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Sex Amidst the Ruins

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When a civilization gives itself over to moral confusion, sex and love are the most obvious laboratories of experimentation –and thus, of controversy. Consider the following:

ITEM ONE: Transgenderism Considered on “Larry King Live” Larry King interviewed [Jennifer Finney Boylan](#) on the May 25, 2005 edition of [“Larry King Live.”](#) Jennifer Boylan—formerly known as James Boylan—went through a male-to-female sex change after 43 years of living as a man. Also appearing was Dierdre Boylan, to whom Jennifer Boylan is still married, although Dierdre had married James, not Jennifer. Still following?

Jennifer Boylan is a professor of English at [Colby College](#) in Maine, and is the author of *She’s Not There: A Life in Two Genders*. Larry King began by asking about the difference between “transgender and transsexual.” As Jennifer explained, “I understand how people would get confused, because where would people learn about this. Transgender is like an umbrella term, that includes a lot of different people. A transsexual is a person like me, someone born in one body with a lifelong conviction that they are the other sex. And so that’s one kind of transgendered person. ”

The show included an extraordinary amount of autobiography [complete with surgical details]. Boylan admitted that, as a teenage boy and young man, he had a strange relationship with girls. “Because I would kind of get together with girls and I’d ask them questions like, well, how do you get your hair to do that? Or what’s it like to have breasts? And my dates would kind of look at me like, well, what do you want to know that for?” Jennifer continued: “My world always revolved around women, but certainly my sexuality was different from — certainly from that of other men. I think women were like, you know, a warm fire in a cold room to me. I was drawn to them.” At one point Boylan simply remarked, “I think as a guy, as a teenager, I was certainly kind of an odd date.” Something of an understatement, no doubt.

The strangest part of the interview had to do with how Jennifer Boylan still lives with Dierdre Boylan, who had married James. They have two sons, now 9 and 11, who call Jennifer “Maddy,” a conflation of Mommy and Daddy. “It’s true that my children don’t have a father or a father figure. And that’s not a small thing,” Jennifer acknowledged. “But on the other hand, they do have me. And I think I’m a very good parent. They certainly see a lot more of me than I saw of my own father. And we do most of the things that families do together. I think a lot of time we forget that there’s anything different about us.”

For her part, Dierdre Boylan commented that she is a “straight” woman who has no desire to have sexual relations with Jennifer, through they are still legally married. “I do miss having a husband, and being a husband and wife,” she admitted. “I miss our physical relationship. In many ways, particularly now, sort of five years down the road, most of the things that I loved about Jim are still present in Jenny. The things that aren’t there are the most male things.” That comment has multiple meanings, to be sure. In any event, this case represents the convoluted complications that ensue when the Creator’s gift of gender becomes an experiment in self-expression rather than a focus of objective identity. Read the [transcript](#) for the full story.

ITEM TWO: A New Job Description: Surrogate Mothers for Gay Couples. [The New York Times](#) reported May 27 [see [story](#)] that some women are gladly serving as surrogate mothers in order to allow gay male couples to “have” children. The paper described several women who have given birth for gay couples, or are in the process of doing so. Lura Stiller, for example, gave birth to a baby girl on behalf of Cary Friedman and Rick Wellisch, gay partners who are both physicians.

According to the paper, “Within the close-knit world of professional childbearers, many of whom share their joys and disillusionments online and in support groups, gay couples have developed a reputation as especially grateful clients, willing to meet a surrogate’s often intense demands for emotional connection, though the relationships can give rise to other complications within the surrogate’s family and community.” In addition, “Many surrogates who choose to work for gay couples say they feel ill equipped or reluctant to deal with the sense of hopelessness and failure expressed by married women and men who have struggled unsuccessfully for years to bear children. Still others are drawn to men as clients because they fear the possible resentments and jealousies in working so closely with other women.”

Shannon Klein, identified as a mother of three and a home-schooler, suggested a very different motivation: “In all

honesty, there's a bit of a rebellious nature in me," she said. "I know that there are people who wouldn't approve of being a surrogate for gay parents, and that has made it more intriguing."

The procedure most often involves a donor egg and the sperm of one of the male partners. Analogously, lesbian couples often use commercial sperm banks in order to inseminate one of the partners. The artificiality of all this is a powerful reminder that heterosexual marriage is the Creator's intended context for human reproduction.

Ms. Klein is on to something important when she admits that her foray into surrogacy for homosexual couples can be traced to "a bit of the rebellious nature in me." It's the rebellious nature of humanity that explains the emergence of such a phenomenon in the first place.

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