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THE RON REAGAN
SHOW »

David Letterman Promotes Transgender Hate Against Obama Appointee Amanda Simpson

Wednesday January 6, 2010 3:35 p.m.



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By [Megan Carpentier](#)

Last night on David Letterman's show, he decided to poke fun at the stereotypes surrounding transgender people after Barack Obama appointed the first-ever transgender person to a position in the Commerce Department, Amanda Simpson. But rather than make fun of the legions of homo- and transphobic people who are quaking in their underbritches at the thought of being "fooled" into sex with a transgender person, he decided to put those people at ease by making it clear that all us "normal" people are equally afraid and appalled at the thought.

Autumn Sandeen and Pam Spaulding at Pam's House Blend [do a splendid job](#) of explaining why this isn't--and shouldn't--be funny and how it reinforces stereotypes about transgender people that are directly related to our government's denial of some basic civil rights for them, but it bears repeating why this passes as humor.

This is "funny" to Letterman and his audience because it relies on stereotypes about transgender people. The first stereotype is that transgender people are deliberately not honest and open about their transitions--which Amanda Simpson rather obviously is--in order to engage in sexual relations with unknowing partners, despite the discrimination, hostility and physical danger many transgender people face from the average stranger. Worse yet, it plays into an ongoing stereotype about the LGBT community at large, which is that LGB people and transgender people are essentially predatory in their sex practices, "recruiting" supposedly otherwise-straight people to their supposedly deviant lifestyle through trickery. It also relies on the stereotype that any supposedly "normal" (i.e., cis-gender straight) person who finds out that he or she unknowingly engaged in sex acts with a person they later discover is transgender would be so horrified at the thought that he or she would vomit. And, finally, it reduces Amanda Simpson and all transgender people to their genitals and the use thereof, rather than acknowledging that their genitals are a part--and for some transgender people, a very minor part--of their gender identity and transition.

But it is apparently easier to poke fun at one transgender woman who has the courage to be open about her life--I mean, she's probably heard worse, right?--than to make fun of the discomfort of a group of people, thereby making them even more uncomfortable. It used to be that Letterman's humor relied on the hilarity of the audience being uncomfortable with his jokes. I guess with Jay Leno moving to 10:00, someone had to take over the role of enforcing majority rules.

THERE ARE 7 COMMENTS

7.

Ray

That was a "skit"? Nothing but an insignificant 20 or 30 seconds out of a monolog the way I saw it. Any number of comedians will use material focused on blacks, whites, hispanics, lesbians, gays, catholics, jews, muslims, fundamentalists, conservatives, liberals and on and on and on. I can't see why the list should exclude "transgendered".

This is America folksor is it anymore? Do something controversial - expect controversy.

Why have we become such a nation of whining, infantile idiots?

This liberal, in your face, self righteous hypocrisy that we are being forced to swallow is enough to turn one's stomach. If David Letterman apologizes for that bit of nothing - then he's a coward.

7:07 p.m. • Wednesday January 6, 2010

6.

Bob Jackson

Libs are always afraid of things they don't understand. Libs should not be afraid of having sex with people of their own sex.

5:12 p.m. • Wednesday January 6, 2010

5.

ladnod

Megan most certainly has a right to her own ideas about this clip, but to me it appears to be mocking the dolts who are frightened BY Gays, Lesbians, Transgendered and not the other way around.

If you are reading this Megan, I would love to hear more from you on the subject, but to me the crux of the Letterman "joke" is aimed at the those who are frightened or prejudiced in all matters LGBT.

4:59 p.m. • Wednesday January 6, 2010

4.

Jack Straw

what the fck does 'cis-gender straight' mean?

4:49 p.m. • Wednesday January 6, 2010

3.

nedsk

Letterman should worry about keeping his stuff in his pants and continuing to kiss the butts of the celebs he has on his moronic show. Heres a new segment for him.. "Stpuid Letterman tricks"

4:38 p.m. • Wednesday January 6, 2010

2.

DragonSlayerX

I'm sure he will apologize, blah.blah, he got his laugh. Yes, trans-gendered people arn't funny /shame /waggs finger

4:17 p.m. • Wednesday January 6, 2010

1.

Caitlyn

I assume that we were watching the same clip, but I thought it focused on the fear and overreaction of the hate crowd, with Alan Kalter playing, as he does so well, the idiot. Alan Kalter's character on the show can hardly be described as being a "normal" person in any of the skits he does.

While I would prefer that a person's past gender weren't brought up at all, this skit made me laugh at the idiots.

Now that the skit has been run, how about pressing Letterman to invite Amanda to be a guest?