

The Justification of Loving a Trans Woman

By: transbutch

****CW: Reference of genitalia, transmisogyny, homophobia, racism, murder, sexual trauma****

Earlier this month, dozens of trans women across various social media outlets created a motion to “Boycott DL Men” via Instagram, Twitter, and so forth. The overall intent behind this motion was to call-out the double-bind that we trans women find ourselves hegemonically placed in as a result of cis men’s treatment towards us, whereas althwhile they pick us up on the curb and worship us in the bedroom, they laugh about us with their friends and kill us in alleys. Cisgender men are, as are every single one of us, raised in a toxic white-supremacist, trans-misogynist state that highlights racist colonial ideologies of gender binary and cisheteronormativity, enabling such exploitation and violence on trans feminine bodies disproportionately as a result. Trans women, Black and Indigenous trans women especially, are subject to heightened levels of harm because our society has instilled the narrative that trans women are not real people but solely sex objects for cis men’s fantasy. Cis men who sexually manipulate and exploit us are simultaneously secretive about these attractions toward us and go about speaking Referring to the initial boycott post, there is a lot to be said surrounding this conversation had about DL men, especially considering the emergence and prominence of down-low (DL) culture among gay Black men during the late 20th century, which I do not think was ethically referenced and linked to in the original post started by other trans (premarily white) activists. However, I do think it is critical to further analyze cis men’s sexuality from another tangent, and to recognize the intersections between such implications of internalized trans-misogyny within their own sexualities and their manifestations of such ideologies through interpersonal sexual relations which lead to violence and murder on our trans feminine bodies.

Throughout my early years of my transition, I like many other trans women found myself traumatized yet ironically complacent in repeatedly opening myself up, literally, sexually for cis men. In the very initial stages, I slept with many self-identified gay men (which obviously did nothing to boost up my own self-confidence). Some would be married and have husbands, others would be single and just looking for something quick. Either way, what they wanted was obvious—dick. The cis gay man I would sleep with would justify getting off sexually to me while maintaining his static identity as a gay man because, regardless, he saw that I possessed, like him, a dick. What I took away from this notion was that his definition of his sexuality was based on the essential characteristic that I possessed a dick; thus, his “same-sex” attraction was literally based on our assigned sexes at birth instead of our actual gender identities.

This perception of sexuality never made sense to me. As I got older and wiser, I realized that the reason it never made sense to me was because it was explicitly transphobic and left no room for my body and other trans women’s bodies likewise in the conversation. To base one’s sexuality around genital

preferability completely abides by a cissexist, two-sex pathology that all men have dicks and all women have vulvas and that's that. If a man is straight (i.e. heterosexual, i.e. attracted to the "opposite sex"), we are automatically assuming that this man is cisgender and possesses a penis and, thus, could theoretically never be attracted to a trans woman with a penis because he would then be sleeping with the "same sex." For a cis man who is gay, however (i.e. homosexual, i.e. attracted to the "same sex"), theoretically there should be no questioning of his sexual identity in this situation because for him to be sexually attracted to a trans woman perfectly makes sense because he would then be sleeping with the "same sex." This sounds fucked up, right? That's because it is.

Later on for whatever reason in the first few years of my transition, I branched out and began sleeping with the other enemy—cis straight men. Just like the cis gay men, some would be married with a wife, others would be sugar daddies who pervertedly sought out trans women like it was their day job. Either way, what they too wanted was obvious just the same—dick. However, it seems that the cis straight man is more obsessed, specifically, with achieving the possession of, for lack of a better word, *girdick* (side-note: if you're cis, you may never say the word "girdick"). The cis straight man I would sleep with, in this case, would be able to justify getting sexual gratification from me while maintaining his fragile identity as that as "strictly-straight" because, even though I possess a dick, my identity as a woman would still be positioned far enough away from his to not intimidate his own gender in the bedroom. As long as he could push the reality that he was sucking my dick far enough down his throat, his brittle sexual identity would remain unaltered.

*Cis gay men don't sleep with women.
Yet, I have slept with many cis gay men.
Cis gay men say they don't sleep with women
because they're gay.
because they're not sexually attracted to women.
However, I have slept with many cis gay men
that say they are incredibly sexually attracted to me.*

*Cis straight men don't suck dick.
Yet, I have had many cis straight men suck mine.
Cis straight men say they don't suck dick
because they're straight.
because they do not get sexually turned on by a dick.
However, I have had many cis straight men
that beg to suck me off and get fucked by me.*

The issue when putting these two situations side by side is that both of the justifications for sleeping with a trans woman ironically contradict one another entirely. The cis gay man justifies sleeping with us, even though we are women, because we have a *dick*. The cis straight man justifies sleeping with us, even though we have a dick, because we are *women*. Whereas the cis gay man bases the defining character of his sexual orientation on the other person's genitalia, the cis straight man bases his on the other person's gender identity and isolates himself from the complex reality that is his own sexuality.

If the prior paragraphs have only led to more confusion and more questions, then good. Because that was the intent. Just like gender, sexuality too is fluid. To prescribe to an expectation that one's sexuality must remain static (and, more often than not, straight) is to assume that one's gender is also

not concurrently and consistently developing. Someone could easily make an argument that the straight men I had sexual encounters with were actually bi or gay...and that may easily be true. Someone could say the same thing about the self-identified gay men...maybe they had a certain level of internalized biphobia within themselves. But the goal of this paper is to rather illustrate the way in which trans women's bodies time after time have to be justified by a cis man to fit into an archetype of some strict sexuality he constructed for himself. Cis men of all sexualities are fucking trans women. And cis men of all sexualities are murdering trans women. The same cis men who pick us up for a night and tell us how perfect we are in a dark room are the same one's implementing laws to ban us from every social service and civil right opportunity possible because they do not see us human, let alone woman. The same cis men who beg us to paint our toe nails and tie on a tight corset before penetrating them are the same one's shouting violent slurs at us on the street and leaving us behind dumpsters unconscious.

Cis men of all sexualities have an important and critical role in shifting not only the dialogue centering our bodies as trans women but the treatment and love toward our bodies as well. Cis gay men, supposedly apart of the same queer community, need to consistently be showing up for the trans women around them who are disproportionately marginalized even within our own community. Cis straight men, with whom lies all the given power in the world, must wake the fuck up and see how their thoughts, words, and actions detrimentally affect us. Trans women, predominantly Black and Indigenous trans women, have a life expectancy of 35 years. Us trans women can do everything in our power to survive, but we likewise urgently need the cis men around us to openly and vocally love and support us, whether you want us to fuck you or not.