THE SKEPTIC ARENA.COM

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"Gay Apologist" Finally Replies To My Request For Answers

*Neo,*

*You'll have to forgive this late response. There's no particular reason why I neglected your email, so all I can do is apologize and get this train rolling.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, no need to apologize. Hopefully, the reason why it took you over 3 months to respond is because you took my advice and sought help from those on the CC list.

*Your first concern takes issue with the logic of Why don't gay people choose to be straight? It would make their lives a lot easier. The logic there is flawed- and that was the point. If we could control our desires by conscious decision making, we'd no doubt pick convenient pleasures.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, what makes you believe that we cannot control our desires by conscious decision making?

Many people experience desires that will have harmful effects if acted upon. If we were unable to make a conscious decision to stop ourselves from acting on these primordial desires (using our mind's veto power), then we would all be savage beyond belief.

And on what basis do you assert that "we'd no doubt pick convenient pleasures?"

There are many situations where people will forego convenient pleasures, as in cases where it will negatively affect other people.

*But that hasn't been observed.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, you need to be more specific about "what" hasn't been observed. To avoid a Straw Man I need to know if you are referring to conscious decision making that hasn't been observed? Or that researchers haven't observed people picking inconvenient pleasures through conscious decision making? Or that controlling desires hasn't been observed?

*Indeed, Atheism is unpopular, and yet there are atheists.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, you said that *if* we could control our desires, we would no doubt pick convenient pleasures. Now you write a (true) statement which contradicts that assertion.

So either you are claiming that we cannot control our desires (no free will) or you have provided an example (Atheism) which contradicts your assertion that people would "no doubt pick convenient pleasures." Let's continue and find out which it is.

*So when the question Why don't gay people choose to be straight? is asked, it's posed tongue-in-cheek to make the point that sexual preferences can't be chosen.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, when are you going to produce the evidence I asked for, that sexual preference can't be chosen?

I keep asking - and you keep dodging. Trying to get a straight answer from you is like playing Wac-A-Mole.

*Apparently, you didn't pick up on the sarcasm and proceeded to give an example that backs up my argument.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, perhaps you would be willing to explain *how* my example (Atheism) backed up your argument?

*To answer your question: Because I can't.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, that's not an answer. The question was *Why* don't you choose to be a Christian? - not *Can* you be a Christian?

*Your second concern over-complicates things. The words "seem to" don't imply anything. They're only there to allow for grey area.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, thank you for that vague, non-answer.

*To answer your questions in the order they were asked:*

*-Yes, it is discovered.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, then it was unnecessary to say "*we seem to discover*." You should have just stated that sexual preference is discovered. If you are so worried about gray areas, then maybe you should think about the topic in more depth before writing.

*-Our sexual preference.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, what makes you think that discovering a sexual preference in puberty precludes the ability to make future sexual choices inconsistent with that initial discovery?

Your Determinism can't explain how a person, who has discovered an attraction for the opposite sex, can later develop an attraction for the same sex (bisexuals). But where your Determinism fails ... free will succeeds by providing an explanation.

*-What about them, indeed.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, was that supposed to be an answer?

*-No, they're not lying. This is why I chose to word it*

*"...something that we seem to discover..."*

Mr. Counter Arguments, you said earlier that you chose to word it that way ("seem to") to allow for "*grey area*." Now you say you chose to word it that way so that people who claimed to know that they were gay before puberty weren't lying. So which is the real reason?

You have provided two contradictory answers to the same question. I don't have to debate you: you are debating yourself ...

and losing.

*-Ask someone who says it.*

*My best guess is that "born" is a substitute for "never anything other than."*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I noticed that nowhere in this email do you address my questions about bisexuals. Can you explain why that is?

*Your third concern is a little wobbly. You admit in your hypothetical examples that you are not choosing to be heterosexual/homosexual. So I'm a little lost on how that's supposed to be a counter argument if you're affirming my argument.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I asserted that people are not choosing to be heterosexual or homosexual. I asserted that they are choosing to have sex with individuals. The majority of people choose to have sex with individuals of the opposite sex. Other people choose to have sex with individuals of the same sex, or both sexes, or neither sex.

Nothing in any of my assertions, affirms your argument.

*Whatever it was you were trying to prove, we have another misunderstanding.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I don't know where you got the idea that I was trying to prove anything. You were the one who produced a video which made specific claims. I questioned you about those claims. The burden of proof is on you, as the claimant, to support your claims. That is something you have yet to do.

*Once again, the question When did you choose to be straight? is being asked sarcastically. And once again, it went over your head.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, what I pointed out to you was, how illogical your sarcastic question was. I followed that with 7 specific questions, not one of which, you had an answer for.

*There is no answer to that question.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, you could have replaced this entire email with that one sentence, if you had just replaced the words ...

"There is" with "I have"

"answer" with "answers"

"that" with "any of your"

"question" with "questions"

*At no point in your life did you (shall we say) pick females to be the gender you'd be attracted to.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I didn't pick a gender to be attracted to, but individuals. That's because I wasn't attracted to all members of that gender - only to specific individuals within that gender.

People don't have sex with genders but with individuals; not all of whom fall into specific gender categories.

*You can choose to ask someone out on a date. You can choose to propose to them and spend the rest of your life with them. But did you choose to be attracted to them in the first place? No.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, what evidence do you offer to support that assertion?

Before you answer, I'll warn you about a trap to avoid - you need to consider that not everyone is attracted to another person ...

right away (It's obvious that you didn't consider that possibility).

*The attraction comes first- then you decide what you're going to do about it.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, like I said, the attraction may not come immediately. For example: I would imagine that in your case, based on your writing, that someone might have to know you for a long, long time before feelings of attraction might begin to develop.

*I realize by now that the reason you had thought that you caught me in these logical tizzies is because you didn't know that these questions were rhetorical.*

You sure are a smart one Mr. Counter Arguments. But what I find interesting, is that, what you refer to as "logical tizzies" were just questions.

Apparently, you don't take questions very well. Perhaps if you had answers, the questions wouldn't seem so threatening, and wouldn't be perceived as "logical tizzies."

*And I also realize that, in that confusion, you made points that support my argument. Hopefully, all of that confusion has been cleared up.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, any confusion that you attribute to my questions is likely nothing more than wishful thinking on your part. So there was nothing to clear up ... at least not on my end.

And if it were true that I made points that supported your argument ... then I would be the only one who did.

*Your forth concern runs around in the same irrelevant circles. Needless to say, the question Why is this different for gay people? is another rhetorical question.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I responded to your rhetorical question with a series of questions. You avoided all of them. I don't need an explanation of your remark. I need answers to my questions.

*All that I need to say here is that there is a difference between "Always" and "As long as you can remember." I'm not going to explain the difference; it should be obvious.*

Nice dodge Mr. Counter Arguments, but distracting attention to definitional nuances to avoid answering questions only works on people who are easily distracted. The questions: "So then a gay person would say they were always gay?"; "How would you prove that before they entertained sexual thoughts?"; and "Absent sexual thoughts and sexual activity, on what basis do you claim they were gay?" ... are still awaiting your answers.

*Your fifth concern might be the most horrendous misunderstanding I've ever read.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, when I see people overreact like you just did, it only makes it clear that in your brief existence ...

you must not have read very much.

So which concern has "horrendously" boggled your mind?

*At what point in the video was it stated that homosexuals do not exercise free will?*

Mr. Counter Arguments, on YouTube, right under the video, you wrote: "*Counter Argument #1: Sexuality is innate*."

If sexuality is innate then sexual free will is precluded. So if you are now claiming that people *do* have free will, then you will need to explain why free will is prohibited in the area of sexuality

(and by *explain* ... I mean provide evidence).

*Both homosexuals and heterosexuals exercise free will.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, then you need to correct "Counter Arguments #1" at the top of your YouTube page.

(I would also suggest that you change the category from *education* to *opinion* ... to protect yourself from a law suit)

*All I was doing with the definitions was drawing a simple distinction between free will and instinct.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, if sexuality is innate as you claimed on YouTube, then it cannot be a free choice. If you wanted to say that innate factors can *influence* sexuality, then that is what you should have said.

*It was all to make the case that sexual desires fall under the instinct tent and not the free will tent. That's all.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, how can you not see the obvious contradiction between this statement and the one two lines up where you stated that people *do* exercise free will?

Mr. Counter Arguments, if you keep contradicting yourself, and tying your mind up in little knots, people might mistake you for ... an anaconda mating ball.

*How could you possibly conclude that was a denial of free will for homosexuals?*

Mr. Counter Arguments, it wasn't me who concluded that ...

it was Mr. Webster. Perhaps what you need to do, is to spend more quiet time in the library reviewing the meaning of the words you use, before posting them on the internet for everyone to see.

*Your sixth concern asks for evidence.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, you mean "question." I'm guessing that you have been calling them "concerns" rather than "questions" in the hope that it will relieve you of the responsibility of providing answers ... answers which you don't seem to have.

*You may not be happy with what I have to say, but given how much you've misconstrued the counter argument already, I not very troubled by it.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I'm glad you're not troubled by my questions, because my purpose in asking them was certainly not to trouble you, but merely to get answers.

So far, all I've gotten after 3 months of waiting patiently, is contradictions, evasions, and redefinitions.

*To present, thoroughly, the evidence that supports this argument would be to give a lecture on the complexity of human psychology.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, so now you've decided to resort to the excuse, that you *would* have answered the questions - but you can't because it would take too long?

Well, why not. You've used just about every other evasive tactic, why not that one.

*I omitted the scientific data*

Mr. Counter Arguments, what scientific data? You mean the data that I asked you for?

So after 3 months, you've: 1) omitted the scientific data,

2) refused to give evidence because it would require a lecture, and 3) contradicted yourself multiple times.

Question Mr. Counter Arguments - why did you even bother?

If you are a big fan of self-immolation - congratulations ...

you succeeded.

*and stuck to examples to keep the video brief. The examples and the rhetorical questions themselves make a strong enough case.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, case for what? That sexuality is innate? Or that people (including gays) exercise free will?

Also, an example does not make a case - an example *supports* an argument or a theory ... that makes a case.

*But for anyone who wants to read the evidence for themselves, I made mention of four separate institutes with plenty of research to read.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, as you might recall - I sent you this email:

*"In your video "Homosexuality Is A Choice"*

*you stated that the A.M.A., A.A.P., A.P.A., and A.P.A.*

*"Are all in agreement that sexuality is not a choice."*

*But I find no links under the video to support that statement.*

*Would you be willing to provide them?"*

Mr. Counter Arguments, you ignored my request, and instead sent me one link to some web site called "teach the facts.org" with an obvious agenda and outdated information. It reminded me of how I felt that time I accidentally wound up on the web site of "The Food Babe."

*And that brings us to your seventh concern.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, you mean my next question.

*You claim that the link I sent you is over 20 years old despite the fact that the most recent year mentioned in it is 1999. I could throw the question back at you "Why didn't you do your own research?"*

Mr. Counter Arguments, that link contained data from studies that were over 40 years old (1973), over 30 years old (1981), and over 20 years old (1994). Then you kept searching and you found studies from 1997 and 1999 (18 and 16 years old).

So you ignored all the old studies that I referred to (over 20 years old) and thought that because there were a couple of studies just under 20 years old ... that you found something to throw back?

You have set a new standard for desperation.

*but I'm not interested in the answer. You're increasingly proving yourself to be slipshod in your analyses. And your eighth concern is a perfect example of this. You don't need to tell me that Dr. Ben Carson's argument is a non sequitur. I'm perfectly aware of that. It's not my argument, Neo. It's Dr. Carson's argument. Send the Skeptic's Dictionary link to him.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, my link to non sequiturs wasn't in response to Carson's statement "*Being gay is a choice* " - it was in response to what you wrote in parentheses right below that ... "*therefore, denying gay marriage is not discrimination*."

You tried to reword Carson's statement, but you did so in a way that did not logically follow from what Carson said. It was your rewording that was the non sequitur.

*You are pointing out the flaw in an argument to a guy who made a video that counters said argument.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, nothing in your video provided evidence that countered Carson's statement. The fact that, in your mind you think you did, would be funny ... if it weren't so pathetic.

*If that's not daft, I don't know what is. One of your final concerns was with the Stephen Hawking example. I don't know exactly what your issue is with it is because you neglected to mention what your issue was.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, the reason you don't know what my issue was with the *Hawking* *erection* example, is because that example was so childish and silly that I simply chose to briefly mention it, and then move on.

*The last thing that you stated was that, essentially, the evidence and research that supports the notion that sexual preference is not a choice is "pseudoscientific (that's not a word) deterministic nonsense."*

Mr. Counter Arguments, seriously, how long would it have taken you to check that out first before embarrassing yourself?

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/pseudoscientific?s=t>

30 seconds?

I think that last humiliation pretty much demonstrates to everyone your basic problem: mental laziness.

*For a guy hellbent on asking for evidence,*

Mr. Counter Arguments, that Freudian slip was priceless. Thanks for proving what you think of those who dare to question you.

*how appropriate that you should refer to all the evidence as "nonsense" without any evidence to back you up.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I didn't need evidence to back up my questions ... you were the one who needed evidence to back up the claims made on your video (google: "burden of proof").

*As if being skeptical is validation enough. I tend to encourage people who write to me to write back anytime they please.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I don't see much purpose in doing that. You were asked a long list of questions and given plenty of time and opportunity to support your claims. Instead, after 3 months, you evaded, contradicted, and distracted your way through a long meaningless email, that you thought would pass the smell test ...

it didn't.

*But not only was your email much longer than it needed to be- it was full of errors. Everything from misunderstanding the argument-*

Mr. Counter Arguments, since you are the one wrestling with the cognitive dissonance of holding contradictory positions (sexual preference is both innate - and - possessed by people with free will), it would seem that the only one who is misunderstanding the argument ... is you.

*to correcting me for someone else's non sequitur-*

Mr. Counter Arguments, already asked and answered.

*to making my case accidentally-*

Mr. Counter Arguments, google "delusion."

*to making up statements that my video never made-*

Mr. Counter Arguments, I don't suppose there is any point in asking you to produce one?

*to blunders in basic math. (2015 minus 1999 is not more than 20).*

Mr. Counter Arguments, an iota of common sense should have told you that the "blunder" was not mathematical, but a misunderstanding, on your part, about what I was referring to.

*You may write back if you ever wish to.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, as I said, what would be the point?

You've been given many opportunities and gobs of time. If you could have defended your claims, you would have; but you didn't. The only reasonable conclusion ... is that you can't.

*But I promise, if you send another email riddled with this many clumsy mistakes again, it won't get a response.*

Mr. Counter Arguments, after waiting over 3 months for a reply, I really expected more. Maybe you should have taken my advice and asked for help from someone on that CC list that I provided. It's not like they could have done any worse.

Or, maybe you did ... and they were just a lot smarter than you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MU8r6SbgIfI>

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

A Tiny Animal May Solve a Big Pollution Problem

A bunch of tiny worms may have just solved a problem that's plagued scientists and environmentalists for years: what to do with the 30 million tons of plastics that end up in US landfills annually. Researchers fed Styrofoam—long assumed to be non-biodegradable—to 100 mealworms. Not only did the mealworms stay healthy on their all-plastic diet, their excretions were biodegradable and appeared safe to use as manure. While other insects have been known to eat plastics, this is the first time an animal has been observed biodegrading plastic.

The mealworms' secret is the bacteria living in their guts. Researchers hope further study could help develop new enzymes for breaking down plastics. Americans throw away 2.5 billion Styrofoam cups every year. Researchers are also hoping to find the marine equivalent of the mealworm since so many plastics end up in the ocean.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

Anonymous

"Religion provides the solace for the turmoil that it creates."