14 March 2021

Input for the: Report to the 47th session of the Human Rights Council on “Gender, Sexual orientation and Gender identity” by the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender, Office of the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights

Submitted by Isabella Stevenson on behalf of WomenForWomen New Zealand.

WomenForWomen is a relevant stakeholder based in Wellington, NZ, which is tracking and analysing the impact of ‘gender’ and ‘gender identity’ in law and public life in NZ and Australia. ([isabella.stevenson.469@gmail.com](mailto:mcknightlouisa1@gmail.com))

Introduction:

In our submission, we will primarily address ourselves to paragraphs #7, #8, #10 and #11 in your Call for Input.

We would like to begin by drawing the attention of the Independent Expert to problems in the way terms “sex”, “gender” and “gender identity” are used in the Call for Input. He conflates and confuses ‘sex’, ‘gender’ and ‘gender identity’. This has significant negative consequences for women and for lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

* Initially ‘gender’ was used at the United Nations - as elsewhere in the world - to mean biological sex. Some delegates were uncomfortable with the word ‘sex’ and so we got ‘gender mainstreaming’ which is based on an analysis of the needs of women and girls, and the way proposals affect women, differently from men.
* ‘Prior to this, ‘gender’ was used to mean behaviour considered appropriate for women and men, according to their sex, known as sex-role stereotypes. Feminists have focused on breaking down these stereotypes - artificial limits - on what is considered appropriate for men and for women.
* ‘Gender identity’ is a term introduced to serve the purposes of a new ideology, called transgenderism. This replaces the earlier transsexualism, and goes much further in its claims. While transexuals said they “felt like women”, today’s transgenders claim they “**are** women”. Transgenderism posits that people can be “born in the wrong body”, and are really the “opposite sex”. This set of beliefs also states that biological sex - male and female - is not real.
* At the same time, the foundational premise of transgenderism fully depends on the assertion that sex does exist and that it is binary. People who say they are transsexual/transgender must transition by means of chemicals and surgery in order to become the “opposite sex”. Transgender theory reinforces sex as binary by arguing that if a child demonstrates a liking for stereotyped behaviour appropriate to the opposite sex, he must really be that sex, and should transition. Despite this, transgender activists deny the reality of biology or that sex is binary.
* Feminists and others understand that these ideas have codified into a belief system called gender ideology. We speak of these beliefs about sex and gender as ideological in that they form a social or political philosophy in which practical elements are as prominent as theoretical ones. It is a system of ideas that wants to explain the world and to change it. (See: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/ideology-society>)
* Gender ideology promotes the status of people who deny that gender is about sex or sex role stereotypes in order to promote advantages and protections for people who claim a gender identity.
* But it must be noted that there is no way to define “gender identity” by any objective and verifiable criteria. It is unfalsifiable. It is self-referential and defined in so many ways as to be almost meaningless. Yet, politicians and policy-makers are signing on to this ideology and there is already strong evidence that women, lesbians, gay and bisexual people are being harmed by it. (See examples, below.)

Implications for the reliability of data collected though a Call for Input on LGBT:

* It is important to emphasise that by clustering the agendas, needs and goals of homosexual communities (Lesbian, gay male and bisexual) along with the transgender community, the Independent Expert is setting up the Council to gather information that is invalid, erroneous and, as such, unhelpful to the work of the Independent Expert, the Human Rights Council and others who follow this example.
* This is because the Independent Expert has asked for a response to a unified whole - LGBT - which is not unified in any meaningful way, Although it is clear that trans activists framed their initial request to the Council so that the Council would include transgender identity along with sexual minorities (Lesbian, gay and bisexual), they did so in full knowledge that “transgender” is not about sexual attraction, is not a sexual orientation, and that, as they use it, ’gender’ is not a synonym for ‘sex’.
* For real world evidence that this is the case, please refer to the break-away of LGB people from Stonewall. Stonewall was until recently the pre-eminent gay rights organisation in the United Kingdom. Among the founders of the new LGB Alliance UK, are Simon Fanshawe and others who founded Stonewall in 1989.
* Here Fanshawe explains why lesbians, gays and bisexuals must advocate separately from the transgender agenda. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QF8VDw1UNrU&list=UUZRTpE1t3-zcgz4YD7jmONA&index=24> & [www.womenarehuman.com/tension-between-lgb-and-t-spurs-lgb-to-break-away-t-makes-death-threats](http://www.womenarehuman.com/tension-between-lgb-and-t-spurs-lgb-to-break-away-t-makes-death-threats))
* In this submission, we will clearly delineate the interests/impact of legislative proposals on LGB people separately from the interests/impact on Transgender people.
* **Recommendation:** It could be useful for the Council to undertake a comprehensive study that examines the conflict between the demands of transgender people and the rights of a) women and b) lesbian, gay and bisexual people in various countries today.

Matters arising from the definition of terms:

* By conflating and confusing the terms ‘sex’ and ‘gender identity’, the Independent Expert is likely to miss significant developments that are impacting negatively on LGB people and on WOMEN (adult human females), and girls:
* Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are same-sex attracted. The fulfilment of LGB human rights does not involve impeding, reducing, or otherwise impacting on the human rights of another group. This can not be said for the group that talks about being transgender.
* ‘Gender identity’ is a term that rests of a notion of gender that is, in this sense, about feelings. It remains undefined by any objective criteria. We are told that a person’s sense of their gender identity can vary greatly day-to-day. This means gender identity is about self-reporting. It can not be subject to external validation. (No one can tell you what your gender identity is. You decide and declare.) It is therefore of little use in quantitative research and for gathering data that is needed in order to formulate effective public policy. In practice, gender identity is defined in so many different ways as be almost meaningless.
* Transgenderism is not about sexual attraction. A person who says he is trans and presents as opposite to his biological sex generally retains his sexual orientation. A man who claims to be a woman is (almost aways) still the homosexual or heterosexual he was before he transitioned.
* This has implications for the way the claims of transgendered people impact on both heterosexual and lesbian women. (See #7, below.)
* However, transgender activists are seeking, and in some cases succeeding, in replacing “sexual orientation” with “gender orientation” in legislation. Since homosexuality is actually “same sex attraction”, replacing same sex orientation with “same gender attraction”, negates homosexual attraction and erases the legal existence of gay and lesbian people. Some argue that homosexuals themselves are legislated out of existence, in the same way that women are legislated out of existence if men can say they are women.
* In fact, in most countries where transgender activists are succeeding, same gender attraction means that a man who says he’s a woman can say he is a lesbian who wants to have sex with an (actual) lesbian. This is creating a great deal of conflict on the ground where lesbians are now under attack from men claiming to be lesbians. Lesbians are told they are transphobic and bigoted and hateful if they refuse to have sex or be romantically involved with these men. (See the “Cotton Ceiling”.)
* To be transgender, by definition, is to make a claim on the rights of another group. Our example is ‘woman’, which is an adult human female. We all know women are disadvantaged on the basis of our sex. It is solely because of our sex that women are treated in our society in ways that are detrimental to our existence. We are disadvantaged in innumerable ways compared with men as a group - only because we are women.

Types of input sought:

#7: “Examples of narratives of gender ideology, genders or other gender-related concepts have been used to introduce regressive measures that impact on LGBT persons or other communities.”

* In New Zealand, narratives concerning gender ideology, genders and other gender-related concepts are being used to introduce regressive measures that impact on LGB communities and women. Women make up 52% of the global population that (adult human female).
* If men can be women, what are women?
* Transgender activists who assert that men ARE women challenge the very meaning of the word woman. If men are also women, where does that leave women? If a male bodied person with male biology - chromosomes and genitalia, hormones and musculature, and more - is a woman, what are women?
* By seeking to establish the legal meaning of ‘woman’ to also mean a “man who says he is a woman”, women cease to exist in law. (See Self-ID on birth certificates, below.)
* Transgenderism is based on the denial of the material reality of sex. However, sex is determined at the moment of conception. It is a biological reality. It is observed when a baby’s born. It is not assigned and it can not be changed. The meaning attached to sex is socially constructed. In our society, it is constructed to mean women are “inferior” to men.
* Gender ideology chooses to deny biological reality. The claims of men who say they ARE women (albeit women with penises), defies material reality. Their narrative is used to make claims, inform politics and create laws that seek to erase the legal existence of women and dissolve the protected status we give women as a discriminated class of people.
* Such narratives aim to give trans identified men (men-who-say-they-are-women) the same rights and compensatory measures we give to women. These narratives also seek to withdraw the legal, physical and psychological protections societies everywhere accord to women. (See the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women, aka the international bill of rights for women, now ratified by 189 states.) They set transgender rights and gender identity politics at odds and in conflict with women.

Some examples of the “regressive” impacts that are“very harmful” to women in New Zealand:

Allowing men to self-ID as women and get a new birth certificate

* The current Labour-led government is proposing to amend the Birth, Death, Marriage and Relationships Registration Act (1995) as a result of a petition submitted to Parliament by a transgender activist, Allyson Hamblett, in 2014. It “called on the Minister of Internal Affairs to enable adults with intersex conditions and trans and other gender diverse adults to change the sex details on any official documentation to male, female or indeterminate based solely on the individual's self-identification, without any requirement for medical treatment and without the need to resort to a court process”. The petition was signed by 53 people. That tiny group of 53 people have kept up the pressure for these changes, aided by significant funding from groups like the Arcus Foundation and other wealthy trans-identified men.
* The amendments the government wants to pass would:
  + allow any person - not just trans - to self-declare that they were born the sex opposite to their biological sex and be issued with a birth certificate stating this;
  + allow any person - not just trans - to request that all mention of his actual sex be stricken from all official records; and,
  + allow any person - not just trans - who then decides he is really is his biological sex (that was observed at birth) to self-declare, again, and have a third birth certificate issued stating *this* is his actual (biological) sex.
* **So far, the government, following the lead of the Green Party during an attempt to pass the same amendments in 2018, has consulted ONLY with the transgender community and indicates it is unlikely to consult women’s rights groups.**
* The implications for women - and for society - of allowing a male to be registered as a woman and be given a birth certificate saying this are significant. In New Zealand, such a person can already obtain a driver’s licence and a passport in his chosen sex. But birth certificates are foundational documents, proof of one’s actual sex. This is a fundamental departure from practices which help to protect the safety and security of women. If it is no longer legal to question a man’s right to be in female-only spaces, because his birth certificate proves him to be female, society says it is no longer interested in safe-guarding women.
* A government that states a man can be a woman if he says he is (and have a birth certificate saying he is female) sends a message that that government **places little to no value on women**.
* A government that is willing to abolish “woman” as a discrete class of person (“adult human female”) and say “men can also be women” (by completing an online form), also tells women it is not interested in women’s needs. It is not interested in the sex-based harms that befall women every day, including levels of violence against women as reflected in the skyrocketing rates of men’s violence against women in our homes.
* That government says it is not interested in the fact that women are paid less than men simply because they are women. It is not interested in protecting the integrity of women who give birth, or the life chances of women whose talent is athletic, and so much more. If we want men to value women, our government must show us that its MPs value women. It cannot do that and also erase women and eviscerate women’s rights by allowing men to simply say they are women. Our government must lead by example.

In addition, New Zealand’s ability to function will be compromised in the following ways (partial list):

* Transgender ideology has permeated the New Zealand civi service. The **Public Service Commission** which is charged with overseeing, managing, and improving the performance of the State sector recently issued guidance to all government departments suggesting that gender pronouns should be used, and attached to email correspondence. (<https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/our-work/diversity-and-inclusion/pronoun-use-in-email-signatures>)
* People who do not agree with the beliefs embedded in the new transgender ideology are finding themselves in difficulty, despite the claim that use of pronouns is voluntary. Some longtime and well-regarded public servants have lost contracts after they declined to adopt the pronoun rules. (See also - <https://fairplayforwomen.com/pronouns>)
* A further aspect of the diminishing of women and redefining biological males as females takes root in the insistence in trans ideology that “transwomen are women” and women are cis-women. Biological women are relegated to a subset of themselves and men become the other, equal, subset. Feminists are insisting that women are adult human females. And that men are not women. There is of course good reason for this (see following …)
* Transgender narratives are impacting on the work of NZ’s national office of statistics (**Statistics NZ).** Inpreparation for the next national census, it has consulted with “the rainbow community”. In reality, this is with the same small group of transgender activists that the government is consulting with on changes to the birth certificate/self-Id proposals.
* Like the UK Office of National Statistics (ONS), Stats NZ decided to drop the question on ’sex’ and substitute one on ‘gender identity’. This would mean that the invaluable (and expensive) collection of data from every person in NZ would be of significantly-reduced value to social scientists in government, academia and the private sector since in life the fundamental determinant of the way people are treated in society is on the basis of ‘sex’ not ‘gender identity’. Word leaked of the proposal; it was not announced. Protests led to the reinstatement of the ‘sex question’. The ‘sex question’ will be asked in addition to one about how a person identifies his ‘gender’. Hopefully, our once in 10-year census survey will not suffer from individuals deciding to answer both questions simply as they feel like, now that the transgender narrative is part of popular discourse. As our birth certificate proposals show: gender identity can change and a person might wish to change his sex on his birth certificate back to the original, if he feels like it. This certainly renders unusable data needed to devise programmes to aid disadvantaged groups, for example.
* Statistics NZ has announced it will no longer collect sex-based data whenever it is not “absolutely” required to do so. It appears that the only sex-based information this government agency intends to collect is for some areas of health data. Already information on public sector workplace participation and equal pay data is by self-identification. If the situation of women is invisible, why do we need polices to correct unfair and unequal situations between men and women?
* In the United Kingdom, feminists have challenged the Office of National Statistics which made public commitments to keep the answers to ‘sex” but then quietly changed to guidance that accompanies the census survey to say it can be answered according to what is on a person’s driver’s license or passport (which, as we have said, can be changed at will). This case went to court. (<https://fairplayforwomen.com/legal-grounds-fpfw-v-ons> & <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-56338666>.)
* The Director of Fair Play for Women, which brought the suit, says: “Accurate data on sex matters. It matters most to women and girls. We need it. If we don’t have good data on sex we can’t monitor inequalities due to sex, and if we can’t measure it we can’t make good policies to remedy it.”
* The **Ministry of Education**’s new curriculum instructs teachers to tell children that sex is not real and that there are numerous gender identities, including trans; that the sex of children should be ignored; and that transgender children must be able to use the toilet and changing room facilities of their gender.
* It is right that trans people, including children, should be respected and their needs taken care of.
* However, in New Zealand, the only people whose needs are being considered and catered to are transgender. Girls and women have been forgotten, or are being deliberately ignored.
* This guidance from the Ministry of Education directs schools to instil in primary and secondary students beliefs that go against scientific, biological, facts. Children are urged to question stereotypes and assumptions about sexuality. That is good. “Gender norms, gender binaries, gender stereotypes, and sex norms are to be challenged”.
* But then, defying science itself, the Ministry says: “It should not be assumed that sex characteristics at birth always fall into a binary of male or female.” But, of course, they always do, even if they are not easily observed external to the body as in some DSD conditions (disorders of sexual development).
* The guidance also says that that how children choose to “identify” is up to them. They should be allowed to use washrooms or changing rooms that correspond with their chosen identities.
* This presents a daunting situation for female students when boys choose to identify in such a way that groups of males are allowed to use female facilities. Girls having to deal with menstruation in toilets shared by a number of boys who are choosing that day to say they are girls is unconscionable. “Period shaming” and other bullying is on the rise in the UK where gender neutral/mixed sex toilets have been installed in schools. The safety and security - both physical and psychological - that should be a right of female students has been taken away from girls in New Zealand, too.
* Transgender narratives also inform the work of the **Ministry for Women** which has lost its focus on women. It now formulates polices aimed at ensuring that “everyone is equal”. Even before it is legal for people to self-identify their sex, the Ministry for Women has unilaterally re-defined “woman” as including men who say they are women. It is hard to understand how this is allowed to happen but such is the fear of transactivists, and their very wealthy funders, among the political and administrative classes that intimidation is causing people to conform.
* The Ministry for Women no longer focuses on improving conditions for women as a class. This is despite that fact that women still need the kind of positive discrimination polices the Ministry was set up to advance. Women are still under-represented in higher-level jobs. Many women still work in occupations that are more than 80% female. Because society still places less value on work done by women, female-dominated occupations still tend to be lower paid. In New Zealand, the pay gap between men and women remains: at the end of 2019, the average hourly wage for men was $33.89 an hour compared with $29.85 for women.
* **Ministry of Justice** and the **Department of Corrections (Prison Service)** - Even before legislation allows any man to self-identify as a woman and obtain a birth certificate saying he is a woman, men sentenced to serve time in prison are declaring themselves to be women in order to be assigned to women’s prisons.
* The degree of trans-capture of our institutions in New Zealand can not be overstated. It is the reason why it has not been possible to gather definitive statistics on this and other impacts of transgender ideology. Numerous anecdotes indicate the problem is real and the consequences for the health and safety of women are serious. There is no reason to think the dimensions of the problem are different from the United Kingdom where it has been documented. (<https://fairplayforwomen.com/campaigns/prisons> & <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/inmate-sues-government-over-keeping-trans-women-in-prison-t7w2t5lx8> & <https://thecritic.co.uk/keep-men-out-of-womens-prisons>).
* Also in the United Kingdom, there is currently a judicial review of this practice underway. (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/03/03/trans-prisoners-needs-cannot-come-cost-safety-female-inmates> & https://metro.co.uk/2021/03/02/governments-trans-women-prison-policy-to-be-challenged-at-the-high-court-14173451/).

Other impacts of the transgender narratives:

* It used to be in New Zealand that there were a **small number of men** who late in life felt they need to present as women. Most underwent a chemical, medical and surgical process of transition. They lived, as required, for at least two years in their chosen sex before being “certified”. They did not - and those still alive in New Zealand today do not - claim they ARE women. They say they feel like women. They acknowledge that they are male-bodied and can not know what it actually feels like to “be a woman”.
* A younger generation of assertive trans activists do not hold back from claims that they ARE women. And from making legal demands for immediate recognition as such.

#8: Impact of T on LGB: “Initiatives taken in connection with the right to freedom of religion, **belief** or conscience that have limited the enjoyment of human rights of **LGB**T persons (including sexual and reproductive rights).

Here we will draw attention to the negative impacts of gender ideology on the enjoyment of human rights of LGB people. To do this, we will examine the impact of transgender beliefs on the rights of homosexual and bisexual peoples.

* The government of New Zealand is working on a bill banning conversion therapy practices. On 22 February 2021, the media reported: “Minister of Justice, Kris Faafoi, confirmed that the **[Ministry of Justice](https://www.justice.govt.nz/)** is drafting a new piece of legislation to effect the change by making conversion therapy practices a criminal offence, civil offence or both. Faafoi noted that conversion therapy practices, which are undertaken with the goal of changing a LGBTQIA+ person’s sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, cause serious harm to those subjected to it, who are often vulnerable youths.” (<https://www.jurist.org/news/2021/02/new-zealand-to-outlaw-conversion-therapy-practices>)
* The proposed NZ legislation will, like the Change and Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020 recently adopted in Victoria, Australia, correctly outlaw gay conversion practices. Same-sex attraction is an innate and normal sexual orientation. Efforts to change that orientation not only amount to torture but they do not work. Do not try to change what is not broken.
* However, New Zealand’s politicians have indicated that, as in Australia, they will include the very different “conversion” practices for children who say they might be trans in the same bill. The need to undertake medical and surgical treatment in order to be trans is qualitatively different from allowing a gay child to simply be a gay child. It is very hard to understand why the government is bent on ensuring that any child questioning his gender identity would be forced onto the affirmation path ONLY, and started on a life-time’s medicalisation. The NZ legislation is now being drafted; the Victorian legislation adopted recently provides outsized penalties for any person who suggests to a child that they might wait or perhaps get help to sort out their other problems before beginning to transition. No one will be able to help a child with gender dysphoria EXCEPT by medicalisation.
* Some transgender activists claim there are churches in New Zealand which still use abhorrent practices to scare lesbian and gay children into “being” straight. If this is still happening, the behaviour should be reported and charges brought under the Crimes Act which is set for this purpose. However, there is some doubt that churches do continue these practices. It is more likely that trans activists are using the old idea of LGB conversion practices which everyone has heard of, and which used to be common, as a cover for the very different “ban on conversion” of children who say they are trans.
* Linking legislation that bans conversion therapies on the basis of sexual orientation (for LGB people) with gender identity (transgender people) makes it easier to ban - under threat of severe legal penalty - anyone from offering or even talking about alternatives for children who say they are “really the opposite sex”. And people, even politicians, think they understand what is meant by “gender identity conversion practices” when in fact they are remembering the scandalous stories about gay conversion.
* It would be reasonable to think that trying various therapies to make a child comfortable in his own body would be preferable to immediately converting him to a medical pathway. You would think that talking to the child would be a reasonable response to his declaration that he might be a girl. Talk therapy is a very reasonable and effective precursor to the medicalisation of children reporting gender dysphoria, if not a substitute for it. But under this bill, talk therapy - indeed even a parent’s asking a child to wait before transitioning - will be outlawed with heavy penalties for those who defy it.
* Right now, the overwhelming majority of children saying they might be trans are girls. (<https://rtd.rt.com/stories/transgender-boom-among-teenagers-perils-of-gender-dysphoria>) In fact, this bill is part of an all-out effort to ensure the marginalisation of women and girls, and their rights, as subservient to gender identity.

The impact of allowing people who say they are transgender on the rights of LGB include, but is not limited to:

“Transing" the gay away

* The impact on LESBIANS. This Bill is bad for women and particularly bad for girls. It can also be seen to be driven by homophobia. The majority of girls who say they are gender dysphoric turn out to be “really lesbian”. There is evidence that there are numbers of parents who say they “prefer to have a trans son than a lesbian daughter”.
* The banning of any therapeutic help for a child who is confused or under pressure for her sexual orientation is simply cruel - both for the young person and for those around her who want her to be free to be her gay authentic self.
* Affirmation of a girl’s sense that she should be a boy, as the only option legally allowable, starts that girl on a conveyor belt - first puberty blockers, then cross sex hormones, double mastectomy and perhaps phalloplasty. Mutilating girls’ bodies through disfiguring surgery, like mastectomies, can not be seen as affirming.
* If an identity needs to be chemically and surgically altered and maintained in order to BE affirmed, it simply can not be “natural”. If an identity requires a life-time of drug-taking - which in other situations is considered undesirable - it can not be a “natural state”.
* It is now known that most girls presenting as gender dysphoric also suffer from depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, and anorexia. Many are on the autism scale. They come from homes that are difficult, sometimes violent and often dysfunctional in other ways. None of these have anything to do with “really being a boy”. These issues MUST be taken care of before a child is “affirmed” in its notion of the body it was meant to be born in. The evidence is that gender affirming treatment does very little to resolve children’s gender dysphoria. (<https://quillette.com/2020/01/17/why-i-resigned-from-tavistock-trans-identified-children-need-therapy-not-just-affirmation-and-drugs>)
* Evidence from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia indicates that kids finding themselves uncomfortable with their pre- or pubescent bodies find a community of transgender people online - many of them adult male - who are very encouraging of the young person who is starting to feel that maybe she is in fact a boy. From there, there is a great deal of pressure on the young person to pursue transitions.
* The question is why will ANY BEHAVIOUR OTHER THAN accepting the child is transgender be banned under the legislation that is now being drafted in New Zealand. Taking some time to make sure a child knows what he is getting himself into does not prevent him from ultimately making a transition. It does - reports indicate - help the majority of children suffering normal confused feelings about puberty but who have a good chance of being on the autistic spectrum, or from troubled - perhaps violent or neglectful homes - or otherwise suffering from conditions that have nothing to do with being transgender.
* It is worth noting that the people who are consulting with the NZ government on this bill are adult trans-women. Transwomen are men. They have a particular political agenda. They can point to children who are “really trans” to validate their own claims that their late transition is “normal”, that they would have transitioned earlier had that been possible. Evidence shows that adult men transition for reasons that have little to do with “being born in the wrong body” and more to do with preferred sexual practices.

The impact on lesbians.

* Most men and woman who transition retain their sexual orientation, which is innate. So men who transition go looking for sexual and emotional relationships with women. This is becoming a significant problem for lesbians in New Zealand as well as other countries.
* Such men insist on attending lesbian social groups that meet in public places. In Ponsonby, Auckland, a group for lesbians who work in professional jobs has been dealing with the unwanted attendance of two men, dressed as women, who are looking for intimate relationships. The men say they are lesbians.
* As in many other cases, these transwomen (men), who have undergone no transition of any kind, have weakened the group, some of whom are intimidated by the fear they will be called transphobic or bigoted for asking the men to leave.
* Most of the group want the men to leave. Some do not want a confrontation and prefer to act as though the men are not there. The men’s persistence is making this increasingly difficult. For the time being, the group continues to meet because the women do not want to lose it. It is a welcome chance to meet others lesbians. It reduces social isolation. If the group were forced to retreat into someone’s home, it would no longer be able to advertise in local media as a place for lesbians to find others. It would be a private group only. Another loss to women as a result of transgender ideology.
* The determination of men to say they are women and to even say they are lesbian is having an impact on the mental health of lesbians. Without the kind of support that social groups like the one in Ponsonby provide, lesbians are much more likely to be socially isolated.
* The mental health of Lesbians is further endangered by the transgender narrative which holds that a male-bodied lesbian has a “lady-dick” and accuses lesbians of being transphobic for not wanting to have sex with men who say they are women. Transgender narratives ignore the fact that lesbianism is about same-sex attraction - about women being attracted to women, not men. It refuses to acknowledge the scientific fact that men can not be women, no matter how they choose to identify.
* The harassment of lesbians by men who say they are lesbian can be brutal in real life. But that doesn’t begin to describe how lesbians are treated on social media and other online spaces. Safe space for lesbians is being reduced by men who say they are women and lesbian.
* These men are overwhelming lesbian dating sites which lesbians need in order to meet other women. In this piece, Graham Linehan, a heterosexual man who is one of the strongest allies of women, creates a lesbian profile and gets onto a lesbian dating site to show that men like him are able to harass gay women in this sphere. (<https://grahamlinehan.substack.com/p/i-got-back-on-her?token=eyJ1c2VyX2lkIjoxMzk5NzgxOSwicG9zdF9pZCI6MzI4NTY1NDksIl8iOiJnTC9hUCIsImlhdCI6MTYxNDA5OTM5NiwiZXhwIjoxNjE0MTAyOTk2LCJpc3MiOiJwdWItNjczMDkiLCJzdWIiOiJwb3N0LXJlYWN0aW9uIn0.L7D6Z9fr4UfPJcgVAEUHrc8vy_YQhfPteWcL1b2bqEs&fbclid=IwAR2-WvWzp-8VJYFkRdYzOqJ3dvhniaZe41ClqoABD48xRiJTPx-rzSstRWA0>)

#10: Which people argue that defending the human rights of LGBT people furthers gender ideology? What are their arguments? Have they reversed the human rights of LGBT individuals? Have their strategies directly or indirectly impacted the human rights of women and girls?

* Feminists understand that transgender ideology is regressive. It means a return to outdated ideas of what is stereotypically acceptable for men and for women.
* We defend the right of transgender people live safely and in full enjoyment of the human rights accorded to the rest of us. But we realise that the global movement fuelling transgender ideology has goals and aims that are harmful to most of us, women and men, and to society as a whole. We suggest that the evidence of the impact of demands being made by activists advancing transgender ideology demonstrates that politicians and policy-makers should review critically the demands now being made of them.
* In most areas, many cited here, the narrative is almost entirely: “How can we make things better for our trans and gender diverse youth?” There is no mention of any countervailing interest in the quality of life for women. For some time now, any narrative about women’s rights has disappeared from public discourse.
* Yes, many of the actions taken in the name of defending the human rights of T people furthers gender identity ideology and harms women and girls.
* The impact on women and girls of polices, programmes and practices designed to improve the quality of life for trans and gender diverse is not addressed. More seriously, women (and men) who do want to raise it are denigrated and more.
* One popular trans narrative is that trans people don’t want separate facilities since that would make them feel discriminated against/different. Instead they want to see the facilities of the “gender they identify with”.
* However, society has long agreed that facilities like toilets, changing rooms, locker rooms and other public spaces used for intimate activities should be single-sex. We do this precisely because of the intimate nature of the behaviour that needs to happen in those spaces.
* In New Zealand, the Department of Education was captured early by transactivists whose narratives led to the conversion of girls’ toilets in schools to “gender neutral” facilities. When applied to the conversion of women’s single sex spaces so they are also used by men and boys, the term “gender neutral” actually means “mixed sex”. It is worth noting that it is often only girls’ facilities that are converted to “mixed sex”; the boys keep their single sex spaces.
* The NZ Department of Education’s own guidelines for mixed toilets acknowledge a serious issue when boys are permitted to use girls’ facilities. “Toilets areas are configured to provide high levels of passive surveillance, but without compromising cubicle privacy. Passive surveillance can reduce the opportunity for bullying and other antisocial behaviour.” (<https://www.education.govt.nz/school/property-and-transport/projects-and-design/design/design-standards/toilet-reference-design>
* We must focus on the impact of forcing women to share toilets with men or boys. (<https://speakupforwomen.nz/sufw_press_release/ministry-of-education-guidelines-undermine-human-rights-act>)
* Allowing boys to share toilets and changing areas with girls has been only negative for girls so far. Some of the more serious consequences include:
* Boys bullying and period-shaming girls. Girls are forced to deal with menstruation and disposing used products while hounded by groups of curious and often cruel boys who are allowed into girls’ toilets.
* Girls refuse to go to school and their education suffers.
* Increasingly, there are reports of girls refusing to go to school in order to avoid toilets altogether. This means the education of girls is compromised. Is the ultimate goal of the transgender narrative to regress women’s educational progress so that overall women do less well in society? It is a reasonable question given the cost of accommodating boys that is being paid by girls.
* In poorer countries, like Kenya, the international community still invests significant resources to build female-only toilets so that girls will feel safe and therefore will be willing to go to school. In New Zealand, we are doing the opposite. We are complying with the narrative of activists who say that boys are girls, if they say they are, and should be allowed in girls’ toilets. We are telling New Zealand’s young women: we do not care about your need to feel safe or free from harassment in an intimate situation.
* Clearly this impacts even more on girls who come from conservative and/or religious families where sharing intimate spaces with the opposite sex is forbidden.
* Girls refuse to drink all day so they do not have to use the toilet. As a result, they develop urinary tract and other infections because they “hold on” rather than going to toilets also used by boys.

#11: Examples of coalitions working together to resist attacks on gender ideology? Examples of feminist and LGBT and other groups working together? With what kinds of frameworks, arguments and results?

* As is doubtless clear by now, feminists and others on both the political left and the right are not “resisting attacks on gender ideology”. Feminists are working with LGB groups that also understand gender ideology to be harmful to women and girls. Feminists and LGB groups understand that gender ideology is a belief system that is harmful to society and must be resisted for all our sakes.
* There is a growing understanding that the aims of gender ideology go beyond the immediately obvious. It is suggested that transgender narratives about children being “born in the wrong body” and a “boy with a girl’s brain” and a boy who is “really a girl” are part of the larger goal of creating a large pool of individuals who will be life-long, paying, customers of the pharmaceutical industry and medical profession.
* In New Zealand last year alone there were some 500 children referred for gender transition treatment. This in a population of only just 5 million people.
* Acceptance of the narratives of transgender ideology means there will be a large group of sterilised, infertile people in our society, many of whom will never experience sexual pleasure and - findings show - will live in significant pain as their bodies atrophy and bones crumble even from an early age (see early onset osteopenia).
* Narratives about being “born in the wrong body” are used to justify the behaviour of adult males who decide to transition. If young children can be “born in the wrong body”, then obviously men who have been denied the opportunity to live as their true self because of societal constraints, can argue that they, too, are “really women”.
* It is strongly held that the majority, if not all, of adult male transgender individuals are autogynephiles - they are sexually aroused by the *idea* of themselves as women. While some trans narratives attempt to discredit this theory, the majority of adult males who say they are trans do appear to be obsessed with the rituals and behaviours consistent with regressive notions of femininity. (<https://quillette.com/2019/11/06/what-is-autogynephilia-an-interview-with-dr-ray-blanchard>) Perusal of social media sites frequented by trans-identified males supports this notion.
* Just as important to feminists is the fictional narrative constructed by transgender theory about girls (and boys) who refuse to conform with regressive sex-role stereotypes. Feminists have worked for years to break down the hold of these have over our behaviour. Now transgender narratives seek to normalise these stereotypes by maintaining that if a child displays them they must “transition” to the opposite sex to which they apply. If a girl likes trucks and guns, engages in what used to be called tomboy behaviour, wants to wear clothes and hair styles generally considered more appropriate for the opposite sex, then clearly she must BE the opposite sex. And so begins the life long medicalisation of children.

The silencing of anyone who disagrees with gender ideology:

* A media black-out in New Zealand means it is hard to discuss these issues publicly but groups working in the field provide many examples. Larger numbers of young people who underwent transition in their early 20’s are now realising they were misguided in how they saw their problems. They are rejecting a life of drugs and trying to de-transition. Many have done irreversible damage - double mastectomies, damage to their IQs, stunted physically, “stuck” in pre-puberty. They can only try to make the best of it, having come to terms with the problems they had in adolescence. Many blame the adults who shunted them into transgender treatment when what they needed was a good therapist. #

In the United Kingdom, where women’s sex-based rights are protected under the Equality Act (2010), a vote by the Green Party on whether to support women’s sex-based rights found a majority against. (<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-green-party-s-growing-contempt-for-women-s-rights>, 8 March 2021)