

Transgender Misdiagnoses: EHRC and Government Advice

Susan Gilchrist

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Preface

On the 7th. February 2024 in the United Kingdom Parliament, during Prime Minister's Questions the Prime Minister, Richi Sunak, jibed at the leader of the Opposition, Keir Starmer by saying "*I know what a woman is*". Those who are aware of the present conflicts in the United Kingdom over the legitimacy of the gender identities will know precisely what this meant. Only the single definition of biology alone as an "*Adult human female*" can be used to define a woman, and no other is allowed. There is also a fundamental disagreement between the two opposing groups. The World Authorities and the Professional Medical Institutions now invariably define transgender identities as "*naturally expected variations of the human condition, intrinsic to the personality created, arising very early in life, and cannot be changed either by the individual concerned or by the predations of others in subsequent life*". And this is a basic or fundamental sense of belonging which lies at the core, or the heart of the personalities and identities that every one of us possesses. However, gender-critical feminist groups deny the existence or relevance of this core gender identity. They instead attribute gender identity wholly to a "*nebulous and collectively created social construct determined entirely through association with the gender role*". This means that any deviation from the pattern of behaviour associated with biology must be regarded as a personality disruption, paraphilia, or perversion instead. Applying the diagnosis of personality variations, now universally adopted by the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, identifies the creation of transgender identities as inwardly focussed and compulsive searches for identity involving the rejection of what is wrong. These do not threaten others: This must be set against the views of opposing gender-critical feminists who, along with many religious groups, instead identify transgender conditions as sexually driven but sublimated personality disruptions, involving motives and feelings of behaviour and desire. Since both the motives and methods of management profoundly differ... to the extent that the approach which one group considers to be that of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably regarded as one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other, it is crucial that the correct diagnosis is made: And it is hardly surprising that strong and toxic disputes occur. There is also a fundamental contradiction. If the depth and legitimacy of transgender and transsexual identities are to be accepted, then the legitimacy of the gender-critical approach must be discredited. If the legitimacy of the gender-critical approach is instead accepted, then the depth and integrity of transgender identities must be denied.

With such deep seated and opposing viewpoints it is crucial that a truly impartial analysis is undertaken. That does not happen: The viewpoints of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions are dismissed by gender-critical groups as not being based on credible science, and as irresponsible work of transgender activists. The motives of the people and organisations presenting them are likewise discredited. No approach other than one which preserves gender-critical ideologies is accepted. Far from adopting the egalitarianism of the feminist pioneers and modern inclusive Christian theology, gender-critical groups adopt a gender complementarity similar to traditional Christian doctrines, where all acceptable social behaviour is indissolubly linked to biological sex: thus, the reality of transgender identities is denied. When the Prime Minister made the statement that "*I know what a woman is*", he was too was misdiagnosing and denying the depth and legitimacy of transgender identities. This was when he understood the mother of a murdered teenage transgender girl, Brianna Ghey, was listening to him in the Public Gallery of the House of Commons, just a few days after two other teenagers had been sentenced for Brianna's murder, and where transgender hate crime was identified by the trial judge to be a part of the motives involved. When challenged the Prime Minister also refused to apologise for his statement. In another sad coincidence, just one day after the guilty verdict had been passed, the Government released its new advice on the treatment of transgender children. The statement is made in the document explaining it that "*This guidance is intended to give teachers and school leaders greater confidence when dealing with an issue that has been hijacked by activists misrepresenting the law*". This statement destroys the impartiality of any current Government approach: That is discussed in this article. This consultation remains open to the 12th. March 2024. Please complete it at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gender-questioning-children-draft-schools-and-colleges-guidance>

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Although the topic of this article is as given in the title, it is also a part of a series which examines these issues. The others are: Gilchrist, S. (2024): "*What Celtic Christianity and the Ancient Church of the East Can Tell us about Christian Attitudes to Women and LGBTI Relationships*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-CelticChristianityWomenGenderSex.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2020f): "*Managing Transgender Conditions Correctly: A Commentary on the Bell v Tavistock Case*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/249P-JudgmentResponse.pdf> : Gilchrist, S. (2022): "*No Blacks, No Irish, No Homosexuals, No Transgender People*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/252P-NoBlacks.pdf> . And a blow-by-blow account is given in: Gilchrist, S. (2023): "*How to Trash the Economy, Transgender Identities and Human Rights*" <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/255P-HowToTrash.pdf>

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Abstract

Currently the nature and origins of transgender conditions are matters of intense dispute. On the one hand, the Professional Medical Institutions and World Authorities now define transgender identities as “*naturally expected variations of the human condition, intrinsic to the personality created, arising very early in life, and cannot be changed either by the individual concerned or by the predations of others in subsequent life*”. This identifies a basic or fundamental sense of belonging which lies at the core, or the heart of the personalities and identities which every one of us possesses. On the other hand, gender-critical feminist groups deny the existence or relevance of this core gender identity. They instead attribute gender identity wholly to a “*nebulous and collectively created social construct determined entirely through association with the gender role*”. Applying this diagnosis of personality variations, now universally adopted by the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, also identifies the creation of transgender identities as inwardly focussed and compulsive searches for identity. These do not threaten others and they involve the rejection of what is wrong. This must be set against the views of opposing gender-critical feminists who, along with many religious groups, instead identify transgender conditions as sexually driven but sublimated personality disruptions instead. These involve motives and feelings of behaviour and desire, so threats to others can be feared. The motives and methods of management profoundly differ to the extent that the approach which one group considers to be that of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably regarded as one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other. It is not surprising that strong and toxic conflicts occur.

It is commonly believed that the nature and origin of these conditions is not well understood. That has led to much confusion in the treatment and management of transgender conditions, and when the present United Kingdom Government supports only the gender-critical approach and no other, that causes major concerns. In this investigation a comprehensive study of the nature and origin of transgender conditions is undertaken, where both neurological and sociological aspects are considered. It is concluded that much of the present confusion arises from the social and religious resistances to change and from the failure of many practitioners in psychology, psychiatry, and sociology, who continue to use traditional social learning and psychodynamic theories to attempt to explain how early development occurs, and who fail to take full account of more recent advances in the understanding of the neurological aspects of early development. The results of this study confirm the diagnosis of transgender conditions as personality variations, in accordance with the approaches of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions. Both Government policies and scientific, medical, and clinical understandings are examined in this investigation, and the results are fully reported. How and why the present United Kingdom Human Rights watchdog body (the EHRC) has come to adopt a policy which is entirely in accordance with that of the current United Kingdom Government is examined in this paper. And how their combined support of only one side; together with their denials of validity and credibility of any other, in this hotly contested dispute, threatens all our human rights

The UK Government’s consultation period for the advice it intends to offer to schools and colleges about their approach to transgender children remains open to the 12th March 2024 (see in particular sections 6:1 and 6:2 in the full document). You are urgently asked to respond¹.

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¹ Please complete the consultation at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gender-questioning-children-draft-schools-and-colleges-guidance>

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1:0 Introduction

Currently the nature and origins of transgender conditions are matters of intense dispute. On the one hand, the Professional Medical Institutions and World Authorities now define transgender identities as *“naturally expected variations of the human condition, intrinsic to the personality created, arising very early in life, and cannot be changed either by the individual concerned or by the predations of others in subsequent life”*: This identifies a basic or fundamental sense of belonging which lies at the core, or the heart of the personalities and identities which every one of us possesses. On the other hand, gender-critical feminist groups deny the existence or relevance of this core gender identity. They instead attribute gender identity wholly to a *“nebulous and collectively created social construct determined entirely through association with the gender role”*. Applying this diagnosis of personality variations, now universally adopted by the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, also identifies the creation of transgender identities as inwardly focussed and compulsive searches for identity. These do not threaten others. And they involve the rejection of what is wrong. This must be set against the views of opposing gender-critical feminists who, along with many religious groups, instead identify transgender conditions as sexually driven but sublimated personality disruptions. These involve motives and feelings of behaviour and desire, so threats to others can be feared. The motives and methods of management profoundly differ to the extent that the approach which one group considers to be that of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably regarded as one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other. This marks a fundamental incompatibility and contradiction between the two approaches, and it is crucial that the correct diagnosis is made. It also is hardly surprising that strong and toxic disputes occur.

On the 19th December 2023 the United Kingdom Government published new guidance about how transgender children should be treated in schools. One stated purpose of this new guidance is revealed in the Government briefing paper which introduced it. This states that *“This guidance is intended to give teachers and school leaders greater confidence when dealing with an issue that has been hijacked by activists misrepresenting the law”*. It is a matter of sad co-incidence that, on the next day, the 20th December, after an 18-day trial at Manchester Crown Court, a 16-year-old boy from Leigh and a 16-year-old girl from Warrington, were found guilty of murder of Brianna Ghey a 16-year-old transgender schoolmate in the most horrific circumstances. The trial judge indicated that part of the motives for this murder were hate against transgender people. When it is known that the present United Kingdom government strongly supports the gender-critical

² Cite: Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“Transgender Misdiagnoses: EHRC and Government Advice”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-MisdiagnosesAndAdvice.pdf>. This article is extracted from: Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“What Celtic Christianity and the Ancient Church of the East Can Tell us about Christian Attitudes to Women and LGBTI Relationships”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-CelticChristianityWomenGenderSex.pdf>

IN BOTH DOCUMENTS I HAVE TRIED TO KEEP REFERENCES ETC. TO THE MINIMUM: FULL REFERENCES TO ORIGINAL SOURCES ARE INSTEAD GIVEN IN ALL OF MY DOCUMENTS IN THE FOOTNOTES PROVIDED. This document contains material extracted from the presentation series Gilchrist, S. (2022): *“Christian Communities, Transgender People and Christian Traditions”* (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-PresDoctrinesDisputesTransPeople.pdf>. And, Gilchrist, S. (2022): *“Transgender Disputes, Conversion Therapy and Government actions”* (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/254p-PresTransDisputesAndGovActions.pdf>. These are fully annotated presentations where full references and cross-references to the original sources are given. Additional resources, including a full bibliography, from which papers can be downloaded are available on my website www.tgdr.co.uk. Some of these papers are still in preparation, although draft copies may now be posted: Go to the website and click on the bibliography or download tabs. See in particular: Gilchrist, S. (****): *“Jesus and Women”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-JesusAndWomen.pdf> ; Gilchrist, S. (****): *“Power and Sex in Christian Traditions”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-PowerAndSex.pdf> ; Gilchrist, S. (****): *“East and West: A Comparison of How the Apostles Interpreted the Gospel Message in Roman and Persian Cultures”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/035B-EastAndWest.pdf> ; Gilchrist, S. (****): *“The Gospel of Thomas: Its Origins and the Consequences for Understandings of Theology, Gender and Sex in the Christian Church”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/027B-ThomasAnalysis.pdf> . For a critique of present Government approaches see: Gilchrist, S. (2023): *“How to Trash the Economy, Transgender Identities and Human Rights”* <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/255P-HowToTrash.pdf> .

approach, this is a matter of particular concern. More information is given in Sections 6:1 and 6:2 of this document.

It is therefore essential that a clear and intensive and impartial analysis of all approaches is undertaken, especially since it is commonly believed that the nature and origin of transgender conditions is not well understood. However, in the past there was little doubt. Traditionally the Christian Churches have regarded all gender and sexually variant behaviour, including the expression of transgender conditions to be disordered acts of grave depravity pursuing inappropriate sex. Although Freud identified homosexuality as an inversion rather than perversion, Freudian psychodynamics have been and still are frequently used to identify all gender and sexually variant conditions as perversions, paraphilias or disruptions from a biologically or divinely ordained path of development: which is also driven by sublimated and inappropriate desires of sex. For as long as all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour was criminalised and subjected to severe legal penalties there could be no access to the experiential evidence which would challenge those understandings. Access to that evidence in the United Kingdom from the 1960's onwards has resulted in a total transformation in attitudes to lesbian and gay relationships: That is from one which had considered them to be sexually motivated perversions to one which now celebrates these relationships in same-sex marriages, and accepts them as expressions of love and identity instead. Many people today regard transgender conditions to be equivalent and compulsive searches for identity, but gender-critical groups continue to define transgender conditions as perversions, paraphilias or disruptions of (male) homosexuality: Thus, the motives of sex and desire are maintained. And threats to women's identities continue to be perceived: with the fears that arise.

To maintain this denial also means that the experiential evidence and advances in research and knowledge which has taken place over the last sixty years must be discredited or denied. It additionally means that the advances in the understanding of the neurological aspects of early development, pioneered by Girard, Dawkins, Gallese and others, from the 1960's onwards, must also be rejected. Far from the presumptions required by all traditional social learning and psychodynamic theories which by the nature of these theories, demand that it is only the cognitive processes of thinking, feeling, and imagining that drive development forward... development under these neurological theories is instead understood to be driven by strong, innate, and pro-active neural forces which dominate from birth. These involve mirror neurons, possessive imitation, empathy, and the like. The nature of this transformation must also recast the perception of cognition from being the primary driving force which propels learning and development forward, into one which creates order out of disorder by increasingly keeping these innate neural forces in check. In addition to this reversal of outlook, it should be noted that identities, such as gender and sexual identities cannot form before birth because this demands interaction with others. And because they also depend on the allegiances, interactions and behaviours which have previously been encountered, they must all be considered consequential effects. However perhaps the most significant thing to note for our purposes is that these processes all involve the search for a coherence of self-identity. And not drives of sex.

Although I believe that gender identity clinics and others today provide the correct approach to the care and management of transgender people, this relies on the experiential, clinical and medical evidence that has already been collected, and a great deal of confusion arises because it is commonly believed that the origins of these conditions is not well understood. However, when many religious groups refuse to consider even the possibility of any change to their traditional doctrines. Also, when many practitioners in psychology, psychiatry and sociology still disregard or dismiss these advances in the neurology and other advances in clinical understanding. And continue to use traditional social learning and psychodynamic theories to try to explain how early development takes place, it is not surprising that confusions and uncertainties occur. Gender-critical groups apply these denials in the same way. This also means that transgender conditions must be identified as sexually motivated perversions, or paraphilias or disruptions to the normal path of development: And that is in contradiction to the diagnoses of the World Health Organisation and Professional Institutions, with their definition of these conditions as personality variations, where instead of sexual motivations, transgender encounters are identified as compulsive searches for coherent senses of identity instead.

In this examination I liken transgender people to immigrants or emigrants who cross this gender divide. And the abuse of any invitation on this journey is as harmful as its denial. For some, this journey may be seen to be an attack on the binary notions of gender and sex. But for transgender, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, it can be seen as one of coming home to be themselves. When experiences with intersex people and others shown that imposing gender reassignment by those who do not need it, can be as harmful as denying it to

those who do, it is essential to get the diagnoses correct. And with uncertainties and differences as great as these it is essential that all views are considered. However, there should be no magic or special techniques required for managing transgender conditions when the diagnosis is correct: But considerable harm can be created when it is not. Attempting to treat transgender conditions as personality disruptions when the diagnosis should be that of personality variations is potentially disastrous, because the time when transgender children and their parents most need help to manage these conditions occurs from early childhood, not later in life. Also, managing all personality variations as perversions or disruptions does not succeed: It never did succeed, even when the earlier extreme techniques such as electro-convulsion therapies, chemical and other aversion treatments, which were even more strongly intended to create revulsion or rejection were used. Not only do these approaches misdiagnose the conditions as expressions of sexual desire; they destroy the self-acceptance and self-esteem that is needed to manage their demands.

An important aim in this study is to provide help and support for those who for personal or other reasons do not wish to transition, and to enable those to do wish to transition to find an orderly way to manage these demands. As with any compulsive behaviour it is essential to gain self-acceptance, and to find ways to escape from the prisons of guilt and the condemnations of others if these strategies are to succeed. And that is why it is essential to create a correct and informed understanding among the general population about transgender people's feelings, identities and motives, so that the freedom to gain this self-acceptance can be found. An in-depth examination of the origin and nature of transgender conditions is reported in this document, where the advances in the neurological and behavioural understandings in recent years are fully considered.

However, no study can be complete unless it fully recognises the horrendous attacks, discrimination, exploitation, violence, coercion, and abuse which women have suffered through the actions of men for centuries. A major contribution to these disputes may therefore lie within the feminist movements... Where one group refuses to accept that any man or any male-to-female transsexual could ever truly be a feminist because of biology or the social upbringing that person has encountered, while the other group includes those who are happy to accept supportive men and also male-to-female transsexuals, as true allies in the feminist cause. Many gender-critical feminist groups in the United Kingdom do strongly assert that they welcome transgender people; and declare that they must have full legal rights. However, that also means they must accept that only their own diagnosis of transgender conditions as paraphilias or personality disruptions is legitimate. No other can be correct. The same concerns apply to religious groups who try to use theology to justify their arguments. Here equivalent condemnations including threats of hell, guilt and damnation are similarly applied³. And the presumptions of sexual motives continue to be made. Neither of these influences should be considered in isolation and the material contained in this paper is extracted from a more comprehensive document where these religious arguments are fully considered⁴.

No matter how strongly compelling these very legitimate and genuinely felt concerns may be, they must never justify any departure from attempts to take a fully objective and impartial approach. But no attempt to do this is made. In place of any serious consideration of the opposing clinical, medical and experiential evidence, gender-critical groups and religious groups, including the present United Kingdom Government through its support for the gender-critical movements, dismiss the views of the Professional Medical Institutions and World Authorities as the work of transgender activists, claim their expertise is not based on credible science, and attack the integrity of those groups and people who support their views. Instead, attempts are made to prove that transgender people are the creators of their own misfortunes, and that the male-to-female transsexuals are at least as likely to engage in violence against women as any male. The validity of these conclusions is challenged in this account.

When the present Prime Minister Richi Sunak made the jibe "*I know what a woman is*" during Prime Minister's Questions on the 4th February 2024, he was re-iterating the claim made by gender-critical feminist groups, that "*women*" must exclusively be defined as "*adult human females*" and denying all others. This was at the time, when he understood the mother of, Brianna Ghey was in the gallery, just after the two teenagers had been sentenced for murdering her. On the 7th February 2024, Rex Benidict, a non-binary transgender

³ Gilchrist, S. (2017e): "*Gender and Sexual Malpractice and Abuse in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/236P-Malpractice.pdf>

⁴ Gilchrist, S. (2024): "*What Celtic Christianity and the Ancient Church of the East Can Tell us about Christian Attitudes to Women and LGBTI Relationships*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-CelticChristianityWomenGenderSex.pdf>

teenager was beaten to death in Owasso High School in Owasso, Oklahoma, where Nex was a student, by three teenage schoolgirls in a horribly similar case⁵. This action by the United Kingdom Government does not just deny the reality and the legitimacy of the identities of Brianna and all transgender people. By confining the definition of “Women” to biology alone and by arguing that all acceptable gendered behaviour of women (and men) must conform to some social stereotype demanded by biology, diminishes all women. And it does not display any evidence of an even-handed or objective approach. It is precisely this exclusion and separation from the normal framework of society, which may have encouraged the murderers of Brianna Ghey to engage in their actions: And this is why the advocacy of these exclusions in the present Government advice on how children should be treated must cause the greatest concern. It is equally reprehensible for the present Prime Minister Richi Sunak to either apologise or withdraw the comment he made in the House of Commons which supported this Government’s gender-critical policies, particularly when he understood the mother of Brianna was present in the Public Gallery. It is these failures alone should demand an urgent review of all of the current EHRC advice, including children, and the present Government approach.

However, there is a much broader concern which is raised by the threats of the United Kingdom Government to limit the intervention of the courts, and to withdraw in whole or in part from the European and International Conventions on Human Rights. It has already done this to the extent that it can now claim to declare Rwanda to be a “safe” country despite the disagreement of the United Kingdom Supreme Court. Any withdrawal in whole or in part from these international conventions leaves human rights increasingly under the protection of domestic legislation. The domestic human rights watchdog body in the United Kingdom is the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). And it must also be an absolute duty of any watchdog body to keep a truly objective and objective approach, to keep the Government into account, and to ensure that all views and rights are impartially and objectively represented. In this context it does not matter which approach is correct. When the EHRC can be persuaded to adopt a position by Government appointments or otherwise, to adopt an approach on transgender matters which entirely conforms to the present United Kingdom Government. in what is a hotly contested dispute. When it also fails to equitably consider the scientific, experiential, clinical, medical, and religious, consensus. Including the approaches of the World Authorities, the Professional Institutions, and others who take opposing views on these transgender matters, then this EHRC approach, which endorses only one side of a dispute, and diminishes or discredits all others, must raise serious questions about the objectivity and independence of the EHRC.

Although the EHRC claims to act as an independent body the major weakness in its ability to do so, is that it is the UK Government who appoints members to its board. It is noted that many of the appointments to the board and other positions in the EHRC in recent years have been awarded to those who are known to support gender-critical approaches. If this is the reason for the transformations in outlook by the EHRC during the time of the present Government. And if it fulfils its intent of withdrawing from the European and International conventions. And if the United Kingdom Government is prepared to interfere in domestic human rights protections to pursue its own policies on transgender matters Then for everyone all of these acts destroy the validity of all of our legal human rights protections that are presently in place on any matter, and that applies to all of our human rights.

2:0 Transgender Journeys, Fears and Attacks

There are many reasons why all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour has until recently been considered to be sexually motivated personality perversions, paraphilias, or disruptions from biologically or divinely ordained paths of development. Even though both religious and feminist groups approach the same issue from very different directions, gender-critical feminists and adherents of these traditional Christian beliefs criticise gender and sexually variant behaviours for the same reasons: Both require answers to the same question: “Are lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual conditions created by searching for identity or through underlying drives of sex?”. Although many gender-critical groups today accept the viewpoints of the World Authorities and Medical Institutions by identifying lesbian and gay conditions as personality variations which involve the search for identity, they still continue to define transgender conditions as sexually motivated personality perversions, paraphilias, or disruptions of (male) homosexuality, which are driven by sublimated

⁵ Fagnant, Nick (2024): “Nex Benedict and All Trans*figured Children of God, Pray for Us!” *New Ways Ministry Blog* , February 25, 2024 <https://www.newwaysministry.org/2024/02/25/nex-benedict-and-all-transfigured-children-of-god-pray-for-us/>

desires of sex⁶. This means that transgender conditions are still considered to be enforced by the same types of motives as sexual abusers, even though lesbian and gay people are not. Many gender-critical groups in the United Kingdom justify their support for transgender people by arguing that these sexual motives are turned inwards towards themselves, but many other groups do not. This continued alleged commonality of motives with sexual abusers has been used for centuries to justify the condemnations of transgender people and lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, most notably by various religious groups in many parts of the world. Yet the advances in neurology, clinical experience, experiential evidence, and the lived experiences of transgender people which has been gained over the last sixty years in those countries and cultures which accept or have access to these have shown that, like lesbian and gay conditions, transgender conditions are likewise driven by compulsive searches for identity, not drives of sex⁷.

For as long as all gender and sexually variant behaviour was criminalised no change was possible. Today, the consequences of that have already been seen in the revolution in social attitudes to lesbian and gay people, in those countries where that experiential evidence has now become accepted and available. That involves a transformation in attitudes which now understands that these conditions are driven by the search for identity, not by desires of sex: From attitudes which had severely criminalised all such behaviour on the grounds of sexual perversion and harmful acts, into ones which now celebrate these as identities, with the acceptance and legalisation of same-sex marriages. This includes the recognition of the roles and the depths of love and commitment within these same-sex relationships and acts. Even though gender-critical groups accept these changes in relation to lesbian and gay behaviour, they persist in their denial of these advances in understanding and science in relation to transgender people by continuing to identify transgender behaviour as sexually motivated perversions or disruptions to a biologically decided path of development. This enforces a gender complementarity which demands that gendered behaviour, gender allegiances, and thus the gender identity which arises from these, must always be indissolubly linked to biological sex. For these reasons, it is transgender people who at the present time are coming under the strongest attack.

History can make this an understandable approach. The centuries of male dominance, physical strength, suppression, abuse, and violence by men against women provide very strong justification for the fears of male aggression that all women today face. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the impacts of the horrendous histories and current incidences of male violence, abuse, and discrimination against women, together with the similarly unequal criminal statistics: where many more men than women are imprisoned for such violence, must never be diminished, or disregarded. That these attacks have been so severe, institutionally enforced, biologically and religiously justified, and have been such a permanent feature of society, means that the idea that any man could be a true ally of women in the battle for women's rights, remains difficult or impossible for many women to accept. Nevertheless, by presenting as women in society, male-to-female transsexuals are subjected to these same degrees of discrimination, and to many of the same attacks.

Male-to-female transsexuals can be compared to immigrants or emigrants who cross this gender divide. And the abuse of any invitation on this journey is as harmful as it's denial. The major concern is therefore about whether this is a legitimate journey for male-to-female transsexuals to make, whether any legitimate invitation should be offered, whether they can be true allies in any feminist cause, or if male-to-female transsexuals must be considered to attack women's identities, exert power over women, and destroy their sex-based rights. For some, this journey may be seen to be an attack on the binary notions of gender and sex, but for transgender, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, it is a coming home instead. All of these considerations suggest that the focus of these arguments is less to do with transgender people and more about disputes within the feminist movements, where one group refuses to accept that any man or any male-to-female transsexual could ever truly be a feminist because of the social upbringing that person has encountered, while the other group includes those who are happy to accept supportive men and also male-to-female transsexuals as true allies in the feminist cause. Many gender-critical feminist groups in the United Kingdom do strongly assert that they welcome transgender people; and declare that they must have full legal rights. However, that

⁶ These theories usually are described as autogynephilic theories. See section B:7:1, *Autogynephilia* in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): "Responsibility in Transgender Disputes": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf> and section 8:0 in Gilchrist, S. (2020f): "Managing Transgender Conditions Correctly: A Commentary on the Bell v Tavistock Case": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/249P-JudgmentResponse.pdf>

⁷ Gilchrist, S. (2013c): "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/207P-ReassessmentPsychologyExtended.pdf>

also means they must accept that only their own diagnosis of transgender conditions as paraphilias or personality disruptions is legitimate. No other can be correct.

2:1 Motives

It is hardly surprising that male-to-female transsexuals react with anger, when the motives and methods of management for personality variations and personality disruptions differ to the extent that the approach which one group considers to be that of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably regarded to be one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other, and the wrong diagnosis is imposed. That anger increases, when their proud histories of involvement in the feminist movements, acting as totally committed allies of women in the fight for women's rights, campaigning for complete equality for women, seeking protection for all women against male violence, countering discrimination, and campaigning for the complete implementation of all gender-based rights, are instead placed alongside those of male aggressors and sexual abusers, thereby raising the opposite fears of predation, grooming and abuse. With the allegations of seeking power over women, and their claimed attacks on women's identities and attacking their sex-based rights. Nevertheless, in the present febrile atmosphere created by the present high level of attacks against women and the genuine and urgent need for groups like the "me too" movement, it is difficult for many women to accept that transgender people, particularly male-to-female transsexuals can be genuine in their arguments. So, instead of looking for agreement, inclusion and understanding on both sides, these conflicts have become battles over the of the legitimacy of transgender identities and their journeys, their acceptance or rejection, their exclusion or inclusion, their motives, and quarrels over women's rights.

That demarcation in the acceptance and the motives of transgender people is seen in the disputes over the degrees of access male-to-female transsexuals should have to toilets and other spaces and services normally used by women. The 2010 United Kingdom Equality Act presently states that such exclusions can be provided: but that this must be on an objectively justified basis. Because of this requirement for justification, privacies can still be protected, and all transgender people including male-to-female transsexuals, with justified exclusions, have had the appropriate level of access by law to these spaces for the last thirteen years. Despite this freedom to self-identify and the laws in many other countries which also allow this ability, there is no evidence of any increase in the already rare abuse of such entitlements, even in any of the years since this legislation in the United Kingdom, in the 2010 Equality Act, was introduced.

2:5 Feminist Disagreements

With such strongly divergent views and opinions being expressed it is essential that an impartial and objective approach is taken. That does not happen. In a 2021 article in the Guardian Newspaper Judith Butler, a major authority and pioneer in the feminist movements expressed her views on these gender-critical approaches: She said: *"It is not easy to fully reconstruct the arguments used by the anti-gender ideology movement because they do not hold themselves to standards of consistency or coherence. They assemble and launch incendiary claims to defeat what they see as "gender ideology" or "gender studies" by any rhetorical means necessary. For instance, they object to "gender" because it putatively denies biological sex or because it undermines the natural or divine character of the heteronormative family": "The anti-gender movement is not a conservative position with a clear set of principles. No, as a fascist trend, it mobilizes a range of rhetorical strategies from across the political spectrum to maximize the fear of infiltration and destruction that comes from a diverse set of economic and social forces. It does not strive for consistency, for its incoherence is part of its power"*⁸.

That statement should be compared with others of Kathleen Stock, one of the most prominent figures in the United Kingdom gender-critical movement. In the 2021 United Kingdom New Year Honours list, ostensibly for services to higher education. Kathleen Stock was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire. On receiving it she said: *"I want to use this opportunity to draw further attention to suppression of critical thought about gender identity ideology and trans activism in UK universities". She continued: "Most UK universities are Stonewall Diversity Champions. Translation... effectively they are now trans-activist institutions.* Stock argued

⁸ Butler, Judith, (2021): "Why is the idea of 'gender' provoking backlash the world over?" *the Guardian* 23 October 2021. See Discussion of Butler in Gilchrist, S. (2022): *"No Blacks, No Irish, No Homosexuals, No Transgender People"*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/252P-NoBlacks.pdf>

that Stonewall “doesn’t belong in UK universities (or schools, or gov departments, or local authorities, or judiciary, or police forces): Once a great organisation, they’re now a threat to freedom, of speech/ public understanding... Get them out”. Stonewall endorses the approaches of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, who treat transgender condition as personality variations, not as personality disruptions, as gender-critical groups allege. However, Kathleen Stock should not be taken as the sole spokesperson of the gender-critical movement. These viewpoints are mirrored by other gender-critical groups who, in place of creating reasoned arguments to counter the views of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, collectively dismiss the understanding of the professional organisations with their public statements that they are not based on credible science, that they are the work of transgender activists, that they along with others, conspire to deny data and seek to silence the views that their opponents present⁹.

When there are such fundamental disagreements about the origin, nature, motives, and methods of management of transgender conditions, it is essential for all viewpoints to be objectively and impartially considered. Instead of examining the origins of transgender conditions, these groups attempt to justify their arguments by trying to use science to prove that male-to-female transsexuals cause at least as great if not greater threat of violence to women as all males¹⁰. In place of vilification by others, they assert that transgender people are the generators of their own misfortunes. And this is also claimed to be the cause of the trauma that occurs. Similar arguments are currently being put forward by Roman Catholic Bishops in the United States, and by other elements in the Christian Church¹¹. I have conducted an extended study of these claims, a summary of which appears later in this document.

There is an irony in these arguments. Both Judith Butler and Kathleen Stock are high profile feminists. Neither of them now, nor in the past have been considered true allies of transgender people, although Butler has always argued for inclusion. Thus, the principal driving forces in these disputes are the disagreements between different parts of the feminist movements. In place of transgender people being the primary focus of these battles, it may be better to treat them as the victims instead. There is an even greater irony because gender-critical groups make extensive use of Butler’s work to justify their own approaches, yet in their own arguments they contradict their own logic and Butler’s emphasis on egalitarianism, by enforcing a gender complementarity that links gendered allegiances and behaviours, with the resulting identities indissolubly to biological sex. This is correspondingly likely to be a strong reason for Butler’s current and forceful condemnations of the gender-critical approach. It is additionally this same refusal to separate gender from sex which leads gender-critical groups to try to impose a false “*gender ideology*” on transgender people which alleges that these people believe they can choose, change, or deny biological sex.

All women have very real and justified fears of being victims of male violence, discrimination, and abuse. That is why I criticise any transgender groups who abuse that invitation as strongly, and in the same way that I criticise gender-critical groups. But that does not justify any false representation of all transgender people; or of male-to-female transsexuals in particular, with the aim of magnifying these fears in order to justify a religious or gender-critical approach. I have compared male-to-female transsexuals to immigrants or emigrants who cross the gender divide. The abuse of any invitation on this journey is as harmful as it’s denial, and when both sides emphasise their rights over their responsibilities to each other, a toxic brew is formed. It is therefore essential that full impartial and comprehensive studies are necessary to remove abuses through the pursuit or creation of false fears, or incorrect theologies and ideologies: But more than that is needed. It must include the ability to listen and to hear: And to accept the ability to change if necessary, in order to build an environment of mutual trust, understanding, inclusion and respect.

2:2 What is a Woman?

⁹ For a discussion of Stock’s work; See section 12:0: *Transgender Attacks* in Gilchrist, S. (2021a): “*Gender Identity, Feminism, and Transgender People*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/250P-GenderIdentityAndTrans.pdf>

¹⁰ For more details of this, see the presentation series: Gilchrist, S. (2022): “*Christian Communities, Transgender People and Christian Traditions*” (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-PresDoctrinesDisputesTransPeople.pdf>. These are fully annotated presentations where full references and cross-references to the original sources are given.

¹¹ See Part 7: “Attacks” in Gilchrist, S. (2022): “*Christian Communities, Transgender People and Christian Traditions*” (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-PresDoctrinesDisputesTransPeople.pdf>

This might at first seem a strange question to ask, but much of the angst in these disputes lies in the way that the word “woman” is defined. All of the feminist pioneers including Judith Butler and Simone De Beauvoir, defined the word “woman” in terms of the performance of gender. This is used to demand total equality in the way men and women socially relate to each other in society¹². It also separates motives of gender from motives of sex. With this definition, the need to provide separate protections and exclusions for men and women based on physical biology or reproductive sex is neither attacked, nor is it diminished in any way, when male-to-female transsexuals are placed inside the category of “women”, in their social relationships and in their fight for women’s rights. This egalitarianism and inclusion are why a great many ardent feminists are happy to accept male-to-female transsexuals as the women they say they are. Who see them to be as safe and responsible as all women are to each other. And where both sides are equally happy to make the distinction between natal women and trans women wherever it is needed for the purposes of biological or reproductive sex: Because both groups define the terms men and women in the same way, both encounter the same interactions in society, and both groups see each other as true allies in the fight for women’s rights¹³.

Along with the feminist pioneers the great majority of people in the United Kingdom also distinguish men from women through their appearance, behaviour and how they interact with others in everyday life. This also means that the term “woman” is used by most people in different contexts in different ways. When the gender-critical groups only accept the biological definition of the word “woman” and deny all others, they exclude transgender people, and assert the argument that gendered behaviour, gender allegiances, together with the gender identity which arises from these must always be indissolubly linked to biological sex. Doctrines of exclusion and gender complementarity are thereby enforced. These embrace the mantra that men cannot become women, and vice versa. This further means that the way in which both the feminist pioneers and transgender people have historically used and defined the word “woman”, is also denied. More significantly it implies that male-to-female transsexuals share the same types of motives as those of sexual abusers. Instead of the search for identity which transgender people and others expect. In place of just being a matter of semantics and definitions, this dispute about how the word “woman” is used has become a method of attack. Today, anyone who identifies male-to-female transsexuals as women can be understood by others to be attacking women’s identities and sex-based rights.

2:3 Inconsistencies and Ideologies

Nevertheless, there are inconsistencies in both arguments. By separating men from women entirely through the performance of gender, the independent role of any underlying sense of belonging, described as the core gender identity, with its role in providing the long-term continuities and stability of personality and identity, is either not recognised or is ignored. On the other hand, dividing men from women entirely through sexual biology and allowing no other: links all approved gender behaviour indissolubly to biological sex. These criteria are mutually exclusive. And in both of these there is no recognition of any middle way.

There is therefore a contradiction in the logic of any argument put forward by gender-critical groups who claim to support the feminist viewpoint that men and women are defined by the performance of gender and who argue at the same time that gender identity is merely a nebulous social construct. This demands that gender identity, including the allegiances and behaviours which create it, must be a choice or desire for everybody. And as a consequence of this egalitarianism, all of the boundaries can be freely crossed. This means that the legitimacies of heterosexual, lesbian, gay, transgender, and transsexual identities should all be given equal value, and none be denied. However, that conclusion is immediately contradicted by the arguments of the same groups, who then attempt to link gendered allegiances, gendered behaviour, and therefore, the gender identity which derives from these, indissolubly to biological sex. Imposing this doctrine of gender complementarity means none of these boundaries can be crossed. Arguing exclusively for one or the other

¹² One need only look at the statement “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.” in Simone de Beauvoir’s book “*The second sex*” *Vintage Classics; New Ed edition (7 Aug. 1997) ISBN-10 : 9780099744214 ISBN-13 : 978-0099744214* or Judith Butler’s inclusion of transgender people in her writings, where she distinguishes men and women from each other not by biological sex, but through *the “performance of gender”*.

¹³ Gilchrist, S. (2021a): “*Gender Identity, Feminism, and Transgender People*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/250P-GenderIdentityAndTrans.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2020f): “*Managing Transgender Conditions Correctly: A Commentary on the Bell v Tavistock Case*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/249P-JudgmentResponse.pdf>

creates binary definitions and excessive instabilities or rigidities in society. Thus: neither on their own can be correct. In section 3:5 of this account I show how strong and stable gender identities are created which need not always be congruent with biological sex.

Gender-critical groups argue that transgender and transsexual people can express their identities in any way they like, provided they never describe themselves as women. But that takes them to a different place: And it also it misses the point. When these gender-critical groups continue to describe male-to-female transsexuals as “*men*”, when they also place their motives alongside those of sexual abusers, (even if sublimated), and when they associate them with those who seek power over women, it is hardly surprising that a great deal of anger is encountered: Not just because it contradicts the identification these conditions as personality variations by the World Authorities and Professional Institutions. But also, because this association of gender complementarity with a gender-critical ideology denies the egalitarian views of the feminist pioneers and many other of today’s feminist groups. It misdiagnoses transgender conditions and tries to enforce a lifestyle on them which they cannot identify with. It additionally pursues, both in concept and in practice, the same type of exclusive approach which closely corresponds to the doctrines of gender complementarity that have been employed for centuries by the Roman Church.

2:4 Ideologies and Agendas

In the previous section I have argued that neither a totally egalitarian approach, nor an approach of gender complementarity on their own, are completely correct. And although strong and stable core gender identities are created, these need not always follow biological sex. A further deception arises when the claim is made by gender-critical groups that transgender people follow a “*gender ideology*”, which declares that transgender people believe they can “*choose, change or deny biological sex*”. Male-to-female transsexuals often identify themselves alongside “*women*” or “*girls*” because that is the way they interact with others in society. And this often happens from a very early age. However, today the legitimacy of terms like “*sex-change*” surgery are totally denied. No amount of surgery or drugs will ever turn a male into a female. Instead, terms like “*gender reassignment*” surgery or “*gender confirmation*” surgery are invariably employed. Thus, when surgery or drugs are sought, it is only to make the journey more complete: The reality of biological sex is never disputed and the need for separate protections based on biology are never denied. What gender-critical groups claim is a “*gender ideology*” is instead, a fictional “*gender-critical ideology*”, where gender identity is presumed to be a collectively created social construct determined entirely by association with the gender role: Which contradicts their arguments that gender identity, and the behaviour and allegiances which create it are indissolubly linked to biological sex, where the massive neural and cognitive changes during early development are ignored, and where the existence, role or reality of the core gender identity (described in section 3:4) is likewise denied.

When Penny Mordaunt then the Women and Equalities Minister in the UK Conservative Government of that time, launched the consultation on reforming the Gender Recognition Act in 2018 by declaring *that “Trans Women are Women. That is the starting point of the consultation”*, she was reflecting the views of the feminist pioneers, in which men and women are distinguished from each other through the ways in which they integrate into society. When Kathleen Stock in 2018 argued that “*Changing the concept of “woman” will cause unintended harms*”, she was not just denying the views of the feminist pioneers. By adopting the exclusive definition of a woman as “*an adult human female*” and by allowing no other, she was additionally denying the legitimacy of transgender identities, and the journeys that transgender people make. She was also restricting the appropriateness of the social behaviour of all women to same expectations of biological sex.

When the present Prime Minister Richi Sunak made the jibe “*I know what a woman is*” during Prime Minister’s Questions on the 4th February 2024, he was implying the same thing. This at the time, when he understood the mother of a teenage transgender girl, Brianna Ghey was in the gallery, just after two teenagers had been sentenced for murdering her. This not only denies the reality and the legitimacy of the identities of Brianna and all transgender people: By confining the definition of “*Women*” to biology alone and by arguing that all acceptable gendered behaviour of women (and men) must conform to some social stereotype demanded by biology; it diminishes all women, and it does not display any evidence of an even-handed or objective approach.

2:6 Government Actions and Human Rights.

When there are such profound disagreements, it should be expected that both Governments and Human Rights Organisations should give complete consideration of every opposing view. This does not happen. The present United Kingdom government is now proposing to amend the 2010 Equality Act in order to enforce a complete ban on male-to-female transsexuals entering any spaces or services normally reserved for women. This is entirely on biological sex and without any need for objective justification. It is regardless of the appearance of transgender people, the possession of a gender recognition certificate, the length of time since they transitioned, and the innocence or appropriateness of their behaviour. That also sets a boundary of identity instead of action, and it should drive a coat and horses through any equality legislation. Its implementation would also allow transgender people to be excluded and to be effectively discriminated against for any chosen reason, whether that be religion or sex. This also breaks the precept that people must be regarded as innocent before they are proved guilty. And it is an argument that could only be justified if every departure from a presumed behavioural stereotype which is indissolubly linked to biological sex, is automatically considered to be a sexually motivated perversion or a disruptive act.

In order to justify this action, the by the UK Government asked the United Kingdom Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to give its advice. However, that advice had previously been made publicly available in earlier guidance which it had provided. The terms are the same as those cited in the previous paragraph. This supportive response of the current EHRC to this request for advice from the present Government authorises the automatic exclusion of transgender people from all spaces normally used by either men or women... solely on the grounds of biological sex. It is made clear that this permission would also allow exclusion by popular vote by any organisation for any reason, whether it is religion or sex. Even though the EHRC has stated that actions must be taken responsibly, and it recommends that alternative facilities are provided, the claim by the EHRC that it cannot define for itself what the word “*transgender*” means, is a further measure of an attempt to define it as a perversion or disruption. Thereby denying transgender people the protection of the 2010 Equality Act. Only intersex people are excluded from this binary exclusion, and it is stated by the EHRC that this is only on the grounds of biological sex. This demand to conform to a binary stereotype does not just affect transgender people. It affects all men and women alike. At present this advice can be challenged by the courts. Amending the 2010 Equality Act to enable such a blanket inclusion would remove the ability to challenge it and give this current advice legal effect¹⁴.

In December 2023 it was revealed that the UK’s foremost LGBT charity Stonewall has successfully persuaded the UN-partnered Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) to launch a special review into the UK’s Equality and Human Rights Commission. At risk is its current “A” status accreditation, retraction of which would entail a loss of voting rights at the UN Human Rights Council and other associated punishments. This challenge is made on the grounds that EHRC stands accused of insufficient critical distance from the Conservative Party, with the result that it has allegedly become “*unfair*” to transgender people. However, I would allege that an equally serious or greater charge that should be laid against the EHRC is that it bases its conclusions entirely on one side of a hotly disputed conflict, and that it fails to take an objective view by summarily denying, dismissing, or discrediting another. The same criticism applies regardless of whether the approach of the Word Authorities and the Professional Institutions or that of the gender-critical groups is correct.

Transgender issues may seem to be matters of minor consequence in the face of present global issues: But these are not matters of magnitude, they are matters of principle, morality, compassion, objectivity, and justice. The current attempts by the United Kingdom Government to deport illegal immigrants to Rwanda, and to deprive them of all future rights to claim refugee status, by withdrawing, if necessary, from all or part of the European Convention on Human Rights, challenges all of these provisions. In addition, by passing a law which prevents any challenge by the United Kingdom Supreme Court, which declares that Rwanda is “*Safe*” country, despite the previous disagreement of that same Supreme Court, destroys the independence of the courts and removes the protections against abuses by parliament. These must be matters of serious and

¹⁴ See Gilchrist, S. (2022): “*Transgender Disputes, Conversion Therapy and Government actions*” (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/254p-PresTransDisputesAndGovActions.pdf> Also Gilchrist, S. (2022): “*No Blacks, No Irish, No Homosexuals, No Transgender People*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/252P-NoBlacks.pdf> . And: Gilchrist, S. (2023): “*How to Trash the Economy, Transgender Identities and Human Rights*” <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/255P-HowToTrash.pdf>

constitutional concern. Such a withdrawal would leave the only protections against manipulation and abuse in the hands of domestic bodies.

When the present evidence suggests that the current United Kingdom Government is prepared to interfere with the independence of the United Kingdom EHRC to justify its present approach to transgender matters, together with the declaration by the UK Government of its intention to pass legislation to deny access to any redress via the courts on these relatively minor transgender matters, must greatly increase these concerns. The recent decision by the Scottish Court of Session to block implementation of the Gender Reform Act recently passed by the Scottish Parliament may be correct in legal terms, but it now means that transgender people in Scotland will continue to be subjected to the same levels of exclusion and discrimination, with the consequent abuses and attacks. Any approach by any Government which pursues only one side in any dispute and seeks to discredit or deny any other, and who is prepared to declare something is “Safe” by passing legislation which denies access to the facts and prevents any legal redress by removing access to the courts, destroys all our human rights.

2:7 Broader Implications

These transgender disputes are ostensibly not about one side seeking to abuse the other. Nobody should assume that anyone on any side in these quarrels is deliberately pursuing evil or malevolent acts. They should instead be treated as being about two groups of people who genuinely and passionately believe that they are acting in the best interests of transgender people, but who come to different conclusions about the nature and origin of these conditions. These difficulties, as I have underlined, are accentuated by disputes over religious dogma and by the failure of many practitioners in sociology, psychiatry, and psychology to take full account of the advances in the neural understandings of early development which have taken place in more recent years. However, the major concerns arise when any side tries to manipulate or deny the full range of knowledge and experience to justify its own ideological approach. I fully accept that gender-critical feminist groups can and do sincerely believe that they are acting in the best interests of transgender people and wish to make them welcome. But for long as they continue to define transgender conditions as sexually motivated perversions, paraphilias or disruptions, they defy not just the advances in science and understanding, but also the increases in experiential, clinical and medical evidence, which have occurred during the last sixty years. By this action, these groups turn the clock back to a time when not just transgender people, but all gender and sexually variant people were considered to be potential paedophiles and abusers, who then were subjected to very severe legal, social, and religious penalties. And that is a situation which still continues in many countries today.

Even though these concerns may be dismissed by some as minor issues to many within the United Kingdom at the present time, where transgender people on the whole are relatively well accepted, and where discrimination is in the hands of minority groups. However, they are also the minor beginnings of self-generating conflicts which can too easily erupt into major concerns. Currently transgender people are coming under increasingly vitriolic and sustained attacks by coalitions of radical feminists, right wing politicians, conservative religious factions, and neo fascist groups, as Butler herself describes. These conflicts are not just about some minor United Kingdom matters, they are about principles and how these are applied. in Britain, Russia, Africa or elsewhere. Many gender-critical people and groups in the United Kingdom seek to accommodate transgender people. But others do not, and these proponents now find they are receiving support from United Kingdom neo-fascist groups¹⁵. Whatever their intentions and regardless of the correctness of their arguments, any pressure or religious group on any side who resorts to ridicule, attacks the integrity of their opponents, attempts to make selective use of experiential evidence, and seeks to enforce partisan interpretations of science and law to justify its ideologies does not serve itself or anyone well in the actions it takes.

¹⁵ Foster, Russell, David; and Kirke, Xander: (2023): “Straighten Up and Fly Right’: Radical right attempts to appeal to the British LGBTQ+ community”: *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 2023, Vol. 25(2) 277 –294: DOI: 10.1177/13691481211069346. Sees: also: rs21 (2023): “Mobilising against the convergence of the far right and transphobia” *Revolutionary Socialism in the 21st Century* 2 March 2023: <https://www.rs21.org.uk/2023/03/02/mobilising-against-the-convergence-of-the-far-right-and-transphobia/>

In my own separate work with others for reconciliation in societies divided by tribal and religious violence I have realised how easy it is to persuade ordinary uninvolved people to innocently engage in active acts of discrimination through the creation of a collective moral rectitude which is based on the fears that have been created... Which then escalates because of the misinformation arising from the fears that were previously formed. And would be horrified by what has occurred. Conflicts are rarely begun by one side seeking to dominate the other, more usually it is the fears of domination or destruction by each side of the other which drives them instead. No theory or hypothesis can have any validity before its predictions are tested by experiential evidence and independent research. No matter how strong the criticisms of any approach may be, the manipulations of guilt, objectivity and impartiality should never become involved. Having trust in the accuracy of that experiential evidence is crucial in any dispute. When that trust breaks down, it is necessary to find ways to rebuild a common sense of justice, compassion, responsibility, and mutual respect.

These arguments lead to the conclusion that these disputes over the legitimacy of transgender identities arise through the disagreement over their origins, employing the correct methods of management, and because of the fears of the attacks perceived on both sides. Each of the two sides in these disputes can create perfectly logical arguments to justify the approaches that they are taking, but these depend on their assumptions about the origin of these conditions. And this means that we must also look carefully at the cause. For these reasons, a detailed examination of the nature and origins of transgender conditions is now given in this account. However, more extended descriptions are available elsewhere¹⁶. There are two areas that should be specifically addressed. The first of these is about the nature and origin of these conditions, the second is about the ways in which neural imaging techniques have been used. I address these in this order in this document. The latest Government advice on the treatment of transgender children is also open for consultation until the 12th. March 2024 and you are strongly encouraged to respond¹⁷.

3:0 Science, Medicine, and Psychology

3:1 Origins.

At the heart of these disputes is the disagreement between the World Authorities and Professional Institutions who consider gender identities arise as personality variations which develop very early in life, which lie at the core of the personality that is created: Which contradict the arguments of the gender-critical groups who consider them to be merely collectively created social constructs, where departures from the norm are considered to be personality disruptions instead. When the methods of management for personality variations and personality disruptions differ to the extent that what one side considers to be an approach of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably considered to be one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other it is not surprising that these strong and toxic disputes occur. The timescales of the two processes also differ greatly, and that must have a profound effect in deciding how children should be treated. Gender-critical and transgender approaches largely agree on the about how identification with the gender role takes place. Therefore, the major disagreement occurs about the role and influence if any, of the core gender identity (described in section 3:4): This term describes the inner and deep-seated sense of belonging that separates the self from the other before the gendered expectations of society can have an effect.

3:2 Cognition and Early Development

Open almost any general textbook or research tome on sociology, psychology or psychiatry and you will find that learning and development is considered to be enabled through some form of social learning or psychodynamic theory, or equivalent. All of these theories presume that learning and development advances

¹⁶ Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2019b): "*The Development of Transgender Behaviour and Identities in Early Life*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/243P-BehaviourSelfIdentity.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2017k): "*What Science and History Says about the Traditional Teaching on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/239P-WhatScienceAndHistorySays.pdf>: Gilchrist, S. (2016h): "*Science and Belief. A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-PaperPersonality.pdf>: Gilchrist, S. (2016d): "*A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-InfluencesPersonality.pdf>

¹⁷ Government consultation on transgender children. This consultation is open to the 12th. March 2024. Please respond. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gender-questioning-children-draft-schools-and-colleges-guidance>

through the increasing powers of cognition as the brain develops. Thus, it is because of the action of these powers of cognition that further development is understood to take place. However, these powers of cognition do not begin to exert coherent effects before the age of about three years. This delay has led many practitioners in psychology and psychiatry to presume that all earlier periods are recognised as times of seething emotions where little constructive occurs. They also provide blank canvases upon which future development is based. It is difficult to go deeper than this, since these theories rely on a sufficient level of cognitive abilities to have developed, thus the limitations arise within the theories themselves. Gender-critical groups who argue that gender identities are merely social constructs are bound exactly the same constraints. This disregard for any earlier processes is eloquently expressed by the prominent feminist neuroscientist, Gina Rippon who dismisses the possibility any earlier changes of significance as “*Whack-a-mole*” myths. In her book on “*The myth of the female brain*” she defines these as false statements which are repeated so often, they come to be believed. She also tries to argue that the increasing cognitive powers of reasoning, expectation, perception, intuition, and understanding, are the major forces which drive development forward. And that the profiles and learning patterns encountered change little from birth. Therefore, learning and development must be re-active or responsive in nature because it is considered to depend entirely on the external stimuli that are provided¹⁸.

The views that these re-active processes of social learning and cognitive processes drive development forward have been challenged from the 1960’s onwards by the work of Gallesse, Dawkins, Girard, and others, who showed that instead of being re-active processes, the core or foundational elements of personality and identity are created through strong, innate, and pro-active forces which dominate development from birth. The early domination of these forces is then moderated by the massive advances and developments in neural structures, increasing cognitive abilities, neural processes and interconnections which take place during the first three to four years of life. This implies that, in place of the cognitive processes acting as the driving forces, the role of cognition must instead be seen as one of creating order out of disorder by keeping these innate forces increasingly in check. That reverses the currently accepted understanding. It is also argued that the very late maturation of the pre-frontal cortex of the brain in humans compared to other species allows the maximum potentials of ability, individuality, and personality to be obtained. The timing of this is also crucial. Too short a delay in the maturation of the pre-frontal cortex makes us increasingly clones of each other. When the delay is too long, disorder occurs. This is why I argue that a balance is achieved whereby the lifetime tensions between the innate proactive forces which drive development forward, acting against the feedback and restraining forces of cognitive control, provide the motives and stimuli whereby the highest achievements are reached. For all of these reasons, it may be expected that a proportion of people having gender and sexually variant identities will also be created without requiring an external cause. And by using this understanding, it becomes possible to identify a systematic path of development from birth into adult life¹⁹.

Even though Freud only claimed to consider homosexuality, which involves sexual attractions and their expressions of love and emotional relationships, he also discussed how homosexual people relate socially to others in society. It is through these social, instead of sexual relationships, that gender allegiances and identities come to be expressed. Freud could only use sexual motives to explain the driving forces which he needed to explain his psychodynamic theories, and that was because no other explanation was available to him. Nevertheless, he identified homosexuality as inversions and therefore as personality variations, where development is considered to proceed undisrupted from the outset. That is, instead of perversions: where sexually motivated disruptions take place. Freud also used the Oedipus complex to identify the separation of the self from the other, but that also presumes the driving force are those of cognition and that it uses motives of sex. The most significant difference between the analysis presented here and that of Freud, is the change in the understanding of nature of the driving forces behind these conditions: So, in many ways, Freud was almost right. It can be argued the Freud’s identification of sexual motives as the driving forces for his theories is itself a subset of these innate and pro-active driving forces identified by Girard, Gallesse, Dawkins and

¹⁸ For a discussion of Rippon’s work see section B:5: *Feminism and Male to Female Transsexuals*, and section C:4: *Different Routes, and elsewhere*. Both are in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): “*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

¹⁹ See: 5:0: Viewpoints of the Professional Institutions and elsewhere in; Gilchrist, S. (2021a): “*Gender Identity, Feminism, and Transgender People*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/250P-GenderIdentityAndTrans.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2022): “*Transgender Disputes, Conversion Therapy and Government actions*” (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/254p-PresTransDisputesAndGovActions.pdf> Also, Section D Campaigns in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): “*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

others: And where the underlying search is instead for a coherent sense of identity, in place of the drives of sex.

3:3 Failures

Even today, little of this work still seems to be considered in present day practice, where the unchanged traditional social learning and psychodynamic theories continue to hold sway. I consider that it is the failure to consider these advances in neurology which allow gender-critical groups to diagnose transgender conditions as sexually motivated personality paraphilias and disruptions. I also argue that this is the primary cause of the present disputes. Although a worldwide consensus of the World Authorities and Professional Medical Institutions and the accepted practice in Gender Identity Clinics now define these as personality variations, that diagnosis is only derived from the medical, clinical, and experiential evidence which is now available. As Dr Hilary Cass notes in her recent reports on the use of puberty blockers to treat transgender children²⁰, a great deal of confusion, disagreement and argument takes place because the nature and origin of transgender conditions are not considered to be well understood. Even though Cass takes full account of other factors and the later neural transformations that occur during puberty, I believe that her own apparent failure to take note of the massive changes and transformations in cognitive and neural capabilities during the first years of life, compromise her report. It is my own encounter with these concerns which has led me to conduct a separate examination, which uses transgender conditions as a case study to examine how the foundational or core elements of personality and identity for everyone to develop. Some of that study is summarised in this account.

Because gender identities arise through allegiances and behaviours that have already been created, this must involve consideration of how behavioural differences are formed in early life. Neural and evolutionary studies on behaviour and aggression patterns during early childhood and adulthood show that while on average typical male and female aggression and behavioural patterns differ greatly, with males more likely to express this in physical violence, considerable overlap still occurs. The neural maturation rates between male and female infants on average are also found to differ, and the precursors for these patterns are shown to be present at least from the moment of birth. There are also indications of pre-natal influences. And hormonal, or endocrinal influences can play an equally important role. Nevertheless, it remains true that gender identities cannot form before birth because these identities are the products of the allegiances which first have to be created. The studies on neural development from the 1960's onwards have shown that learning and development during the early years is propelled through the actions of these strong, pro-active, and innate neural forces involving mirror neurons, possessive imitation, empathy, and the like. Here, the major question that has to be asked, is not about how development proceeds, but how it can be kept in check. In addition to the action of these pro-active forces, their self-reinforcing elements mean that once development starts in a particular direction, it can be difficult to stop. These forces also concern the search for identity, not the drives of sex.

During this early period, massive advances and changes in neural capabilities and cognitive abilities are also taking place. Timescales and the order of development are also important. Although the innate neural forces dominate from birth, children do not try to conform to the expectations of the gender roles ascribed to them until around the age of three years. Before this, around a median age of two years, a rapid major increase in neural capabilities and cognitive abilities takes place. Later, a neural consolidation occurs. By studying the consequences of these changes, I show that all of these physiological, neurological, endocrinal, and psychological aspects of brain development act pro-actively together in early life to form a finely tuned system in which the maximum amount of individuality, possessiveness, intelligence, and inquisitiveness, together with the minimum degrees of energy expenditure are generated. For these reasons, typical or atypical gender and sexual identities can develop. And this is why for most people, but not for all, these identities will be congruent with biological sex.

3:4 Core Gender Identity and Gender Role Identity

²⁰ Cass, Hilary. (2022): *The Cass Review. Independent review of gender identity services for children and young people: Interim report* February 2022 <https://cass.independent-review.uk/>

This development pattern confirms that gender identity has two components. The first is the core gender identity: It can be described as an inwardly focussed sense of belonging which separates the self from the other: It is formed before the social expectations of gender can be understood. The second is the gender role identity which develops in response to the expectations that society creates. Thus, the gender role identity acts as an overlay on the often-hidden core gender identity, which was the first to be created. This division is in line with the generally accepted modern understandings of gender identity, which divides it into the same two components. Either will usually, but need not always be congruent with each other, or with biological sex. This further means that transgender conditions must be treated as personality variations which arise from incongruences in the core gender identity, while disturbances to the gender role identity must instead be treated as perversions or disruptions to a path of development which has previously been formed.

3:5 Neurology

The second area of concern relates to neural imaging. This technique involves using methods such as blood flow measurement, MRI scanning etc, to determine the parts of the brain that are most active in response to different stimuli. Most gender studies concentrate on the brain area known as the pre-frontal cortex, because this is the part of the brain that is most responsible for managing reason, perception, understanding, planning, and intuition. But there are other areas involved. While the pre-frontal cortex involves active neural processing, the *default neural network* stores those cognitive and other behaviours and processes which we do without actively thinking about them, and here answers to questions about “*What makes me, me?*” may be found. We argue that gender identity arises because of allegiances and behaviours that have already been encountered: thus, these identities are consequential effects. And they may have been created by a combination of endocrinal processes, and massive neural transformations which take place through the first three years of life. These it is argued create a core gender identity which becomes effectively unchangeable or is much more difficult to change in later life. We have seen that the development of personality and identity is a strongly pro-active process driven by innate neural forces which dominate from birth, where once develops in a particular direction, it becomes difficult to stop, so these early influences could act as triggering processes and nothing more is required. However, that does not fully answer the question of why “*Who am I?*” should dominate our conscious minds. One very recent advance is the discovery of an independent “*I*” neural network which may give answers to some of the questions that arise.

One particular brain area is called the amygdala, whose primary focus is concerned with the management of fears and emotions. This includes anxiety disorders, addictions, compulsions, and complex neuropsychiatric disorders such as autism. In humans the amygdala formed early in gestation, so that is already well developed, and it is functioning from birth. The female amygdala also reaches its peak age about one year and a half earlier than the male amygdala. Testosterone increases amygdala activity in a person who is approaching a socially threatening situation and decreases the activity when such a situation is avoided. The greater spike in testosterone at the moment of birth in male babies, compared to in female babies, could also be significant in determining the direction in which gender identities develop. Although I do not focus so much on endocrinal, or hormonal effects in this account, they are extremely important and must never be ignored: And they may trigger the direction in which development proceeds²¹. In contrast to these earlier influences, the pre-frontal cortex in humans matures at a much slower rate than the equivalent organising processes which have taken place in other human brain areas, also when compared with other species. This maturation of the pre-frontal cortex is expressed in the rapid development of cognitive abilities around the median age of two years. So, while natural variations may mean that this core gender identity need not always follow that which is expected by biology, there will still be a preferential effect. A very important role for the amygdala is one of protecting the individual from harm, and evolution demands that the necessary protections through fear must arise before the consequences of any adaptation or experience can be properly understood.

Modularity of mind is the notion that, at least in part, a mind may be composed of innate neural structures or mental modules which have distinct, established, and evolutionarily developed functions. Historically, questions regarding the *functional architecture* of the mind have been divided into two different theories of the

²¹ For a discussion on hormones see Gilchrist, S. (2016a): “Taking a Different Path”: Chapter 10 in: “*This Is My Body: Hearing the Theology of Transgender Christians*”, Ed: Beardsley, T. and O'Brien, M: Darton Longman and Todd. May 2016 ISBN 978-0-232-53206-7 Notes for this chapter are available on: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/sourcesA/index.htm> Also: Gilchrist, S. (2015g): “*A Different Journey*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/212P-DifferentJourney.pdf>

nature of the faculties. The first can be characterized as a horizontal view because it refers to cognitive mental processes as if they are interactions between faculties such as memory, imagination, judgement, and perception. The second can be characterized as a vertical and behaviourist view because it claims that these earlier lower-level mental faculties, or *modules* which may be considered as inherently built in functional elements which, for survival these have to be active from birth. These modules are considered to be contained within specific neural domains that are genetically determined, are associated with distinct neurological structures, and are computationally autonomous. According to Fordor, a *module* falls somewhere between the behaviourist and cognitivist views of lower-level processes²². Nevertheless, there are major disputes about what the nature of each *module* may be. In this study I examine how the pre-frontal cortex and the amygdala interact with each other. This early maturation of the amygdala compared with the delayed maturation of the pre-frontal cortex means that its earlier low-level processes must be also pre-cognitive in nature. All of this suggests that it is not just a variation in aggression profiles but other innate processes, present in many animals, such as having the instant ability to walk, learn to feed, and the immediate ability to find one's own mother, which suggest that both gender identification and the ability to separate the self from the other, are all developments which are active from the moment of birth. Gender identities cannot form before birth because they depend on interaction with others, but the traits may already be present. Some support for this is encountered with intersex children whose intersex condition is due to physical deformity alone. For many years the practice has been to assign these children to the gender which surgery can cosmetically make more appropriate, often immediately after birth. However, the distress that this has created even when the children were never told about this assignment, means that the recommendation now is to delay any surgery to the time when children can decide for themselves²³.

However some more recent work carried out at Stanford University may throw more light on these situations.. A Stanford Medicine study using some 1500 individuals and AI techniques identifies distinct brain organization patterns in women and men. This new artificial intelligence model was more than 90% successful at determining whether scans of brain activity came from a woman or a man²⁴. The investigators stated that model's success suggests that detectable sex differences do exist in the brain, but that these haven't been picked up reliably before. The fact that the model worked so well in different datasets, including brain scans from multiple sites in the U.S. and Europe, are claimed to make the findings especially convincing, as it reduces the many confusions which have plagued previous studies of this kind²⁵. They found the model was most often looking to the default mode network, striatum, and the limbic network to make the decision. Although these studies may give answers to the "*What makes me, me?*" question, the question of "*Who am I?*" must still be examined.

And that takes us to other recent work carried out in Stanford University. In addition to the default neural network, a further paper claims to have identified an independent "*I*" network in the brain²⁶. The paper unveils the key role of a small structure or brain area which is sandwiched between the brain's two hemispheres.

²² These ideas were formalised by Jerry Fordor in 1983. See: Fodor, Jerry A. (1983). *Modularity of Mind: An Essay on Faculty Psychology*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press. ISBN 0-262-56025-9

²³ Dessens, A.B. Froukje, M.E., Slijper, F.M.E. Stenvert, L.S. and Drop S.L.S. (2005) 'Gender dysphoria and gender change in chromosomal females with congenital adrenal hyperplasia', *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 34(4): 389–397; Diamond, A. (2002) 'Prefrontal Cortex Development and Development of Cognitive Function', in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*: 11976–11982, Diamond, M. and Sigmundson H.K. (1997) 'Sex reassignment at birth. Long term review and clinical implications', *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 151: 298-304. Diamond, M. and Watson, L.A. (2004). 'Androgen insensitivity syndrome and Klinefelter's Syndrome', in Diamond, M. and Yates, A. (eds.) *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America (Sex and Gender)*, Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, 13(3): 623–640.; Kipnis, K. and Diamond, M. (1998) 'Pediatric ethics and the surgical assignment of sex', *Journal of Clinical Ethics*, 9(4): 398-410. Ochoa, B. (1998) 'Trauma of the External Genitalia in Children: Amputation of the Penis and Emasculation', *Journal of Neurology* 160(3-11): 1116-1119. Reiner, W.G. (2004) 'Psychosexual development in genetic males assigned female: the cloacal exstrophy experience', in Diamond, M. and Yates, A. (eds.) *Child and Adolescent Clinics of North America (Sex and Gender)*, Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, 13(3): 657–674 .

²⁴ Stanford Medicine (2024): Stanford Medicine study identifies distinct brain organization patterns in women and men". *Stanford Medicine* 20th. February 2024: <https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2024/02/men-women-brain-organization-patterns.html#:~:text=When%20the%20researchers%20tested%20the,been%20picked%20up%20reliably%20before.>

²⁵ For more detailed discussions see section B of Gilchrist, S. (2020b): "*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

²⁶ Lyu, Dian; Stieger, James Robert; Xin, Cindy; Ma, Eileen; Lusk, Zoe; Aparicio, Mariel; Kalkach, Werbaneth; Katherine: Perry, Claire; Megan: Deisseroth, Karl; Buch, Vivek; Parvizi, Josef: (2023): "Causal evidence for the processing of bodily self in the anterior precuneus" *Neuron* Volume 111, issue 16, p2502-2512.e4, august 16, 2023 published:june 08, 2023 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2023.05.013>

While answers to questions of “*What makes me, me?*” are claimed to dwell in the well-studied network of neurons in the default mode network, there’s no official name yet for the “*I*” network, and it has not been similarly studied. Although they are separate, the two brain areas constantly interact with each other. While stimulation of the default mode network does not cause any change to the sense of selfhood that a person possesses, considerable disruption arises to this sense of selfhood arises when this “*I*” area is stimulated instead. The effect is described in the following way: “*Your sense of physical or bodily self represents your organism in the immediate here and now, with a particular point of view that is yours alone, your first-person perspective on the world around you. Nobody shares it,*” Parvizi said. “*You may not be conscious of your point of view. But you will be if I disrupt the network that generates it. Your place in the world around you will suddenly seem unreal*”²⁷. Much more work on this is required including confirmation as to whether this area is active before birth or if it only becomes active after birth. It is also much too early to say if any of these modules contain generically determined behavioural traits which leads directly to gender identification, and that need not depend on the presence of XX or XY chromosomes. It should also be expected that this would only set the direction of travel, and it is the massive neural advances and changes during the first three years which result in stable core gender and other identities to be created. Thus, other influences may well be involved. However, the early development of these behavioural traits and the experiences with intersex children does suggest there may be some genetically and hormonally associated contribution: And it also supports the presence of distinct neural modular structures in the brain which are computationally independent, in the way that Fordor describes.

However, in opposition to this behaviouralist approach, cognitivists see lower-level processes as continuous with higher-level processes, and where no equivalent modular structures exist. This means that the impact of the many neural transformations which take place during the earlier pre-cognitive period must also be discounted or denied. That denial in turn takes us closer Rippon’s work and to the gender-critical approach. For these reasons, I argue that it is the behaviouralist approach as presented by Fordor and others, with their predictions of low-level innate modules, which have domain specificity, that are computationally autonomous, which may also be genetically determined and are associated with distinct neurological structures, which play a more significant role in determining how the brain develops, and how the early development of personality and identity proceeds. It follows then from these arguments that the core gender identity would be congruent with the sense of “*I*” that is created. Also, that it need not depend on behavioural effects. And it may also explain why conversion therapy is so harmful since it attacks this sense of “*I*” that is created, and that leaves a vacuum inside.

Work by Girard, Dawkins and others also argues that these early stages of development are characterized by the initial creation of fleeting strands of disorganised thought which coalesce into more substantive units as development proceeds. This also means that early development is a fragmented process. And research and experience demonstrate that that this is not a steady progression. A rapid outburst of interactions and interconnections takes place, but only after a sufficient density (or a quorum) is reached. A further feature of early development is the existence of the various peak periods of very rapid neural development which are unique to early life. These peak periods occur in different areas of the brain at different times. During them, those capabilities which are most used develop very rapidly, while those that are less well used become permanently diminished or lost. This has a lifetime effect. The peak period which interests us most is the one which is encountered in the pre-frontal cortex. Before it, the pre-frontal cortex had been relatively inactive, but during and after this period its activity rapidly increases. Distant areas of the brain of the brain become interconnected and explosions in cognitive and language abilities occur. The term “*the brain lights up*” has been used to describe what happens. Where independent modules as Fordor argues had previously existed, they may now coalesce. This is also the time when close links between the rapid development of language capabilities and the emergence of an awareness of core elements of personality and identity, including gender identity, have been noted. Throughout this period those neural pathways which are most used advance greatly, however those that are less used become permanently diminished or lost. This has the effect of tuning the brain to the environment, and the explosion in language capabilities is also likely to give the creation of cognitive abilities a very strong boost. Most of the research on these peak periods concentrates on how neural motor functions and capabilities are formed. However, identities and personalities, including

²⁷ Goldman, Bruce (2023) “Where Is ‘I’ the Physical Sense Of Self Has Been Localized” Stanford Medicine Innovation & Technology Issue 3 / 2023 <https://stanmed.stanford.edu/tiny-brain-structure-role-sense-of-self/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CMe%E2%80%9D%20dwells%20in%20a%20well,for%20the%20%E2%80%9C%E2%80%9D%20network.>

gender identities, develop through the behaviours and allegiances that have previously been created, so these are consequential effects.

Prior to these periods of early development, the number or density of synapses or neural connections in the pre-frontal cortex of the brain rapidly increases, from a small number at birth, to reach a peak value by around the age of three years. This number then dies back until by adult life to only about half of that peak value remains. This ebb-and-flow forms a normal part of brain development, and this can be matched to transformations in learning capabilities and cognitive growth. The brain also reduces its energy consumption by eliminating connections that are seldom or never used, (the term synaptic pruning is used), and in this way it tunes itself to its environment. But the development of the innate sense of belonging, represented by the core gender identity, pre-dates the later rapid advances in the development of the pre-frontal cortex. A stable frame of reference provided by the core gender identity would give the stability which allows continuities of core or underlying elements of personality and identity to be created. The stability of the core gender identity combined with the very high flexibilities, capabilities and adaptabilities built into the pre-frontal cortex can then continue to give the brain great freedom to adapt itself to many different requirements throughout life. Thus, the stabilising influence of the amygdala and other lower-level brain areas may be expected to have a much more pronounced, and a potentially lifetime effect.

All of the activities associated with the amygdala and the default neural network can be related to personality variations, the protection of the individual, and to the coherence of selfhood that is created. This means that transgender conditions should be treated and managed in the same way as all other personality variations because, in all of these, the same processes are involved. The standard way for managing personality variations is to encourage acceptance of the reality and impact of the variation, then to develop strategies which find ways to accommodate its demands. It means that to eliminate distress and achieve harmony and where necessary, methods of management akin to compulsions should be used. Unlike those compulsions which lead to oblivion or malfunction, the compulsions of gender seek greater contributions to society and add to the fulfilment of life. This also makes them more difficult to manage, since a goal of fulfilment instead of oblivion must always be sought. Because of this, there should be nothing magical or different about the way that transgender conditions are treated or managed, provided the diagnosis is correct. However, the validity of any theory depends on testing and experiential evidence that is available. The outcomes of this analysis match the understanding of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions who consider personality variant conditions to be *“naturally expected variations of the human condition, intrinsic to the personality created, arising very early in life, and cannot be changed either by the individual concerned or by the predations of others in subsequent life”*²⁸.

Neural imaging studies which involve the pre-frontal cortex may be perfectly adequate for examining how the gender role identity develops. However, I argue that it is the primary role of the amygdala, default neural networks, “I” networks and the role of Fordor’s modules, which must be considered to understand how the core gender identity is formed. This provision of a stable base enables continuities of personality and identity to be created. And the stability of that base allows for the widest possible range of gender and other roles to be expressed. Work with transgender children carried out by Money, Stoller, and others from the 1960’s has shown that this core gender identity has become immutably established at the latest by the age of three years, although many ascribe a much earlier date²⁹. Along with other core elements of personality and identity it is accepted that this underlying sense of belonging becomes difficult or impossible to change unless some physical brain injury or dementia intervenes.

A link between higher levels of autism and transgender people has been noted. Both relate to higher functioning individuals and to the coherence of selfhood that is created. This implies that both should be considered as parallel effects. Far from merely being a set of feelings the core gender identity lies at the foundation of the sense of selfhood which every one of us creates. So, attacking it or disabusing it, attacks one of the foundation stones upon which the senses of selfhood and the self-esteem for all of us are based. These experiences also give strong reasons which explain why methods appropriate to the management of personality variations should be used. And where necessary, it also means that methods akin to managing

²⁸ See Gilchrist, S. (2020b): “Responsibility in Transgender Disputes”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

²⁹ See section 7:0 Social Construction of Gender and section 8:0: Gender Dysphoria in Gilchrist, S. (2013d): “Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

compulsions should be employed. This is the only approach which is now accepted to be correct by virtually all of the World Authorities and the Professional Medical Institutions who are involved in this field. It is also made clear that these techniques are required to manage the distress, not to deny the variation. The outcome of this may lead to transition or it may not: What it can and should do, is to ensure that any decision that is made is correct.

Because early development is a fragmented process, everyone finds their own end points on their journeys of gender discovery, and these may well not conform to any binary role. In the case of autism for example the savant symptom is well known. Although virtually every handbook on sexuality and psychiatry confirms the understanding that gender and sexual identities are both formed together as a single complex at a very early date, they both go their different ways. Thus, as great a range of sexual identities is found in the transgender communities as that which exists in the population at large. Our conscious understanding of gender identity depends greatly on our involvement with the gender role. So that, unless some incongruence occurs, the separate role, existence, and impact of the core gender identity is usually hidden from conscious view. The timescales and orders of precedence are just as important. The core elements of personality and identity coalesce from disorganised thoughts around a median age of two years, but children do not strongly conform to the stereotypes of gendered behaviour around the age of three years. However, children do not develop a sufficient independence of mind (called *theory of mind*) to sufficiently understand what has happened to them until around the age of four years. This lack of awareness leads some to believe the incongruences they become conscious of from that year onwards have been present from birth. Transgender people may sometimes describe this as being "*born into the wrong body*", but that is a description of these experiences, it has nothing to do with the biology of sex. For the general population on the other hand the hidden nature of these processes makes it seem natural to believe that gender identity should always be congruent with biological sex. It also means that among these outsiders the nature and intensity of transgender conflicts may not be easily understood. And it is the manipulation of these contrasting views that give rise to the fears that are created and much of the venom in these disputes.

Rippon only mentions transgender people in passing in her book and advises them to be careful about what they ask for, but her analysis highlights the contradictions and disagreements that exist. She describes the present arguments in terms of a "*hunt the differences*" agenda and argues that transgender people should not need to change their bodies to conform to any gender role. Like other investigators, such as Swaab, Joel, et al, Rippon recognises that the human brain contains a distributed mosaic of male and female oriented features. within which considerable overlaps in these characteristics occur. And that is confirmed in the later work by Stanford University. But this does not remove the incompatibilities or contradictions that are encountered through this gender-critical denial of the impact of the core gender identity, and by disregarding the massive changes in neural capabilities and cognitive abilities which take place from birth. and during the first three years, in order to preserve a gender-critical approach.³⁰

There is no real issue over the contribution of the gender role. Gender and sexually variant people can and do conform to as wide a range of social roles as everyone in society. The issue is over the scaffolding, including the actions of the amygdala and of other more primitive brain areas, which puts the neural structures that guide how cognition develops in place. Also, how we respond to "*fright and flight modes*", and how we create the foundational or core elements of our personalities and identities, which include these gender and sexual identities. It is the hidden nature of all these processes which have allowed the feminist pioneers in the past to ascribe the development of gender identity entirely to the gender role. It is the failure of much of psychology, psychiatry, and sociology to take account of the advances in understanding which Girard, Gallese, Dawkins, Money, Stoller and others have now exposed. Today, it allows Gina Rippon and gender-critical feminist groups to dismiss the impact of these earlier changes and effects.

Transgender people form a small and often hidden presence in the community. For many people their understanding of transgender conditions depends on fears that may be created, and these are based on what other people say. It is also these dismissals which enable gender-critical groups to create their own definition of gender identity as a collectively created social construct which is confined entirely to the gender role. Furthermore, when Gina Rippon additionally dismisses these earlier influences as false "*Whack-a-mole*"

³⁰ See Section D, including section D:2 *Gender Attacks* in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): "*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

myths which are repeated so often that they come to be believed, all of these groups misdiagnose transgender conditions. And it is the exploitation of these fears which leads to the trauma, disputes, and false allegations in the way that Butler describes.

Using the work of Dawkins, Girard, Gallese and others, I have argued earlier in this account that the core or foundational elements of personality and identity are created through responding to the strong, innate, and pro-active forces which dominate development from birth. Therefore, the role of cognition must be seen as one of creating order out of disorder by keeping these innate forces increasingly in check. That reverses the understanding of the traditional social learning and psychodynamic theories where cognition itself is understood to provide the primary force: And this means that the innate nature and the impact of these innate neural forces is ignored. I consider that for as long as psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, and neurologists continue to identify cognition as the primary force and consider only the capabilities of the pre-frontal cortex which drive development forward, they will be looking in the wrong place to define, not just how transgender conditions, but how all personality variations and identities, including gender and sexually variant conditions, are formed. It should not go without notice that when sexually variant conditions are considered, similar arguments can be applied. It is also interesting to speculate about the nature of consciousness as a compilation of how all of these elements interact.

3:6 Consequences and Social Interactions

There are other issues to consider. The current understandings show that although on average there are significant differences in male and female behavioural patterns, with men more prone to engage in physical violence, considerable overlap occurs. The large body of research and experiential evidence on early development which is now available shows that allegiances to these behavioural patterns create strong and stable core gender identities, which usually but do not always follow biological sex. This allegiance allows all women, including male-to-female transsexuals: acting as women with women, to pursue the same feminist arguments with the same vigour, from a stronger base. Equally for any female-to-male transsexuals: acting as men with men, to pursue any equivalent male arguments from a similarly stronger base. Because the core gender identity can be described as an inner sense of belonging without behavioural implications, it further means that gender-critical ideology, whichever way it is interpreted, must be the less effective approach. It follows from this that gender identity instead of biology which should be used as the marker to guide the legislation and the behaviours which decide how people can socially interact.

3:7 Implications

The failure to resolve these differences is particularly damaging for transgender people. It means that the diagnosis of personality variations, adopted by the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, which are inwardly focussed and compulsive searches for identity involving the rejection of what is wrong, and which do not threaten others, is set against the views of opposing feminists who, along with many religious groups, instead identify transgender conditions as sexually driven but sublimated personality disruptions, involving motives and feelings of behaviour and desire. These demand interaction with others: which means that fears of predation, coercion, grooming, and recruitment can be formed. In place of the egalitarianism espoused by the feminist pioneers and others, we have seen that it also enforces a gender complementarity that refuses to separate gender from sex.

Rippon, and all of those gender-critical groups, who deny the impact of all earlier influences and associate the creation of gender identity entirely with the gender role, argue that transgender people should be free to identify with any role they like without needing to change their bodies. But that does nothing to explain the driving forces behind them: And when all earlier influences are dismissed as “*Whack-a-mole*” myths which are false assertions that are so often repeated they come to be believed, then the only conclusion that can be reached are that the driving forces behind transgender conditions are motives of sex. The research work by Girard, Gallese, Dawkins and others which challenged this assumption of sexual motives has been available since the nineteen sixties, but it has not been taken up by many in the psychiatric, psychology and sociology professions. It has often been dismissed as an idiosyncratic approach. This disregard may not be of great significance in many situations, but it is of crucial significance as far as transgender and gender and sexually variant people are concerned. When the methods of management for personality variations and personality disruptions differ to the extent that what one side considers to be an approach of compassion, acceptance

and concern is almost inevitably considered to be one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other: it essential to get the diagnoses correct.

3:8 Autogynephilic Transsexuality³¹

There are many who apply these condemnations of sexual motives without exception to all gender and sexually variant people. That is a position which has been occupied for centuries in many religious traditions. However, gender-critical groups accept the advances in science and the transformation in attitudes which now recognise lesbian and gay relationships as valid expressions of identity. Yet they deny the same advances and recognitions to transgender people by continuing to define these conditions as perversions, paraphilias or disruptions of (male) homosexuality, which are driven by sublimated motives of sex. However, the theory which is used only considers male-to-female transsexuals. It ignores female-to-male transsexuals, and no equivalent paraphilia or disruption for these people has been identified. It also fails to deal with non-binary roles, and it does not provide adequate explanations for the wide range of transgender conditions that exist. It does not match the lived experiences of transgender people. It continues to rely entirely of Freudian theories, and it takes no account of the advances that have since taken place. It was considered outdated at the time it was put forward, and the one clinic that promoted it was later shut down. There is a great deal of anger among transgender people over an incorrect diagnosis being imposed upon them with the aim of preserving a gender-critical approach: instead of protecting transgender people's lives.

4:0 Management

Contrary to much popular opinion, the emotions which drive most male-to-female transsexuals is not that they want to be women, it is instead an unconquerable instinct that they ought to be women (and vice versa): so, the goal is to be themselves. Far too often the experiences of transgender people are ones of fighting or trying to suppress these compulsions with all their might until attrition and exhaustion destroys the demand to conform, and mental or other breakdown occurs. From then onwards, gender transition and surgery may be obsessively sought. For many, these experiences will be present from earliest memories. For others they may erupt into conscious awareness when some change occurs. And these pressures may increase with increasing age, as hopes for the future give way to the realities of the past. Up to that time many try desperately to conform to the roles expected of them, and outwardly many succeed very well. Yet others reject the gender they are assigned to from earliest years. Transgender people are searching for a secure sense of identity. They are not pursuing sexual desires. Once transition is achieved, gender is no longer an issue. Many then merge invisibly into society in the role they identify with; and lead ordinary everyday lives.

It is recognised that attempting to fight these conflicts does not succeed and methods appropriate to the management of personality variations and compulsions must be applied. This requires the creation of inclusion, self-esteem, and self-affirmation together with the self-acceptance that is needed to successfully manage these demands. This mirrors the standard approach used for personality variations, and it is the only approach now accepted by the World Authorities and Professional Medical Institutions. It has the aim of enabling gender and social transition to take place in an orderly way when it is right to do so. And equally as important: to find ways of avoiding transition and managing the demands when for other reasons, it is not. Enabling these proper acceptances and understanding provides far greater opportunities to find appropriate ways of managing these conditions, in place of fighting battles which one cannot, or is not allowed to comprehend. Without these methods of acceptance and inclusion, those abilities are destroyed. Employing the techniques required for the management of sexually motivated personality disruptions, such as suppression, distaste, diversion, and rejection, which can involve the creation of guilt, often in a religious

³¹ Autogynephilia was defined by an American psychologist, Dr Ray Blanchard, as "a male's propensity to be sexually aroused by the thought of himself as a female". (Auto = self, gyne = woman, philia = love). According to Blanchard and Lawrence "The increasing prevalence of male-to-female (Male to female) transsexualism in Western countries is largely due to the growing number of Male to female transsexuals who have a history of sexual arousal with cross-dressing or cross-gender fantasy. Ray Blanchard proposed that these transsexuals have a paraphilia he called autogynephilia, which is the propensity to be sexually aroused by the thought or image of oneself as female. Autogynephilia defines a transsexual typology and provides a theory of transsexual motivation, in that Blanchard proposed that male to female transsexuals are either sexually attracted exclusively to men (homosexual) or are sexually attracted primarily to the thought or image of themselves as female (autogynephilic), and that autogynephilic transsexuals seek sex reassignment to actualize their autogynephilic desires". Lawrence, A. A. (2007): "Autogynephilic transsexualism conceptualized as an expression of romantic love"; *Perspect Biol Med.* Autumn 2007;50(4):506-20. doi: 10.1353/pbm.2007.0050.4

context, do not succeed. They never did succeed, even when the earlier extreme techniques such as electro-convulsion therapies, chemical and other aversion treatments, which were even more strongly intended to create revulsion or rejection were used. Not only do these approaches misdiagnose the conditions as expressions of sexual desire; they destroy the self-acceptance and self-esteem that is needed to manage their demands³².

This means that creating self-acceptance and self-esteem should not be regarded as a one-way ticket to transition. Giving children the opportunity to explore their gender has been an accepted practice for many years. Social transition should not be impeded but it is not a neutral act and the social consequences of this must be accounted for before it comes into effect. Many transsexuals do not want to transition; and do everything in their power to conform to the gender and social roles expected of them. More recently there has been a large increase in the number of younger people coming forward who are questioning their gender identity, often during puberty, and concerns have arisen over treatment that has been provided. I argue that careful and correct counselling is required, but that is made more difficult when there are continuing disputes within the medical profession about the origin and nature of transgender conditions. Facilities have also been overwhelmed: That has led to gaps in recording, disagreements, and failures in administration, but I also suggest that a failure to take account of the bipolar nature of transgender conflicts may be a principal reason for these difficulties: Particularly since remissions do occur. Attempts have been made for years to treat transgender conditions and all gender and sexually variant conditions as perversions or disruptions, in the way that gender-critical groups still advise. It is now accepted by professional institutions that none of these have had any success. I also conclude that a great deal of harm continues to be caused whenever these techniques continue to be applied. Conversion therapy, which takes a similar approach, is universally condemned as harmful and potentially disastrous by the Professional Medical Institutions and World Authorities. The application of this by others often happens only after transgender people have been attempting to apply it to themselves for many years.

All these attempts to treat transgender identities and all other gender and sexually variant conditions as though they are perversions, and as the results of reward driven desires or lifestyle choices fail because there is no previous sense of gender identity to restore. That leaves a vacuum inside. Because there is a bipolar element to these conflicts and because these conditions are driven by rejection rather than desire, some relief can be gained for a time by creating a sense of euphoria which transcends their demands This is the approach taken by some religious groups who claim that a “Cure” has been found, but that only lasts for as long as the euphoria can be sustained. After this is lost it is not something that willpower can regain, for attempts to fight these conflicts simply reinforce the demand. The problem with many such groups is that anyone who does not conform to their rules of behaviour may be ejected from membership. It is also extremely destructive since their attempts to fight or suppress the conflict drives people deeper into distress. These people may be told that God still loves them but to be practicing or non-practicing is not the real issue. These acts of rejection become a personal attack of the self-identity of that individual and not of their practice. Whatever opportunity there might once have been to re-join the Church or group, or to keep personal control of their conflict, is either diminished or destroyed. The hurt, guilt and self-loathing caused by this can be enormous. That is why making the correct medical diagnosis is so important, it also why it demands an urgent re-assessment of the teaching that the Church provides, particularly since, for many, this has become an issue of salvation for the Church³³.

4:1 Transgender Children

An additional major area of contention is found in the disagreements about the ways in which transgender children should be treated. Here too, the differences in timescales are important, when the World Authorities and Professional Institutions regard transgender conditions as personality variations where the inner sense of belonging which represents the core gender identity has become immutably established very early in life. This

³² Gilchrist, S. (2017): “*Cherishing Transgender Children*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/241P-CherishingTransgenderChildrenLeaflet.pdf>

³³ Gilchrist, S. (2017d): “*A House Built on Sand? Attitudes to Gender and Sexual Variant Identities and Behaviour in Christianity and the Christian Church*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/231P-HouseUponSand.pdf> and Gilchrist, S. (2017f): “*Condemning Sexual Abuse and Welcoming Gender and Sexually Variant People into the Christian Church*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/237P-ChangesInChurch.pdf>

is In contradiction to gender-critical groups who ignore the core gender identity, regard transgender conditions as personality disruptions, and argue that gender identity is only the product of associations with the gender role: Which means that these groups do not consider any component of gender identity to have become consistently established until a much later date: And that may not be until puberty has passed. This is why attempting to treat transgender conditions as personality disruptions when the diagnosis should be that of personality variations is potentially disastrous. Because the time when transgender children and their parents most need help to manage these conditions occurs from early childhood, not later in life.

Even though Cass in her recent reports on the use of puberty blockers takes full account of other factors including the later neural transformations that occur during puberty, I believe that her apparent failure to take note of the massive changes and transformations in cognitive and neural capabilities during the first years of life compromise her report, and that this leads to conclusions which are too cautious and incorrect. In addition, the correct administration of any drug depends crucially on making the right diagnosis, and upon balancing the potential harm that is created against the benefits it brings. Puberty blockers have been administered to delay the onset of puberty so that people who are struggling with their sense of identity have more time and can keep a calmness of mind to decide what the correct path may be. This offer may be appropriate when these conditions are regarded by the Professional Institutions as personality variations and compulsions, which search for an identity. But where they are instead seen by others as perversions, paraphilias, and desires, their administration may be seen as a one-way path to transition. These disagreements create a great deal of tension in these disputes.

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4:2 Personal Experiences

It may be useful to compare my own experiences with those of Debbie Hayton, who I have known as a friend, and I still consider to be one. We have also we have worked together on transgender matters for many years. Debbie is publishing a book: *“Transsexual Apostate: My Journey Back to Reality”*³⁴, It is also summarised in

³⁴ Hayton, Debbie (2024): *“Transsexual Apostate: My Journey Back to Reality”* Forum (8 Feb. 2024) ISBN-10: 1800753098 ISBN-13 978-1800753099

the Daily Mail article “*Even though I have had a sex-change operation I’m not and never will be a woman*”³⁵ (I have not yet seen this book, which is not due to be released until the 8th. February), but I know Debbie well as a person and I do not question her sincerity. Debbie has also argued that “*Transgender women are men*”. Like gender-critical groups, she uses autogynephilic theories: and she defines women as “*Adult human females*” to the exclusion of all others. However, the issue of concern is not just about definitions. It is what the word “*woman*” is taken to mean and how it has become as a weapon instead. The most distressing thing to me in the history Debbie presents, is that she was able to proceed to surgical transformation in the mistaken belief that “*Sex-change surgery will somehow make her a woman*”. It does not: It is the social interactions and the performing of gender which are important, and this is the definition of men and women which the feminist pioneers used. To my mind, Debbie’s story is a sad story of the consequences of failure and misconception, but my story has failure too. I for one am happy with the slogan “*Transgender women are women*” because it represents the way in which I find I naturally integrate into society. Also, because that is the way in which the feminist pioneers used it. I would not hesitate to express my reasons for this on a need-to-know basis (as I am doing now): but only when it is genuinely needed. I do not believe in total concealment unless victimisation by others demands it. Unfortunately for many, that is required. In any case most transsexuals in my experience do not think about transition primarily as having the final goals of sex, biology, or gender. These are journeys across the gender divide which take them home to themselves.

Like Debbie I sought professional help for similar difficulties, though this was 35 years ago, rather than 12. I was offered hormones three times. And each time I refused because I felt the right thing to do was to try to sort out these difficulties without their help. I have not sought either surgical or hormonal intervention ever since. That decision has led me to adopt an approach of inclusion instead of rejection for the creation of a coherent sense of self-identity³⁶. I also use my experience to help others and promote a better understanding of transgender conditions wherever I can. It has additionally led me to endorse the views of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions. Also, to use methods of management associated with compulsions instead of desires. And to adopt the understanding of the feminist pioneers and many other feminists who define gender identity including the terms “*men*” and “*women*”, through the performance of gender and by how men and women interact with each other and society...not by biology alone. With this in mind, it should not be surprising that I have not totally socially transitioned, but that is because I seek a truce between my wish to fulfil my relationships love and commitments in the life I have built in a battle against very deep-seated feelings inside. Only the future can tell if I were to seek surgery, and transition full time. My attitude to surgery is that should only be a means of completing the journey or tidying up the bits left behind. However, what very often happens is that people have fought against these feelings for so long, that surgery becomes the first answer that is sought, and too easily this becomes a topic for discussion, in the hope of relieving the tension itself.

Much of my own writing attempts to address these issues³⁷. In “*Transgender People and Women’s Concerns*”³⁸, I compare my own viewpoint with the one that Debbie adopts. In another article I cast my consideration of reform of the Gender Recognition Act in “*Divisions: Self-Declaration and Gender Variant People*”³⁹ in the form of an imagined conversation between Debbie, myself and one other. I do believe that Debbie does seek full inclusion of transgender people into society. Her story, and her relationship with her wife is used as an example of inclusion in the Church of England Living in Love and Faith Programme, and Debbie and I have worked together in our attempts to achieve this for years. I respect Debbie’s attempts to

³⁵ Hayton, Debbie: (2024); “Even though I have had a sex-change operation, I’m not and never will be a woman” *Daily Mail*. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13013999>. See also: Dayton, Debbie (2024): “*Transsexual Apostate – Serialisation and Exclusive Interview*” <https://debbiehayton.com/2024/01/31/transsexual-apostate-serialisation-and-exclusive-interview/#more-5803>

³⁶ See for example Gilchrist, S. (2013e): “*Management Techniques for Gender Dysphoria with Particular Reference to Transsexuality*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/205P-ManagementTechniquesInGenderDysphoria.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2020f): “*Managing Transgender Conditions Correctly: A Commentary on the Bell v Tavistock Case*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/249P-JudgmentResponse.pdf>

³⁷ See for example: Gilchrist, Susan. (2015): “*A Path of My Own*”: Person Centred Care and Support: NHS Transgender and Non-binary Symposium 30 June 2015 <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SuF0630g-TransgenderNBSymposiumSlidesSil-30jun15.pdf> . For the Symposium Report see: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SuF0630s-FINALSymposiumReport.pdf>

³⁸ Gilchrist, S. (2018b): “*Transgender People and Women’s Concerns*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/243P-TransgenderSocialIssues.pdf>

³⁹ Gilchrist, S. (2019a): “*Divisions: Self-Declaration and Gender Variant People*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/243P-DivisionsSelfDeclaration.pdf>

get transgender people accepted within the gender-critical feminist movements, I support her call for compassion and the need to move away from the mudslinging and arguments, I have no reason to doubt her sincerity and I do not disagree with all her views. In common with gender-critical feminist groups she misdiagnoses transgender conditions by using the theory of autogynephilic transsexuality (see section 3:8) which identifies transgender conditions as sexually motivated perversions, paraphilias or disruptions to a biologically or divinely ordained path of development. But in any argument and discussion there has to be an openness to hearing the views of all sides

However, when Debbie and other gender-critical groups use the slogan “*Transgender women are men*” and refuse to define women as anything other than “*adult human females*”, that journey can never begin. And this takes all transgender people to a different place. When it also maximises the separation of these people from the social fabric of society, it provides the framework for the historic exclusions, condemnations, persecutions, scapegoating, criminalisation, and the imposition of blame upon all gender and sexually variant people, simply based on difference, which have blighted religions, cultures, and countries for years. That need not be an issue in a truly egalitarian society, but this demands that full inclusion and respect for different viewpoints is sought. Unfortunately, in line with much of the material that Debbie and other members of the gender-critical movements have published, she dismisses the approaches of the Professional Institutions and World Authorities by likening the people and organisations who support their conclusions to transgender mobs, imputes their motives, and describes them as people who are pursuing political agendas instead of responsible science⁴⁰. Quite clearly exclusions on an individual objectively justified basis are necessary. But I find that almost every article on Debbie’s website seeks to maximise the exclusion of transgender people from the normal fabric of society not just where it is obviously needed, but in everyday life⁴¹. Although she argues earnestly for full acceptance, I do not find any serious consideration of any other approach in her work, and this is a major concern when the methods of management of personality variations and personality disruptions, including the definitions of gender identity, so strongly diverge⁴².

It is also easy to produce sincerely written but totally opposing articles and conclusions which depend on the definition of gender you are starting from, as Debbie’s website, her publications, and the work of Kathleen Sock and others show⁴³. I do not question Debbie’s intentions, but sadly I find that her attempts to belittle, discredit, and denigrate the views and motives of transgender people and others who disagree with her opens the door to the scapegoating, the condemnation and the imposition of a gender complementarity adopted by religious traditions and by gender-critical groups. Although transgender people are now relatively well accepted in the United Kingdom. it is these which have destroyed and still destroy the lives, not just of transgender people, but the lives of numerous gender and sexually variant people in many countries. And in my view it is her one-sided adoption of this gender-critical approach which makes Debbie be seen as a Transgender Apostate, as she herself describes, in many people’s eyes.

While I can only give a personal opinion, and not a prescription, I have identified the existence of a high degree of bipolarity, together with the possibilities of remission in these transgender conflicts. It seems to me that those transgender children who have consistently shown an alienation to the gender identification assigned to them from early childhood should be able to proceed, with puberty blockers being offered to them without unnecessary impediment, when they are judged to be required. If that is correctly done, a high correlation between the administration of puberty blockers and onward transition would be expected. However, in those cases where these conditions only become apparent during puberty, much more caution, with careful and correct counselling is needed⁴⁴. And essentially, the high degree of bipolarity in these conflicts must be considered. I believe that this may still allow for the earlier administration of puberty blockers but also require a longer delay in offering cross-sex hormones, until it is as certain as is possible that the decided course is correct.

⁴⁰ Debbie writes frequently for the Spectator <https://www.spectator.co.uk/writer/debbie-hayton/>

⁴¹ Debbie Hayton: Transgender Teacher and Journalist <https://debbiehayton.com/>

⁴² See for example: Hayton, Debbie (2020): “Gender identity is bollocks” *Spectator, Australia*: 4 April 2020: <https://www.spectator.com.au/2020/04/genderidentity-is-bollocks/> [accessed June 2020] and her other articles.

⁴³ Website for Debbie Hayton <https://debbiehayton.com/>

⁴⁴ See section D:6: *Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria* in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): “*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

5:0 Overview

5:1 Gender Recognition Act

A major area of contention at the present time are the proposals to reform the 2004 United Kingdom Gender Recognition Act. This would allow transsexual people to legally redefine their gender identity by changing the registered sex on their birth certificates without requiring a medical diagnosis of gender dysphoria and lowering the minimum age from which this can take place without reducing in any way the protections against abuse that are presently in force. Although I fully support these reforms and I agree that the need for a medical diagnosis should not be necessary, I urge that more medical caution is needed. However, this should only be to confirm the long-term stability of a decision to transition, and no arbitrary minimum timescale should be applied. That tallies with my own experiences. I have found that remission can occur and that the treatment which was offered in the past may not always have been correct. Today we do not demand that lesbian or gay couples must undergo an intrusive medical examination of their motives by an anonymous expert panel before they are legally allowed to marry: On the contrary, they are not required to undertake any medical examination and to impose that today would cause an outrage. More importantly, it would attack the trust and the self-acceptance that is needed not just for the couple to manage their relationships, but how they manage their own lives. I agree with the approaches of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions. I do not agree with the viewpoints of the gender-critical groups, who allege that an opposing diagnosis must be made. I argue that the failure in the medical profession to agree on the nature and origin of transgender conditions causes many of these difficulties, and I discuss these issues of reform in detail elsewhere. However, these are disputes and issues which lie within the province of medical concern, and no legislation should arbitrarily be used to enforce or exclude any particular approach.

5:2 Journeys

In this examination I have compared the journeys that transgender people; and male-to-female transsexuals in particular make as emigrants or immigrants who move across the boundaries of a notionally binary gender divide. The success of that move depends on the welcome of those who would receive them at the end of their journey. The long history of sexual abuse, domination, and discrimination by men over women makes that welcome more difficult for some women to accept. But this is not and should not be about domination. It is about where male-to-female transsexuals fit in. For some feminists that is never a legitimate journey, for other feminists the need to make that journey is recognised, but it can never be a journey to be recognised as women, it can only be a journey towards some separate or foreign country or place. For yet others, who I perceive to be the large majority of feminists, a complete welcome is given, and male-to-female transsexuals, are fully accepted as the women they say they are: Always bearing in mind that these journeys are about how men and women relate to each other in society and that separate protections, where justified and needed on the grounds of biological or reproductive sex remain fully in place.

Religious elements remain very important, and the question to be asked again is *“How did Jesus handle this?”* And that matters whether you believe in Christianity or not. The story of the Centurion and slave in the Bible is the description of how two people made that journey of love and affection across this gender divide, where permission to express that love and affection in any physical act is never denied. The story about eunuchs is also a story of people who make the equivalent journey across the gender divide, where the only qualification is that people live according to the ideals of the Gospel message, and the permission for those who make that journey to engage in any physical act to make this journey more complete is never denied. That same inclusion is expressed both by Paul and Thomas in their attitudes to the requirement for circumcision. Both argued that circumcision in the spirit transcends every physical act.

Some also argue that Paul imposed a complete embargo on accepting the legitimacy of these journeys. What today we understand as homosexuality would not have been understood in first century Middle Eastern societies. Then the boundary which was used was one which separated the noble pursuit of love from the carnal abuse of sex: And that was applied to male same-sex acts. Paul's coded references to the passages in Leviticus makes it clear that his condemnation of same-sex intercourse applied both to the abuses of power as well as the abuses of sex. So, Paul's condemnation, and the absolute Jewish condemnation contained in

Leviticus, and in the Jewish Law, was not intended for the purpose of condemning the act: it was about condemning the abuses of power and the abuses of sex. Jesus also considers this in his teaching in the New Covenant, where in place of the strict condemnations of Jewish Law, all judgements should be made on virtue and love and intention of the acts. Some modern translations of the bible describe Paul's prohibition as that of homosexuality, and so create a totally false impression of the meaning of these bible texts⁴⁵.

However, the acceptance of this teaching becomes more difficult to accept in societies where gender complementarity or gender discrimination continues to be enforced: for any departure from the gendered expectations of those societies continues to be considered as disruptive or disordered acts. It also seems that this difficulty may have been anticipated by Jesus when he added the qualification "*Let the one who is able to receive this receive it.*" to his teaching on eunuchs in the Gospel of Matthew. In our gender equal societies of today we have largely returned to the first century distinction that would have been understood by Jesus and Paul. This separates the noble pursuit of love from the carnal abuse of sex. Instead, we now apply this equally to all men and women alike: And there is no toleration of the abuses of power and the abuses of sex. This is a mission which belongs to a listening Church whose commitment is to spread this full welcome and the vision of inclusion that Jesus gives to each of us now, and to all others, in the Love of Christ.⁴⁶

6:0 Impartiality: Government and EHRC Advice

Strictly the analysis I have just presented should not be needed, since the social, clinical, and medical experiences gained, research, and articles published over the last sixty years have clearly shown that these conditions should be managed as personality variations. Also, the methods of managing personality variations and personality disruptions differ so greatly, it should be easy to tell them apart. However, the total denial of access to the experiential evidence, because of the condemnation and criminalisation of all gender and sexually variant behaviour over much of the last millennium, has meant that no such studies could then be made. Today, that is additionally compounded by disagreements within the medical profession, and a paradigm shift in Christian teaching which now determines that all gender and sexually variant behaviour regardless of purpose is condemned as intrinsically disordered and in pursuit of inappropriate sex.

At the present time, this uncertainty is being further accentuated by the actions of the United Kingdom Government who dismiss the views of the Professional Medical Institutions and World authorities as the work of transgender activists, who claim it is not based on credible science, and who attack the integrity of those groups and people who support these views. This is replaced by the pursuit of a gender-critical ideology adopted by a feminist faction, which itself is only one part of the feminist movement: And that raises questions about the objectivity and impartiality of any analysis which is used to justify this position, and to accuracy of the cited research which is used to support just the one approach.

6:1 Government Guidance on Transgender Children

⁴⁵ "*Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way, the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.*" Romans 1:26-27 That misuse occurs in other translations. For example, in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 it says: "*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God*" The first is clearly a condemnation of lust. In many translations of Corinthians, the section on homosexuality simply does not appear. If any, many words are used to describe it, and Paul himself invents a word to describe it which is best translated as "*abusers of themselves with mankind*". The word "*homosexuality*" first appeared in pamphlet published Karl Maria Kertbeny in Germany in 1869. That definition would not have been understood in the first century world. What Paul would have known and understood are the first century distinctions made between the noble pursuit of love and the carnal abuse of sex. Also, the Jewish condemnations which were concerned with the abuses of power, virtue, and the abuses of sex. Aquinas' disregard of the abuses of power and his adaptation of "*Natural Law*" have turned these into the condemnations, without exception of the acts. Translation drift has also created barriers to many of these understandings. See sections 6:2 and 6:3 of Gilchrist, S. (2011b): "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>; Also: Gilchrist, S. (2015e): "*Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf> Where a more appropriate translation may be that one should not put warrior gear on a woman instead.

⁴⁶ Gilchrist, S. (2017d): "*A House Built on Sand? Attitudes to Gender and Sexual Variant Identities and Behaviour in Christianity and the Christian Church*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/231P-HouseUponSand.pdf>

On the 16th July 2020 the Library of the United Kingdom Parliament published a revised House of Commons Briefing Paper on *“Gender Recognition and The Rights of Transgender People”*. Five days later, on the 21st July 2020, Liz Truss, then Minister for Women and Equalities stood up in the United Kingdom Parliament and gave her absolute assurance that transgender rights will be protected. In the revised paper, the research in the original paper which had reported more favourably on the use of puberty blocking hormones was removed, and a statement that little is known about their long-term effect was inserted. All reference to the protection of children against transphobic bullying in schools, which had been present in the previous version of the paper was also removed, with no notice being given⁴⁷. A relatively more recent statement by the then Attorney General, Suella Braverman declared that it is lawful for schools to misgender, deadname, ban from some sports, reject from enrolment based on their transgender status, and to refuse any or all other forms of gender affirmation to transgender children. In addition, she stated that to recognise their identities as transgender, would qualify as *“indoctrinating children”*. None of this does anything to redress bullying in schools. The more recent and long-awaited Government guidance on the treatment of transgender children in schools repeats and strengthens many of these assertions. Specific recommendations are that *“boys should be kept out of women’s sports”, “a boy should never be allowed to go into a girls toilet, or vice versa”*. Teachers are permitted to misgender transgender children without penalty. It additionally states that, *“schools and colleges should only agree to a change of pronouns if they are confident that the benefit to the individual child outweighs the impact on the school community. It is expected that there will be very few occasions in which a school or college will be able to agree to a change of pronouns.* It further suggests that it will almost never be appropriate to use pronouns in accordance with a child’s wishes, and that there should be no assumption of allowing any flexibility on school uniform. The current advice also refuses to use the word *“transgender”*. I agree that parents should be informed about any child’s concerns, and that every effort should be made to do so, but to make this an absolute requirement makes it impossible for the school to organise confidential counselling or to respect a child’s privacy whenever this is required. The underlying purpose of this guidance is revealed in the Government briefing paper on this issue, published on the 19th December 2023 which states *“This guidance is intended to give teachers and school leaders greater confidence when dealing with an issue that has been hijacked by activists misrepresenting the law”*. That statement destroys the impartiality of any approach.

It is understood that the present United Kingdom Government Minister for Women and Equalities, Kemi Badenoch wanted to go further and introduce an outright ban; but she could not do so because this would break International Human Rights treaties. When Stonewall criticised this new advice as *“Not being fit for purpose”*, Badenoch, lambasted Stonewall by saying it was giving very *“Bad advice”*. When this so-called *“Bad advice”* is the same as that which is now almost universally endorsed by the World Authorities and Professional Institutions. And when the views of these institutions are dismissed by Badenoch as merely the work of *“Transgender activists”*. That verdict also comes despite a freedom of information request, which has revealed that Badenoch *“had failed to meet a single LGBTQ+ group during her time as Equalities Minister, despite telling MPs that she had “engaged extensively” with such organisations”*⁴⁸. When all these matters are considered, the attitude of this Government must be a serious concern. It is a matter of sad co-incidence, that on the day following release of this new advice, on the 20th December, after an 18-day trial at Manchester Crown Court, a 16-year-old boy from Leigh and a 16-year-old girl from Warrington, were found guilty of murder of Brianna Ghey a 16-year-old transgender schoolmate in the most horrific circumstances. Brianna was described as an *“It”* in their correspondence, and no remorse was shown for any of these acts. The new Government guidance does say that alternative, but separate facilities should be provided for transgender pupils, but also makes it clear that these must never undermine the single-sex facilities that are provided. Far from seeking inclusion and integration this new advice encourages or promotes the separation, bullying, and rejection of transgender children, and it presents them as potential threats to other peoples’ lives.

6:2 Bullying and Protection

This demand for rejection is increased by the attempts, now supported by the present United Kingdom Government, to enforce a diagnosis of perversions or disruptions on transgender people: When these attempts ridicule or deny the legitimacy of all contrary approaches, including the consensus view the World

⁴⁷ Gilchrist, S. (2020): *“A Comparison Of Changes To The House Of Commons Briefing Paper On “Gender Recognition And The Rights Of Transgender People” Made On The 16th July 2020”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SuM0720a-BriefingComparisonDocument.pdf>

⁴⁸ Reported on page 9 of the *“I”* newspaper, February 2004.

Authorities and Professional Institutions, they can be used to turn the understanding of transgender people from being victims of discrimination and persecution into their condemnations as bullies instead. However, it is hardly surprising that transgender people and particularly their supporters react with anger when gender-critical groups disparage all other approaches and try to enforce the wrong diagnoses and false allegations, which place motives on them which parallel those of sexual abusers; incorrectly claim that they seek power and domination over women, threaten women's identities, and which do not match the realities of transgender people's lives. Today these conflicts are marked by the assertion of rights over responsibilities, by the refusal of each side to listen to, or attempt to understand the views of the other, and to build mountains on their own fears and concerns. And this applies to both sides. That I argue is why the experiences of bullying arise. Suzanne Moore makes the assertion that she was being bullied by 338 of her colleagues for her adoption of a gender-critical approach⁴⁹. Debbie Hayton claims that her rejection from the mainstream of the transgender community is because similar bullying has occurred⁵⁰. This is, even though they may believe that they are protecting women's identities and transgender people's lives. A similar allegation is also made in the recently issued United Kingdom Government advice on the treatment of transgender children, where it states *This guidance is intended to give teachers and school leaders greater confidence when dealing with an issue that has been hijacked by activists misrepresenting the law*. A call is made that *"more research is needed"*, but this means that the clinical, medical, and experiential evidence gained over the last sixty years must also be denied. Extended reviews of the peer-reviewed literature and the many papers on this topic universally conclude that transgender people are the victims of this bullying: None allege that they are bullies instead.

The new advice does state that there should be no bullying of transgender people, but apart from this exhortation, it does nothing in any way to restore the protections against it which were previously included in the documents withdrawn from the House of Commons Library in July 2020. This tenor of this current advice should also be compared with the current moves by the present United Kingdom government, supported by the United Kingdom Equality and Human Rights Commission, to amend the 2010 Equality Act. This would have the intention of enforcing or legalising a complete ban on all male-to-female transsexuals entering any spaces or services normally reserved for women, entirely on biological sex. It is made clear that it would exclude transgender people without the need for any objective justification, regardless of their appearance, the possession of a gender recognition certificate, the length of time since they transitioned, or the innocence or appropriateness of their behaviour. If these criteria were to be applied in any other areas, for example on the grounds of ethnicity, race, colour, or religious belief, it should be seen to drive a coach and horses through any equalities or human rights legislation. But by defining transgender conditions as sexually motivated perversions or disruptions of (male) homosexuality, and by refusing to use the word *"transgender"* in any of its documentation, the EHRC claims to remove all transgender conditions from the protections of the current 2010 Equality Act. At the recent Conservative Party conference, it was also announced that the Government intends to change the National Health Service Constitution so that the same restrictions and provisions would be enforced within that organisation. Currently the new advice on transgender children is open for consultation. Schools, parents, and other educational groups are invited to contribute, but those organisations actively involved in transgender matters are not. The consultation closes on 12th March 2024, and it is important that responses should be provided⁵¹.

6:3 Research and Evidence Base

These challenges mean that the claimed evidence base used by gender-critical groups must also be questioned. A recent report by Cambridge University, commissioned by Stonewall on attitudes to schoolchildren is violently attacked by UK gender-critical groups, who focus their criticisms on condemning the methodologies involved. And on just one other paper. While it is possible for methodologies to be suspect in individual cases, that is hardly likely to be true when identical conclusions are reached in the numerous separate and independent studies that have been carried out on adults and on children throughout the world. Other attempts to use a limited number of selected peer reviewed research papers to prove male-to-female transsexuals are generators of their own misfortunes and are at least likely, if not more likely, to engage in

⁴⁹ Moore, Suzanne: (2020): "Why I had to leave The Guardian If you were bullied by 338 colleagues, what would you do?" *Unherd*: <https://unherd.com/2020/11/why-i-had-to-leave-the-guardian/>

⁵⁰ Hayton, Debbie (2024): "Transsexual Apostate: My Journey Back to Reality" Forum (8 Feb. 2024) ISBN-10: 1800753098 ISBN-13 978-1800753099

⁵¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gender-questioning-children-draft-schools-and-colleges-guidance>

violence against women, are strongly denounced by lead authors of the papers that are used. Collecting data on small numbers of prisoners who claim to be transgender, and then applying this to the general population without adjustment, does not meet the requirements of any reliable statistical analysis. It has been pointed out by various authors that these figures can be increased by the known actions of other prisoners who claim to be transexual to gain access or advantage. Other peer reviewed literature shows that an increase may also occur in the general population because the social victimisation and the limited opportunities for employment of this group can force people into less desirable occupations. Many reports, statements, and evidence, including some key documents, produced by the United Kingdom Professional Medical and Clinical Institutions acting in unison are never referred to: And there is no evidence that these have ever been considered.⁵²

One major meta-study covering a systematic review of all the peer-reviewed articles assessing the effect of gender transition on transgender well-being found that 97 percent of the investigations showed that stresses due to gender dysphoria are relieved. Not one of these studies concluded that gender transition causes any overall harm. However, most of these studies show that overall trauma after transition does not always decrease, although trauma caused directly by the gender conflict almost universally does. That strongly suggests that it is not transgender people who create their own misfortunes: it is instead created because of the vilification and persecution by others, which may be expected to increase or continue after transition takes place. It is true that some notorious instances of abuse by people who are mainly prisoners, and who claim to be transexual, are encountered. Although these cases are rare, they are highlighted and taken to represent the whole transgender population.

Contrary to these allegations, the evidence from the professional medical studies identifies much lower rates of abuse. There is also no body of court records or peer-reviewed papers which could permit justification for simply extending the same allegations to the general population. From the information available, the reverse instead is indicated⁵³. The threatened increase in abuse, which was predicted by gender-critical groups in those countries which have already made it easier for transgender people to get legal recognition of their identities, does not occur. And this does not suggest that any such connection can be made. Something similar occurs when the proportion of those people who have regretted transition are discussed. As I have argued remissions can occur. However, the reasons for these and the incidences of relapse are never considered. Gender-critical groups allege that these figures of regret are very high, but gender identity clinics and others state low values⁵⁴. Where mistakes have been made these should be properly highlighted, and remedial action must be taken, but the incidence of violence, victimisation, and abuse against transgender people, notably in prison, greatly exceeds those instances for whom the reverse may be the case.

6:4 Discrimination

Even though transgender people are generally well accepted by many in United Kingdom society, it remains commonly recognised that they are still one of the most vilified groups. That is seen in the already high and now increasing incidences of hate crimes against transgender people in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. Currently the United Kingdom Home Office attributes at least part of this increase to the virulence of the present disputes and it only takes a minority to victimise another minority group. This conclusion is further supported by many independent reports, conducted across international boundaries and countries, which consistently show similarly high rates of discrimination and attacks. None of this discrimination is cited in any way as matters of concern in the present UK EHRC advice, and no recommendations for its prevention are provided. On the contrary, people are permitted to exclude transgender people from facilities by popular vote. In place of vilification by others, the present EHRC advice implies that transgender people are the generators of their own misfortunes: And this is claimed to be the cause of the trauma that occurs. It further tries to claim that gender, but not sexually, variant identities are perversions or disruptions of sexuality instead of

⁵² See: Part 8: *Current Disagreements* in Gilchrist, S. (2022): “*Christian Communities, Transgender People and Christian Traditions*” (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-PresDoctrinesDisputesTransPeople.pdf> Also in Gilchrist, S. (2023): “*How to Trash the Economy, Transgender Identities and Human Rights*” <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/255P-HowToTrash.pdf>

⁵³ For a full discussion, see section D4 onwards in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): “*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

⁵⁴ Transition regret. See section D:7: *Transition Regret*, and section D:8: *Transition Counselling and Advice*, in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): “*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

expressions of identity. That requires these conditions to be diagnosed as personality disruptions, so that the role of the core gender identity, and the relevance of the clinical, medical, scientific, and experiential evidence gained over the last sixty years must be discredited, dismissed, or denied.

Instead of taking heed of these inconsistencies, gender-critical groups and the present UK Government continue to identify the opposition to their arguments as the work of transgender activists, ignore the statements of the professional institutions, and condemn them as the products of conspiracy theories and transgender activists. The unconstrained attacks that Katherine Scott, who is probably the best-known academic in the United Kingdom for promoting gender-critical theories, makes on Stonewall, in concert with the attacks of others, and by using social media, do not just condemn Stonewall, they also attack the understandings of these professional institutions and world authorities, because Stonewall associates itself with the same views. Over 600 professionals and academics in an open letter have condemned Stock's actions and the theories she pursues. Similar attacks on transgender people are mounted by the Roman Catholic Bishops Council in the United States⁵⁵, and by others elsewhere. Attempts by Paul McHugh in the United States of America to impose the same views on religious grounds have likewise been condemned by many of his peers.⁵⁶

6:5 Policy Changes and Human Rights

At current Government level it would be hoped that an objective and impartial view of this medical, scientific, and experiential evidence, and of the current research would be taken, but this appears not to be the case. The disbanding of Government sponsored LGBT advisory groups, initially under Liz Truss, when she was the government minister responsible for Women and Equalities, the refusal to meet with, to consider the views, or heed the warnings of the House of Commons Select Committee on Women and Equalities, which has commissioned many reports, reviews, and scientific investigations into the methods of management, treatments, and the legislation needed for transgender people. Other instances include the quiet withdrawal of documents in the House of Commons Library and their replacement with others supportive of a more gender-critical approach. Also, the re-editing or issue of supplementary documents in ways which are intended to question the veracity of previous research. These actions all suggest the destruction or discrediting of an already existing evidence base, rather than any requirement for new research. Much of this experience and evidence had already been collected and collated by the United Kingdom House of Commons Women and Equalities Parliamentary Select Committee. This committee has strongly supported the approaches of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, including the proposals to reform the 2004 Gender Recognition act to make it easier for transgender people to gain legal recognition of the gender identity. Which would also remove the intrusive and the now considered medically inappropriate diagnosis of these conditions. This movement for reform had strong Government support from the previous Conservative administration under Teresa May. And, up to 2019, the same reforms were additionally endorsed by the United Kingdom Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

Since then, a complete reversal has taken place. The near universal outcry when the Government stated its intention to exclude any ban on conversion therapy for transgender people in a bill originally intended to prohibit this practice for all LGBT people on the grounds that "*more research is needed*", is not only a refutation of this reversal; it is also a statement of the magnitude and reliability of the experiential evidence that already exists. It is true that more rigorous "*double blind*" research is required to show definitively how transgender conditions vary, but these are ethically difficult to conduct. Nevertheless, all of these arguments that "*more research is needed*", fall flat when the vast amount of clinical, medical, and experiential evidence gained of the last 60 years, is ignored, dismissed, or denied by government policies and by gender-critical

⁵⁵ See Part 7: "Attacks" in Gilchrist, S. (2022): "*Christian Communities, Transgender People and Christian Traditions*" (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-PresDoctrinesDisputesTransPeople.pdf>

⁵⁶ See Section D:8: *Transition Counselling and Advice* in Gilchrist, S. (2020b): "*Responsibility in Transgender Disputes*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/248P-Responsibility.pdf>

groups⁵⁷. In one of these documents, I compare my own approach, which relies on that of the Word Authorities and with Debbie Hayton, who I know, who adopts a gender-critical approach⁵⁸.

Transgender issues are largely hidden and frequently misunderstood because it is only transgender people and those who support them who need to separate the existence and impact of the core gender identity from that of the gender role. These advancements take place before conscious awareness appears, so for most people it is natural to assume that unless some perversion or disruption occurs, gender identity should always be congruent with biological sex. Stock's arguments, and those of these gender-critical groups are perfectly logical within the bubble or tribes of their own perception. That is provided an approach of gender complementarity is adopted. And that largely coincides with the traditional teaching of the Christian Church. Therefore, the dismissal of any other explanation, including the understandings of the Professional Medical Institutions, can rely on fears that are created without demanding an objective approach. This is described in Butler's paper, where she says of the gender-critical movement: "*it mobilizes a range of rhetorical strategies from across the political spectrum to maximize the fear of infiltration and destruction that comes from a diverse set of economic and social forces. It does not strive for consistency, for its incoherence is part of its power*". The same processes are seen to be active in the United Kingdom in the "*War on woke campaign*" of the present United Kingdom Government, which attempts to discredit or disregard expert opinion in pursuit of populist viewpoints, whenever disagreement occurs. Gender-critical groups face a further contradiction. If the depth and legitimacy of transgender and transsexual identities are to be accepted, then the legitimacy of the gender-critical approach is discredited. If the legitimacy of the gender-critical approach is instead accepted, then the depth and integrity of transgender identities must be denied.

Perhaps Suzanne Moore, one of the prominent advocates for the gender-critical approach, reveals this when she said "*Why did I speak up? I have no hatred or fear of trans folk. As a feminist, I would argue that gender is socially constructed, and it can be reconstructed*"⁵⁹. If that is the case then: along with the feminist pioneers, gender identity should be a matter of choice for everybody. But this is not what is adopted by members of the gender-critical movement. Although these groups deny the separate existence of gender identity, they associate all of the behaviours and allegiance which create it entirely with biological sex. That gives rise to unfounded ideologies and allegations. These include the definition of a false "*gender ideology*" which states that transgender people alone believe that they can "*choose, change, or deny biological sex*". It is also why the same groups insist on defining women as "*adult human females*", and no other definition is allowed. It is why male-to-female transsexuals who identify themselves as women are claimed to be seeking power over women; are intent on destroying women's identities and are attacking their sex-based rights. It is additionally why transgender people are alleged to be determined to remove all of the legal protections on the privacies and protections for reproductive or biological sex in supporting reform of the 2004 Gender Recognition act. There was no change proposed in the Act, none expected, and these must always be provided. It is also why allegations that reforming the gender recognition act will result in many males intend on invading women's private spaces which, despite the evidence, continue to be made. It is why gender critical groups seek to impose methods of management which are believed to protect transgender people from their own delusions, and also to protect women and girls from potential transgender sexual attacks.

All of these concerns arise from presumptions that gender identity is purely as collectively created construct which is determined entirely through interactions with then gender role. This includes the denial of the processes which create the core gender identity and the huge changes in cognitive and neural development patterns which take place during the first three to four years of life. Other explanations are dismissed as not

⁵⁷ See: Part 8: *Current Disagreements* in Gilchrist, S. (2022): "*Christian Communities, Transgender People and Christian Traditions*" (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-PresDoctrinesDisputesTransPeople.pdf>

⁵⁸ For my own take on conversion therapy see Gilchrist, S. (2019a): "*Divisions: Self-Declaration and Gender Variant People*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/243P-DivisionsSelfDeclaration.pdf> and: Gilchrist, S. (2018d): "*Self-Declaration and Gender Diverse People*": <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/243P-SelfDeclarationSubmission.pdf> (Submission for the consultation on the reform of the 2004 Gender Recognition Act) In the first of these articles I compare my own understanding with that of Debbie Hayton and one other, both of whom I know and with whom I have worked together in the past. Although I disagree with Debbie, and depreciate the way she presents her views, there is no other disagreement between us I am aware of. However, her adoption of a gender-critical approach and her dismissal of all others to me mind only emphasises the need for a truly impartial and objective approach. She is currently publishing her understandings in Hayton, Debbie (2024): "*Transsexual Apostate: My Journey Back to Reality*" Forum (8 Feb. 2024) ISBN-10: 1800753098 ISBN-13 978-1800753099

⁵⁹ Moore, Suzanne: (2020): "Why I had to leave The Guardian If you were bullied by 338 colleagues, what would you do?" Unherd: <https://unherd.com/2020/11/why-i-had-to-leave-the-guardian/>

being based on credible science and dismissed as the work of transgender activists. The integrity of transgender people, and those who present them is denied. This attitude is seen in the present United Kingdom Government policies, in gender-critical feminist groups, and in the writings of various authors who take the gender-critical approach. It is true that much of this disagreement arises through the similar failure of many psychiatrists, psychologists, and sociologists to take account of these neural advances: However, the clinical, medical, and experiential evidence gathered over the last sixty years, together with the differences in behaviour. should be able to ensure that the correct protocols are adopted. And when the consequences of these early developments are accepted, instead of being rejected, the approach of the Professional Medical Institutions and the World authorities which consider transgender conditions to be: *“naturally expected variations of the human condition, intrinsic to the personality created, arising very early in life, and cannot be changed either by the individual concerned or by the predations of others in subsequent life”*, falls into place⁶⁰.

With such profound disagreements it is absolutely essential that the arguments of all sides are equitably considered but that does not happen. I hold a letter from Dominic Raab, then Secretary of State for Justice, Deputy Prime Minister, and Lord Chancellor in the UK Government assuring me that transgender rights will be protected. However, in the present Government policy and in gender-critical groups we hear the views and arguments of only one side. The effect of denying the advances in science, theology, neurology, psychology. clinical, medical, or experiential evidence which has taken place since the 1960's, is to turn the clock back to a time when all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour without exception could be regarded as sexually motivated depravities, which are intrinsically disordered and deny the gift of life.

Even then, these largely religious condemnations always censured behaviour, never identity. The current EHRC advice which now approves exclusion of transgender people by popular vote, and on any other ground such as religion or sex, from resources and facilities, spaces, and services without any need for objective justification, regardless of their appearance, the possession of a gender recognition certificate, the length of time since they transitioned, or the innocence or appropriateness of their behaviour, goes further than this: instead of exclusion by behaviour, it excludes transgender people on the basis of identity. And if the present United Kingdom Government gives this advice legal effect through its plans to amend the 2010 Equality act, it will reinforce the concerns about its willingness to protect all our human rights.

6:6 Transgender People and Gender-Critical Feminism

Earlier in, section 2 of this account I have suggested that transgender people should be regarded as victims in what is primarily a feminist dispute. And much of the intensity of these conflicts may lie in the challenges to the legitimacy of gender-critical ideologies that transgender people present. The rights and safety of women must be an absolute and irreducible priority, but it is where transgender people fit in that is instead the primary focus of these disputes.

Few people ever need to give any serious thought about how any man, or a woman should be defined. Most people make the distinction on demeanour, appearance, how men and women relate to each other in society, or on biology, and simply use the one that is most appropriate at the time. And in instances where biology should be specifically defined the terms male and female are available to use. The primary aim of the feminist pioneers was always to ensure that men and women were equally treated in society, so their distinctions between men and women were based on how people socially related to each other. And any handicapping by biology was diminished. It is only necessary to look at how all of the feminist pioneers including Judith Butler and Simone De Beauvoir, defined the word *“woman”* in terms of the performance of gender to see how this was done, and when Suzanne Moore said *“Why did I speak up? I have no hatred or fear of trans folk. As a feminist, I would argue that gender is socially constructed, and it can be reconstructed”*⁶¹ she was repeating the same thing. That is confirmed in the gender-critical definition which states that gender identity is purely a collectively related social construct that is determined entirely by association with the gender role. And this means that social identification for everyone, which includes use of the terms men and women, transgender

⁶⁰ See the presentation series; Gilchrist, S. (2022): *“Transgender Disputes, Conversion Therapy and Government actions”* (Presentation): <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/254p-PresTransDisputesAndGovActions.pdf> These are annotated presentations where full references to original sources are given.

⁶¹ Moore, Suzanne: (2020): “Why I had to leave The Guardian If you were bullied by 338 colleagues, what would you do?” Unherd: <https://unherd.com/2020/11/why-i-had-to-leave-the-guardian/>

etc are matters of choice. This is where a contradiction occurs. Although gender-critical groups continue to deny the separate existence of gender identity, they instead assign the behaviours and allegiances that would have established it indissolubly to biological sex. This creates boundaries which cannot be crossed, and the definition of a woman as an adult human female is now the only one that can legitimately be used. Thus, in place of the egalitarian principles adopted by the feminist pioneers an approach of gender complementarity is established.

However, neither definition on its own is satisfactory. On the one hand making gender identification merely a matter of choice leads to excessive instability. While on the other it leads to cloning instead. In section 3:6 this account I have shown that, although strong and stable core gender identities are created for everyone in the same way they need not always follow biological sex. Since these only define a sense of belonging and not behaviour it follows that all women, including male-to-female transsexuals: acting as women with women, can equally pursue the same feminist arguments with the same vigour, from a stronger base. Equally any female-to-male transsexuals: acting as men with men, can equally pursue any equivalent male arguments from a similarly stronger base. Because the core gender identity can be described as an inner sense of belonging without behavioural implications, it further means that gender-critical ideology, whichever way it is interpreted, must be the less effective approach.

7:0 Where are we now?

7:1 Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender People

In the previous sections of this article, I have compared transgender people to immigrants or emigrants who journey across a gender divide, and the purpose of this section is to review some of the issues that have earlier been uncovered. What is seen as a departure for one is a homecoming for the other. When gender-critical groups argue that transgender people cannot make that journey because for everyone the boundaries of biology and gender are unbreachable, then they must do the same for lesbian and gay people. Lesbian and gay people cannot be exempt from this journey because both involve the same crossings. So, for both groups the legitimacies of both journeys must either be either accepted or denied. While the outcome for one is gender identity which is measured in terms of the social interactions with society, the outcome for the other is expressed in love and relationships in life. Thus, it follows in logic that lesbian and gay people should be considered the greater threat, and that is often the case in many religious and social traditions. We have seen that gender-critical groups try to get round this difficulty by using autogynephilic theories which present transgender conditions as sexually motivated perversions, paraphilias or disruptions of male homosexuality. On the one hand, this demands that for lesbian and gay people, the advances in understanding, social acceptance, and experiential evidence gained of the last sixty years must be accepted: But on the other hand, the same advances in understanding, social acceptance and experiential evidence for transgender people must instead be discredited or denied. That differentiation is simply not supported, either in this analysis, or within the current scientific consensus, both of which show that, though each may go their different ways, gender, and sexual identities for everyone form as a single complex very early in life.

Quite clearly and rightly all women have every reason to fear male attacks, abuse, coercion, and violence. It affects all women and girls every day of their lives. And a major element in this is the difficulty in distinguishing those males who are truly supportive from those, who may appear to be supportive, but are intent on abuse. There are many who believe that no male can be considered supportive because of biology, and that all males must be considered potential threats. There are arguments presented that nobody who has been brought up as a male could ever be trusted because of their social upbringing and the expectations of male domination and privilege they have received. There are those who argue that to allow male-to-female transsexuals to be accepted into the category of “women”, is as ridiculous as someone who makes the argument that any man can become cow; and expect to be treated as such simply by choice. Far from denying the existence of gender identity, and the allegiances which have created it, gender-critical groups link gender identity and these allegiances indissolubly to biological sex. And that denies the egalitarianism of the feminist pioneers who distinguished men from women through their performance of gender, how they interacted with each other in society, and not by biological sex. All of these arguments fit into the so-called

“gender ideology” presented by gender-critical groups, who argue that transgender people believe “they can somehow choose, change, or deny biological sex”⁶². In the United Kingdom we only have to go back about sixty years to how lesbian and gay people were being subjected to similar attacks.

There could be little possibility of change without the knowledge that is now available and for as long as all gender and sexually variant behaviour was severely, criminalised, suppressed, used as the targets for scapegoating, and where all behaviour was invariably understood as disordered acts of grave depravity pursuing inappropriate sex. A transformation in outlook has occurred in countries and cultures where the ability to express these identities has again become available. In many of these countries the legitimacy and strength of same sex marriages is now legally accepted, where lesbian, and gay relationships have come to be regarded as legitimate expressions of love and identity, and not as perversions of sex. Gender-critical groups define gender as a nebulous social construct which is created entirely by the desire to conform to the gender role. This contradicts the views of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions who argue that gender identity is a core element of the personality, which is being created, that it forms very early in life, that it is part of the process of separating the self from the other, its search is for identity, and that its formation precedes the social awareness which is needed to create any association with the gender role. These elements must be denied, to preserve the gender-critical approach. There is also a fundamental contradiction in gender-critical ideology. If the views of the World Authorities and the Professional Institutions are to be accepted then the legitimacy of the gender-critical approach is denied. And if the ideologies of the gender-critical approach are to be accepted then transgender conditions must be identified as sexually motivated perversions, paraphilias or disruptions from a biologically or divinely ordained path of development, and the depth and integrity of these identities is denied.

It follows that if gender-critical groups must succeed in denying the advances in science and understanding which have taken place in relation to all gender and sexually variant conditions over the last sixty years for transgender people... while continuing to accept them for lesbian and gay people, if they are to be able to justify their ideology. These denials can take many forms which have been described in this account, which Butler also describes in her article. However, Butler also states that: “The anti-gender movement is not a conservative position with a clear set of principles. No, as a fascist trend, it mobilizes a range of rhetorical strategies from across the political spectrum to maximize the fear of infiltration and destruction that comes from a diverse set of economic and social forces. It does not strive for consistency, for its incoherence is part of its power”⁶³. Here, Butler argues that much of the force of the present attacks involve the fears of the unknown that are created. Gender-critical groups argue that they welcome male-to-female transsexuals, provided they do not describe themselves as “women”. But that simply takes them to a different place. That separation is further enforced by using slogans such as “Transgender women are men” and by refusing to define women as anything more than their biological sex. Gender-critical groups justify their welcome for transgender people on the grounds that these sexual motives are sublimated and are turned inwards towards themselves. This means that their motives are still considered to be those of sexually motivated perversions, paraphilias or disruptions from a biologically or divinely ordained path, where women’s pronouns cannot legitimately be used. And it enforces a separation which provides a breeding ground for the attacks, abuses, and the sexual and religious scapegoating of transgender people by society. To see the effects, it is only necessary to look at the laws in many countries where the expression of any form of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender behaviour is made subject to very severe legal penalties, where in some cases, the death penalty is applied. Butler uses the word “fascist” in her description. That is a strong word, but there is evidence in many countries, and some in the United Kingdom that right-wing political groups, neo-fascist organisations and religious conservatives are coming together to ensure that these condemnations are applied.

However, it is not only the attitudes of gender-critical feminist groups that must be considered. There is also the continuing disregard of the advances in neurological science which from the 1990’s has shown that early development is dominated by the actions of innate neural forces, where the which are active from birth. The transformation in outlook this creates is still dismissed by many practitioners in psychiatry, psychology, and

⁶² See for example: Gilchrist, S. (2021a): “Gender Identity, Feminism, and Transgender People”: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/250P-GenderIdentityAndTrans.pdf>

⁶³ Butler, Judith, (2021): “Why is the idea of ‘gender’ provoking backlash the world over?” *the Guardian* 23 October 2021. See Discussion of Butler in Gilchrist, S. (2022): “No Blacks, No Irish, No Homosexuals, No Transgender People”: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/252P-NoBlacks.pdf>

sociology through their continued use of traditional social learning and psychodynamic theories, where cognition alone is presumed to provide the driving force propelling development. And where the motives instead are desires of sex. them. Recognising the impact of these forces transforms the role of cognition from one which is understood to provide the primary driving force for development to one whose role is to create order out of disorder by keeping these innate neural forces increasingly in check. This dismissal, together with the pursuit of traditional dogmas by religious groups who refuse to consider even the possibility that there could be errors in their present teaching, are likely to major barriers to change. And be causes of the present confusions. However, the greatest barrier of all most likely arises because all of these developments take place before people can be consciously aware of them. This means it is natural for most people to assume that gender and sexual identities should always be congruent with biological sex. As a minority group, the nature of gender and sexually variant conditions may also be too easily misrepresented, and not be well understood.

It is not surprising that strong and toxic conflicts occur when the methods of management for personality variations and personality disruptions differ, to the extent that what one side considers to be an approach of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably considered to be one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other. With difference as great as these it essential to get the diagnoses correct. Today these conflicts are marked by the assertion of rights over responsibilities, and by the refusal of each side to listen and hear, or to give the opportunity to listen, to the other: and this applies on both sides. And this means that a rigorous and impartial examination of all of the conflicting arguments must be undertaken. That does not happen. Earlier in this document we have seen that the approaches of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions are dismissed as the work of transgender activists, are claimed not to be based on credible science and the motives of those presenting them are attacked. On the evidence I have presented, I have shown that selective use of science and research is used in attempts to prove that male-to-female transsexuals are generators of their own misfortunes and are at least likely, if not more likely, to engage in violence against women. The statements and other evidence produced by these professional organisations including the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), are discussed only to discredit them. Their evidence is never seriously examined, and their statements are never referred to, or are ignored. No research can have any validity if the hypothesis it seeks to prove is incorrect. The argument is made that *“more research is needed”*. But that fails to have any validity when, the views on the professional organisations are disregarded, documents are removed or edited to cast doubt on existing research, and expert advice is not consulted. I conclude that all these efforts are being made to discredit other approaches to claim proof of a gender-critical ideology. So, instead of attempting to discover a fair and balanced view which considers all opposing approaches, only one theory is adopted, and this supports the gender-critical viewpoint.

The denial of the research and the experiential evidence which has become available over the last sixty years, and the attacks on the integrity of those people who dare to present an opposing view, destroys any hope of an objective approach. These denials also take us back to a time when in line with Christian condemnations, all gender and sexually variant behaviour was being condemned, as intrinsically disordered acts of grave depravity which threaten others, and particularly children, in the pursuit of inappropriate sex. Also, to a time when Margaret Thatcher was launching her own attack on the legitimacy of lesbian and gay relationships, including the popular viewpoint that children should not be taught about transsexuality or homosexuality until some appropriate *“age of maturity”* is reached. That is potentially disastrous, because the time when all gender and sexually variant children and their parents most need help to manage these conditions occurs from early childhood, not later in life. Like the infamous *“Clause 28”* introduced by Margaret Thatcher to condemn *“pretend homosexual relationships”*, it attacks the very foundation stones upon which self-acceptance, self-esteem and self-identity are built.

Almost exactly the same attitudes presented today in the advice which the present United Kingdom Government, the EHRC, and gender-critical groups are now presenting in relation to transgender people: And that arises from the fundamental misdiagnosis of these conditions. In place of compulsive searches of identity it alleges that these conditions are driven by underlying sexual motives where fears of predation, grooming, and recruitment arise. And it implies that all transgender people, including children, should be treated as potential threats: Most notably by enforcing their automatic exclusion of many services and spaces normally used by women. And by seeking to introduce legislation to enforce such separations, purely on the grounds of biological sex. In place of promoting inclusion, the present advice promotes the opportunities for exclusion

which can be justified on the basis of popular vote, and by identity alone. It states that the rights of transgender people must be fully protected and there must be no bullying: It further states that where possible alternative spaces or facilities should be provided: But it no longer gives any statement about if or how these requirements should or must always be enforced. In place of all previous and current understandings, repeated on a worldwide basis, and across international boundaries which, over centuries have made or recognise all gender and sexually variant people, to be one of the most victimised groups in society, it transfers the condemnations of guilt, which should belong to the abusers to the victims instead, and it presents transgender people as the bullies in the current disputes. The EHRC states that it cannot adequately define what the word “*transgender*” means and asks the Government to define it for them. However, it also uses the argument that transgender conditions are perversions or disruptions of a biologically or religiously ordained path of development. And therefore, these conditions, and “*gender identity*” should not be recognised as a “*protected characteristic*” under the 2010 United Kingdom Equality Act.

In a letter to the Guardian on the 20 Feb 2022, defending the EHRC, Baroness Falkner, the Chair of the EHRC, said: “*Where we have modified our position on self-ID for trans people or the Gender Recognition Act, we have done so because new evidence about the tension between trans and women’s rights is emerging*”. These are very sensitive issues in a conflict where I sense that any attempts by either side to accept that there is a genuine belief in the arguments the other believes in, are lost... Where on the one hand the diagnosis of personality variations, now universally adopted by the World Authorities and Professional Institutions, identifies the creation of transgender identities as inwardly focussed and compulsive searches for identity involving the rejection of what is wrong, and do not threaten others: Against the views of opposing gender-critical feminists who, along with many religious groups, instead identify transgender conditions as sexually driven but sublimated personality disruptions, involving motives and feelings of behaviour and desire. Since both the motives and methods of management profoundly differ... to the extent that the approach which one group considers to be that of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably regarded as one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other. Therefore, it is or should be the absolute duty of the EHRC or any watchdog Human Rights body to take an objective view of all conflicting viewpoints, and to ensure that all of these are fully protected. Although the EHRC has taken strong action in individual cases, I argue that the failure is one of policy instead. In place of any consideration of the viewpoints of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions about how transgender people and male-to-female transsexuals in particular should be included within the normal frameworks of society, the advice, which is now given, both for children and adults, ignores their conclusions and maximises the opportunities for exclusion to be enforced.

It is precisely this exclusion and separation from the normal framework of society, which may have encouraged the murderers of Brianna Ghey to engage in their actions: And it is the endorsement of this exclusion in the present Government advice on how children should be treated must cause the greatest concern. It is equally reprehensible for the present Prime Minister Richi Sunak to either apologise or withdraw the comment he made in the House of Commons which supported this Government’s gender-critical policies, particularly when he understood the mother of Brianna was present in the Public Gallery. And it is these failures alone should demand an urgent review of the present Government approach.

Although these concerns in the United Kingdom today relate particularly to transgender adults and children, that is only because the experiences of how lesbian and gay people live their lives have already enabled these transformations to occur. Transgender groups cannot be exempt from this journey because both involve the same crossings. And, for both groups the legitimacies of both journeys must either be either accepted or denied. For as long as both sets of conditions are considered to be sexually motivated perversions or disruptions from a biologically or divinely ordained path of development, both groups will continue to be subjected to the same religious and secular scapegoating. And to the same, sometimes extreme, levels of abuse, persecution, criminalisation, and attacks... not just in the United Kingdom, but in many countries throughout the world.

But that is not the only issue. Currently the United Kingdom Government is pursuing strategies which may involve complete or partial withdrawal of the international and European Conventions on Human Rights in order to proceed with its policies. If that were to happen it would leave only domestic legislation to protect the human rights for all of us. When on the basis of this present evidence, the Government has already interfered with this domestic legislation enshrined in the EHRC to pursue its own policies on transgender matters, we

must be aware of the extent to which the human rights of all of us are being destroyed: and take action to ensure that no such destruction takes place.

8:0 Avoidance and Denial

These are not disputes where any side should be assumed to have evil intent. They are best seen as arguments between two groups of people who earnestly seek the best interests of transgender people, but who come to two very different and opposing views about how transgender children and adults should be treated because of the diagnoses that are made. The attempts by gender-critical and religious groups to enforce an ideology which associates the motives of transgender people with those of sexual abusers, and with those who seek power over women, already creates fears about transgender people's intentions. The angry responses of transexual and transgender people to these challenges further, increases these fears. So that the perpetrators of these conflicts also become infected by the fears they create. These are conflicts which are largely driven by the fears and anger of both sides. However, the major concerns and the great harms arise when either or both sides decide to defy, manipulate, discredit motives of opponents, and to deny any form of impartial arguments, analysis, or discussion to preserve their own ideological approach. Any attempts to avoid, deny, delay to procrastinate or to defer in facing up to any conflict where the motives and methods of management of personality variations and personality disruptions differ to the extent that the approach which one group considers to be that of compassion, acceptance and concern is almost inevitably regarded to be one of grooming, recruitment, and coercion by the other, is simply going to increase the intensity of the disputes.

9:0 The Need for Change

9:1 Objections

Even though religious organisations and feminist groups approach these issues from very different perspectives women and gender and sexually variant people have the same needs. That is to counter the male domination, victimisation and sufferings which have been suffered for centuries by both groups. For the feminist pioneers, along with many others today, an egalitarianism was and is expressed where men and women are differentiated from each other through the performance of gender. In these social interactions, everyone is enabled to cross the gender divide. However, by refusing to separate the expressions of gender from the biology of sex, gender-critical groups create a gender complementarity where the acceptable social behaviour for men and women is instead divided by biological sex. These departures from the stereotypical male and female conventions demanded by society are interpreted as being driven by sexually motivated perversions or disruptions, and as disordered behaviour. Egalitarianism includes the celebration of difference; gender complementarity excludes it. And adopting one or the other can depend greatly on the fears of the unknown which are created. In the present febrile atmosphere created by the present high level of attacks against women and the genuine and urgent need for groups like the "me too" movement, it is only natural that women should be very concerned.

By claiming the first of these but by adopting the second, gender-critical movements deny the views of the feminist pioneers and adopt a misleading approach. Most people define the terms "men" and "women" through the ways in which people interact with society. That is the way in which the feminist pioneers, transgender people, and many of today's feminists all use it. But we also have the terms "male" and "female" to refer to the biology of sex. By identifying "women" as "adult human females" and denying any other, the legitimacy of all transgender identities is denied. That leads to the adoption of a totally false "gender ideology" which claims that transgender people can *somehow* "choose, change, or deny biological sex". By embracing an identification as women, male-to-female transsexuals are alleged to be seeking power over women, attacking their identities, and destroying their sex-based-rights. Thus, nobody can legitimately cross this social and gender divide. Male-to-female transsexuals are also identified as "men" (and vice versa) in many gender-critical statements and literature. Other groups use inappropriate pronouns and may deliberately "deadname" transsexual people.

Today many transgender people use the word "they" in the singular, instead of "he" or "she" to define themselves. But "they" is a gender-neutral collective term: We only have "it" to refer to the singular. And that is

the term the murderers of Brianna Ghey, used to describe her. By denying the use of fitting pronouns the advice now being given in the EHRC documentation and in the present United Kingdom Government Policy, including its advice on transgender children and its proposals to change the constitution of the UK National Health service, do much the same. Nevertheless, gender-critical groups state they extend a welcome to transgender people by arguing that these sexual motives are turned inwards towards themselves. Many more are embracing a non-binary identity and role. While I do support these intentions and freedoms, that is still not the point. The motives are still understood to parallel those of sexual abusers and the conditions are still defined as sexually motivated personality disruptions. As a consequence, fears of predation, indoctrination, and recruitment are generated, and inappropriate methods of management are applied.

In this account male-to-female transsexuals in particular are imagined to be on a journey. The failure by gender-critical groups to believe that these people are genuine in their arguments denies them the possibility of any recognition of the legitimacy of their journey. It does not provide a solution, and it continues the gender wars. The argument that transgender people are deliberately lying is also put forward by some more extreme feminist groups. And trust is totally absent in these disputes. The continued attempts to enforce the diagnoses which, despite the current evidence, still defines transgender conditions... or all gender and sexually variant people in the case of religious organisations as sexually motivated perversions or disruptions of some divinely or biologically ordained path, is not only a feature which is common to these religious and gender-critical groups, it measures the magnitude of the changes in understanding which are required.

9:2 Actions

There are three key areas where these traditional approaches should be challenged. And here both religious and secular elements must be considered. The first is religious and it arises from the dogma that all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour must invariably be considered as intrinsically disordered acts of grave depravity in pursuit of inappropriate sex.

That has led to the subsequent criminalisation and condemnation of all such acts, with extreme penalties being imposed on those who engage in these acts. No change was possible for as long as experiential access was denied. Despite this, attitudes to transgender people have been transformed in countries where access to that experiential evidence has again become available. But the same severe condemnations remain in force in many cultures, countries, and religious traditions, where this is not accepted, or is not available. That paradigm shift has also greatly affected all other religious teaching which involves the relationships between power and sex.

The second is the advances in the medical and scientific understanding of these conditions. Although Sigmund Freud, Jeremy Bentham and some others pointed the way, this did not properly become available until the 1960's when the work of Gallesse, Girard, Dawkins and others showed that innate neural forces drive development forward. These pursue a coherence of identity: And that opposes the assumptions of the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories, which assume that cognition itself acting on a neutral base provides the impetus. Where, in place of seeking a coherence of identity the motives continue to be characterized as desires of sex. Although many of the psychiatrists, psychologists and sociologists who are most likely to be involved in gender clinics and the treatment of the distresses experienced by transgender people do now take account of the nature of these changes, others do not: This has led to the disagreements described in this account, and to the toxicity of the present disputes.

The third consideration relies on the interpretation of the Christian texts. However, a Jewish Rabbi in Palestine had addressed these same issues just over two thousand years ago. In the story of the Centurion and the slave he showed how relationships of love and commitment can cross the boundaries that sex and gender provide. In the passage on eunuchs, he showed how all people who seek to live to the highest standards of the Gospel Message can also cross the boundaries that sex and gender provide. In his teaching on the New Covenant, he further stated that his intention was not to change the Jewish Law, but to interpret it in a way where judgement is now to be based on the grounds of love, virtue, commitment, and intention of the acts. Thereby to introduce an interpretation where all people, whether they be heterosexual, bisexual, lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual who live in ways which are true to their own identities and to the highest standards of the Gospel message are all accepted alike. Where there is no toleration of the abuses of power and the abuses of sex: And where there is no automatic prohibition of any sexual act.

10:0 Conclusions

These are sensitive issues. Any incorrect attack or misdiagnosis of transgender conditions becomes seen as attack either on women's identities or transgender people's identities. In this situation, the maximum respect for differing views is needed, and it is essential to get the diagnoses correct. At present I observe there to be a retreat into traditional values, where the now available advances in theology and psychology continue to be denied. I expect many people will consider the arguments I present in this account to be radical reassessments of conventional understanding: I may be wrong; or I may be right in these, that is now for others to judge, but I believe it is important for all views to be heard. It is also the absolute duty of every Government, Church or Human Rights body take full account of all of the views and arguments encountered in any dispute or conflict, and not to try to hide or dismiss their effects. In today what is a strongly contested dispute, any Government, Church, or any Human Rights Body which is prepared to legislate solely on the grounds of endorsing one set of arguments or theories, while totally disregarding any other, destroys all our Human Rights.

With disagreement is strong as these, it is essential that truly independent and objective and impartial studies which consider all of available evidence are undertaken. That cannot happen when any feminist, medical, and religious group, any Church, Government, or any other organisation seeks to pursue an ideology in defiance or denial of advances in knowledge: including the increasing understanding of science, sociology, history, or other discipline. And who also refuses consider the possible legitimacy of any other approach and dismisses or disparages the motives of those who present them. Equally problematic is the paralysis and inaction which occurs in any organisation, which may genuinely express its good intentions, but who denies or fails to face up to these challenges and advances in understanding and knowledge... and who fails to take them into account. correspondingly important is the harm that is created when misdiagnoses take place, and when the approach of any Government in uncritical pursuit of these ideologies attacks or destroys our human rights.

I am aware that I am presenting a radical and potentially controversial account. But if any argument is to be validated, all of the contesting elements must be fully explored. I may be wrong, or I may be right on any of these matters, but I believe that these are all views which must objectively be heard. If you have any thought-out comments to make please email them to me at spap4144@gmail.com . Please also be aware that all abuse will be reported. Also, I may not respond to every approach.