

Dear Tracy,

I woke up to your apology this morning and was disappointed. You apologized to your fans and the gay and lesbian community; that missed the point for me.

You know that your words offended the gay community because Kevin Rogers, an out gay man, was able to blog about his experience and share it with the world.

I can't pretend to know Mr. Rogers' situation, but I'm going to assume that he's found a way to live his life in an out and proud manner, and while your tirade against us was offensive to him, it didn't create a life or death situation.

Mr. Morgan, I'd like you to consider your position in the Black community. While you are a comedian and people expect that most of what comes out of your mouth will be jokes, there are certain cultural norms that you have the ability to perpetuate or reject or come up with something in between. Personally, I'd say examine them, but that's me.

When you perpetuate negative stereotypes towards the gay community, much less violence towards us, you're reinforcing the belief that Black people hate gay people. I'm tired of defending my community against my community and you don't make my job any easier by inserting yet another quotable example of Black people hating on gay people into the cultural and political discourse.

Mr. Morgan I am a bi-racial, lesbian mother who works with LGBT teens on a daily basis. Most of these teens are youth of color - that's us Tracy. Because of what they see and hear on t.v. and the radio they know that when they come out as gay they are losing the Black community. Imagine if someone told you being funny wasn't a Black thing so you could only hang out with white comedians. And if you'd try to hang out with Black folks they'd reject you. And when you hang out with your white comedian friends, sometimes some of them would make Black folk jokes because Black folks are funny. That just doesn't feel right. Does it?

Mr. Morgan you're an intelligent man. You wouldn't be where you are and have achieved the accomplishments you've achieved if you weren't. While my Black comedian example is a bit of a stretch I hope you get my point. Our children need to be accepted and loved for who they are. When you ridicule and advocate violence towards us as teens; when we're just growing into who we are, you validate stereotypes and create unsafe living situations for our children...hear me out.

Other than Mr. Rogers, I don't know who was in the audience that evening. But let's say there was a Black single mother in the audience who's just figured out that her son is 'that way.' She hasn't told any of her girlfriends, they're just out to have a good time. Then you start Tracy. Her son is the same age as the son you'd stab. And you tell your joke and her friends laugh...and she laughs.

What happens next, Tracy? I can tell you what I see. I'd LOVE to tell you what I see. Better yet, I'd love for you to come to my office and SEE what I see. Your apology may have come from the heart, but it missed the point. Some people will be happy with it, some won't, some are going

to want to flush out your bank account.

I don't want your dollar. I don't want your apology. I want your ear, your time, and your understanding. Come to my office and meet the LGBT teens I work with or find other organizations and individuals working to support these marginalized children. Because again, Tracy they are us. Please, educate yourself on who these children whom you would theoretically stab are and consider their parents when you tell these jokes. When Mr. Rogers went home, he blogged. The theoretical mother out with her friends may have found a different outlet for her emotions. I've seen mothers like the one I described handle it in the most beautiful after-school special way. But I've seen far too many families torn apart by scenarios similar to the one you described on June 3rd.

Sincerely,

Kamora Le'Ella Herrington