

(Do Ask Do Tell market video)

by
(Bill Boushka)

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by
(Names of Subsequent Writers,
in Order of Work Performed)

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FADE IN:

INT. LECTURE ROOM - DAY

ME (BILL BOUSHKA) delivers the lecture in the style of a one-person play. At various points, various film clips and stills are shown with my own voice-overs.

ME

Hello, I am Bill Boushka, the author of both books called "DO ASK DO TELL" published in 1997, with a second cooperative printing in 2000, and then a second book in 2002. There is also a book "Our Fundamental Rights" from 1998.

Show the books.

ME

I've had people ask for "my book" when buying copies from me. They mean, in object-oriented speak, "my instance" of the book. The authorship ownership is of course mine, and these books, along with the supporting websites hppub.com and doaskdotell.com have become my modest claim to fame.

Show the websites. Use both a Mac and Dell.

ME

The books developed a libertarian approach to the idea of equal fundamental rights for gay men and lesbians. The philosophy stressed self-definition and total personal responsibility for one's own actions, as well as harmlessness to others, as a moral justification for equality. Even so, the philosophy recognized interdependence of people, as in the family unit and other communities. The idea was to get government out of the business of socializing people, but letting communities set their own standards.

Show a clip from the Hamline lecture

ME

I gave lectures on my book to college students at Hamline University and the University of Minnesota in St Paul and Minneapolis in 1998 and 1999, and a talk to the Unitarian fellowship in 2002.

Show the Unitarian pictures.

ME

Although there were modest sales of a few hundred copies of the first book, and I had depended on an improving stock market in the 1990s to finance the self-publishing, it was the web site along with search engines that over several years made the books better known. I believe that the books were helpful in overturning the sodomy laws with the *Lawrence v Texas* opinion in 2003, along with some favorable decisions in the Internet censorship area. We are even to the point where legislation has been introduced to repeal the notorious "don't ask don't tell" policy regarding gays in the military.

Show the military policy materials.

ME

We all know, however, that the time since 9/11 has not been an easy time for the growth of libertarianism. It is not an easy time for civil liberties.

Show some 9/11 pictures.

ME

Of course, even when I wrote the books, in the back of my mind was the notion that freedom cannot be taken for granted. We have to share burdens and responsibilities. I wanted a less government-driven approach to sharing these burdens.

Show some pictures from a gay marriage rally.

ME

I think you can look at all of our social tensions from the perspective of maintaining individual liberties. What are the responsibilities that go with that? The argument goes in stages. We look at the fact that many people today see their lives in terms of their own self-expression, and less away from their molding of other people within the family unit.

Show a traditional wedding, a "blessed event", then some books and music.

ME

People want to be themselves and have their own expressions before they get into relationships. So marriage has come to mean less, and that tends to leave people stranded. People of earlier generations tended to accept the idea that you lived for the welfare of your blood family, would do things for family that would be wrong to do for anyone else, and would let the needs of family members determine your own personal priorities. As a reward, one would be entitled to pampering of other family members as an elder if one needed it, and disabled family members would be cared for "lovingly" or at least willingly. That does not sit well with people who do not relate to opposite-sex coupling and having children of their own, and who have other artistic or aesthetic was of feeling. A self-expressive life depends on a technological society, which some people see as abusing people in other parts of the world. So what are the steps to go through? (1) National defense, national security, sharing that, along with environmental issues like global warming, pandemics, homeland security; (2) Sharing family responsibility, eldercare, raising kids.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

This is touchy because many people believe that people should fit into meeting the needs of family before they strike out on their own in life. Demographics matter here as people can be kept alive longer but have fewer kids--with a lower birthrate there are fewer people to support them; (3) Rethinking our way of debating things. We pay people to think for us, yet the Internet has given anyone free entry into making himself a celebrity by taking this on himself. That is quite profound, because you don't need any accountability to others to become a celebrity first. So we have to look at all of these in steps. Let's get back to defense.

ME

That is what having the capability to serve openly in the military means, the right to marry means, and the ability to adopt children in appropriate circumstances means. It means sharing in socialization and in the big job of keeping a free society going, or doing your part.

Show pictures of conservative books.

ME

Of course, there is a backlash. People claim that giving gay people full equality will undermine marriage as a socializing institution. Maybe they are right.

Show diagram of fundamental rights, social rights, and responsibilities.

ME

We have two big problems. One is enormous inequality of wealth. This can be destabilizing. The other problem is threats to our infrastructure, to our way of life, from terrorism, pandemics, natural disasters, environmental damage that we are not prepared for.

Show a picture of the Capitol.

ME

Liberals often say that these should be solved by government programs. Conservatives point out that these goals should be achieved by individual and personal sharing of responsibilities and sacrifices, and maybe then the government programs can make more sense.

Show a picture of volunteer work (Habitat for Humanity)

ME

There is a deep sense that burdens are not shared at a personal level very equitably. Of course this is true of corporate chiefs, but it may be true of middle class people too. There is a particularly disturbing idea that family responsibility is not shared equitably, and this helps drive the polarizing nature of gay issues. Some families have children with catastrophic medical problems, and, while many people have fewer or no children, their parents live longer, but may be alive longer while sick, with fewer people to take care of them. People who grew up in a more individualistic culture like mine expect others to take care of themselves and define their own purposes, whereas people from earlier generations expect to find meaning in shared purposes, especially through the family, and don't believe that individual freedom can take that much responsibility or claim that much freedom.

Show chart of "solution."

ME

My own take would be, allow gays to serve relatively openly in the military, allow gay marriage and in many cases gay adoption and custody.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

The price would be increasing the notion of filial responsibility.

Show more of chart.

ME

Adult children might have strengthened obligations toward other family members, even if they have no children of their own. Such a development could tend to tether unmarried people or childless people to obligations to original families. This would strengthen the family as a caretaking unit. But it should accept the idea of gay couples as heading families. That is the deal. That is a way to maintain the strength of the family, even if some feel that it still challenges the importance that some people want to give to biological gender roles as part of the transmission and procreation of biological human life, as part of their personal identify and a reinforcement of their religious notions of natural law. Another idea would be to make sure that people, when they do have the benefits of family leadership, perform, pay their dues, and do not hide behind the family.

Show Williamsburg

ME

In general, the idea of ordered liberty will become consciously changed by the idea that one must participate in becoming his brother's keeper.

Show a copy of the New Testament, appropriate parables like "The Rich Young Ruler" and "Parable of the Talents."

ME

But I want to go back to what motivated me to write the first book. Remember that in 1993 President Clinton opened up a spirited debate on letting gays and lesbians serve openly in the military.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

That served as a fulcrum of debate of social equality in many other areas.

Show Wren Building on William and Mary campus.

ME

Right after Thanksgiving in 1961 I was sent home as a freshman from the College of William and Mary after telling the Dean of Men that I was a "latent homosexual." It was very traumatic. The Dean had called me in on Friday afternoon after Thanksgiving Day and indeed waited around all afternoon for me to come. I wonder why this was done in such a bizarre way. I had spent Thanksgiving Day in Jamestown with my parents and he called my parents long distance as they visited friends in North Carolina, a big deal in the days of long distance operators and party lines.

Show Brown Hall. Somewhere show **snippets of dialogue with roommate.**

ME

There had been increasing tension between me and a roommate in this dorm, and a gradual increase in rumors. I was somewhat like the character "Tom" in the 1956 film "**Tea and Sympathy**" and other boys perceived me as an indirect threat to them. I had been a good student, and gotten straight A's at midterm. But I would not go through the required socialization (by women) that would bind me to meeting the needs of blood family and doing my share. They would have to. It seemed to them that I would become the ultimate cheat or freeloader, or that my success could somehow render them impotent.

Show grades and W&M papers.

ME

On the surface, I was struck by the parallel between my civilian expulsion and the justification for the military ban. That is, the supposed sexual privacy of straight men in a confined environment of forced intimacy.

Show film of logging quarters.

ME

But other civilian occupations can have forced intimacy. That was even true of the CCC during the Depression. There are many other examples, like fire, FBI at Quantico, civilians on ships, and in some ways, teachers, especially of immature students.

Show a school.

ME

I think that the deeper reason has to do with the socialization of young men. It is a big burden to remain the sexual initiator for a lifetime, as both partners grow older and face disease and aging. Part of the sexual satisfaction of marriage for many men is the notion that society is fully behind them, and that means restricting the sexual freedom of those disinclined to marry, and to function in their natural biological roles as husband and wife and as committed parents. Society in those days protected the incentive to marry, stay faithful and parent for the common good by restricting the freedom to have sex outside of marriage; this was the abstinence paradigm, that sex is only for "married people." That got abused, as families kept wealth to themselves and justified evils like slavery to segregation.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

Individualism, on the heels of the 60s Civil Rights Movement, became the fix, but that led to new problems, with families getting weaker and people within families getting left out in the cold as people cherry-picked their way out. In olden times, a man would justify his existence with his wife and children. If a man died, it seemed like a greater loss if he had a wife and children. That was the common speak.

Show a mock drawing of a hazing.

ME

Some of the fuel to the fire may have come from my skipping a hazing scenario early in the year. At William and Mary they were called "tribunals" and rumors claimed that "they" shaved the boys legs. Maybe there is no "they." In "**Tea and Sympathy**" the ritual became the mandatory pajama party. Hazing in those days was a ritual by which men were supposed to "get it" as far as their expected adult male roles.

Show NIH

ME

After my expulsion I went to George Washington while living at home. I lost the opportunity for a normal college social life.

Show GW

ME

I was also a patient at National Institutes of Health for six months in 1962. This was sold to me as a research program for those who had trouble adjusting to college.

Show NIH

ME

It is an irony that society realized that to win the Cold War it needed nerds and "different" people like me to come up with the ideas and intellectual work to succeed. Yet people like me had to "pay our dues" and conform to social norms, a contradiction. I was on a ward with some psychotic patients. I was allowed off the grounds to go to school and found out about the Cuban Missile Crisis by watching the President speak on GW campus TVs. I was the only patient who understood this. Likewise, my William and Mary semester had occurred while the Berlin Wall was going up.

Show a DVD

ME

That is why a film on this period would give a filmmaker the opportunity to tie together various threads of history--including the background of our government and separation of powers as demonstrated by Colonial Williamsburg--in one compelling film.

Show ING

ME

While working on the book, I was working for a company that sold life insurance to military officers. Since I was writing about gays in the military, I thought that this presented a conflict of interest. But my company was bought by a bigger company, and I transferred to Minneapolis in 1997. These were great years. But they also created certain family problems.

Show chart

ME

That brings back to what really bothers a lot of people about people like me. I have lived my life in relative "exile" for other thirty years as I chose. My values are aesthetic, partly driven by music. I want to create my own music and writings and movies rather than just consume the work of others, and that ought to be admirable, but takes a lot of listening. I took years of piano as a youngster and most of the classical repertoire was programmed into me.

Show piano with me at it.

ME

I probably lost the opportunity for a music career because of the Cold War. Music does, after all, provide a covert way to say things that often are perceived as socially disruptive. Now, had the William and Mary debacle not happened, I might have had a career in medicine, probably epidemiology, which would have positioned me when AIDS struck. Today I would be able to work on the pandemic and bioterror problems. I like the idea of defining yourself by what you can best do first before you commit yourself to a relationship. But most people don't have that opportunity. Most people are very dependent on the nuclear family to give their lives meaning. If a child bolts and does not carry on the biological family, they may take his disinterest in lineage as a personal rejection. Likewise, they may take insult in my erotic interest in the potential leaders (men) of other families and see this as disloyal. Furthermore, a adult child like me may not be as available for caretaking. If I had children of my own it would be easier for me to participate in sharing family responsibility.

Show a family picture.

ME

I spent thirty plus years living the way I wanted to in various urban environments, in what now seems like a semi-forced exile.

Show Greenwich Village, Dallas, Minneapolis

ME

I worked in a technical occupation, mainframe commercial computer programming, well suited for introverts. One could get lost in a world of being on call, where every cycle had to run perfectly. I did not have to advance, and I could live my personal life as I chose. I was valuable the way I was. That has been less true after Y2K, as those kinds of jobs were offshored. More of the jobs that remain require public commitment to advancing for the sake of the organization, and socialization and marriage tends to mean more. I have tried substitute teaching, and with some kinds of students I find that they will not respect me since I have not been a parent myself and have not tried to be competitive as a "man" in a conventional fashion of establishing my own biological lineage as a domain. Instead, I have lived for my own esthetic values.

Show playing piano.

ME

These activities do fill my own life so that it works. I pick and choose the people I relate to on my own terms.

Show a "Ninth Street Center" picture.

ME

Others may see my way of selecting people as a rejection of them. They may interpret neutrality as contempt.

Show a gay bar exterior.

ME

They may find my not wanting to have my own biological children as a rejection of my own blood, or as loyalty to someone else's. They may see my rejection of conventional paths of competition and advancement as contempt for what they did or as contempt for myself. They may see it as pathological, as a desire to live vicariously or voyeuristically, without real life. There is a name for this kind of view that they have. Aesthetic realism.

Show gay mag exteriors.

ME

Moreover, others will have needs and that brings up the question of playing fair. Most people build up a basis of emotion around blood relationships and biological family. I do not. I can see how other family arrangements can compel just as much lifetime emotional commitment. Others will still see openness about other personal value systems, which generate their own aesthetic emotions, as interfering with their own ability to make and keep normal family commitments. The other big concern is that other value systems, often predicated on technology, can be undermined if the infrastructure of society is damaged, by natural disasters, misuse of the environment even by individuals, or terrorism.

Show more 9/11 and hurricane pictures.

ME

Of course, there have always been threats to stability. That was a major point of the Cold War.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

But we came out of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War turned unnecessary and wrong (maybe), the oil shortages turned into surpluses in the 80s under more libertarian policies, and we gained more confidence in stability. We learned how to make AIDS a manageable problem for society. But since 2001 we have become increasingly concerned about future stability, with horrific terror attacks, natural disasters, global warmings, and now an old-fashioned 1918 style pandemic of a super-flu, a la Stephen King. It is possible for a society based on individualism and stability of contracts to break down under such stress, just as the system is threatened by massive defaults of some companies. In that case, all that one has to live for is family and faith. One cannot pursue one's chosen goals very well and limit one's social contacts to those of one's choosing in an unstable world. Many people in earlier generations took for granted that things are this way, and you might as well make protecting your family your top priority in life. That means "family first," regardless of the truth, even if you don't procreate your own children. I didn't go along with that.

More family pictures

ME

In the past few years, I have lost some of my personal freedom because of family requirements, gradually. There are those who feel that my freedom is not morally legitimate. They (in and outside the family) would claim that I am myself somewhat "disabled", at least since I can't procreate, and that I should accept solidarity with them and limit myself to promoting their ends to pay them back. Of course this is unacceptable. But I can see a twist in my own thinking.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

If, as a male homosexual, I admire others through upward affiliation, then I have to be judged by my own standards. That creates a paradox.

Show a classroom. Show math textbooks.

ME

In substitute teaching, I've noticed a certain paradox. Special education or underachieving students often wonder why they are required to perform in something like Algebra I, or even in basic social behaviors. Likewise, when I was younger, I wondered why I was required to to PE, or required to learn to become proficient in mechanical chores that I found potentially demeaning, or required to show some potential for social conformity and performance. It seems like the same way of thinking. Or maybe a different way of thinking. The progressive skills required in scouting (Cub Scouts-- as far as I got!--, Boy Scouts, Eagle Scouts) tend to be practical skills that assume that a man may be called upon to defend his family in a practical way because of circumstances beyond his ordinary control, with normal ideas of personal accountability. A lot of this kind of moral thinking was behind my father's insistence that I learn to do uninteresting mechanical tasks "the right way" before I could pursue my piano. You have to survive first. Basic services first.

Show a used car salesman.

ME

I do not like to play roles that are foreign to my personality. I do not "protect" people or compete to advance other people's agendas, but that is what many people who have families to support have to do.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

Without heterosexual interest, and without a sexual interest that can lead to procreation and transmit family continuity across generations, I have no obvious incentive to provide for others, at least until some other person comes into my life on my terms. It is easy for the needs of family members to become perceived as "burdens."

Show marquee of "Days of our Lives"

ME

I have avoided all of the problems, like jealousy, when men compete to realize themselves in a conventional way, through biological family. As on these soap operas, a lot of horrible things happen to people when they have to do this, and I outflank all of that. But that is a way to take responsibility for others. If you don't want to "compete as a man" -- quotes intended -- you have to find another way to participate in meeting others' needs, or else your gifts can become disruptive. I'll get to that again.

Show Google.

ME

There is also something about my speech. I like to present information to help people understand the range of all of these cultural social problems. In retirement, I think that I am good at that. The value of the information that I publish is that it stays out there, to be found by anyone. It is harder for special interests to get away with their campaigns when someone like me is out there.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

Some people may not like this, not just because of the obvious "seditious" political threat of dissent, but because it is harder for them to stay loyal to their own family commitments when they know that there are alternatives that are no longer hidden away in a closet. I think that is very important. This can work both ways. As a gay man, I actually don't enjoy seeing men act like women, but I know that I need to defend the freedom of others to be themselves in public.

Show a bit of a gay celebration or drag show, and a razor.

ME

Now I have published myself. Furthermore, it is very easy for people anywhere in the world to find me through search engines.

Show a Google search on me.

ME

That is good, as I get recognition. But some people see this as "cheating." Since Internet technology is new, I did not have to compete "like a man" to provide for a family first. I did not need the approval of others to publish. Maybe the lack of accountability is a problem. I have written that people who have certain kinds of jobs need to keep a low profile and should not use public spaces this way; they would have to restrict their constitutionally protected speech content to more conventional means requiring third party support. People could say that I am promoting myself within the reach of children, which is a point in the litigation over the Child Online Protection Act (COPA). There are other things they can say, too.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

That I write to avoid committed relations with others, or to show off knowledge for its own sake, or to create a stir when I do not share the same family responsibilities of other people. Some people will say that putting personal material out on the Internet for free where it can be found so easily by robots would show a profound disrespect for family, other members of which might be affected by public attention that in the past could not have occurred without more supervision, and especially without money being earned. Other family members may have grown up in a world that promised them public loyalty from all other family; family solidarity may be what they live for. I agree that these are valid questions. I do like to make people uncomfortable with intellectual or "false faith" complacency. Perhaps I am stepping on toes or fighting with fingernails rather than competing like a whole man. So be it.

Show an evangelical church or a Christian bookstore.

ME

Internet self-promotion, without supervision, is an opportunity that has been around for only about ten years. **The fact that someone can make himself a worldwide celebrity on the Internet with free entry and no accountability, is profound;** this idea has only been around about a dozen years. It has attracted bad actors and a host of problems. These include spam, hijacking for terrorist purposes, copyright infringement, trademark, and perhaps what some people who do business the old fashioned way by confrontational selling, unfair competition. And censorship, as with COPA.

Show some spam and an example of hacking.

ME

Therefore we cannot be sure that the opportunity for free publicity through passive advertising through the Internet will exist or work forever. There is controversy over social networking sites.

Show a social networking site

ME

With most of them, anyone can see them, including a sexual predator. Moreover, employers are starting to check personal blogs and sites of job applicants without telling them. Ironically employers feel legal consequences if they openly announce an off-duty blogging policy, but they are not afraid to look at someone's "Google" reputation as if it were part of an interview suit, because they can do this under the table. You can get some unfair results this way. Try typing "sex offender" into Google with your own name or that of almost any celebrity, and you may be alarmed at what comes up, and how an employer or maybe even a landlord could perceive you if it came up -- incorrectly, of course.

Show the Google search with my name.

Show a Superman comic book or a shot of TheWB.

ME

There is a certain paradox here. One of my favorites shows is *Smallville*, and in one episode teenage Clark Kent is tempted to throw a forward pass to himself to win a high school football game. That provides a good analogy to self-publishing when one is "different," I think.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

When there is no supervision, no accountability, and when you can talk about anything and disregard all loyalty, there is a risk of undermining what you believe in, social justice through personal obligations, without a lot of government involvement or politics. You can undermine the chance of other people to find meaning and support that they count on. On the other hand, you can wake people up and provide opportunity if you have the freedom. The only reconciliation seems to be paying your dues.

Show a shot of working a menial job on the night shift.

ME

What is most important to me, however, is to define my own ends, and not be forced to advocate the causes of other people just based on their specific needs, even for family members, even when these needs are compelling. I do not solicit others or manipulating them just to meet the ends of those that I work for or those that think they have the moral right to decide priorities. I know a lot of people have trouble with this. They will try to use religious notions of salvation as a reason to compromise one's goals and intellectual integrity. I find that unacceptable. That is how I feel.

ME

As I noted before, I lived apart in a separate community for about three decades or so. Other people's priorities did not matter as much.

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

In the 1990s, the combination of political changes -- President Clinton's trying to lift the military gay ban for example with "don't ask don't tell" -- along with the expressive and communications efficiency of the Internet, started to draw the worlds back together, in what author Clive Barker would have called a *reconciliation* in his colossal novel **Imajica**. The ultimate new political debate will be about the limits of freedom, and unelected accountability to others. We think of having children as the commencement of our adult accountability to others. But that responsibility -- accountability, filial responsibility, family responsibility, blood loyalty, whatever, may be imposed even on those who do not use sexuality to produce children--to pay back a cultural debt of deferential respect for being raised. Indeed, it is the link of marital sexuality to procreation that makes shared responsibility a natural process. Those without that link (to provide the expected grandchildren and lineage) do not feel the same emotional rewards, and will resist. They may feel cornered, and when people are cornered they can, out of candor, say brutal or highly negative things. So much of this comes down to the cultural importance (or lack thereof) of procreation, doesn't it! Mathematical logic and deduction, taken to its root, can be merciless and unforgiving. Perhaps all of this goes beyond the bound of human control and rationalism, and demands faith and grace. As one high school student wrote, "Behold the fury of philosophy."

Show newsletter

ME

(MORE)

ME(cont'd)

We need to put everything on the table that has to do with out freedom and any accountabilities that go with it. No other commitments make sense to me until we do that.

ME

To return for a moment to the WM debacle, my succeeding in life my way would demean my roommate's life. Procreation (or supporting it) is the one thing everybody can do, so anyone who rides above it is ruining it for everybody else. What's wrong with this kind of thinking-it is predicated on controlling what others do, **taking away their freedom** to meet the "majority's" invisible psychic needs.