

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

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Submitter Comments:

Gender and sex are separate but related concepts, and are both socially constructed. What we tend to view as "biological sex" is a complex set of often complementary developmental outcome profiles that include certain primary and secondary phenotypical features (mammarys, reproductive organs, developmental patterns, musculature, height, etc) and neurological phenotypes, largely driven by developmental hormone profiles, but also via genetic, experiential and environmental factors. From a statistical perspective, these profiles are not binary categories. They are bipolar distributions along a continuum. The binary construction of "biological sex" is a statistical and phenomenological falsehood. Via the neurological, experiential and environmental pathways of "biological determinism," the degree to which people's sense of congruence with the assignment of a binary profile of sex, and the degree to which they feel obliged to follow their society's constructions of gender (dress, presentation, behaviour, etc) is also (and to a large extent, even more so) a distributed phenomenon. Gender is changeable, dynamic, ever evolving and changes can be triggered by anything from ideological positions (e.g. a position against capitalist consumerism and the fashion industry) to trauma informed dissociation (e.g. victims of sexual aggression wishing to distance themselves from gender-based social interactions). Gender variance can have many different axes, and we should see all as valid with respect to the experiences of individuals' personal experiences. To do less, is inhuman. Victorian era "science" sought to impose binary categories of both sex and gender (in a conflated whole) when there was none. Modern medicine, neurology, sociology and psychology have all started to diverge from this position and adopt a more critical position of the biased simplistic phenomenology used by people who chose to inflict their biases and simplistic (if systemic) thinking via colonial power on most of the world's population. This bias has been long lasting and it's time it was put to bed. Science - as a discipline - integrates new observations, new data, new insights and new theories into its body of knowledge as a matter of fundamental philosophical necessity. The philosophy of science as a body of knowledge demands that we continually update our thinking as more nuanced models of reality are presented, proven and integrated; whilst older, more primitive models are discarded. As an analogy... Victorian biological and social science is like playing with Lego's Duplo blocks. Big, clunky construction modules that you can only make certain things with. Over time, as our technical, social and psychological sophistication has developed, we have moved to Lego neighbourhoods, then to Technic, then Mindstorms (Lego's robotics and coding system). So, does the Queensland government want to be known for smashing the Duplo blocks together until they stick? Or does it want to be a future facing organisation that acknowledges that science, society, philosophy and more all move forwards, rather than back and embrace the vast array of possibilities that Mindstorms presents? Doing so does not prevent anyone from playing with Duplo. It just stops them insisting that everyone else does so. I would encourage any government to embrace the more modern, future-ready approach where people are not hide-bound to flawed models of reality constructed and maintained for the sake of forcing a sense of personal order on the world. Update the toolset. Update the models of ways of knowing and being to include those who fall further from the binary modes, and let them be themselves without shame or censure. Politics is etymologically "Of the people". If you exclude people from participation on terms dictated by the dictates of the people with the most simple models of reality, you do a disservice to politics as a body of knowledge, and politics as a praxis.