

I came across a pretty interesting article describing women's coping strategies for being married to gay men. The major theme of the article revolves around women's coping methods for being married to a homosexual man, revealing that one of two methods is often utilized (redefining homosexuality, and "submitting to God"), both of which are utilized to "protect" the wives' femininity and traditional, patriarchal values. These women (often identifying with a conservative Christian denomination) felt cognitive dissonance over the fact that their husbands "preferred" men, despite the wives' conscious effort at upholding traditional feminine values. To reconcile their adherence to these values with their husbands' sexuality, the wives would often either "redefine" homosexuality as a psychological disorder (effectively "freeing" the wives from the guilt of not pleasing their husbands), or accept their husbands' sexuality by perceiving it as God's will (to which they must submit, in order to continue to uphold the "feminine" quality of submission and passivity).

While the author's interest seems to be that women will continue to force gender roles upon themselves, I am slightly more interested in the fact that these homosexual men are married to heterosexual women (in essence, being the same sort of self-imposed continuation of gender roles). These males seem to be fully aware of their homosexuality, yet they actively marry heterosexual women without disclosing their sexuality until after their union. Through this, I would assume that the pressure to seem heterosexual is so strong as to actually "fake" it through heterosexual marriage.

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Sources:

Wolkomir, Michelle (2004). "Giving It up to God": Negotiating Femininity in Support Groups for Wives of Ex-Gay Christian Men. *Gender and Society*. Vol. 18, No. 6 (Dec., 2004) (pp. 735-755)