

TRANSADVOCATE

Hold Dr. Keith Ablow Responsible... NOW!

By Cristan Williams

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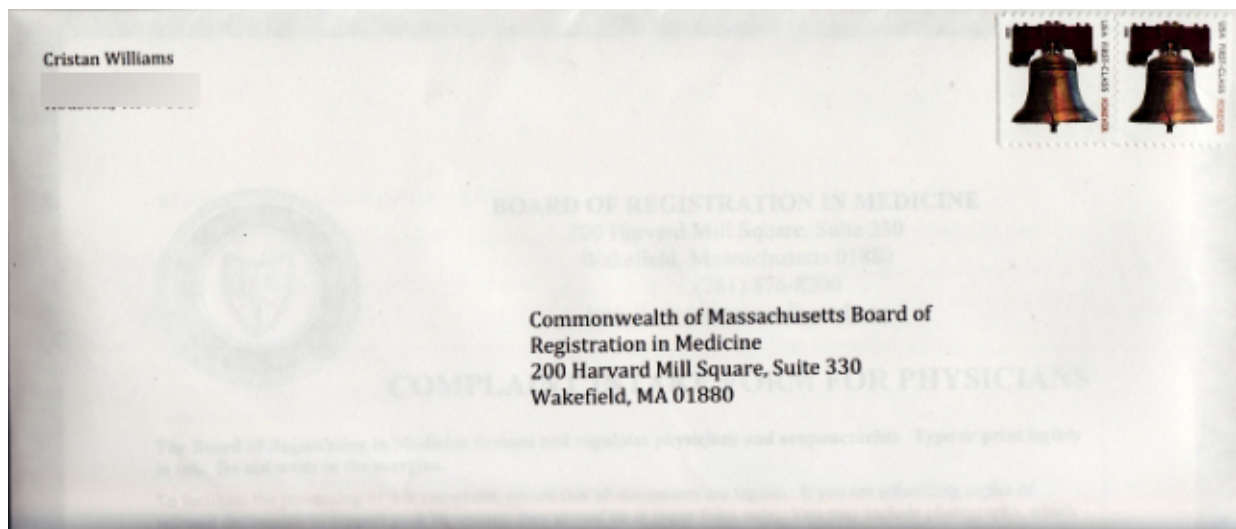
https://www.transadvocate.com/hold-dr-keith-ablow-responsible-now_n_4554.htm

Abstract

*Note: Update 9/19/2011, here's my ethics complaint letter against Dr. Ablow before I sent it off today:
By now, you are probably aware of the disgusting and shameful professional behavior of Dr. Keith Ablow, a pop psychiatrist employed by Fox News. Here's a quick refresher: On September 2, Dr. Keith Ablow, the Fox News [...]*

Article

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By now, you are probably aware of the disgusting and shameful professional behavior of Dr. Keith Ablow, a pop psychiatrist employed by Fox News. Here's a quick refresher:

On September 2, Dr. Keith Ablow, the Fox News psychiatrist, advised parents not to allow their children to see a transgender person on television because he feels that doing so might turn children into transsexuals. The statement was made in response to an announcement that Chaz Bono, a transgender man, would appear on the next season of Dancing with the Stars:

"I advise parents to not allow their children to watch the episodes in which Chaz appears. Here's why: Many of the children who might be watching will be establishing a sense of self which includes, of course, a sexual/gender identity. Some will be girls becoming comfortable with dramatic changes in their bodies. Some will be boys coming to terms with integrating the dawn of manhood with exquisite

feelings of vulnerability. Young viewers will include tomboyish girls and sensitive, less stereotypically “masculine” boys. They will also include children who have sustained the losses of loved ones and are wrestling with depression, perhaps wondering who they are absent their deceased mothers or fathers.”

- Keith Ablow for FOX News, 9/2/2011

Ten days later on the Howard Stern Show, Ablow claimed that transsexualism is like getting a tattoo: “... if a person came to me tattooed as a zebra,” adding, “I’m not going to have my kids watch a show in which people pretend to be farm animals.” Ablow is famed for his Chris Angel-like “Street Therapy” addressing the traumas of strangers on the streets of New York and claiming to resolve their mental health issues within minutes. Ablow worked his way towards media celebrity in the 1980s working in New York television and writing columns for the Washington Post. He increased his celebrity as a frequent guest on day-time talk shows Sally Jesse Raphael, Maury Povich and Gerardo and “infotainment” programs Inside Edition and Glen Beck. Recently, Ablow has enjoyed best-selling author status after co-writing a book about family values with Glen Beck. He is now a paid commentator for Fox News. Ablow generated controversy earlier this year when he claimed that allowing a boy to paint his toe nails would cause him to become a transsexual. The Daily Show’s John Stewart spent a significant portion of his April 13, 2011 show openly mocking Ablow’s assertions.

Apparently mocking all trans people and specifically targeting and singling out one transsexual for his special attention wasn’t enough. Ablow doubled down on Sept. 16:

I stand by that advice.

I believe that mainstreaming behavior makes it more likely that others will engage in that behavior. I believe this is particularly true for those who are still forming a psychological identity--a firm sense of self. Children and adolescents certainly fit those criteria. There is a wealth of scientific data supporting that view, but many activists and media personalities and even some mental health professionals have taken issue with that claim.

Opioid dependence is, after all, a recognized psychiatric disorder in the DSM IV-TR, just like Gender Identity Disorder. Why would we discriminate against someone with a known psychiatric condition? Similarly, networks should be encouraged to have people on game shows who suffer with anorexia and who wish wholeheartedly--and quite sincerely--to be 80 pounds. They should cue the audience to get to their feet and applaud. What could the risk of that be?

I believe the risks are clear.

- Keith Ablow for FOX News, 9/16/2011

Ablow has been denounced by most of his professional peers. To hit the point home as to how egregious his professional behavior has been, compare the misinformation Ablow continues (see above) to spread against the platform of the KKK (below):

“... the liberal government and its media encourage our young children to behave like primitive savages. Homosexuality, bisexuality, transsexuals, sado-masochism, and every other type of vile perversion is [sic] applauded by the scum that control our country. The American Knights demand a return to sanity.”

- Platform of the American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan

While Ablow and the Klan see eye to eye on this issue and seem to speak with the same voice, the time has come for us to use our voice!

Ablow has committed many professional ethics violations and the time has come for the community to report his violations. When Ablow obtained a license to practice, he agreed to abide by certain professional ethics. Specifically, his ability to continue practicing is contingent upon his adherence to the following American Psychiatric Association's ethical standards. The following list represents the ethical violations I feel Ablow is guilty of violating:

Section 1

A physician shall be dedicated to providing competent medical care with compassion and respect for human dignity and rights.

Ablow has publicly stated that transsexualism is like heroin addiction and obtaining tattoos. Furthermore, he has singled out and targeted one transsexual and in a very public way used his status as a licensed psychiatrist to make a number of disparaging comments about Chaz Bono.

Section 2

A physician shall uphold the standards of professionalism, be honest in all professional interactions and strive to report physicians deficient in character or competence, or engaging in fraud or deception to appropriate entities.

3. A psychiatrist who regularly practices outside his or her area of professional competence should be considered unethical. Determination of professional competence should be made by peer review boards or other appropriate bodies.

Ablow is not a gender specialist; he is a trained forensic psychiatrist. He falsely presents himself to the entire nation as a psychiatric professional who is qualified to make pronouncements about the mental health of Chaz Bono and ALL transsexuals.

Section 5

A physician shall continue to study, apply, and advance scientific knowledge, maintain a commitment to medical education, make relevant information available to patients, colleagues, and the public, obtain consultation, and use the talents of other health professionals when indicated.

1. Psychiatrists are responsible for their own continuing education and should be mindful of the fact that theirs must be a lifetime of learning

Ablow has publicly rejected established scientific and professional knowledge the field of gender studies. The sitting president of the American Psychological Association has publicly denounced Ablows statements about transsexualism.

In Ablows 9/12/11 Fox News post, he cites the debunked decades old opinions of a psychiatrist as being the basis of the ideas about transsexualism he is pushing on a national basis in his role as a licensed psychiatrist.

Section 7

A physician shall recognize a responsibility to participate in activities contributing to the improvement of the community and the betterment of public health

1. Psychiatrists should foster the cooperation of those legitimately concerned with the medical, psychological, social, and legal aspects of mental health and illness. Psychiatrists are encouraged to serve society by advising and consulting with the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches of the government. A psychiatrist should clarify whether he/ she speaks as an individual or as a representative of an organization. Furthermore, psychiatrists should avoid cloaking their public statements with the authority of the profession.

3. On occasion psychiatrists are asked for an opinion about an individual who is in the light of public attention or who has disclosed information about himself/herself through public media. In such circumstances, a psychiatrist may share with the public his or her expertise about psychiatric issues in general. However, it is unethical for a psychiatrist to offer a professional opinion unless he or she has conducted an examination and has been granted proper authorization for such a statement.

Ablow has, in his role as a paid psychiatrist for Fox News, made numerous public assessments about Chaz Bono's mental health without Bono's consent. Ablow has publicly stated that transsexualism is like heroin addiction and obtaining tattoos. Furthermore, he has singled out and targeted one recently transitioned transsexual and in a very public way used his status as a licensed psychiatrist to make a number of disparaging public comments about Bono.

According to the American Psychiatric Association anyone with "personal knowledge of the alleged unethical conduct" may file a valid ethics complaint. When filing the complaint, refer to yourself as the "Complainant" and to Ablow as the "Accused Member."

Ablow's professional behavior has been deplorable. If you are trans or have a trans child, I urge you to fill out THIS ETHICS VIOLATION FORM and send it in!

The form used in Massachusetts is generalized for all medical doctors:

Page 1, Box 1:

Additional information or materials attached		☐ Yes	☒ No
COMPLAINANT INFORMATION:			
Your relationship to the patient (i.e. parent, self or spouse)		N/A - See section Part 1, Section A, subsection 1 of the American Psychiatric Association's The Principles of Medical Ethics 2010 Revised Edition: "An ethics complaint can be filed by... an individual with personal knowledge of the alleged unethical conduct."	
Gender:	☒ Female ☐ Male	Date of Birth	01/02/1923
Doe	Jane		
Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial	
123 Main St.		713-555-1212	
Address		Daytime Phone	
Houston	Texas	77006	713-555-2121
City	State	Zip Code	Alternate Phone

Figure 1. image

Page 1, Box 2:

PATIENT INFORMATION:		Same as above: ☐ Yes ☒ No	
Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male Date of Birth _____ I am not making a complaint on behalf of a patient. I am "an individual with personal knowledge of the alleged unethical conduct." See section Part 1, Section A, subsection 1 of the America's Psychiatric Association's The Principles of Medical Ethics 2010 Revised			
Last Name _____		First Name _____ Middle Initial _____	
Address _____		Daytime Phone _____	
City _____	State _____	Zip Code _____	Alternate Phone _____

Figure 2. image

Page 1, Box 3:

PHYSICIAN INFORMATION: (Use separate form for each licensed physician)			
Ablow		Keith	
Last Name		First Name Middle Initial	
36 Water Street		978-462-1156	
Address		Business Phone	
Newburyport	Massachusetts	01950	Forensic Psychiatry
City	State	Zip Code	Specialty

Figure 3. image

Page 2, Box 4:

MEDICAL TREATMENT INFORMATION:	
How long has the patient been under this physician's care?	N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form
If the patient is deceased, provide the date of death.	N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form
Location of treatment: ☐ Office Practice ☐ Clinic ☐ Hospital ☐ Nursing Home ☒ Other	N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form
Treatment site (list if different than the address provided on page one in the physician information section)	
N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form	
Name of treatment facility _____	
N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form	N/A
Address _____	Daytime Phone _____
N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form	N/A
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____	Alternate Phone _____

Figure 4. image

Page 2, Box 5:

ADDITIONAL HEALTHCARE PROVIDER INFORMATION:

Please list the names, addresses and types of other healthcare providers, i.e., physicians, dentists or chiropractors, who provided treatment that may relate to this complaint. (Use a separate sheet if necessary.)

N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form

Name

Address

Daytime Phone

City

State

Zip Code

Type of Provider

N/A - Refer to "Patient Information" section of this form

Name

Address

Daytime Phone

City

State

Zip Code

Type of Provider

Figure 5. image

Page 2, Box 6:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing and submitting this form, I acknowledge that the Board of Registration in Medicine may (1) refer my complaint to other appropriate law enforcement or regulatory authorities; and (2) may obtain medical records and other information relating to this complaint. In addition, I acknowledge that a copy of my complaint and all attachments may be forwarded to the physician. I further acknowledge that, if I am not the patient, the Board will not share the patient's confidential medical information with me without legal proof that I am authorized to receive such information.

I attest that the information provided by me is true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Jane Doe

9/18/2011

Complainant signature

Date

Jane Doe

Printed name of Complainant

Figure 6. image

And, most importantly, Page 3, Box 7:

COMPLAINT DESCRIPTION: Dates of events that form the basis for this complaint: <u>9/2/2011, 9/6/2011 and 9/16/2011</u> Briefly describe your complaint
--

Figure 7. image

Here is where it's best to use your own words to describe how Ablow misused his status as a psychiatrist to push ideas not supported by current scientific consensus as being scientific fact, for singling out a recently transitioned transsexual for his special band of professional bullying by purposefully - via a national platform FOX News provides him as their paid psychiatrist - misgendering Bono and making Bono's condition a subject of national scorn and mockery.

Specifically note the ethical sections he violated. Here's what I've written. Please feel free to use what you like. You can certainly cut and paste the entire thing into your statement if you wish. However, I urge you to use your own words, ideas and insights.

Dr. Keith Ablow, from hereon referred to as the Accused Member has, on multiple public occasions, violated the American Psychiatric Association's Principles of Medical Ethics code of professional behavior.

On 9/2/2011, The Accused Member, acting in his professional capacity as a psychiatrist for Fox News, stated "I advise parents to not allow their children to watch the episodes in which Chaz appears. Chaz Bono, the "transsexual" woman who underwent plastic surgery and takes male hormones in an effort to appear to be a man, and who asserts she is a man... Chaz Bono should not be applauded for asserting she is a man... Chaz Bono should not be applauded any more than someone who, tragically, believes that his species, rather than gender, is what is amiss and asks a plastic surgeon to build him a tail of flesh harvested from his abdomen. It's position is that Chaz Bono's chemically and surgically altered appearance is a blessing to us all, a triumph of autonomy and self-possession on par with the triumphs achieved by the heroes of the Civil Rights movement. That's very nearly insane. So, here it is. One psychiatrist's prescription, sure to cost me a lot of hate mail, but reward me with the certainty that I am stating what I believe to be true and that I am doing my job: If you care about your kids, don't let them watch "Dancing with the Stars" starring Chaz Bono."

<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2011/09/02/dont-let-your-kids-watch-chaz-bono-on-dancing-with-stars>

On 9/6/2011, The Accused Member, representing himself as an opinion leader within the psychiatric community, went on satellite radio and said, "When somebody has taken a really torturous path-literally having breasts removed, injecting oneself with hormones and is mid-stream in that process and wants me and the rest of the nation and all of our kids to agree that he is a man-that's reality bending... If you are inhabiting a male body and you believe yourself to be female you are essentially delusional."

<http://mediamatters.org/blog/201109120022>

On 9/16/2011. The Accused Member, acting in his professional capacity as a psychiatrist for Fox News, stated "I stand by that advice... Opioid dependence is, after all, a recognized psychiatric disorder in the DSM IV-TR, just like Gender Identity Disorder... Similarly, networks should be

encouraged to have people on game shows who suffer with anorexia and who wish wholeheartedly--and quite sincerely--to be 80 pounds."

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2011/09/16/dr-paul-mchughs-views-on-gender-reassignment-surgery>

I assert that the above professional statements violates the following sections of the Psychiatric Medical Ethics code:

Section 1

A physician shall be dedicated to providing competent medical care with compassion and respect for human dignity and rights."

Section 2

A physician shall uphold the standards of professionalism, be honest in all professional interactions and strive to report physicians deficient in character or competence, or engaging in fraud or deception to appropriate entities.

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3. On occasion psychiatrists are asked for an opinion about an individual who is in the light of public attention or who has disclosed information about himself/herself through public media. In such circumstances, a psychiatrist may share with the public his or her expertise about psychiatric issues in general. However, it is unethical for a psychiatrist to offer a professional opinion unless he or she has conducted an examination and has been granted proper authorization for such a statement.

In violation of Section 1, Section 2 and Section 2 subsection 3 and Section 7 subsection 3, the Accused Member, in his professional role, chose to refer to Bono, who is legally a male, as a female in the national media on multiple occasions. Writing in his professional capacity as a psychiatrist, the Accused Member claimed, contrary to current scientific consensus on the matter, that transsexualism is like believing that one is a lizard, horse, monkey or some other species which possesses a tail. Furthermore the Accused Member, using the unique national media reach afforded him as a paid psychiatrist for an international media organization, stated that from his point of view as a psychiatrist, people who are transsexual are "very nearly insane" and "delusional" - again, positions which are contrary to current scientific consensus.

In direction violation of Section 2 subsection 3 and Section 7 subsection 3, the Accused Member, a forensic psychiatrist, has made national statements about transsexuals and the nature of transsexualism. While the Accused Member is not a gender specialist, he used his unique status as a paid psychiatrist for an international media organization to make a number of statements which, while inconsistent with current scientific consensus, were nonetheless put forward by the Accused Member as mainstream scientific consensus. The Accused Member explicitly represents that he is qualified to make public assessments about the mental health of Mr. Bono as well as the mental health status of transsexuals as a group even though doing so is outside his area of professional competence.

The Accused Member's professional statements are so contrary to scientific consensus that the sitting President of the American Psychological Association took the unprecedented step of publicly denouncing the Accused Member's professional assertions about transsexualism. Even after receiving correction from APA, on 9/16/2011 the Accused Member stated via Fox News that he is choosing to disregard the guidance from the APA in favor of propagating decades old beliefs about transsexualism that are not consistent with current scientific consensus. He compounded his error by comparing transsexualism with heroin addiction. These actions are in violation of Section 5, Section 5 subsection 1, Section 7 and Section 7 subsections 1 and 2.

In violation of Section 1, Section 2, Section 2 subsection 3, Section 5, Section 7, Section 7 subsections 1 and 3, the Accused Member, acting in his role as a psychiatrist, targeted the recently transitioned transsexual man, Chaz Bono, in what amounts to professional bullying. The Accused Member has consistently and unrepentantly targeted Bono through a national campaign of misinformation and innuendo given validity by his status as a psychiatrist. Additionally, the Accused Member has consistently and unrepentantly targeted transgender people - a particularly vulnerable class of American citizens - through a national media campaign of misinformation and innuendo given validity by his status as a psychiatrist. Furthermore, the Accused Member, acting in his role as a psychiatrist, engaged in fear mongering by instructing parents to prevent their children from viewing a transgender person on television because, according to the Accused Member, it could cause children to turn into transsexuals. This, as the Accused Member put it, "psychiatrist's prescription" is completely unsupported by scientific consensus and yet, the Accused Member used his status as a psychiatrist to inspire unfounded fears in parents through an implied danger transsexuals pose to the mental health of our nation's children.

Send your complaint to:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine
200 Harvard Mill Square, Suite 330
Wakefield, MA 01880
Phone: (781) 876-8200
Fax: (781) 876-8383

Do not allow this man to continue his unethical professional behavior. I feel that his behavior is nothing more than bullying wrapped up in a professional guise of psychiatry. Please stand up to this professional bully now!

cross-posted from Ehipassiko

*editors note: Cristin also followed up with an open letter to Executive Director of the Mass. Psychiatric Society, Beverly Sheehan.

Suggested citation

Cristan Williams. "Hold Dr. Keith Ablow Responsible... NOW!." TransAdvocate, September 20, 2011.
https://www.transadvocate.com/hold-dr-keith-ablow-responsible-now_n_4554.htm