

Ellie's story: A first-hand account of child sexual exploitation

Ellie was groomed from the age of 12 and was subsequently a victim of human trafficking and child sexual exploitation for seven years. She describes being trafficked as a 'life sentence'. Now a young woman of 23, she experiences regular flashbacks to the trauma she suffered and lives with ongoing medical complications.

Family Education Trust (FET) trustee, Sarah Carter, recently talked Ellie through the recommendations of the FET report Unprotected. Ellie welcomed the publication, and particularly appreciated the recommendations in relation to applying the age of consent in professional practice.

In Ellie's own words...

There were so many times as a young girl I would walk into a pharmacy, or the doctors, and could very easily get contraception without being questioned as to why, at the age of 12 and throughout my teens, I would even be in the position to need it. It was the same for so many of the other girls too. You could get it for someone else and they wouldn't have a clue or they just didn't care.

There's a reason that 'consent' has an age limit. You wouldn't put many life choice responsibilities into the hands of a kid and expect them to be able to fully grasp the concept of the decisions they are making.

So why is it so different when it comes to sex? How can a kid of 12 fully understand everything about it, what is right, wrong, safe or legal? No child is able to consent to something they can't fully understand.

I still can't understand my own experiences and I'm now 23, so how a young teenage child can be seen as able to consent by authorities is unbearable to accept.

If just once through those seven years one person was to question the behaviours they were seeing, or the warning signs right in front of them, then I would've had so much more of a chance of being allowed to be a child that wasn't exploited. But instead you get overlooked, ignored and become hidden by the authorities that are meant to look beneath the surface and protect.

Police, teachers, social workers etc who just think, 'She's just another one of those naughty, rebellious kids. Out and about all hours drinking, getting into trouble and putting herself around. She's too much to deal with.'



Sarah Carter, telling Ellie's story at the FET annual conference in central London on Saturday 24 June.

But they should've been asking: 'Why? What is happening to make her be this way? There has to be more to this.' You'd be surprised at how many kids underneath all that hardness actually just want someone to look long enough to see something isn't right, and they need protecting from something.

That first time I went to get the morning-after pill and a pack of condoms I was 12. If someone had stopped me and said, because of your age we need to bring your parent, carer or social worker in for you to have this, the next seven years I probably wouldn't have been an exploited child. But it's too easy to get hold of contraception without any questions or care, and then you slip under the radar and it's too late.

'Ellie' is a pseudonym. She lives in constant fear of her former abusers finding her and for that reason is unable to contact her family or friends. If she could speak out in public, she would.



● **Norman Wells, *Unprotected: How the normalisation of underage sex is exposing children and young people to the risk of sexual exploitation*** 152pp pbk, available from Family Education Trust
Price: £7.50 + £1.50 p&p.



World Congress of Families

Louise Kirk reported on the World Congress of Families summit, held in Hungary in May. The event was sponsored by the Hungarian Government and addressed by the Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán. There was evidence of concern in Hungary about both demographic decline and the effects of family breakdown, combined with a desire to strengthen marriage and encourage fertility. Mrs Kirk left the conference with two thoughts:

1. Eastern Europeans are not innocents. They have lived through attacks on the family under communism and are coming out the other end. They are strong in their commitment, and give all of us great reason for hope.
2. The World Congress movement is gaining momentum. There is an impressive amount of shared research and expertise, with experts in many countries.



Challenge Team UK

Sue Relf reported that in 2016/17, the Challenge Team had given its presentation to over 7,000 more young people, bringing the total audience reached since 2005 to 147,000. The team continues to receive positive responses to its hour-long interactive presentation aimed at equipping and inspiring young teenagers to consider the benefits of saving sex for marriage. One young woman wrote:

Hi ... you spoke at my school a couple of years ago and completely inspired me to reconsider my self worth and respect myself when making choices on intimacy! For this I am so great full (sic) as it has saved me a lot of possible heart break. I just thought I would drop you a message of gratitude and for you to know how your work has an impact on many people's lives even years later. For this I am forever grateful.

A pastoral tutor from a city university recently told Mrs Relf that 99 per cent of the problems that students report to her have to do with their sexual relationships.



Lovewise

Dr Maxwell regularly visits three primary schools and two secondary schools in the Basingstoke area, giving lessons on marriage, relationships and sex, using materials produced by Lovewise. At a recent parents' meeting, parents were very enthusiastic about the resources and a number purchased copies of the Lovewise books that accompany the teaching material.

The range of resources available from Lovewise may be viewed on its website at <http://lovewise.org.uk/> and Dr Maxwell encouraged Family Education Trust supporters to get in touch for more information or to suggest schools that may welcome Lovewise materials.



Northern Ireland

Mary Russell expressed the hope that the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), with its pro-life stance and its support for traditional family values would exercise a positive influence on the minority Conservative government at Westminster.

She noted that the leaked version of the Labour Party manifesto stated a commitment 'to ensure a woman's right to choose a safe, legal abortion – and we will extend that right to women in Northern Ireland'. However, after strong reaction from pro-life groups, the final version promised to 'work with the Northern Ireland Assembly' to achieve this goal.

During the year, Mrs Russell had contributed to media discussions on a number of issues, including Amnesty International's drive to liberalise Northern Ireland's abortion laws, the increased incidence of swearing on screen and in public, and the trend to dress little girls in burlesque-type garments.



Ireland

David Quinn reported on proposals by the Irish government to amend the gender recognition law so that teenagers as young as 16 can declare themselves to be whatever they identify as without parental consent. Under the plans, younger children would be able to identify as something other than their biological birth sex with parental consent.

There is a huge propaganda campaign to scrap the Eighth Amendment, which declares: 'The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right.' A referendum on abortion was planned for 2018.

AGM and conference Saturday 24 June 2017

This year's AGM and conference was again very well-attended, with supporters flocking to central London from virtually all corners of the British Isles.

In his opening address, Family Education Trust chairman, **Arthur Cornell**, gave a broad overview of some of the key issues that had arisen in relation to the welfare of children and young people in the previous year. He referred to various ways in which the transgender agenda was having an impact on school policies, the increase in the incidence of online grooming and bullying, the pressures reported by social services due to a record number of 'problem parents', and the rise in the number of alcohol-related deaths amongst young women.

Mr Cornell expressed concern about the long-term consequences of the high proportion of births outside marriage and cited the findings of an international study on cohabitation which demonstrated that levels of family instability are higher in areas where more children are born to single parents or cohabiting couples. He noted that instability is costly economically, socially and personally.

On a more hopeful note, Mr Cornell observed that recent research into Generation Z (those born since 2001), suggested that it may be the most socially conservative generation since the Second World War, in terms of attitudes towards same-sex marriage, transgender rights and cannabis legislation. There was also evidence of a more prudent approach to saving and spending than in any generation in the post-war period.

Mr Cornell encouraged supporters to continue communicating the truth about marriage and stable family life in such a way that young people can evaluate the truth for themselves, and so that parents will know that they are not alone in encouraging their children to challenge an oppressive culture and take responsibility for their own decisions.

Three challenges

In his director's report, **Norman Wells** focused on three challenges:

- The challenge to family freedoms as a result of a creeping totalitarianism;
- The challenge to our understanding of marriage and the family, presented by the sexual revolutionaries and transgender activists; and
- The challenge to the safety of children and young people, as seen in the way that relaxed attitudes towards underage sexual activity among professionals are exposing minors to the risk of abuse and exploitation.

An extract from Mr Wells' report will be found on page 3 of this bulletin.

The challenge to our understanding of marriage and family

An extract from Norman Wells' report at the 2017 AGM

Once upon a time, marriage was pretty much universally regarded as the lifelong union of a man and a woman, the family was the basic unit in society, consisting of a father and a mother and their children, and if you were born a boy, you would grow up to be a man, and if you were born a girl, you would grow up to be a woman.

But now if you say such things, you can find yourself accused of homophobia, transphobia and bigotry, and run the risk of being charged with some kind of hate crime.

It's easy to forget sometimes that this 'once upon a time' was not some far-off mythical fairy-tale world, but the real world of not so long ago. The pace of change has been rapid and it has accelerated markedly since the advent of same-sex marriage only a few years ago.

As Patricia Morgan predicted:

'The coming of same-sex marriage portends a speeding up of change well under way throughout all and every aspect of society. Increasingly the power that pressure groups wield throughout the legislature, education, media and political machinery will move beyond combating the toxicity of homophobia to concentrate on the even greater task of eliminating heterosexism or heteronormativity.'

But how do you set about getting people to abandon self-evident truths that have been acknowledged for millennia? And how do you persuade people to exchange a recognition of those objective realities for a belief-system that is at variance with human nature and experience?

There are many weapons in the armoury of the sexual revolutionaries, but one of their key tools is the education of the young, and, specifically, the sex education of children.

That is why the government's plans in connection with statutory Relationships Education in primary schools and Relationships and Sex Education in secondary schools are potentially so dangerous.

The question of definition

Relationships Education. It sounds completely harmless and innocuous. Talking to primary school children about their relationships to their mother and father, their brothers and sisters, their grandparents, their aunts and uncles, their friends, and their pet rabbit – surely there's no harm in any of that!

After all, the legislation insists that pupils should learn about *safety* in forming and maintaining relationships, the characteristics of *healthy* relationships, and how relationships may affect physical and mental *health and well-being*. And the teaching will have to be 'approp-

riate having regard to the age and the religious background of the pupils'.

So what's the problem?

Simply that Relationships Education has yet to be defined, either in law or in statutory guidance. Ministers have said that the Department for Education *expects* Relationships Education to 'focus on themes such as friendships, different types of family relationships, bullying, and respect for other people', but an expectation is not the same as a definition.

More ominously, ministers have also declared that the Department expects all schools to ensure that young people, 'whatever their developing sexuality or identity, feel that Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education are relevant to them and sensitive to their needs'. The department envisages 'working with organisations who represent LGBT communities and who are already supporting schools in this area.' Specific reference is made to working with Stonewall and the Terrence Higgins Trust.

There is therefore every reason to fear that under the guise of Relationships Education, primary schools could be required to teach pupils aged 4-11 about same-sex relationships, transsexualism and all manner of 'alternative lifestyles'.

The parental right of withdrawal

Since the government considers Relationships Education non-contentious, it has said that parents will not be able to withdraw their children from it. So a primary school could use Stonewall material and other resources setting out to normalise same-sex relationships, same-sex parenting, transsexualism and gender-reassignment, and there is nothing that parents will be able to do to protect their children from it.

The situation with regard to the parental right of withdrawal from Relationships and Sex Education in secondary school is different though. In that connection, the minister stated:

'For those parents who still prefer to provide this education themselves, we absolut-



ely intend to retain a right to withdraw from sex education.'

Notice the word 'absolutely' in the above sentence. The parental right of withdrawal from Relationships and Sex Education (albeit NOT from Relationships Education) is absolute. Or is it? The minister continued:

'We will, as part of this, need to amend the current right to withdraw to make sure it remains in line with case law, and we will consult further in order to clarify the age at which a young person may have the right to make their own decisions about whether to withdraw from that aspect of their education or not.'

So the 'absolute' intention to retain the right of parental withdrawal is not as 'absolute' as the minister at first indicated. Whether the government's intention is 'relatively absolute' or 'absolutely relative', I'll leave you to judge!

It would appear that the government is planning to limit the parental right of withdrawal in some way, possibly by transferring the right of withdrawal to the child at a certain age, as yet unspecified.

But some want to go even further. Lord Alli, the first openly homosexual member of the House of Lords, has recently written:

'In my time in the Lords, I've worked with the Tony Blair government to equalise the age of consent, repeal Section 28, approve adoption rights for same-sex couples, introduce civil partnerships and pass the first gender recognition act. David Cameron took up the baton and passed the Equal Marriage Act.'

'Now we need to do more to support our young people with compulsory, age-appropriate sex and relationship education in all our schools and end the parental opt-out.' (emphasis added)

When the government launches its consultation on regulations and draft statutory guidance later this year, we shall need to be vigilant and active in the face of something that presents a challenge to our understanding of marriage and family life.

Does English Law need 'marriage'?

Professor Julian Rivers

Should the law recognise marriage, and should it attach rights and duties to the distinctive status of marriage? In many respects these are strange questions to ask, since there is no prospect of major reform in the near future.

Although the Law Commission has stated that there is a 'dire need' to reform the law in relation to the *process* of marriage ('how and where couples marry') there is no indication that Parliament has any appetite for changing the *legal status* of marriage itself.

But while it is not a pressing issue as a matter of pure practical politics, it remains a relevant question nonetheless, since a growing number of academics are proposing that the law should get out of marriage.

Arguments for de-legalisation

There are three groups of arguments for de-legalising marriage in the academic literature:

(a) Libertarian arguments

Libertarians argue that the law should not impose a single view of marriage as a life-long monogamous union upon the entire population, but that individuals should be free to design their own relationships as they choose. Without the single package of assumptions inherent in current marriage law, contracts could be tailor-made to suit the individuals concerned. Such a contract could specify the duration of the 'marriage' and the number of people involved, and include an arbitration clause for the resolution of conflict.

(b) Egalitarian-feminist arguments

Believing that marriage is an oppressive patriarchal institution, egalitarian-feminists favour the removal of the legal framework in order to end what they view as state reinforcement of patriarchy and 'heteronormativity'.

(c) Christian arguments

Christians who favour the state getting out of marriage altogether do so on the basis of a belief that marriage is fundamentally a religious ordinance, conducted in the sight of God and the church, and that the involvement of the law represents an inappropriate form of entanglement between church and state. Removing marriage from the jurisdiction of the law would disentangle what they regard as an inappropriate church-state relationship.

There are certain parallels between the process of religious liberty since the 17th century and the more recent process of marriage law reform. The late 17th and 18th centuries saw an *expanding toleration* in which different denominations did not attempt to persecute each other out of existence. This led to *equal recognition* for Roman Catholics and Nonconformists during the 19th century, which in turn led to a growing *separation* between the church and state in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

A similar pattern can be observed in relation to marriage. First, there was an

expanding toleration of unconventional relationships and sexual minorities, marked by the removal of criminal sanctions. Toleration has now given way to the present phase of *equal recognition*, and the logical consequence is to take the third and final step and *separate* marriage from the state altogether.

Historic trends in English marriage law

Elements of all three arguments can be seen in the development of the law governing marriage:

- (a) Marriage law has become a little more contractual. We are more free to design our own relationships than we were, say, 20 years ago.
- (b) Certain of the patriarchal elements of old English marriage law have been removed.
- (c) In some respects marriage has been separated away from state interests.

The history of English marriage law is one of the gradual removal of the historic common law consequences of marriage and, since the 1930s, the gradual creation of equivalent consequences for cohabitation.

Common law consequences of marriage

The historic common law on marriage was informed by two key doctrines: the doctrines of spousal unity and consortium.

• Spousal unity

Upon marriage, the husband represented the family unit for the purposes of the outside world. Although most of this ceased to apply after the late 19th century, echoes of it remain. For example, if two people plot together to commit a criminal offence they can be charged with conspiracy, but not if they are husband and wife. Likewise, a husband and wife cannot sue each other without the express permission of the judge. There are only limited circumstances in which a husband and wife can testify against each other in a criminal trial. The same restrictions do not apply to cohabitants.



• Consortium

A husband and wife have a right to share each other's 'bed and board'. Under the common law, this could be compelled and a husband could force his wife to return to the matrimonial home by law. This has largely been abolished, but there is an echo of it in that married people can apply for an order of judicial separation. No such order is available to cohabitants. The fact that desertion still evidences irretrievable breakdown reflects the expectation that married couples should be together.

Creation of equivalent consequences for cohabitation

In a whole range of areas the law has come to treat cohabiting couples in the same way as married couples.

- In the case of bankruptcy, the law treats the ownership of marital property in the same way, regardless of whether a couple is married or cohabiting.
- Domestic contracts entered into between couples, whether they are married or cohabiting, are generally unenforceable.
- The UK Supreme Court recently ruled that in principle a pre-nuptial agreement between spouses could be enforced so long as it was a reasonable preparation for the possibility of separation later on. This would be equally applicable to cohabiting couples.
- Since the 1970s, the law has given cohabitants a right to claim as much as a former spouse could claim in the event of the death of a cohabiting partner.
- The rules relating to the transfer of a tenancy upon death are the same whether a couple is married or cohabiting.
- The law also treats cohabiting couples in the same way as married couples in relation to remedies for domestic violence, social security benefits, and immigration requirements.

Over time, the law has removed the distinctive features of the common law of marriage whereby the couple were treated as a single entity and had rights and duties to share in each other's lives. And the law has created equivalent consequences for cohabitation.

Key remaining differences

• **Redistribution and financial provision on nullity, separation and divorce**

When a marriage breaks down, a judge has considerable discretion to work out who gets what, taking into account individual needs and the requirements of children. Such powers do not exist for cohabitants, regardless of how long they have lived together.

• **Wills and intestate succession**

Marriage automatically invalidates any prior will. The law presupposes that the deceased would wish to leave any property to his/her spouse. The same principle does not apply to cohabiting couples.

• **Recognition of paternity**

The law assumes that the husband is the father. No such assumption is made in the case of cohabitation. Cohabiting fathers have to apply for paternity rights.

• **Home rights**

A married person possesses the legal right to occupy the family home even if it is registered in the name of one spouse, or if a tenancy agreement is in only one name.

In view of the fact that the law has increasingly recognised cohabitation as an alternative to marriage and transferred across many of the legal consequences, the question may arise: Why not complete the process and do away with marriage altogether? The experience of a section of our community that does not use the legal status of marriage helps to shed some light on this question.

Unregistered Islamic marriage

The proportion of British Muslims who contract an Islamic marriage which is not legally binding under English law is unknown. Estimates vary from between 30 per cent to as high as 80 per cent. Such marriages are typically conducted in a flat by an imam in the presence of family and friends. In the eyes of the law they do not constitute marriages, but would be treated as cohabiting relationships.

A high proportion of the work of Sharia Councils is derived from the breakdown of Islamic marriages which are not recognised in English law and so legal remedies are not available. In Islamic law there is a doctrine of dowry where the husband makes promises to the wife to support her in the event of family breakdown, but these promises are often not upheld. The Sharia Councils then attempt to resolve the problems that arise.

The experience of many Muslims who have entered into an unregistered Islamic marriage serves to highlight the considerable problem of injustice which frequently ensues when a section of the population does not enter a legally-recognised marriage, but embarks on an

informal form of marriage under its own rules.

Potential solutions

Several solutions have been suggested:

• **Encourage the registration of more mosques for marriage**

Currently only 20-30 per cent of mosques are registered for marriages, but it is unlikely that increasing the proportion would solve the problem. The vast majority of Muslims do not marry in mosques. Marrying in a registered building does not fit the cultural assumptions of the British Muslim population.

• **Revert to the common law definition of marriage**

Prior to 1753 a marriage was contracted when, in the presence of witnesses, a man said 'I take you as my wife,' and the woman responded, 'I take you as my husband.' But the government would not wish to return to this out of concern about sham marriages and forced marriages.

• **Develop the law of cohabitation**

Then Muslim marriages could be treated as cohabitations and given legal remedies. But this would appear to undermine marriage.

• **Change the methods of civil registration**

Marriages could be permitted on private premises in the presence of witnesses, provided the registrar has noted the name of the celebrant and a certificate is completed and returned to the registry office. This is an option that the Law Commission is looking at and may help to bring at least some Muslim marriages within the scope of the law.

One thing we should *not* do is to follow the libertarian, feminist and 'Christian' arguments and effectively assimilate the law to the current Islamic position. In view of the problems which arise when marriages are contracted without legal recognition, it is important that marriage should retain its status in law and not become a purely private matter governed by any personal, religious or social cause.

• **Julian Rivers is Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of Bristol Law School.**

Scotland

After a delay of almost a year, the Scottish Government finally published a new Bill in June 2017, setting out a watered-down version of the named person scheme. The *Daily Telegraph* reported:

'The revamped legislation places major restrictions on the circumstances in which state guardians will be able to share information about a child, warning they must comply with data protection, human rights and confidentiality laws.'

'This means they cannot share confidential information without the consent of a child or their parents unless they can prove there is an "overriding" reason for doing so, such as the detection of crime.'

'A statutory duty to share private information has been scrapped and replaced with a responsibility merely to "consider" whether doing so would help a child's wellbeing.'

The policy memorandum explicitly states that: 'Children and young people, and their parents, can accept or reject advice, information, support and help offered by a named person' and, 'Refusal to accept advice or services offered or refusal to co-operate with a child's plan is not in itself to be taken as evidence of a risk of harm.'

Wales

Family Education Trust is joining forces with parents and other family groups to oppose the Welsh Government's plans to make it a criminal offence for parents to administer a disciplinary smack to their children.

The nationwide awareness campaign, *Be Reasonable*, will warn that removing the defence of reasonable chastisement risks criminalising hundreds of thousands of ordinary parents in Wales.

The Welsh Government plans to consult on its proposals over the course of the next 12 months and to introduce a Bill in 2018/19.

• www.bereasonable.wales/



Ann Whitaker (1922-2017)

Ann Whitaker, a longstanding supporter of Family Education Trust, who attended and contributed to our annual conferences into her 90s, passed away on 8 May, just four days before her 95th birthday.

A founder of Cornwall's Community Standards Association, we presented Miss Whitaker with the Family Life Award in 2001 in recognition of 'a lifetime's work of tireless caring and campaigning on behalf of young people and the family'. We said on that occasion:

'From the heart of Cornwall, Miss Whitaker's influence has been felt in the corridors of power by means of informed briefings and research material. Her unswerving commitment to the truth, combined with her clear vision and energy, continue to be an inspiration to countless pro-family groups and individuals throughout the country.'

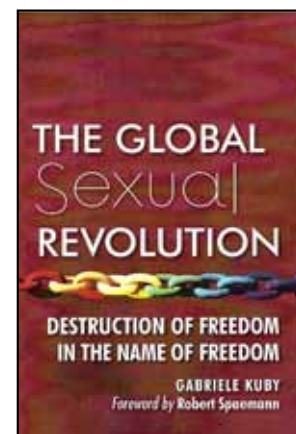
She will remain an inspiration to those who knew her and witnessed her faithfulness, zeal, courage, energy and dogged determination.

The Global Sexual Revolution: Destruction of freedom in the name of freedom

Gabrielle Kuby

LifeSite 2015, 283pp, pbk, £16.00 ISBN 978-1-62138-154-9

This is an updated English translation of a work originally published in German in 2012. It traces the global sexual revolution from the French Revolution to the post-modern gender ideology of Judith Butler, the leading 21st century American philosopher and gender theorist. Gabrielle Kuby describes the goals, strategies, networks and methods of a cultural revolution based on the ideological premises that ‘there is no such thing as man and woman; killing is a human right; and moral standards are discrimination’ (p.242).



Before delving into the history, Kuby sets the scene by examining the ways in which the sexual revolution is set on ‘the destruction of freedom in the name of freedom’. She notes how since the 1960s a powerful lobby has been fighting to change our value system:

‘The goal is absolute freedom, unfettered by any natural or moral limitations... The concrete weapons in this war include deconstruction of male-female sexuality, alteration of the population’s social norms and attitudes (especially among youth), complete legal equivalency of homosexual partnership with marriage, and even social ostracism and legal criminalisation of any opposition to these new “norms”.’ (p.8)

In spite of the fact that this radical agenda contributes nothing to the solving of the great problems of our time, it receives priority treatment in the activities of the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU), as well as in many individual countries.

A soft totalitarianism

Kuby suggests that we are being confronted by ‘a new soft totalitarianism’. While our current conditions may be light years away from the terror systems of Nazism and Communism, she discerns that, ‘Totalitarianism has made a costume change and now appears in the mantle of freedom, tolerance, justice, equality, anti-discrimination and diversity – ideological backdrops that prove to be amputated, distorted terms.’ (p.12) In reality, she writes, this global cultural revolution does not create freedom, but rather creates rootless individuals and social chaos. ‘When people fall for the lie that unrestrained satisfaction of their urges is freedom, or leads to freedom, they become subservient to those urges.’ (p.17)

The historical survey highlights the contributions of some of the trailblazers of the sexual revolution, with sections on Thomas Malthus, Margaret Sanger, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Wilhelm Reich, Sigmund Freud, C G Jung, Alfred Kinsey, John Money and Simone de Beauvoir among others. As the American social commentator, E Michael Jones, has observed: ‘The goal of secularisation was the reduction of all of life’s imperatives to “opinions”’, as opposed to the expression of moral absolutes or divine law. He continued: ‘Once

the “secularisation” occurred, the people who controlled “opinions” controlled the country.’ (p.31)

Manipulating public opinion

Conscious that sexualisation blinds people and makes them unwilling to resist attacks on the fundamental pillars of society’s value system, the cultural revolutionaries devoted their energies to manipulating public opinion and seeking to sexualise society. In her analysis of the role of the UN in the sexual revolution, Kuby notes that it is a top-down revolution, originating with globally active power elites. The UN uses its power and resources to replace universal morals with relativistic postmodern ‘values’ as the foundation of the culture.

Ambiguous, positive-sounding words such as ‘freedom of choice’, ‘women’s empowerment’, ‘unmet needs’, ‘quality services’ and ‘reproductive health’ are employed to promote objectives which would not otherwise achieve a consensus, while self-styled ‘experts’ function as lobbyists for small radical minorities who assert their own interests at the expense of the welfare of society. A chapter on ‘The European Union and the gender bandwagon’ similarly relates how favoured NGOs are granted privileged access to the labyrinthine structures of the European institutions in order to promote a new legal and social order in the areas of gender and sexuality.

In an illuminating chapter on the Yogyakarta Principles, Kuby explains how a group of unaccountable ‘human rights experts’ met in 2007 to formulate a detailed manual for implementing gender ideology worldwide. In common with international human rights instruments, the document is subject to evolution and the ‘activist’s guide’ states that the scope of the principles will expand. As the European legal commentator Jakob Cornides has observed: ‘the rights they seek to promote are no human rights, but the slogans of a pressure group’ (p.73).

Political rape of language

A chapter entitled ‘Political rape of language’ notes how terms are ‘thrown out, emptied of meaning, perverted, outlawed, forbidden and arbitrarily invented’:

- Terms that express traditional values are made suspicious and discarded. Example: Chastity.

- Terms with positive connotations are given new content and then exploited. Example: Diversity.
- New terms are invented for transmitting new ideologies. Example: Polyamory.
- New terms are invented to smear opponents. Example: Homophobia. (p.110)

In a brief review it is not possible to do justice to such a wide-ranging and insightful study. Non-Catholics may not share the author’s view that her Church is ‘the last bastion for defending Christian sexual morality as an indispensable precondition for marriage and the family’ (p.233), nor that ‘the monastic idea of poverty, chastity and obedience’ is ‘the spiritual bulwark against the West’s cultural identity’ (p.275). Nevertheless, Gabrielle Kuby has performed an invaluable service in exposing a top-down cultural revolution which is largely taking place behind our backs and which is eroding our freedoms step by step.

Rallying cry

The huge political and financial resources of the UN, the EU and many Western governments, together with the power and influence of global corporations, foundations and NGOs are lending their united support to a global sexual revolution set on deconstructing the binary gender order, deregulating sexual norms and dissolving the family. Yet Kuby concludes on a positive note with a rallying cry to her readers to join the growing resistance movement and to speak out in defence of true freedom while there is still time.

‘The price the individual has to pay for objecting and opposing increases the longer he keeps quiet and the more social and political power the minority gains... The higher the price, the fewer people are willing to pay it. But the triumphant minority can never get enough. The slippery slope into totalitarianism is greased with the fraudulent promise of limitless individual freedom. But because this type of freedom turns people into slaves to their urges, it can lead only to bondage. A society can be free only to the degree that the people who make it up are themselves free to do good. No state can be founded on lust or greed.’ (p.243)

The Transgender Agenda – Critiquing its origins, ideology, methods and goals

Dr Peter Saunders

Few things are more self-evident than that human beings are divided into two sexes: male and female. But we are now being told that gender is simply a social construct, the product of a biased society, and that gender has no biological basis at all. Pressure is being brought to bear upon professionals and the general public to adopt a new ideology, to use new language, and to affirm the beliefs of transgender people.

Over recent years there has been a huge explosion in the number of people claiming transgender status. One GP working in a university city in the south of England wrote:

‘During term-time I am seeing on average one new gender-conflicted teenage patient every day. They all want referral to a specialist gender dysphoria clinic in London where many will be prescribed hormones and some may go on to have gender reassignment surgery. They are all without exception on antidepressants.’

Referrals of children to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust gender identity development service more than doubled from 697 in 2014/15 to 1,419 in 2015/16. During the past year, 167 children aged 10 or under, including three 3 year-olds, have been referred to clinics, almost double the number during the previous year.

Celebrity culture and social media seem to be major drivers of the increase in children questioning their gender identity, combined with the fact that transgenderism has become much more socially respectable, especially among millennials. The increase in the number of broken and dysfunctional families may also be a factor. Scientific objectivity is almost impossible because of the powerful vested interests involved.

Medical developments

The medical profession’s perception of the condition has changed markedly. In 2013, the Fifth Edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* replaced the previous mental illness diagnosis of ‘gender identity disorder’ with a diagnosis for ‘gender dysphoria’. This shifted the emphasis from gender incongruence as a disorder to the distress (dysphoria) associated with the subjective experience of that incongruence.

The change was ideologically driven rather than based on evidence, with the aim of de-pathologising gender incongruence. It has now become difficult to debate the issue within the medical profession. GPs now fear that they could lose their licence to practice if they refuse to prescribe hormones for gender reassignment.

In October 2013, the Royal College of Psychiatrists published *Good practice guidelines for the assessment and treatment of adults with gender dysphoria*. It is a comprehensive, albeit little-known document, endorsed by almost every

medical body in the country, including the royal colleges.

Gender mainstreaming

The cultural, medical and legal changes which we are now observing are being driven by a process that insiders know as ‘gender mainstreaming’.¹ The movement originally had its roots in radical feminism. Simone de Beauvoir is credited with laying the intellectual framework for the third wave of feminism. Judith Butler, an American philosopher and the founder of gender mainstreaming, has taken de Beauvoir’s thought further and is working for the deconstruction of any biological difference between men and women in society.

Butler believes that binary genders are only structured through language; therefore language has a central role to play in deconstructing gender. Her aim is to shake the foundations of how people think about gender through ‘subversive confusion’ and the multiplication of gender identities. In her view, there is no such thing as male and female. Biological sex has no role to play in determining our sexual identity. A person’s sexual identity is determined by feelings rather than biology. It is free-flowing and flexible.

Butler is also one of the most important practitioners of ‘queer theory’. Like ‘gender’, the word ‘queer’ has taken on a new meaning. Formerly an aggressive and offensive word applied to homosexuals, ‘queer’ is now a verb used to refer to the subversion of ‘heterosexual normativity’. ‘Queering’ describes action taken to undermine, shake or unsettle what is regarded as normal.

A revolution of ideas

Recent years have seen a revolution of ideas driven by a new morality. Leading components include a radical feminism (‘throwing off the male yoke’), a form of Gnosticism (‘liberate the authentic inner



you’), and Queer theory (‘gender categories are social constructions’). Such ideas begin in the universities, but over the course of time impact the media, parliament, law and public policy.

The United Nations has played a major role in popularising these new ideas. At the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, it replaced the word ‘sex’ with ‘gender’. Just over a decade later, a group of human rights experts met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and unanimously adopted the *Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*. The Yogyakarta Principles define ‘gender identity’ in the following terms:

‘Gender identity is understood to refer to each person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.’

According to this definition, gender identity is self-defined, and subjective experience trumps objective biological reality – what the gender theorists call ‘the arbitrary assignation of biological sex at birth’.

These ideas have been promulgated throughout the world and are being integrated into education systems.

Legal and political developments

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 allowed transgender people over the age of 18 to be legally recognised in their new gender if they had lived in their chosen gender for two years. The Equality Act 2010 made it unlawful to discriminate against transgender people, and the

continued overleaf...

The Transgender Agenda

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Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 made it possible for a marriage to continue after one spouse had undergone gender reassignment.

For a number of years, government departments have funded publications that assume gender identity theory, including *A Guide for Trans Young People in the UK*, published by the Department of Health in 2007.

A report published by the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee in 2016 calls for changing gender to be made a simple administrative procedure on the basis of self-declaration, not requiring medical authorisation. It also recommends legal reform to enable 16- and 17-year-olds to apply for gender recognition and to permit the earlier use of puberty-blockers and cross-sex hormones in younger children. It further urges that, 'The Government should be moving towards "non-gendering" official records as a general principle.'

There are huge cultural, media, medical, legal and educational forces that are being used to popularise these concepts and to indoctrinate children with gender ideology.

False claims of transgender ideology

• *Transgender is very common*

The House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee estimates that as many as 650,000 people in the UK are 'gender incongruent to some degree' (i.e. 1 in every 100), but the truth is that gender dysphoria is rare. The medical literature shows that its prevalence is very low - fewer than 1 in 10,000 adult natal males, and fewer than 1 in 30,000 adult natal females.

• *Male and female are social constructs*

In reality, sex is biologically determined. It is determined by our chromosomes, hormones, gonads and genitals.

• *Some women have male brains*

Science shows that there are differences between male and female brains. While females tend to score higher on emotional recognition tests, social sensitivity and language ability, males tend to score higher on maths and mechanical subjects, perform better visualising abstract shapes when rotated, and finish faster and score higher on embedded objects tests.

• *Transgender is a normal variant and not a mental health issue*

Until very recently, the majority of psychiatrists viewed gender identity disorder as a form of body dysmorphia - a mental disorder characterised by an obsessive pre-occupation that some aspect of a person's own appearance is severely flawed and warrants exceptional measures to hide or fix it.

It is undisputed that transgender people suffer a much higher level of other mental health problems, though there is debate over why that should be. In the US, suicide attempts among trans men (46%) and trans women (42%) are roughly 10 times the rate found in the overall population, while in Ontario, the suicide attempt rate for transgender people was about 18 times higher than the general population.

• *Intersex is a form of transgender*

This is not the case. In intersex there is an abnormality in either chromosomes, hormones or internal structures or external genitalia due to a physical, bio-chemical, hormonal or structural abnormality.

• *Transgender is unchangeable*

This is not borne out by the evidence. 50 per cent of adults who start gender reassignment treatment never finish it. In children it is often a passing phase. Most gender dysphoria does not resolve with psychological treatment and for 25 per cent who undergo surgery, the outcome is not positive.

• *Gender reassignment is not medically harmful*

In reality, it causes all kinds of problems. Giving children puberty-suppressing hormones is one of the most widespread, untested trials being conducted. It is a massive

experiment with unknown long-term consequences, and it is being driven by ideology rather than evidence.

Conclusion

The special issue of *The New Atlantis* on 'Sexuality and Gender' concluded that:

'The hypothesis that gender identity is an innate, fixed property of human beings that is independent of biological sex — that a person might be "a man trapped in a woman's body" or "a woman trapped in a man's body" — is not supported by scientific evidence.'

If a person has incongruence between his or her body and identity, you can go one of two ways with it. You can say that the body is the problem or that the belief is the problem.

There is an analogy with anorexia nervosa, where a patient is convinced that she is overweight when it is patently obvious that she is not. But psychiatrists do not rush in and offer liposuction to the anorexic. That would be abusive. They don't go along with a belief that is not objectively correct.

The question to ask is: Does the problem lie with the body or with the belief? And therefore should we alter the body to conform to the gender identity (through hormones or transgender surgery)? Or should we rather seek to alter the identity to conform to the body (through counselling and psychotherapy)?

Note

1. Gabrielle Kuby explains that gender mainstreaming is about much more than the equality of men and women. 'It involves manufacturing equality through "deconstruction" of the binary hierarchical gender order to arrive at a diversity of genders with equal value and equal rights.' *The Global Sexual Revolution*, pp.94-95.

• **Dr Peter Saunders is chief executive of the Christian Medical Fellowship.**

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