

## SAVAGE LOVE SL Letter of the Day: Dicks Be Dicks

posted by DAN SAVAGE on FRI, AUG 19, 2011 at 3:37 PM

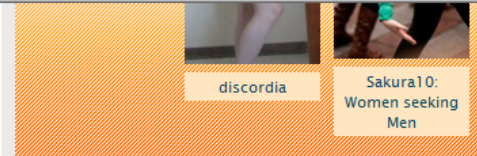
Recently I was talking to a trans guy who was expressing his frustration with finding partners, and when I asked if he was looking to date men or women he sneered at me and replied, "I date humans." The way he said it made me feel ashamed and embarrassed, and shortly afterward he made it clear he wasn't interested in talking to me anymore.

I bring this up because while I try to be sensitive, I always seem to piss somebody in the LGBT community off. I come from a fucked up conservative Christian upbringing that taught me to treat gays as a species slightly less than human, and it wasn't until I left for college that I began to understand how insane that was. Now I have many close gay friends and some trans friends, studied gender issues in college, blah blah blah.

I would never presume to understand the frustration that the LGBT community deals with every day in affirming their identity to the world at large. But the world at large is still catching up. This is my point: when someone tells you something is true for the first 18 years of your life, when they surround you in a community insisting these very things, it's easy to believe. What's hard is leaving this community and realizing you were very wrong, and then trying to make up for that by doing the right thing. So I get a little frustrated when someone immediately jumps down my throat for using the term 'hermaphrodite'. Because at the time, *I didn't know why that was wrong.*

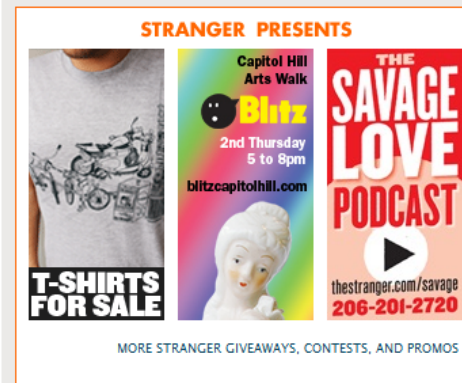
I'm not asking for a get out of jail free card. I am asking for a little patience and compassion, the same measure of patience and compassion that I'm ready to give anyone else on earth. If I refer to you with a female pronoun and you identify as a guy... I'm sorry! I really am! I'm still getting used to this! So I guess my question is, is this an unreasonable request? Am I just doomed to be an asshole for the rest of my life because that's how I was raised? I know that sounds ridiculous, but I feel like I can't do right by anybody.

*Catching Up Too Slowly*



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