Words Kill

June 14, 2011 By Aundaray Guess

I remember when I was around 11 or 12 , my mother called me away from my brother and sisters. Taking me aside she looked at me and gave me a warning.

“If you ever turn out to be gay I’ll kill you.”

I didn’t know where she was coming from as I never placed that title on myself, but there must have been something I did or behaved to make her feel that way. Again I was a very young man and was not sexually active, so it wasn’t about that. Yet I do recall how she would tell me to stand straight and quit standing like a girl or how I was not suppose to have my wrist limp. And even though internally I did know that there was something different about me, she went ahead and placed a name on it.

And she not only placed a name on it but she followed it with a threat on my life.

From the moment I heard that threat I spent most of my teen and even young adult life, not giving her validations that I was gay. I was literally scared that she was going to follow through with her threat. The person who I looked to for protection, who gave me birth, who fed me, who was supposed to guide me through this huge world, was now something I feared.

As most may have known by now there’s a controversy with comedian Tracy Morgan, an actor on the show 30 Rock and a stand up comedian. The controversy stems from his anti-gay, homophobic assault of which he hid in what he called humor. A part of his so-called humor piece is when he described how he would stab his son if he felt his son was gay. Hearing this, I got flashback to my own experience with my mother.

Reading the after-effect and how he’s being called to task, of course you knew the generic “I’m sorry” was to come along, yet I have to ask him what is he really sorry about? The fact that he was called out for his hate or was he truly sorry that he sent a message that those who are gay deserve harm, even if it’s from the parents.

Words kill.

The scary thing is that some people buy into what Tracy says and agrees with him although unlike Tracy they may not have a stage to say it aloud. You even see it on the message boards as people feel that it’s comedy so what’s the problem. Or it’s a routine that shouldn’t be taken seriously. In that argument I find so many double standards.

First, as a black man his routine was filled with the word “nigger,” a hateful word of which he even attached to his son before stating how he would kill him. Every other comedian from Micheal Richards to

other non-black performers, when they have used that word, there's a huge outcry yet I suppose when you're black it's okay. I wonder if my ancestors who heard the word "nigger" as their life slipped from them as they hung from the tree would feel the same.

Second, to even suggest that people who are bullied are trying to get attention is such an ignorant statement and I wonder if he could ask the men and women, young and old, who were killed because of their sexuality would agree.

Lastly, as an African-American man for me he gives a perfect reason why we have black men who are on the "downlow." Although as I stated in another blog "downlow" is not just black men, we also have to recognize that in the black community it's not acceptable to be gay. After hearing Tracy's words and if I was his son and suppose his son was gay, there's no way I would come out.

I know for me after hearing my mother's words I didn't live the life i wanted to live. I lived the life that others thought I was supposed to live. So I pretended to be sexually attracted to girls, I displayed a machismo attitude and all the time while playing as an actor I lived a life of misery.

People are stating that maybe he's gay as those who speak the loudest about it have something to hide, yet whether he is or not, that's his business. What affects me is a public display of hate that reinforces homophobia, especially in the black community.

I do think he still owes a sincere apology, but not to me or to others. I think the apology should be directed to his son, as a parent should be a parent and love the life they brought into the world and not use their child as a punchline in such a vicious way. That's where the sorry should begin.

I repeat, words kill no matter if you wrap it in a song, a joke or a warning. If Tracy is sincere in his apology, he should speak to the families whose children were killed. He should donate to agencies that are fighting to end the stigma. He should simply shut up and take some old school advice, if you can't say something nice, then don't say nothing at all. And to quote Sidney J. Harris, "We have not passed that subtle line between childhood until … we have stopped saying 'It got lost' and say 'I lost it.'"

Tracy Morgan, you have lost it!

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/words-kill