

# **I Am So Proud To Live In Missouri - Not**

**by Rev. Joe Dirt - Tuesday, February 06, 2024**

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The following article from the alternative newspaper, Riverfront Times, popped up in my Google news feed: [Missouri Ranks Dead Last in National Survey of LGBTQ+ Equality](#)

## **I Misunderstood Missouri**

I moved to St. Louis after living and working in Mississippi for over three years. While I left some good friends behind I was more than glad to get away from the religious conservatism that dominates politics down there. My first impression of Missouri was of St. Louis which left me with a hopeful feeling. Then I discovered the rest of Missouri. While St. Louis is more of a purple with bluish hues, the politics of the rest of the state is a Trumpian dystopia concerned with protecting so called guns rights and waging cultural battles against basic individual rights and freedoms, especially against women and folks with alternate lifestyles. It is deeply red, and, for me, very discouraging to the point of being depressing. Of course, I am an Okie by birth and with Oklahoma's super hard turn to the far right, I find my native state even more depressing.

## **Why Would You Care**

I really do not care what consenting adults do in private. I generally do not want to know, but hey... if it makes you happy, and all parties are on board with it, be happy. I just do not understand why the GOP is attempting to marginalize and even criminalize private behavior. If a person makes you uncomfortable, be somewhere else. This is pretty much what I do with MAGAs at this point.

Having several gay and lesbian friends, my take is that they are no different than heterosexuals except

whom they chose to love. **Why would they be?** I said chose, homosexuality is not a choice, folks are born homosexual just like folks are born heterosexual. I have had enough conversations with folks about their journey to an “alternate” life style that I have come realize that their only real choice was to be closeted or open. They were not groomed into an alternate lifestyle. The real crime here is that people cannot be who they are.

## **Religion, Not A Fan**

Anyone who has talked to me or read my silly little blog knows I am not a fan of religion. I bring religion into the picture here as I see much of the anti-LGBTQ+ coming from fundamental Christian churches. From my reading of the New Testament (yes, I have, more than a few times), if there ever were organizations that should be accepting and tolerant of human individuality, it should be Christian churches. My personal experience and from what I read and hear, is the complete opposite.

The GOP has made a cynical bargain with the Religious Right to obtain votes and power. Those GOP politicians who have drunk the fundamentalistic Kool-Aid and are true believers, scare the bejeebers out of me. From all my reading, most of America is not on board with their discriminatory beliefs.

Currently, according to [Gallop](#): 71% of Americans think same-sex marriage should be legal, 79% think same-sex relationships should be legal, 93% think gay and lesbian folks should NOT be discriminated against in employment, about half believe people are born homosexual, and 75% believe gays and lesbians should be allowed to adopt children. The main negative in this poll is that many folks have issues with transgender people.

I wish I could find the article that I read years ago. It was an autobiographical account of an individual born male, but whose self-perception/self-image was that of a female. The discordance it created in this individual was extreme. However, I do understand folks having a problem with individuals born with a male body competing athletically with persons born with a female body. To me, though, it is more of a fairness issue.

I am very aware that religion is very important to many, many folks. As long as they will leave me alone in my agnosticism, I am quite willing to let them be who they are. I start taking exception when they try to convert me, and especially when they are pushing their own special brand of morality on the rest of us.

I have even come up with a phrase – I have never had an original thought, but I do not recall the provenance, so I am going to take credit – that, to me, encapsulates what the Religious Right is doing: *They are being **immorally moral**.* They are pushing the morality of their particular religion on the rest of us... whether we want it or not. In my universe that is immoral.

## **Which Brings Me To..**

I have my own take on a common saying, “*Life is tough, whatever gets you through the day, whatever gets you through the night.*”

My first *whatever* is to remind me to be tolerant of other people’s religion. Hopefully, their religion is helping them to get through this absurdity we call life. We all need something, mine just happens to an

Italian cream cheese cake.

The second *whatever* is to remind me to be tolerant of other people's sexuality... whatever gets you through the night.

In other words, *Live and let live*.

And if I could wave a magic wand, I would make it so.

### **A Little Lagniappe**

[Pope denounces 'hypocrisy' of those who criticize LGBTQ blessings](#)

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