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Oct. 1, 2019
SOCA-125-01

Two Spirits and the Gender Binary

Critical Thinking Essay #2

Richard LaFortune comments in the Film *Two Spirits* that “the crossroads of two genders can be a gift” and also that “the place where two discriminations meet can be a dangerous place to live.” By these two statements LaFortune means that there is a certain good that can come from seeing the world from the perspective of a discriminated class as well as an inherent value to experiencing the world differently from that class. To be discriminated against is for others to harbor prejudice against you. Acting on that prejudice is a hate crime. Discriminating happens when people like the boy grow up to be victimized for essentially nothing that is the public’s business.

The gender binary as we know it is fast fading. In many indigenous cultures, women have held traditional roles of authority and leadership, same sex relationships have been celebrated, transgender people have been revered, and people who express multiple genders have been honored. These positions are becoming more mainstream with every passing generation, or decade even. The modern gender binary rooted in 1950’s America of the wife in the blouse mill and the man making hay in the steel mill has fast become, through feminism, a bygone era in this millennium. Women keep pace with men in earnings, and men are more likely to be committed to child rearing, cooking, and cleaning in the modern tradition. Also, gay people have gained the right to marry in this millennium and the postmodern family, which is to this author an evolving concept, accepts that gay couples may adopt, singles may cohabit, and for transgender people society is fast adapting from tolerance to acceptance.

It is important to acknowledge the perspective offered by the film *Two Spirits* in our personal and professional lives because it allows for us to be inclusive and diverse which is what's best suited for personal and professional growth. To exclude gay people from the workplace, like Chic Fil-A or Hobby Lobby, is worse than being closed for business on a Sunday. As stated in the film, there are the typical roles of masculine and feminine males, and masculine and feminine females, but the intersection of the defining binary in the same body creates conflict that can only be resolved through time.

It is this author's personal opinion that transgender males (female to male – a male in a female's body by sex) will never be accepted as "paternal mothers", although he knows of at least one story where the female to male "dad" birthed a child and subsequently tried to return to alleged full acceptance of her essential male gender. This is where things get confusing from a sociologists, theological, and psychological perspective.

Works Cited

Two Spirits. Dir. Lydia Nibley and Independent Lens. n.d.

Lamanna, M. A., Riedman, A., & Stewart, S. (2017). *Marriage, Families and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society*. Boston: Cengage Learning.