

## AGM and Annual Conference Saturday 3 July 2021

Royal Air Force Club, 128 Piccadilly, London W1  
10.30am to 4.30pm Admission free

### Guest speakers

**Dr Sharon James**  
How Radical Gender  
Ideology Cheats our  
Children



**Sharon James** studied history at Cambridge University, has an M.Div from Toronto Baptist Seminary, and a doctorate from the University of Wales. Sharon has acted as a spokesperson for the Coalition for Marriage and currently works as Social Policy Analyst for The Christian Institute. She has travelled to many countries as a conference speaker and is the author of several books including *The Meaning of Marriage* (published by Family Education Trust) and most recently *Gender Ideology: What do Christians Need to Know?*

**Robin Aitken**  
Turning the tide: How  
to get a hearing from a  
hostile media



**Robin Aitken** is a former BBC reporter and journalist who spent 25 years working across all levels within the Corporation, from local radio to the Radio 4 Today programme. He is the author of *The Noble Liar: How and Why the BBC Distorts the News to Promote a Liberal Agenda*. In 2014 he was awarded the MBE for his work with the Oxford Foodbank which he co-founded in 2009. He is a regular columnist for the *Daily Telegraph*.

For further information and/or to book a place, please email Piers Shepherd at [piers@familyeducation.plus.com](mailto:piers@familyeducation.plus.com) or call the office on 01784 242340. Please let us know if you are planning to attend.

## CQC rates gender clinic 'Inadequate'

**Hot on the heels of its defeat in the Keira Bell case, the Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has been rated 'Inadequate' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).**

Inspectors from the CQC had visited the service during October 2020 and released their report in mid-January 2021.

The CQC gave as its overall rating for the service that of 'Inadequate', the lowest rating the CQC can give, with particular criticism being directed at levels of safety, responsiveness to young people's needs and the overall management of the service itself. Among the CQC's key criticisms were the following:

- 'Staff did not always assess and manage risk well. Many of the young people waiting for or receiving a service were vulnerable and at risk of self-harm.'
- 'Staff had not consistently recorded the competency, capacity and consent of patients referred for medical treatment before January 2020.'

*continued overleaf....*

### In this issue

- AGM and conference • CQC rates gender clinic 'Inadequate' • Welsh education bill threatens parental rights
- Great FET resources for parents and teachers • Interview on Home Education • *The Corrosive Impact of Transgender Ideology* • Helpful booklet on RSE • *Letters from the Culture War* • *Out of the Smoke* • *Marriage and Divorce in the Liberal Imagination* • *Transgender Agenda* DVD • Meet our Communications and PR Officer

## CQC rates gender clinic 'Inadequate'

*continued from front page*

• *'Staff did not always feel respected, supported and valued. Some said they felt unable to raise concerns without fear of retribution.'*

• *'Many records provided insufficient evidence of staff considering the specific needs of young people, such as autistic spectrum disorders.'*<sup>1</sup>

Of these findings, perhaps the lack of respect for capacity, competency and consent is most shocking. The inspection report states:

*In the audit in March 2020, the service reviewed ten records of young people who had been referred to endocrinology for hormone blockers. Of these, only three contained a completed consent form and checklist for referral...During our review of records, we found no evidence that staff had completed an assessment after the documentation was found to be missing. Again, this meant that staff had still not assessed the capacity and competency of young people receiving treatment, despite being aware that they had not done so.*

Later in the report, reference is made to a parent who *'said they felt like they were being pushed into doing things they didn't want to do.'*

The CQC's reference to the apparent lack of respect for staff concerns is consistent with the testimony of former Tavistock employees such the psychiatrist Dr David Bell. Dr Bell told Cathy Newman in an interview for Channel 4 that staff who expressed concern about the clinic's procedures faced disciplinary action. Dr Bell himself had been facing such action at the time of his retirement from the clinic. He noted that the Tavistock's chief executive had stated that *'those who raise criticisms against the Trust have an unfortunate attitude to gender'*. Dr Bell said, *'this is like a message to everyone else...I had better not speak out or they will*

*think I am transphobic'*.<sup>2</sup>

In the same interview, Dr Bell affirmed that 35-40% of children presenting for gender dysphoria at the Tavistock were on the autistic spectrum. This makes the CQC's criticism of the clinic's failure to take this into account all the more relevant.

### **Worshipping at the altar of diversity**

The CQC report and the statements made by Dr Bell and other former Tavistock employees make it abundantly clear that ideology rather than evidence was the order of the day at this clinic. Dr Bell refers to how *'Leaders of movements with a very heavy ideological commitment have managed to capture policy both medically, professionally, in the media and in government with no evidence base'*.



**Keira Bell**

While the executive leadership of GIDS has been disbanded in the wake of the Keira Bell judgment and their poor rating from the CQC, we cannot have too much confidence in the CQC's own integrity in these areas. The same report praises GIDS for its 'non-judgmentalism' stating approvingly that *'the values and ethos of the service focused on promoting non-judgemental acceptance of gender identities'*. In 2018 a CQC report on 'Sexual safety on mental health wards' stated:

*The diversity on a mental health ward reflects the diversity of the country. It is important that the ward environment meets the needs of everyone – and does not make predetermined gender-based assumptions.*

*This may be particularly important for those people who identify as LGBT+.*<sup>3</sup>

The CQC is also part of Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme. Their latest inspection report includes the following:

*'...one clinician gave an example of how they had worked with families that had held homophobic or transphobic attitudes. They explained that if this presented a risk to the young person, they would make a referral to children's social care services.'*

It is clear then that the CQC drinks very deeply from the well-springs of diversity and this may account for why on a previous inspection of GIDS in 2016 they rated the service 'Good', though much of the evidence used to show the inadequacy of the service in 2021 was already available then. The CQC has undoubtedly been infected with the same 'ideological capture' as GIDS itself.

Nonetheless, there are positive signs. In light of the Keira Bell judgement the NHS has updated its guidance on gender dysphoria. The guidance now instructs that:

*GIDS needs to apply to the Court for permission to start puberty blockers for children and young people under the age of 16. This is because a recent court ruling states that it's doubtful children and young people under the age of 16 are able to give informed consent for this treatment.*

We can only hope that the spirit of this guidance will be rigidly adhered to.

### **Notes**

1. Care Quality Commission, Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Gender identity services Inspection report, 20 January 2021

2. Cathy Newman, 'Children have been very seriously damaged' by NHS gender clinic, says former Tavistock staff governor, Channel 4, 23 January 2021

3. Care Quality Commission, Sexual safety on mental health wards, September 2018

## Welsh education bill threatens parental rights

Nowhere is it more important that parents have control of their children's education than in those most sensitive areas of sex education and religious education.

However, Welsh parents are set to lose the right to withdraw from both if the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill passes through the Senedd (Welsh Parliament) later this year. The bill establishes a new Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and renames Religious Education (RE) 'Religion, Ethics and Values (RVE)'. Both subjects are mandatory.

The bill is being pushed by Welsh Minister of Education, Kirsty Williams. In the Welsh government's second consultation on the issue, to which FET responded, the government stated that it sought to teach both subjects in an 'objective, critical and pluralistic manner' and stated:

*'We believe that the state has a moral obligation to ensure that children in schools receive neutral and accurate information in these issues which pervade throughout society.'*<sup>1</sup>

But is any teaching on these subjects ever neutral? And why must a parent with strong religious convictions or strong beliefs about issues relating to marriage and sexuality be forced to have their children endure teaching that they find objectionable? And one does not have to look far to find a clue to what sort of RSE the Welsh government is inclined towards. While no curriculum has yet been published, in its analysis of responses to its consultation, the government makes specific reference to sexuality education developed by UNESCO.

The UNESCO *International technical guidance on sexuality education* is truly objectionable. Among much else it contains the following: all education to be 'LGBTI' inclusive, the 'I' in this case stands for intersex thus equating an unfortunate physical abnormality with sexual lifestyle choices, all school staff including even janitors and cleaners to be made aware of LGBT issues and adolescent girls to be made 'knowledgeable about their rights concerning abortion'. Inevitably, it calls for free and confidential access of all adolescents to 'sexual and reproductive health services'. That doesn't sound very neutral or objective.

FET supporters in Wales may want to get in touch with their Senedd member to express their concerns. Elections to the Senedd will be taking place on 6 May.

### Notes

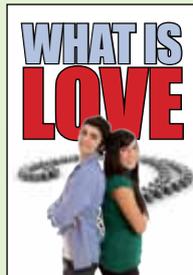
1. Welsh Government, Consultation on proposals to ensure access to the full curriculum for all learners, October 2019

## FET resources you will need for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education

With the coming of mandatory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education many parents and teachers may feel at a loss to as to what resources they can use that are respectful of values such as modesty, chastity, and restraint. Luckily, the Family Education Trust has produced several leaflets covering areas including love, sex, drugs, and alcohol that would be ideal for teaching the new subjects.



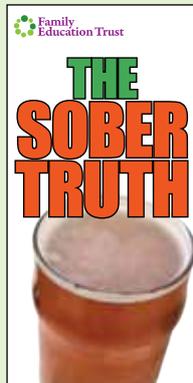
**Why Save Sex?** describes the nature and purpose of sex and provides attractive arguments for why it is so important to save sex for marriage. The leaflet shows saving sex for marriage to be a positive and liberating choice and gives young people practical tips to help them to make this choice.



**What is Love?** describes the qualities that characterise true love: commitment, faithfulness, perseverance and patience. It explains why true love should never be confused with infatuation, lust or mere physical attraction.



**Drug Alert** looks at the UK's most commonly used illegal drugs: cannabis, cocaine and ecstasy and explains their serious effects – on the brain, on physical health, and on mental health and behaviour.



**The Sober Truth** presents accurate information on alcohol in an attractive and accessible format. In straightforward language, it refers to twelve ways in which alcohol misuse causes serious problems for teenagers, their families and society as a whole. The leaflet also explains what alcohol is and how it affects the brain and offers some practical tips for young people to help them develop responsible attitudes towards its use.

Leaflets can be ordered from the Family Education Trust website for 25p per copy or are available at the following prices: £2.50 for 10 copies, £4.50 for 25 copies, £7.00 for 50 copies and £13.00 for 100 copies.

# An Interview on Home Education

**Home education has recently become a big topic in the news due to coronavirus and the resultant closing of schools.** Many parents are having to home educate their children for the first time. Others, however, have adopted home education as a way of life. For several years there have been moves to bring about mandatory registration and monitoring of all home-educated children.

**Home educating veteran Randall Hardy** is a vocal opponent of these plans and is involved in several initiatives which seek to protect the freedom of parents to educate their own children in the way they deem most suitable for them. He believes it is important that everyone understands why this natural and historic responsibility is under threat.

Here **FET's Senior Researcher Piers Shepherd** interviews Mr Hardy about educational freedom, the challenges currently faced by home educating families and what the consequences will be in future if the lobbyists are allowed to succeed.

**Some of our readers will be home educators, but for others home education may be something quite novel. What would you say are the principal reasons that parents decide to home educate?**

The first pioneer of the modern form of home education in England was Joy Baker, a Norfolk mother of five, in the 1950s. She believed that all parents should have the right to determine how their children are educated and by whom. I would add that her view was based on the natural and historical responsibility of all parents.

Following Joy Baker there were a few pioneers of elective home education across the UK from the 60s onwards. The majority of these were motivated by their philosophical or religious convictions. Their position continues to be protected by human rights treaties. For instance, Article 2 Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights reads:

*The State shall respect the right of the parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.*

In recent years the reasons why parents choose to teach their own chil-

dren have become more varied. A recent Local Government Association report commented:

*In the large majority of cases this was because the parent felt that either their child's special educational needs or their child's mental health needs were not being met.*

There were problems with the sample size of parents approached in that report. A larger survey by the parents' group "Define Fine" carried out last year, observed:

*The overarching reason for deregistering a child was to prioritise their mental health & wellbeing.*

In other parts of the world there are other reasons. For instance, I have been told that in the United States, concern over gun crime is now a major factor.



**Randall Hardy**

**In April 2019 the government produced new guidance for local authorities in England on elective home education. What would you say are the positives and negatives in this guidance and is there anything in it that we should be particularly wary of?**

Besides recognising the primacy of parents in ensuring a child receives a suitable education, the one good point is that the government said there was no need to change the law in England in regard to monitoring home-educated children. However, that said, the implication was that local authorities already have all the powers they need through legislation regarding their 'safeguarding' responsibilities. The subtle change resulting from this new emphasis was a move away from the previously recognised position that a council should only make inquiries if there were concerns that a child was *not* receiving a suitable education.

This has been turned on its head by section 4.2 of the Guidance for LAs,

which at one point reads:

*Until a local authority is satisfied that a home-educated child is receiving a suitable full-time education, then a child being educated at home is potentially in scope of this duty.*

British law is famously based on the principle that citizens are innocent until proven guilty. This clause has inverted the basis of educational law, by making clear that a local authority should act as if home educating parents are *guilty* of failing to provide their children with a suitable education until they have *proved themselves innocent* to a local authority officer who may or may not be biased against home education. Practically, this change has resulted in a situation in Portsmouth, where the Council has in recent months issued 137 section 437 'Notice to Satisfy' letters to home educating families. According to the Portsmouth Home Education Group, this is over half the families known to the council.

Parents in the area have taken advice from a QC and recently begun legal action against the City Council. The wider home educating community is keeping a close watch on the response because in the new guidance, after reminding LA's of 'their public responsibilities as prosecutors' (section 6.19) the Department for Education added:

*The department will be happy to support local authorities to test the boundaries of current case law through discussion with them of potentially difficult home education cases which they are contemplating bringing before the courts. (Section 6.22)*

**What would you say are the leading threats to home education and where are they coming from?**

Historically, throughout Britain it has been over-zealous council staff in the mould of those Joy Baker struggled against for eight years before she prevailed. But in the last twenty years there has been a noticeable shift in the nature of the threat. In England the shift from local prejudice to a national campaign to change the foundations of education law was signalled by Ed Balls in 2009, who, as Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families asked Graham Badman to review home education. The intention was to change public opinion by raising fears of home education being used as a cover for child abuse.

## Home Education Interview

After that attempt failed there was something of a lull, but opponents of educational freedom began to undermine it once again by generating an unevidenced hostile environment. Then in 2017, Labour peer Lord Soley's Private Members Bill opened the door to a deluge of negative comments in Parliament and the media, which resulted in the revised guidance which is now causing problems in Portsmouth and elsewhere.

In Scotland, the approach was different. I expect many Family Education Trust supporters are aware of the failed Named Person Scheme there. Amongst those who joined together to oppose this through the courts were Scottish home educators, who understood the unexplained dangers in what was sold to the public as benevolent policy to safeguard children. In her 2016 High Court judgment on the case, Lady Hale observed:

*The first thing that a totalitarian regime tries to do is to get at the children, to distance them from the subversive, varied influences of their families, and indoctrinate them in their rulers' view of the world.*

In my opinion all parents, not just home educators, need to seriously consider whether or not we are witnessing leaders around the world, not just in the UK, seeking to do that very thing without being honest with their electorates. The threats are widespread at present, with Wales and the Isle of Man having experienced more aggressive initiatives than those in England - though both of these have now been shelved for the time being.

In Europe, people may have heard that in October President Macron decided to justify banning home education 'unless there are medical or health reasons' by saying that it was being used by Islamists against the values of the Republic. His speech made clear what he sees as the purpose of schools: *School should first and foremost instil the values of the Republic.*

This echoes sentiments from a 2019 speech by Ofsted's Chief Inspector at the Wellington Festival of Education where Amanda Spielman explained:

*The founders of the common school*

*movement in the United States in the 19th century wanted to mould fine upstanding citizens of the Republic...*

It seems to me that home education is considered by some as a threat to their grand project, and consequently there is an international move to discredit it in the mind of the general public everywhere.



Piers Shepherd

**Has the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child played any role in facilitating attacks on home education? This declaration has been ratified by every country, except the United States. Much of the opposition to ratification in the US came from home-schooling organizations who felt it posed a threat to families. Do you have sympathy with that view?**

The more I research this, the more it seems that the questions raised by such organisations are looking in the right direction, but perhaps not deeply enough.

Recently UNICEF UK submitted a response to last autumn's House of Commons Education Committee's Inquiry into home education. In their introduction they describe themselves as 'mandated by the UN General Assembly to uphold the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and promote the rights and wellbeing of every child.' That suggests to me that they consider themselves as some type of international police force charged with ensuring that nations conform to the requirements of the UNCRC. The tone of their submission - and I would encourage your supporters to read it for themselves - doesn't challenge my view.

For instance, praising both Germany and Sweden where home education 'is allowed only in exceptional circumstances' they suggest this is the very position the DfE should be moving towards in England. It is interesting to me that this is the same

outcome which President Macron said in October that he wanted France to adopt.

However, I want to encourage people to dig deeper than just the UNCRC, because UNICEF is sister to UNESCO, which takes the lead role in the UN's global educational programme. I recently looked at the 'Mission and Mandate' page on its website. At the top is this statement, which is the first clause in its constitution:

*Since wars begin in the minds of men and women, it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed.*

When I read it, it struck me that this is not a statement of fact, but one of philosophical belief. That is confirmed in a 2018 article also found on UNESCO's website. Citing Julian Huxley, its first Director-General, author Mark Goodale draws on Huxley's 1946 text, *UNESCO: Its Purpose and its Philosophy*, describing it as a "blueprint for the new Organization."

According to Goodale, Huxley charged UNESCO 'with overseeing the emergence of what he described as a 'single world culture, with its own philosophy and background of ideas.' Huxley's words are strong throughout his booklet and on page thirteen he asserted:

*Specifically, in its educational programme it can stress the ultimate need for world political unity and familiarise all peoples with the implications of the transfer of full sovereignty from separate nations to a world organisation.*

To me that is an idea which future generations should be encouraged to debate vigorously, rather than embrace uncritically.

One final point. Recently, UNESCO published its Global Education Monitoring Report 2020 entitled, *Inclusion and education: All means all*. I have not read the previous ones, but I have been told that this is the first time these annual reports have referred to home education. A statement on page 188 reads:

*Homeschooling is an example of how parental preference for self-segregation can test the limits of inclusive education, despite the*

**continued overleaf....**

## Home Education Interview

Continued from previous page

*potential that distance and online mainstream education offer for inclusion.*

It seems to me that the problem that organisations like UNESCO and UNICEF have with home educators is that they cannot be confident that parents will teach their children to embrace the philosophical ideals of men like Huxley and their Utopian dreams of a world at peace with itself.

To put it simply, those within these organisations believe that they need to rescue tomorrow's citizens from the influence of their parents, and enforced, state-dominated schooling is their method of choice.

**Do you think the current situation where many parents have been suddenly forced to supervise "school at home" could lead to more parents electing to home educate in the future?**

I'm glad you used the phrase 'school at home.' What the majority of parents have found themselves doing over the last year is trying to deliver a school curriculum at home, with absolutely no preparation. Many have therefore found the experience very, very difficult.

However, reports are that a significant number have found having their children at home really beneficial. I have seen social media exchanges where parents are saying that their children have rediscovered a love of learning and that relationships within the family have also benefited. One group, the Scottish Home Education Forum, surveyed people who had turned to them for advice in the first lockdown, and just under half of those who responded said they planned to home educate when schools returned. One parent commented:

*I have applied to home ed my 10-year-old. It's something I've wanted to do for her for years and this situation just gave me the push I needed.*

Another commented:

*Lockdown gave me an insight into how much school was negatively affecting my son and what he was capable of at home.*

**If there was one website, you could recommend where people can keep up with what's happening in the UK with regards to home education what would that be?**

There's lots of good websites in the various different countries of the UK which offer advice to parents who want to home educate. The one which does cover the whole of the UK is called The HE Byte and the URL is [he-byte.uk](http://he-byte.uk) and that has links to most of the other websites and it also provides a running commentary on what's happening politically across the UK and even carries stories from other places like South Africa and France.

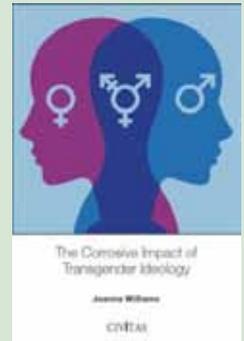
**This interview can be accessed on video at Randall Hardy's website:** <https://wp.me/pKv2m-pz>

**and FET's YouTube Channel:**

[https://youtu.be/-w4XIKZg\\_2o](https://youtu.be/-w4XIKZg_2o)

## The Corrosive Impact of Transgender Ideology

Joanna Williams, Civitas, 120pp, £8.00, ISBN 978-1912581085



This report, published by Civitas and written by Joanna Williams of that think tank's Freedom, Democracy and Victimhood Project, focuses on the threat to freedom of speech, women's rights and child safety posed by the machinations of the transgender lobby.

At the root of the attack on freedom of speech and discussion has been the trans lobby's portrayal of transgender individuals as a distinct social group, criticism of which constitutes hatred and bigotry. Williams writes:

*In less than two decades 'transgender' has gone from a term representing individuals and little used outside of specialist communities, to signifying a powerful political ideology driving significant social change. At the level of the individual, this shift has occurred through the separation of gender from sex, before bringing biology back in via a brain-based sense of 'gender-identity'. This return to biology allows for the formation of a distinct identity group, one that can stake a claim to being persecuted, and depends upon continual validation and confirmation from an external audience. All critical discussion is a threat to this public validation and it is often effectively curtailed.*

The transgender agenda has been imposed from the top-down with government and corporate bodies imposing codes of speech and behaviour on the rest of us. The advancement of 'transgender rights' entails an expansion of the state's control over what we think and say:

*The expansion of transgender rights has gone hand in hand with an expansion of state and institutional (both public and private) regulation of speech and behaviour...it calls for recognition and protection from the state in the form of intervention to regulate the behaviour of those outside of the identity group. Whereas in the past, to be radical was to demand greater freedom from the state and institutional authority, today to be radical is to demand restrictions on free expression in the name of preventing offence.*

Williams traces the development of gender theory from Simone De Beauvoir's 1949 book *The Second Sex* which proposed the idea that male and female were social constructs, through John Money's coining of the word 'gender' in the 1950s. Feminists initially promoted the idea of gender as a way of critiquing sex stereotypes.

## Transgender ideology review

Nonetheless, De Beauvoir and other feminists did not deny the reality of biological sex. Judith Butler, however, in her 1988 book *Gender Trouble* proposed the idea that there is no biological reality and that gender is simply ‘a kind of persistent impersonation that passes as the real’. The view that gender is distinct from biological sex is now the fundamental dogma of the transgender movement. Though some trans activists have tried to bring biology back into the debate by claiming the existence of a ‘transgender brain.’

### Threat to women’s safety

Williams is particularly concerned about the threat to women-only spaces that is entailed in allowing people to self-identify their gender. This has become a particular problem in women’s refuges and prisons. One in 50 (1,500) prisoners in the UK claim to be transgender, a much higher proportion than the population at large. Williams argues that there are incentives for prisoners to claim transgender status:

*Transgender prisoners can be entitled to perks such as being able to shower alone or have their own cell and they can also apply to switch between male and female jails. Additionally, taking on a new name and identity allows personal histories to be rewritten as the taboo on dead naming effectively allows the person convicted of the crime to be erased from the public record.*

Allowing transgender convicts to choose the prison that best suits their gender identity has had serious consequences. For example, David Thompson, a convicted paedophile, and rapist, serving a life sentence, subsequently chose to identify as a woman called Karen White.

He was moved to a woman’s prison where he sexually assaulted several female prisoners.



**Transgender flag**

### The assault on free speech

Williams writes:

*The demand from transgender activists is twofold: firstly, the freedom to name themselves and the world as they decree, thereby overriding social and linguistic conventions; and secondly, that other people must obey these decrees and use language that the trans-person prescribes. Whereas the first is compatible with free expression, the second is clearly not. Dictating the language use of others not only restricts their free speech but, more significantly, in compelling speech it imposes a demand upon them that calls into question their freedom of conscience.*

A whole new language has been developed to accommodate the transgender agenda. Those who oppose it are ‘transphobes’. Feminists who express concern about the danger to women’s spaces are termed TERFs (Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminists).

Williams highlights several cases of individuals who have come under attack for dissenting from transgender ideology. Harry Miller, a former police officer, was visited at his place of work by Humberside Police after posting tweets in which he satirised the idea that there are more than two genders and that is

possible to change sex. While the police informed Miller that he had not committed a crime, his actions were recorded as a ‘non-crime hate incident’. Women’s rights campaigner, Posie Parker was cautioned by police for putting up a billboard with the definition of the word ‘woman’ on it.

Attacks on dissenters have been particularly severe in academia. Professor Selina Todd of Oxford University has been provided with bodyguards who accompany her to all lectures after violent threats were circulated online. Todd had stated that changing sex is biologically impossible. James Caspian of Bath Spa University, who was conducting research on those who regret transition, had support for his research project cut off by the university, as in Caspian’s words ‘politically incorrect research could incur criticism and this, in turn, could incur criticism of the university. And it is better not to upset people. That was the reason given.’

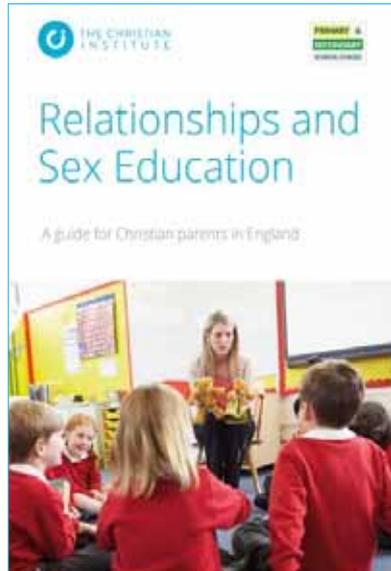
The report examines other areas including the alarming rise in transgender identification among teenagers and the trans movement’s strategy of claiming group victimhood. It comes up with a number of recommendations including a moratorium on proposed reforms of the Gender Recognition Act, clarification on the difference between sex-based and gender-based protections in the Equality Act 2010 and the prescribing of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for under 18s.

Joanna Williams’s report, which can be downloaded for free from the Civitas website, is a disturbing account of how a very small group of activists can exercise an influence disproportionate to their numbers and make life difficult for those who disagree with them. It is well worth a read.

## Helpful booklet for parents on Relationships and Sex Education

*Relationships and Sex Education: A guide for Christian parents in England* is a booklet published by the Christian Institute and serves as a useful guide for parents concerned about sex education in their child's school. Though aimed at Christian parents, it can be equally utilized by parents of any faith or background who have concerns about what their children are being taught.

The booklet calmly and rationally weighs up the advantages and disadvantages of the new curriculum showing that while there is room for positive features there is also an opportunity for radical groups to impose their agenda. The booklet then proceeds to instruct parents how best they can influence what their children learn and combat inappropriate teaching.



It highlights the following points, all of which can work to the benefit of parents:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education are not part of the National Curriculum and schools therefore have considerable flexibility about how they teach them and must respond to parental concerns.
- There is nothing in the content of primary school Relationships Education that requires teaching about sexual relationships.
- Schools are not permitted to push any particular ideology in their teaching.
- There is an explicit requirement that teaching must be appropriate to pupils' age and religious background.
- Teaching needs to take account of the developmental differences between children.
- The science curriculum must only teach empirically verifiable science.

- Primary schools MUST respect a parent's wish to withdraw their child from any and all sex education. This is an 'absolute requirement'.

- If parents of secondary school pupils request that their child be withdrawn from the sex education element of RSE, schools must grant this request unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- Schools are required by law to consult parents when drawing up their policy and whenever they review it.

- Clear information must be provided for parents on the subject content and schools should provide examples of the resources that they plan to use. Should a school refuse to show parents the educational materials they plan to use, parents may demand to see them under the Freedom of Information Act.

- It is the job of the head teacher and governors in every school to make decisions about Relationships and Sex Education: it is their legal responsibility, not the local authority's.

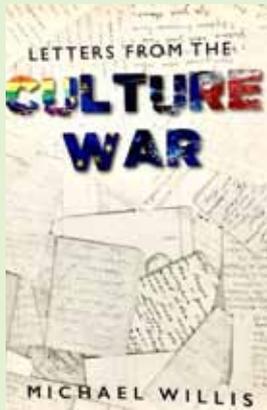
Addressing the subject of LGBT teaching in schools, the booklet notes that while the government has recommended that primary schools cover LGBT content, there is no legal requirement for them to do so. While secondary schools are expected to teach about LGBT issues these should only be addressed when age-appropriate and must be done in a way sensitive to pupils' religious backgrounds.

Additionally, schools must acknowledge that a range of views exist on these issues. The booklet notes that *'The British Social Attitudes Survey showed that in 2018, one in six agreed that sexual relations between two adults of the same sex was "always" or "mostly wrong"'*. Those who disapprove of same-sex marriage and transgenderism are likely to be much higher.

The booklet contains helpful tips for parents on engaging with schools and a very useful chart summarising the right of parental withdrawal at different educational stages. It also contains web links to all the key government documents relating to RSE. Any parent wanting to know how they can have an effective influence on what their children are learning in these subjects will want to get a copy of this booklet.

# Letters from the Culture War

Michael Willis, Brown Dog Books, 137pp,  
£12.99 ISBN 978-1-83952-247-5



The struggle to defend life, marriage and family has often been broadly described as the ‘culture war’. Among those who fight to defend the values we hold dear there are many valiant warriors. There are those who engage in activism, those who write articles and

those involved in educational work. Engagement in these activities may bring a certain amount of recognition. But there is another warrior whose efforts are much less recognised: the inveterate letter writer. Day in, day out these passionate individuals, fired up by the issues of the day, submit their letters to the major newspapers, the vast majority of which are never published. But still they write on.

This book is the work of one such individual. Michael Willis pursued a successful career in engineering but spent much of his spare time championing pro-life and pro-family causes. His commitment to his values has had a heavy cost. In 2018 he was sacked from the Institute of Directors where he had held a director training role.

This book contains 200 unpublished letters written over the last ten years which the author submitted to the *Daily Telegraph*. These letters cover a very broad range of subjects including abortion, sex education, marriage, home education, free speech, Brexit, and the NHS. The reader does not need to agree with all of Mr Willis’s views nor with his very distinct religious beliefs, which he states in the introduction, to enjoy and appreciate this book. The author has stated that the aim of his letters was to ‘*puncture the pomposity of post-modern values*’. A great turn of phrase and he certainly succeeds in this goal.

Some of the most powerful letters aim at highlighting the hypocrisy of the British establishment in its attitude to the sanctity of human life. The establishment’s obsession with ‘equality’ and ‘non-discrimination’ get thrown out of the window when-

ever the subject is abortion. For example, on the topic of abortion and disability, Mr Willis wrote the following letter:

*Sir, I have never understood the fact that under the law it is illegal to discriminate against an individual because of their disability and yet within the womb the law allows an individual to be ‘terminated’...because the scan has revealed a 50 per cent chance of disability. The revelation that 29 children were killed over the last 10 years because of the risk of a cleft palate demonstrates the lengths we will go to cleanse disfigurement and disability from our society. The silence is deafening from the various charities whose purpose it is to care and support those with disabilities. Yours in astonishment.*

Similarly, on the question of ‘gender discrimination’ Willis highlights the establishment’s double standard:

*Sir, I have not heard much of an outcry from the feminists about the abortion of unborn babies simply because of their gender. To destroy a baby because it is female must be the most ruthless form of gender discrimination...It shows how hollow is our claim to protect human rights when our society secretly disposes of 180,000 unborn children every year. Yours in life.*

Mr Willis rarely minces his words, but many FET supporters will undoubtedly approve of the sentiments expressed in the following letter regarding the school curriculum:

*May I suggest that if the Government cannot get the schools back in business we need to do something about making the future timetable more efficient? Stripping out useless non-subjects like Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) would free up the timetable and release children for more useful types of learning. PSHE is state-sponsored child abuse. Introducing sensitive information about sex is something best left to parents...*

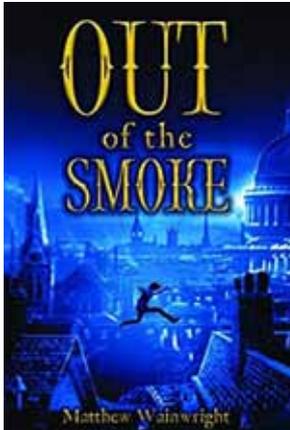
Other relevant letters include several deploring the capture of the police force by LGBT ideology, the Rotherham sexual abuse scandals and what Willis sees as the cause of these, ‘*the state who grooms young children to accept underage sex as the norm*’.

Willis’s letters are an entertaining read and while there is much to cause anger in some of the situations his letters describe, there is also much to take heart from.

# Out of the Smoke

Matthew Wainwright, The Wakeman Trust,  
336pp

£7.99 ISBN 978 1 913133 10 8



It is rare for us to review a novel in the bulletin but in an age when morally healthy literature for children and young people is few and far between it is worth highlighting genuinely decent works that parents can give to children without fear of moral consequences.

*Out of the Smoke* is aimed at young people of 12 and upwards. It is an engaging, exciting and often moving story with a good moral message. Set in Victorian London, the plot concerns Billy, a chimney sweep, who cleans chimneys under the supervision of Gerard, a cruel and callous man, to whom Billy was sold by his parents at a young age. Billy works with another boy named Tosher. One day when the two boys are cleaning the chimney of a particular house, Tosher steals a silver spoon. Billy and Tosher pawn the spoon and spend the money on alcohol. However, Gerard finds out about the theft and after a series of dramatic events Billy and Tosher escape from Gerard but are also separated from each other.

Billy ends up on the streets and graduates into a life of crime, becoming a respected member of several criminal gangs. However, a chance encounter with the children's champion and social reformer Lord Shaftesbury makes an impact on Billy and through an unusual turn of events, Billy ends up in the care of one of Shaftesbury's 'ragged schools' where he is reunited with Tosher and now has the prospect a better future.

The novel captures vividly the dirt and grime of 19th century London as well as the often terrifying life of the child chimney sweeps. Early in the book, Billy remembers the first time he got stuck in a chimney:

*...the pure unmingled terror of realising he had brought his knees up too far, jamming himself in the shaft...he had never forgotten the blind overwhelming panic, the feeling that the flue was squeezing him like a vice...he never forgot the spectre of death hovering*

*nearby, ready to pounce.*

Later, Shaftesbury and some of his associates walk the streets at night seeking to help those in need. Wainwright describes:

*By candlelight the ruin around them was even more evident: the sores on faces, the sewage lying in the open, the scuttling shapes that darted from shadow to shadow with beady eyes and yellow teeth...Robert glimpsed a person who might once have been a woman but was now little more than a scarecrow, clutching a ragged bundle in her arms and surrounded by smaller scarecrows.*

These descriptions raise the reader's social consciousness and make the book more than just an exciting story.

Towering over the whole story is the figure of Lord Shaftesbury, that famed philanthropist who made it his life's work to improve the lot of children and young people. Though he only actually appears in a few scenes he is to all intents and purposes the hero of the story who manages to redeem the lives of seemingly hopeless cases like Billy and Tosher.

Shaftesbury is an interesting figure from the perspective of Family Education Trust. Like FET, he was deeply concerned for the welfare of children and young people, but, like us, he also warned that both the state and many of the charities established to aid children risked becoming overbearing and intrusive into the privacy of family life. He would undoubtedly recoil in horror at some of the antics of today's children's charities.

Matthew Wainwright has produced a highly readable novel with a moral centre. The moral of 'two wrongs don't make a right' is integral to the story. Similarly, the novel illustrates how one act of dishonesty can have the most disastrous consequences. There is much to learn here about the importance of kindness and charity and of children being brought up by loving parents in a stable family.

Additionally, Wainwright seeks to inspire in his readers a historical interest in the period in question. As well as featuring scenes of Shaftesbury's discussions with well-known politicians of the day in the course of the story, at the end of the book he includes a short historical outline of the period, a biography of Shaftesbury and chronology of the events of his life. As a result, this book can serve both as an engaging story and a useful educational tool.

## FET booklet

### *Marriage and Divorce in the Liberal Imagination*

**Family Education Trust, in cooperation with the Coalition for Marriage, has recently published a booklet based on the address given by Colin Hart at our 2019 conference but updated and expanded in light of the passing of the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act.**

This short, easy to read booklet tells you all you need to know about the benefits of marriage and the harm done by easily available divorce.

Within the pages of this short but incisive booklet you will discover:

- What is the true nature of marriage
- The numberless benefits of marriage to the individual and to society
- Why the public interest is served by healthy marriages
- The liberal concepts that have undermined marriage
- What happens when a society abandons the traditional understanding of marriage illustrated by pertinent historical examples
- The motives of the pro-divorce lobby
- The damage done by permissive divorce laws
- What we can still do to defend marriage in our day

This concise booklet serves as the ideal short guide to marriage and divorce in our time. Why not order multiple copies and help communicate its truth to others.

**Copies of *Marriage and Divorce in the Liberal Imagination* are available from the Family Education Trust at £3 per copy. Order your copy today!**



*The booklet is good and its arguments are well presented.*

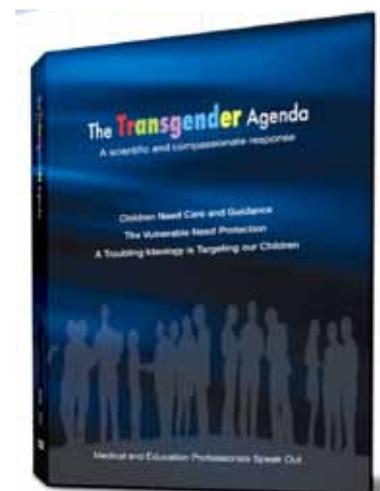
**A prominent Conservative MP**

## *The Transgender Agenda* A DVD from Truth in Science

*The Transgender Agenda* is a powerful evidence-based DVD in which medical and educational professionals including Dr Peter Saunders, Dr Carys Moseley and FET trustee Dr Julie Maxwell speak out on the transgender issue and the harm it is doing to our children and young people.

Find out more information or order the DVD from the Truth in Science website:

<https://www.truthinscience.org.uk/newDVD>



## Meet our Communications and Public Relations Officer



**Lucy Marsh**

Lucy is our new Public Relations and Communications Officer and started the position at the end of November 2020. She is responsible for keeping our supporters up to date with relevant news through social media and the newsletter. One of her aims is to widen the support base of FET through new methods of communications and publicity, as well as building new partnerships with other agencies and charities who support similar aims to FET.

Lucy's background is in journalism, and she first started working on the news desk for the Sunday Times after gaining a degree in linguistics at University College London, followed by a postgraduate diploma in newspaper journalism at City University. She then moved into PR and marketing and has worked for a number of agencies, as well as in-house. Most recently she worked in corporate communications for a higher education organisation in York.

Having a passion for writing, Lucy completed an MA in Creative Writing at the University of York in 2014, and continues to love writing for pleasure, particularly poetry and short fiction. Married to Allen with three school-aged children, the family live in rural North Yorkshire, surrounded by a lot of animals who keep them very busy!

Lucy was attracted to the role at FET as she strongly believes in the importance of marriage and the rights of parents to raise their children according to their beliefs without undue interference from the state. She is also a strong believer in free speech, something which should never be taken for granted. "I'm looking forward to making a difference and raising the profile of FET. It's important that we continue to take a stand for marriage and families to protect the welfare of children."

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