


James Randi Educational Foundation (/site/)

JREF Swift Blog

How To Say It?

Details

Written by James Randi

 Published: 21 March 2010



Well, here goes. I really resent the term, but I use it because it's recognized and accepted.

I'm gay.

From some seventy years of personal experience, I can tell you that there's not much "gay" about being homosexual. For the first twenty years of my life, I had to live in the shadows, in a culture that was — at least outwardly — totally hostile to any hint of that variation of life-style. At no time did I choose to adopt any protective coloration, though; my cultivation of an abundant beard was not at all a deception, but part of my costume as a conjuror.

Gradually, the general attitude that I'd perceived around me began to change, and presently I find that there has emerged a distinctly healthy acceptance of different social styles of living — except, of course, in cultures that live in constant and abject fear of divine retribution for infractions found in the various Holy Books... In another two decades, I'm confident that young people will find themselves in a vastly improved atmosphere of acceptance.

Before publishing this statement, I chose to privately notify a number of my closest friends and colleagues — none of whom, I'm sure, have been at all surprised at this "coming out." I'm prepared to receive the inevitable barrage of jeers and insults from the "grubbies" out there who will jump to their keyboards in glee to notify others of their kind about this statement, which to them will be yet further proof of the perfidy of the rationalist mode of life that I have chosen. Those titters of joy will be unheard over the murmur of acceptance that I confidently expect from my friends.

This declaration of mine was prompted just last week by seeing an excellent film — starring Sean Penn — that told the story of politician Harvey Milk, the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in California (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_lesbian,_gay,_bisexual,_or_transgender_firsts_by_year). I'm in excellent company: Barney Frank, Oscar Wilde, Stephen Fry, Ellen DeGeneres, Rachel Maddow, are just a few of those who were in my thoughts as I pressed the key that placed this on *Swift* and before the whole world...

I should apologize for having used *Swift* as the venue to publish this note, an item that is hardly the focus of what we promote and publish here, but I chose the single most public asset I have to make this statement. It's from here that I have attacked irrationality, stupidity, and irresponsibility, and it is my broadest platform. Here is where I have chosen to stand and fight.

And I think that I have already won this battle by simply publishing this statement.

Note: To hear an extensive discussion of this issue, please listen to my appearance on (http://www.forgoodreason.org/james_randi_a_skeptic_comes_out_at_81) For Good Reason (http://www.forgoodreason.org/james_randi_a_skeptic_comes_out_at_81).

◀ [Prev \(/site/index.php/swift-blog/915-for-good-reason-jennifer-michael-hecht-the-poetry-of-skepticism.html\)](/site/index.php/swift-blog/915-for-good-reason-jennifer-michael-hecht-the-poetry-of-skepticism.html)

[Next ▶ \(/site/index.php/swift-blog/913-skeptical-evaluator-of-alt-med-faces-loss-of-funding.html\)](/site/index.php/swift-blog/913-skeptical-evaluator-of-alt-med-faces-loss-of-funding.html)

Main Menu

[Home \(/site/index.php\)](/site/index.php)

This is the archived site - [Click here for the new site \(http://web.randi.org\)](http://web.randi.org)

[Swift Blog Biographies \(/site/index.php/swift-blog/swift-blog-biographies.html\)](/site/index.php/swift-blog/swift-blog-biographies.html)