

856 LGBT (*this is an edited version of my blog 856*)

I can't say I have no regrets ... I have a couple, this is one: A while ago someone commented on the Safe Schools program in Australian schools. (*In describing the aims of the program, the Safe Schools Coalition Australia reports that 75% of same sex attracted young people experience some form of homophobic abuse at school.*) The person made her point by asking, "would you want your kid to be exposed to the LGBT issues raised in the Safe Schools program?" Her inference being that tuning in to the issue could be detrimental for children (possibly convert straight kids to be gay! A related issue is the conjecture that growing up in a same-sex parents family could damage the children; but that gets short shrift: *'No evidence': Medical groups rubbish 'red herring' claims about same-sex parents*, SMH). We were at a gathering where responding as I would have liked to would have caused discord. But I regret not having stood by my conviction and say what I felt: "Oh yes, the issue is pertinent even for very young children. To begin with, gender identity confusion is a matter that should not be ignored or suppressed; it is an issue that people are born with, where children as young as three or four may have an inkling there is something wrong with their outward gender, as opposed to the gender they feel is truly theirs. So if my six or eight year old grandson would express some gender identity confusion, I know he would get all the support he needs from his family ... and I would hope also from his school. The point here is that children - pre-teens and teenagers - who are thus confused and who don't get the support they need, are going through a living hell. This is borne out in the suicide rate of teenagers due to bullying on account of their sexuality." I wrote a blog about a case in point (blog 762), and the picture of that thirteen year old boy haunts me to this day. "So, in answer to your question: With your comment you make it obvious you are ignorant of the issue ... are you aware that your stance is responsible for sending gay children to hell and them committing suicide?" The question is again brought into focus by the current YES / NO "survey" on the issue of marriage equality (in Australia). On my blog are links to a few SMH articles that shed light on how damaging & destructive this survey is. I have an essay *LGBTTTTIQQAHHL*. Some definitions: Lesbian: A female who is attracted to other females. Gay: Generally refers to males attracted to other males, but it may also refer to the gay community in general (like queer). Bisexual: A person who is attracted to persons of both the same or opposite sex. Transgender: A person whose gender identity is different from his or her anatomical sex. Transexual: A person who will have or had operations done to accommodate their new gender identity; transsexuals are often referred to as either "pre-op" or "post-op." Transvestite: A cross-dresser, someone wearing clothes of the opposite sex. Intersex: A range of physical traits that lie between definitions of male and female. Androgyne: A person who relates neither to male nor female genders - also: Asexual, without sex or sexuality. Questioning: A person who is questioning his or her gender or sexual identity. Queer: A broad umbrella term for anyone - male or female - who identifies as sexually diverse.