
STRIFE FOR EXISTENCE: EMPOWERING TRANSGENDER

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Abstract: There are some things which are established in the society because they are practised by more number of people. This rule may apply perfectly to something but it would not become rule for all. Heterosexuality may be a norm in the patriarchal society because it is accepted and approved by maximum people. But it is a tragedy of those who born as a man loves to another man or woman who loves to another woman, or sometimes to both. In short they are trapped in the wrong body because their soul is different than their physical body. It is wrong to consider homosexuality as a crime and heterosexuality as the norm.

Keywords: existence, homosexual, transgender, queer, erotic etc.

Introduction: The LGBT is a grouping of homosexuals of different types like lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. The community of LGBT is an organization comes together by a common culture and social movements. Queer is used to denote deeply personal identity and defiant political perspective to the individual who has sexuality other than heterosexuality. It is a disparaging term used first to describe homosexuals in West. Now it becomes a name for a community and movement. It encompasses multiple desires and identities. These desires and identities question for naturalness, the rightness and inevitability of heterosexuality. The queer movement discards two prime established things of the society viz. primacy of heterosexuality and patriarchal family set up. The queer movement captures and validates identities and desires of same sex people. Along with sexuality of same sex people, it tries to understand politics of sexuality that inevitably connected with class, gender, cast, religion and so on.

It is wrong to consider homosexuality as a current phenomenon because it was existed in primitive era also and had equal status with the heterosexuals. Plato is key source for classical articulation of same sex desire. In his Symposium, a statement by Aristophanes was relevant to the discussion of identity construction in present era. He theorized that the world was made up of conjoined beings of mixed sex and of two men and two women.

Critics have contradictory views about the sexual practices other than heterosexuality. The critic of sexuality, Richard Van Krafft-Ebing in his encyclopaedic work *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) has treated homosexuality as a disease. Krafft-Ebing indicates it as degeneration of society.

Karl Ulrich is opposite to the view of Krafft-Ebing. In his writings, he explains homosexuality as 'natural'. He confirms his statement by referring to Plato. He defines homosexuality by determining it metaphysically and considers that the soul of other sex's body trapped within the homosexuals. Joseph Bristow noted lesbians and gay men as "inverts". (Sexuality 21-22). He expresses:

This idea would have a lasting and demanding influence on twentieth century prejudices against homosexuals. For it set the trend for imagining that lesbians and gay men were "inverts"¹

Sigmund Freud's inconsistent statement about homosexuality shows that it is a state of misdirected erotic energies resulting from childhood traumas and unfinished developmental processes. Lesbian historian Margaret Cruikshank noted Freud:

Speculated that homosexuality involved a narcissistic for a love that symbolizes the self, a castration fear for men and penis envy for women. He did not regard it as a sickness, however, or as a condition that could be changed, and thus he opposed criminal punishments for homosexuality. Freud believed that the natural sexual feelings of children are both homosexual and heterosexual and that social conditioning usefully represses both bisexuality and homosexuality. Thus a homosexual person is arrested in his or her development.²

Some critics consider that homosexuality is not a crime or degeneration of sexuality or mental disorder of that individual but natural. Edward Carpenter in *The Intermediate Sex* (1908) argues that the increasing incidents of homosexuality were the indication of a beginning of sexual freedom for all. However, the major critic Sigmund Freud and other sexologists in their elaborate theories states that heterosexuality is necessary for healthy society.

Though, the same sex love had enjoyed prestigious status in the ancient Greek period, but in modern period the condition of same sex lover is tragic. Now, homosexual practice is a punishable crime. Therefore, they hide themselves from society and live in ignorance. They try hard to keep homosexual identity in secret from their family, friends and society. It creates for them problem of existence. They, as an individual or a group, struggle to live with their original identity freely.

Jeffery Weeks states in his article Introduction to Gay Hocquengham's Homosexual Desire (1972) that homosexual desire is no differ than heterosexual desire. He calls homosexuality, "a manufactured product of the normal world."³

Edelman, the sexual theorist, treats homosexuality with equal status to heterosexuality. He pleads that homosexuality should become socially constituted sexuality in such a way that sexuality should read and interpret in the light of homosexuality. Nancy Chidrow in her article, Heterosexuality as a Compromise Formation (1994) differentiates the choices of sexual objects in homo and heterosexuality as well as in a choices of gay and lesbians. According to her, choices of the sexual objects of man and woman declare sexuality of that individual.

Butler comments on homosexuality in her article Imitation and Gender Insubordination (1991) as:

Hence, if it were not for the notion of the homosexual as copy, there would be no construct of heterosexuality as origin. ⁴

She states that heterosexuality is impossible imitation of itself because imitation constitutes itself original. She calls homosexuality as an imitative parody of 'heterosexuality'. Thus, in a gay culture, homosexuality is an imitation of imitation and heterosexuality is not original to imitate.

Some critics of sexuality are influenced by the patriarchal ideology and regard heterosexuality as norm. Lee Edelman in his article Homographesis (1994) finds out the reason for consideration of homosexuality as illegal and unnatural. His findings tell that the assumptions of heterosexual ideology are effectively rooted in the society and hence it is legal and moral.

The critics have contradictory opinions about sexuality. It is seen that in ancient period the homosexual relations were accepted and treated as normal. In the patriarchal society, only heterosexuality is treated as a norm and look to homosexuality as abnormal and immoral. However, in the period after 1980s, when all the homosexuals come under the one umbrella with the formation of queer movement, they fight collectively for their rights and strive to accept themselves at least as normal human beings.

Queer movement is not a revolution or revolt against the previous norms of sexuality to eradicate and establish new one. But it simply provides a change to accept and approve homosexuality equal with the established sexuality.

Before getting the title 'Queer Movement', the movement was well known with the title 'Gay and Lesbian Movement' emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s. At first, the movement was interconnected with the works of feminists who were connected with issues of sexuality and gender identity. The queer and feminist movement shares the common ground on the objects of oppression by a dominant male heterosexual group. However, there was a ground for the difference in other respects.

The queer movement collectively fights for the rights of all homosexuals. Though they are separated on the grounds of their sexual practices, choices of the partner and social status, they are all united with the political movement. They fight for the equal position against patriarchs who judge heterosexuality as the norm and heterosexuals are real men and women.

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Eunuchs are neutral in gender because they are treated by society neither male nor female. They are physically born as male but not competent enough to play the traditional role of heterosexual men. Instead, they desire to play the role of woman. In history, their unique nature had made them trustworthy of kings and noblemen who appointed them to guard their Harems. They were suitable to this work because they have strength of men but no temptation for women. The society welcomes them only on marriage and childbirth. They

are uneducated and become unable to seek respectable resources for their earning. It creates lowest status to them.

Everyone should have a right to create and live within his or her own family, but eunuchs are disqualified for it. The patriarchal society allows this right to normal human beings and eunuchs are not normal beings for the patriarchs. However, the patriarchal discrimination offers them human being of the lowest category.

Eunuch or hijara people remain marginalized in the society because they cannot belong to any category of the established gender. For the survival, they establish their own houses as their family with the system of one head and others are members. In these houses, the head eunuch is the ultimate authority and every one follows her order. However, she is boss but treats everyone with motherly cares. After the retirement of the head eunuch, another comes on his place.

Hating of the people feels eunuchs that they are living in the society as its disease. However, they yearn for themselves to treat as human being and consider as a part of society. The yearning of eunuch to be a member of society is noticeable. The patriarchal society never permits marriage between a eunuch and a man. The society becomes cruel before the false and ephemeral prestige.

Thus, the condition of the transgender and queer is so deteriorated that they have no right to live as normal human beings in the society of the established heterosexuals. They should have the protection of the law as well as some affection in the mind of the people to accept them as normal human beings.

References:

¹ Bristow, Joseph. *Sexuality*. London and New York: Routledge. 1997 p. 21-22 quoted in Donald E. Hall, *Queer Theories*. London: Palgrave Macmillian. 2003 p. 32

² Cruikshank, Margaret *The gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement*. London and New York: Routledge. 1992 quoted in Donald E. Hall, *Queer Theories*. London: Palgrave Macmillian. 2003 p. 37