

Turtle Soup For the Soul

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Published January 30, 2007

https://www.transadvocate.com/turtle-soup-for-the-soul_n_69.htm

Abstract

Reading All We, Like Sheep? over at Box Turtle Bulletin.com, part of the post really resonated with me. "If it's not a choice (being gay or lesbian), it should be." But what choice? There's a difference between a desire and the action that follows it. My therapist explained it to me using a food analogy. [...]

Article

Reading All We, Like Sheep? over at Box Turtle Bulletin.com, part of the post really resonated with me.

"If it's not a choice (being gay or lesbian), it should be."

But what choice? There's a difference between a desire and the action that follows it. My therapist explained it to me using a food analogy. "I like chocolate. I can't make myself not like the taste of chocolate, but I can decide not to eat chocolate. Desire isn't something that is a choice, it's a automatic response. You can't will away your desire, but you can choose your response."

A food analogy works because hunger is a innate desire/drive that is part of our survival drive. Sex too, is part of that survival drive.

If one is obese, is the cause nature or nurture? Typically, it's both. A mixture of learned eating habits, genetics, and our own biology contribute to obesity. In that equation, only genetics is immutable. Physiologic changes in the body can cause a change in eating habits. Many illnesses cause a person to feel ill and cause a reduction in food intake. The opposite is also true. Changes in eating habits and increased muscle mass through exercise can increase metabolic rates. Each variable plays a part in the final outcome, but there isn't one variable that is the ultimate controller of obesity.

One of the points of contention I have with "radical feminism" is that it denies "biological essentialism."

"Biological essentialism depicts a process in which biological influences precede cultural influences and set predetermined limits to the effects of culture." - link

While I don't believe that biology trumps socialization, I do believe it has influence. In a previous post, i jokingly referred to this as "biological suggestion-ism ." Transsexuals have a unique life experience. They are exposed to both estrogen and testosterone and know the affect that each has on a persons emotional state and sexual libido. To the transsexual, the biologic effect of HRT is obvious. Traditional radical feminism is based on a belief of a social constructionist point of view that says that every individual is an empty container just waiting to be filled. That actions are strictly dictated by

the social mores of one's culture. I think the complex truth lays somewhere in the middle.

In the end, I don't think it's vitally important to know the genesis of our decisions about sexual preference and identity and how they are made. What is important is how those decisions manifest into our life.

In closing Box Turtle Bulletin.com says:

"we must never allow this argument to serve as a distraction from the fundamental values that we are really wrestling with. These values go to our very core as men and women and as citizens. And they are also the founding values of our great nation: that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights. And we are endowed with these rights not because of how we were born, but because of the fact that we were born."

This concept is vital in the fight for equality. We don't deserve equal treatment because of our biology. We deserve it because it is what is fair and just. Our founding fathers believed these "inalienable rights" were a birth right. Human beings should be able to make healthy life choices based on their own needs and desires without penalty. We choose religion without penalty, why should sexual preference or identity be any different? When did life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness go out of style?

Suggested citation

Marti Abernathey. "Turtle Soup For the Soul." TransAdvocate, January 30, 2007.
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