

Memorandum

Date: July 22, 2022

To: Allies in opposing legal sex change

From: Twiss Butler and Patrick Butler

Subject: 4th step – Please don't say gender when you mean sex!

We oppose the trans idea of legal sex change and think that using the word *gender* when *sex* is meant confuses the public about what trans means. This confusion can be ended, we argue, if the use of *gender*—alone or combined with other words—is ended. This ending—including of *gender*'s use as a synonym for sex roles and sex-based stereotypes as well as for *sex*—is also argued by Laura Lecuona in a scholarly [paper](#). Her paper quotes Sheila Jeffreys and others in making its case. Our case for eschewing the word *gender* is made below using annotated quotations from Helen Joyce's book *Trans*.

Using *gender* in a label:

This is a book about an idea, one that seems simple but has far-reaching consequences. The idea is that people should count as men or women according to how they feel and what they declare, instead of their biology. It's called *gender* self-identification...[A]nd it is the identity, not the body, that should determine how everyone else sees and treats them. [Introduction, italics added.]

When *sex* is meant:

Gender self-identification, however, is a demand for validation *by others*. The label is a misnomer. It is actually about requiring others to identify you as a member of the *sex* you proclaim. [Introduction, italics original.]

When the goal of trans promoters is confusingly mislabeled:

What campaigners mean by 'trans rights' is *gender* self-identification: that trans people be treated in every circumstance as members of the *sex* they identify with, rather than the *sex* they actually are. [Chapter 11, italics added]

When change in legal *sex* is confusingly mislabeled:

[I]n 2014 [the Open Society Foundation] supported 'License to be Yourself', a guide to campaigning for national *gender* self-ID laws. This argued...that children of any age should be able to change their legal *sex* at will. [Chapter 11, italics added]

How to unconfuse the public about the meaning of legal *sex* change can be shown by a systematic editing of labels: Simply remove the word *gender* (as shown by striking through it) and insert the word *sex* (as shown by underlining it) as in the following bulleted examples.

- demanding that self-declared ~~gender~~ sex identity be allowed to override *sex*
- To think about how attitudes towards ~~gender~~ sex self-identification might develop,
- for the activists, it is transphobic not to accept people as the ~~gender~~ sex they claim.
- half of British voters thought people should be 'able to self-identify as a different ~~gender~~ sex to the one they were born in'. But two-thirds said legal *sex* change should

only be possible with a doctor's sign-off, [Obviously, the use of sex instead of gender in the poll would have strongly reduced the approval of self-identifying.]

- demonstrating widespread confusion about what being trans means, and that support for trans people does not imply support for self-declaration of an opposite-sex identity overriding reality.
- objection to ~~gender~~ sex identity overriding sex – is nothing like homophobia

[The first example is from the Introduction and the rest are from the Conclusion]

What trans promoters are seeking—and getting—is legal sex change. This “change” makes treating trans people as if they really were the opposite sex required of everyone. The burdens of this requirement would be much more obvious if what promoters of opposite-sex identities want were labeled “sex” instead of “gender.” In other words, what trans promoters really want is sex self-ID, but they succeed in this by deceptively labeling what they want as “gender” self ID. They say gender but mean sex.

In conclusion and with respect, we suggest to our allies in opposing legal sex change, that if your blog and interview platforms were to replace gender labels with sex labels, these replacements would increase significantly the platforms' effectiveness in alerting the public to the negative consequences of legalizing opposite-sex identities. That is, don't say gender when you mean sex. Or, as our “masters' words” 1st step memo argues, repeating your opponents' self-serving words just normalizes them and confuses the public.
