

Reason to be proud

Dan Hammes/St. Maries Gazette Record

Why is it the people who claim to be so accepting cannot accept some things?

Without a bunch of fuss, muss, hand-wringing and calamity, that is.

That thought occurred with the announcement of the gay football player. For those who missed it, a defensive end at the University of Missouri announced last week that he is gay.

And that's a problem.

He announced.

Pronounced.

Proclaimed.

That is he's gay.

Most folks, those of us who do not count ourselves among the elites, simply rolled our eyes and wished he would just shut up. But the real fancy people, celebrities, people who talk on TV and the First Lady among them, made quite a fuss over this. They were just giddy that a football player would be gay. For some reason the sex life of a complete stranger became a very, very, very big deal to those folks.

Then it got worse.

Several of these elitists were instantly proud - proud - that this particular defensive end is gay.

There was a time when pride had a foundation. A basis. A reason. There was a time when people took pride in others, and themselves, for an achievement that required extra effort or a major commitment. Losing weight, academic excellence, a promotion, living compassionately, feigning interest when a liberal talks politics could all prompt feelings of pride. But why ever would a person be proud of a stranger simply because that stranger is gay?

Is it that hard? It is, after all, natural. And sex, of course, is not all that difficult if one can find a partner. Given all the accolades, cheering and media coverage one would think this particular defensive end would have no problem getting a date. It is as if he had a phone number written in every bathroom stall in America. So, what's to be proud about?

Of course these elite types would claim they are not proud of the football player they never heard of because he is gay.

No. They would say they are proud of the football player they do not know because he 'announced' he was gay. They would claim his 'pronouncement' required courage, fortitude and all sorts of other wonderful things that prompts their feelings of pride.

Which brings it back to where we started.

Why is it that elite-types who claim to be so inclusive cannot accept that some people are gay - without making a fuss?

The rest of us do.

Everybody knows somebody who is gay. But none of us - at least those of us who are not among the elites- is proud of that person simply because of what that person does in his or her bedroom. Unlike the Hollywood types, people on TV or anyone married to the president, we simply do not care. We may be proud of that person for who he - or she - is. But nobody - at least no mature adults - takes pride in somebody for his sexual proclivities.

More important, and something the inclusive crowd just does not get, we don't want to hear about them.

In addition to being proud, the elites who were so consumed with news about the gay football player they do not know, were also quite fussed over how his 'announcement' would impact his draft status.

This is interesting on a couple fronts.

Typically the only time the inclusive crowd talk about football is when they are yammering about the superiority of soccer. You've heard it all before. Most popular game in the world. Great skill. Less violent. Millions and millions of people watch. Yadda, yadda, yadda, blah, blah, blah. But perhaps it stands to reason that the types who fuss over other peoples' sex lives would find soccer exciting.

What the elites don't get is the gay football player's draft status has nothing to do with what he does in the bedroom and everything to do with what he does on the football field.

As things stand now, he could do better.

Draft experts agree that this guy will get drafted in the lower rounds. Yes, they acknowledge that he was the SEC defensive player of the year, but his performance in the Senior Bowl was lacking. They say when he faced off against the best offensive tackles in the nation that he didn't do well enough to be drafted early.

(We Pac-12 fans would say this is more evidence of the SEC bias. That is, if the best defensive player in the league only ranked as average when facing good opposition - then is the SEC as great as everyone claims? But then, we're off track. Besides, there is no future in antagonizing

SEC football fans. They are a lot like liberals and politicians. They make little sense, repeat themselves constantly and say little.)

So while the elites worry and fuss whether the gay football player will face discrimination in the NFL draft, the rest of us give a diddly who he diddles and just want to know if he can get to the quarterback.

The evidence suggests he cannot.

Now, if he proves his critics wrong and someday is named to the Pro Bowl, that would be reason to be proud. *DAN HAMMES is publisher of this newspaper.*