

Lifestyle Choice?

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Being queer is not a lifestyle choice.

I have never encountered that aisle in my local grocery store called "Sexual Orientation" where I could chose the "lifestyle" that I liked best. Figuring out my sexual identity is certainly not the same process I use to pick out a new colour of paint for my kitchen. The phrase "lifestyle choice" trivializes this arduous journey of self-discovery.

"Lifestyle choice" is a problematic term on two levels. First, there isn't any one single queer lifestyle. Gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders are just as diverse in the ways they live their lives as heterosexuals. Secondly, by referring to being queer as a "choice", suggests that being queer is curable. Being queer is not a disease, nor a psychological disorder, nor is it a fad or a fashion statement.

Still I suppose I do have a "choice". I could choose to deny who I am. I could choose to suppress my love and attraction for people of the same sex. I could choose to not live with the fear and shame of discrimination. I could choose to live a lie.

Being queer isn't any more of a choice than being straight.

It simply is.