

Understanding & Dismantling Privilege

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Why Do You Call Me “Faggot”? An Editorial in Verse

Warren J. Blumenfeld

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This is an editorial verse by author Warren Blumenfeld who is an Assistant Professor of Multicultural and International Curriculum in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Iowa State University. Among his publications are Investigating Christian Privilege and Religious Oppression in the United States, Readings for Diversity and Social Justice, Homophobia: How We All Pay the Price, and Looking at Gay and Lesbian Life.

Why Do You Call Me “Faggot”?

As you drive down the boulevard
Why do you call me “faggot”?

Alone or with your fellows
You shriek menacing refrains
Bellowing in mocking intonations

You blast your horn
Or slow your pace
Or circle back to reprise your taunts

What fuels this need inside?
Who gives permission and cover?

Where does this entitlement stem?
Who offers tacit approval?

When I express gender traditionally
Why do you call me “faggot”?

When I gender non-conform
Why do you call me “faggot”?

When I walk alone or in company
Why do you call me “faggot”?

For I am a person, like you, making my way in the world

I am a professor at your university
I am a neighbor in your town
I shop where you shop
And I breathe the air you breath

Sunlight shines on me as on you
Rain and snow wash over me as over you

Like the Eastern Goldfinch, the Cardinal, and the Dove
Heartland winds tug and lift me
Do they lift you too?

And I am comfortable in my skin
Are you comfortable in yours?

So why do you call me “faggot”?