

# An Examination of Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions, and a Commentary on the Cass Review: Abstract.

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## Abstract

The nature and origins of transgender conditions are currently the subject of an intense dispute between The World Authorities and Professional Medical Institutions who 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”*: against the attitudes of gender-critical feminists, religious groups, and others who define these conditions as *“paraphilias, perversions, or disruptions to the gender role”*. Traditional social learning and psychodynamic theories consider the organising powers of cognition to be the primary force that drives development forward. That is supported by cognitive neurologists, who adopt a similar approach. However, work by anthropologists such as Girard and different neurologists, including Dawkins, Gallese and others from the 1960s onwards have shown that early development is driven by strong, innate and pro-active forces involving possessive imitation, mirror neurons, empathy and the like. These dominate at birth and only progressively come under control as the powers of cognition exert increasing effect. I show that the driving forces identified by Freud are a subset of these innate forces, where in place of the motives of sex, the search is for a coherence of identity which affects the whole personality: And that this has to be established as quickly as possible, to bring order and stability to life. For these reasons, and by definition, theories which rely on cognition, cannot explain pre-cognitive development. By mapping how development takes place during the first three to four years, I show that the that the core elements of personality and identity coalesce from previously fragmented thought during the rapid expansion of neural interconnectivity around a median age of two years: These provide the inner senses of belonging: They also create the ability to separate the self from the other; which is needed before cognition and identification with the gender role can come into effect. That is taken to happen around a median age of three years. While the social learning processes are receptive and cognitive in nature, the psychodynamic processes, identified by Girard, Dawkins and others, are pre-cognitive and strongly pre-active. That has major effect on the rate at which the core elements of personality and identity, including the gender identities are created. For the same reasons, typical or atypical core gender and sexual identities can develop:

In August 2020 the then UK Government commissioned Dr Hilary Cass to conduct an independent review into services for transgender children (The Cass Review). However her decision to adopt as her terms of reference, a definition of gender identification and identity that dates from 1966 which considers only the influence of gender role: together with her disregard of the effects of the major advances and transformations in neural and cognitive links and profiles during the first three to four years of life: even though she considers them when puberty occurs: These, combined with her questioning of the validity and methodology of later research, means that the viewpoints of the World Authorities and Professional Institutions are dismissed in the terms of reference she uses without consideration. Thus, the whole of the Cass report is predicated on her conclusions that the traditional social learning theories provide the only legitimate approach. And by rejecting the psychodynamic element in these approaches I conclude that Cass considers gender identities to develop through social learning alone. Cass is not alone in this. For too long: too many practitioners in the mainstream of psychiatry, sociology and psychology have ignored these innate forces: except where sex is concerned. This failure misdiagnoses transgender conditions. The same denials have led gender-critical feminist groups, right wing political groups, conservative religious groups, some philosophers, and others, to condemn the conclusions of the World Authorities and Professional Medical Institutions, as not being based on credible science and the work of transgender activists. I do accept that Cass is sincere in her intention to act in the best interests of transgender children, but any report which considers only one side of a toxic dispute is not an independent report. The consequences of this for all transgender people are examined in these accounts.

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *““An Examination of the Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions and a Commentary on the Cass Review (Abstract)”*. 255P

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The results of this examination are presented in a family of documents  
This document

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“An Examination of Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions, and a Commentary on the Cass Review: Abstract”*:

<https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassFinalAbstract.pdf>.

(1 page)

All Documents

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions and a Commentary on the Cass Review: Preface to the Series”*:

<https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassFinalPreface.pdf>.

(1 page)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“An Examination of Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions, and a Commentary on the Cass Review: Abstract”*:

<https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassFinalAbstract.pdf>.

(1 page)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“The Cass Review and the Treatment of Transgender Conditions: An Introduction”*:

<https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassTreatmentIntroduction.pdf>.

(11 pages)

The companion presentation is available on

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“The Cass Review and the Treatment of Transgender Conditions: Presentation”*:

<https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassTreatmentSlides.pdf>.

(59 slides)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions: A summary and a Commentary on the Cass Review”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassSummary2.pdf>.

(5 pages)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“A Summary of Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions and a Commentary on the Cass Review”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassFinalSummary.pdf>

(4 pages)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions and a Commentary on the Cass Review: Part 1, Diagnosis”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassTransDiagnosis.pdf>.

(16 pages)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions and a Commentary on the Cass Review: Part 2, Implementation”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassTransImplementation.pdf>.

( pages)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“An Overview of Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions and a Commentary on the Cass Review”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassFinalOverview.pdf>

(20 pages)

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *““An Examination of the Current Disputes on the Natures of Transgender Conditions and a Commentary on the Cass Review (Abstract)”*. 255P

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Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“On the Diagnosis of Transgender Conditions: A Study of Current Understandings and a Commentary on the Cass Review”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/255P-CassFinalCommentary.pdf>  
(63 pages)

The following documents may also be of interest:

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“Why the Present United Kingdom Government Advice on Transgender Children Must be Challenged”*. <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-GovAdviceTransChildren.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2024): *“Transgender Misdiagnoses: EHRC and Government Advice”*: <https://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/040B-MisdiagnosesAndAdvice.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2022): *“Transgender Disputes, Conversion Therapy and Government actions” (Presentation)*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/254p-PresTransDisputesAndGovActions.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2022): *“No Blacks, No Irish, No Homosexuals, No Transgender People”*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/252P-NoBlacks.pdf>

More documents can be accessed and downloaded via the bibliography tab on my website: [www.tgdr.co.uk](http://www.tgdr.co.uk)

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