

Margaret Court and the Hypocrisy of Professional Tennis

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First things first, [Margaret Court has been a religious zealot for years](#). It is not a new thing and it is not news. After retiring from tennis in 1977 she became a Pentecostal minister, founded her own church, and preaches on the Australian Christian Channel on Sundays. [She has publicly declared homosexuality and abortion abominations, advocates for gay conversion therapy at her church and is against same-sex marriage](#).

Like I said, her boycotting something over homosexuality is not new. This is what she is known for now. People should not be shocked by her behavior. This is her.

What is new and somewhat shocking though is the outrage by tennis fans, tennis players, and tennis organizations. Players like Samantha Stosur and Andy Murray are talking about boycotting Margaret Court Arena at next year's Australian Open due to her [current Qantas boycott](#). This is hypocrisy. Why boycott an arena yet continue to play tennis and earn money from countries that still criminalize the LGBT+ community? Simple answer: money over human rights.

The International Tennis Federation, WTA, and ATP all host tournaments in Tunisia, Egypt, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Uzbekistan, Singapore, and India - all countries where homosexuality is illegal. The big-name players like Andy Murray and Serena Williams usually play Doha and Dubai every single year while lower ranked players play the other Challenger events where they can. If the "stars" of tennis were truly LGBT+ allies they would boycott tournaments in these countries and any sponsorship coming from them. If the WTA and ATP were truly LGBT+ allies they would make Doha and Dubai "non-mandatory" or cut ties with these countries completely. They claim to be bastions of civil rights and human rights yet they make tournaments mandatory in countries that imprison and lash people for their sexuality. Isn't that hypocritical, Andy? You playing in a tournament in a country that does that and you say what you say? One cannot blubber on with, "Well, the country can do what they want. It's their country." Those are the words of a human with blinders on. Tennis is your job. You make your living from playing the game. In the words of Billie Jean King, "Sport is a microcosm of society." You have the privilege of being the best in your field! Why not use that privilege to stand up for others? It is your choice.

Note Some people, this writer included, have always wanted the Australian Open's "Margaret Court Arena" to be named after stalwart player [Evonne Goolagong-Cawley](#). She has always been a positive presence and advocate for aboriginal rights. She is a more fitting role model for 21st century humanity sport.