directly under the title is a picture of Kosilek before and after transition. The caption says: “Photo: Left, Robert Kosilek following his arraignment in 1990; Right, Kosilek dressed up as Michelle in 1993.” Again Smith denies Kosilek her identity by implying that she (a transsexual person) is just “playing dressup”.

This and many stories like it sensationalize treatment of GID under the guise of justice. What they never seem to touch on is the fact that GID is a diagnosis and there is a professional standard of care (SOC) to deal with such a diagnosis. From the most recent SOC:

“Sex Reassignment is Effective and Medically Indicated in Severe GID. In persons diagnosed with transsexualism or profound GID, sex reassignment surgery, along with hormone therapy and real-life experience, is a treatment that has proven to be effective. Such a therapeutic regimen, when prescribed or recommended by qualified practitioners, is medically indicated and medically necessary. Sex reassignment is not “experimental,” “investigational,” “elective,” “cosmetic,” or optional in any meaningful sense. It constitutes very effective and appropriate treatment for transsexualism or profound GID.

And have they have further expounded on the medical necessity of sex reassignment surgery here. Regardless of her crimes, isn’t denying medical care cruel and unusual?

Furthermore, Smith and CBS News have decided that Kosilek's gender identity is theirs to decide, that gender identity is conditional. While I abhor the crimes that Kosilek is convicted of, I do not believe that her gender identity or health care should be up for public debate.

Suggested citation

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