

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

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See attached:

Inquiry into Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022

This Bill is anti-women, anti-gay and anti-children. This Bill should not be passed.

Sex is a biological reality. Trying to pretend it is not is a farce.

It appears that the drafters of this bill have not paid sufficient attention to the harm caused to children by the “gender affirming” approach adopted by the UK Tavistock organisation. Tavistock is now being disbanded, after it was found that Tavistock’s model of care was ‘not safe’ for children. It appears Tavistock will be subject to hundreds of lawsuits, possibly over one thousand.

The State of Queensland should not be subject to the risk of such lawsuits when things go pear-shaped from unnecessary surgeries and medical procedures performed in Queensland hospitals. The number of detransitioners, despite moves to quieten and exclude them, is growing. They are not happy after being “affirmed” into having drastic and irreversible medical procedures.

The drafters of this bill also appear to have paid insufficient attention to the outcomes in overseas jurisdictions that have implemented similar proposals. This includes having men (adult human males – with male genitalia) invade women’s (adult human females) spaces. In particular, what has happened when such men have self-declared that they are female and are located in female prisons, and hospital wards. This has included rape of women.

Examples of the problems include those in England and Ireland, and a warning of problems for Scotland:

Relevant articles providing deeper analysis and examples of the problems are listed below. I have received permission to include the articles in my submission:

Fraser Myers, 29th July 2022, “How did the Tavistock carry on for so long? - The vicious culture of fear around trans issues silenced all concerns.”

<https://www.spiked-online.com/2022/07/29/how-did-the-tavistock-carry-on-for-so-long/>

Raquel Rosario Sanchez, 27th October 2022, “How trans ideology harms the most vulnerable - A woman was refused life-saving surgery due to her gender-critical beliefs”

<https://www.spiked-online.com/2022/10/27/raquel-woman-denied-treatment/>

Lauren Smith, 30th November 2022, “The woke state has failed women - The Ministry of Justice’s embrace of gender ideology has ruined the lives of some of the most vulnerable in society.”

<https://www.spiked-online.com/2022/11/30/the-woke-state-has-failed-women/>

Brendan O'Neill, 7th December 2022, “We need to talk about woke homophobia - The trans cult has ushered in a new hatred of homosexuals”

<https://www.spiked-online.com/2022/12/07/we-need-to-talk-about-woke-homophobia/>

James Esses, 21st December 2022, "This is a dark day for women and children in Scotland - Sturgeon's gender-recognition bill will drive a coach and horses through safeguarding and sex-based rights"

<https://www.spiked-online.com/2022/12/21/this-is-a-dark-day-for-women-and-children-in-scotland/>

James Esses, 5th January 2023, "Ireland's dangerous experiment in self-ID - Women's spaces and child safeguarding have been obliterated in the name of trans rights"

<https://www.spiked-online.com/2023/01/05/irelands-dangerous-experiment-in-self-id/>

The gender self-id provisions of this bill should not proceed. Those provisions anti-women, anti-gay and anti-children.

How did the Tavistock carry on for so long?

Fraser Myers

How did we let this go on for so long? That is surely the question on everyone's mind following the NHS's announcement this week that it will shut down the Tavistock Centre, its specialist gender-identity clinic for children and young people.

This comes after the damning findings of paediatrician Dr Hilary Cass, whose [interim report](#) into the Tavistock was published earlier this year. Cass found that the Tavistock's model of care is 'not safe' for children. This week a letter from Cass to NHS England was [published](#) with further advice on reforming Britain's gender-identity services and on the potential harms of puberty blockers.

The Cass review confirmed much of what was already known that clinicians at the Tavistock are under pressure to 'affirm' a child's new gender identity, and that the puberty-blocking drugs that are prescribed to this end are largely experimental. But the deeper questions remain: why did so many adults go along with this and why were they so nonchalant about putting vulnerable children at risk?

After all, the alarm has been sounded repeatedly, over nearly two decades, through whistleblowers, reports, media investigations and lawsuits. And yet nothing ever seemed to change.

Concerns about the Tavistock stretch back at least 18 years. In 2004, mental-health nurse Susan Evans blew the whistle, after learning that a 16-year-old boy who thought he was a girl had been referred for hormone treatment after just four appointments. In 2005, a review by Dr David Taylor raised concerns about the speed with which children were being prescribed puberty blockers, the lack of evidence surrounding their use, and the troubled backgrounds of the children presenting with gender-identity issues.

In 2018, Dr David Bell, who had worked at the Tavistock since 1995, accused the clinic of fast-tracking young people down the trans pathway, without exploring their personal histories. He warned that many of the patients presenting as trans were often gay, on the autism spectrum or suffering from other conditions like anorexia. The review prompted Dr Marcus Evans, a Tavistock board member (and husband of Susan), to resign.

Even as the damning claims mounted, the volume of children treated by the clinic continued to balloon, from around 250 patients per year in 2011/12 to some 5,000 patients in 2021/22. According to the *Telegraph*, in the time between Susan Evans first blowing the whistle and this week's announcement of the closure, some 20,000 children had been referred to the clinic.

We do not know how many of these children will have been prescribed puberty-blocking drugs, but from the Cass review and her letter this week we can say three things:

First, that staff at the Tavistock have been 'under pressure to adopt an unquestioning affirmative approach' to gender identity, which means children would likely be prescribed puberty blockers if they wanted them.

Second, there is no evidence that puberty blockers work as intended. Though they are often said to delay the onset of puberty to let children ‘pause’ and think before potentially transitioning to the opposite gender, Cass has found no evidence of this. As she wrote in the [letter to NHS England](#), published this week, it is just as likely that these drugs ‘disrupt [the] decision-making process’, potentially making it more likely that young people will move on to cross-sex hormones.

And third, puberty blockers could be dangerous. As Cass puts it: ‘Brain maturation may be temporarily or permanently disrupted by puberty blockers, which could have a significant impact on the ability to make complex risk-laden decisions, as well as possible longer-term neuropsychological consequences.’

So why were so many children exposed to this harm? And why did no one put a stop to it? The simple explanation is that anyone who raised concerns was met with dismissal at best and venom at worst. As former clinician Dr Kirsty Entwistle noted in an [open letter](#) in 2019, concerns were not ‘sinking in’, leaving distressed colleagues with no option but to speak anonymously to the press. When the clinic’s child-safeguarding lead, Sonia Appleby, [tried to report staff concerns](#) to management, she was branded ‘hostile’ and accused of having an ‘agenda’.

The most common accusation thrown at those who blew the whistle was, of course, ‘transphobia’. An absurd smear, with its cruel implication that these practitioners must have hated the children in their care. The very children they were trying to protect from harm.

Of course, the accusation of transphobia not only appeared to discredit the concerns of the whistleblowers – it also made others afraid of voicing their own. Last year’s report by the Care Quality Commission into the Tavistock identified a culture of fear, in which ‘staff did not always feel able to raise concerns without fear of retribution’. As Marcus Evans put it when speaking to *spiked* in 2020: ‘The fear of [being accused of] transphobia has basically just immobilised people’s capacity to think critically.’

This lack of critical thinking and questioning opened the door to all kinds of strange and illogical views about gender. Over the years, many whistleblowers noticed the growing influence of trans lobby groups such as Stonewall and Mermaids. Mermaids promotes the idea that medical transitioning can be ‘life-affirming and life-saving’ for children. And Stonewall this weekend claimed that children as young as two years old can recognise their trans identity. The question of pre-school trans kids is not merely theoretical at the Tavistock – according to *The Times*, it has seen patients [as young as three](#).

The cruel irony here is this extreme gender ideology purports to protect the most vulnerable. The ‘affirmation’ approach to gender transitioning is held to save the lives of those most in danger. In reality, it is the most vulnerable who are paying the price for this, such as children with body dysmorphia and complex mental-health issues. In recent years, the proportion of girls seeking gender reassignment has shot up exponentially – by some 5,000 per cent. And a vast proportion of children with gender-identity concerns grow up to be gay. Tavistock whistleblowers have compared the rushed medicalisation of children to a form of [gay conversion therapy](#). A dark joke among staff had it that there would soon be ‘no gay people left’.

As these children grow up, many come to regret the path they were encouraged to take by this affirmation approach. So-called detransitioners, like Keira Bell, will [bear the scars](#) of these medical interventions for the rest of their lives.

This is the cost of silence. The cost of a culture of fear that tries to hush up difficult

conversations. It ends with adults placing political correctness and woke ideologies above the welfare of children. With the demise of the Tavistock, this has got to change.

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Picture by: YouTube / BBC.

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How trans ideology harms the most vulnerable

Raquel Rosario Sanchez

‘Why does it matter to you?’ This is the question women are always asked if we object to the mantra that ‘transwomen are women’. Proponents of gender-identity ideology are quick to reassure us that the advancement of [‘trans rights’](#) does not in any way infringe on the existing rights of women and girls. We are told it is not an issue that requires much thought or debate. We need to just be kind and accepting, and to stop causing such a fuss. Yet time and again, we see clear-cut instances in which the pursuit of trans rights ends up actively harming vulnerable women. In a recent shocking case, a woman was even denied access to life-saving surgery, seemingly due to her gender-critical beliefs.

Last week, a woman using the pseudonym Emma told the [Mail Online](#) that a life-saving operation, scheduled to take place at the private Princess Grace Hospital in London, had been cancelled. This was because Emma, a victim of male sexual violence, had requested an all-female nursing team and single-sex accommodation. Emma had also refused to state her ‘gender identity’ and give out her preferred pronouns, when asked to do so in a questionnaire.

Princess Grace Hospital specialises in women’s procedures. It is one of a handful of hospitals which has a Da Vinci robot. These robots are used to perform delicate operations, such as the complex colorectal surgery that Emma needed and had been scheduled to undergo on 10 October.

Emma’s ordeal began on 6 October, when she turned up at the hospital for a pre-op assessment. Emma alleges that [a male member of staff](#), wearing a blonde wig and make-up, opened the door on her and made eye contact with her while she was in a state of undress.

After the incident, Emma filed a complaint. She also made an urgent request for a women-only nursing-staff team, over fears that ‘men would be attending’ to her intimate care after her surgery, which was expected to leave her immobilised for an entire week. Yet not only was her request denied, but her surgery was cancelled, too.

One working day before the procedure was due to take place, Emma received an email from Maxine Estop Green, the chief executive at the Princess Grace Hospital, telling her that the operation was to be cancelled. The email states that the hospital does not ‘share [Emma’s] beliefs’ and that it is ‘committed to protecting staff from unacceptable distress’. The implication here is that Emma’s request for single-sex facilities and women-only intimate care was somehow transphobic and discriminatory.

Speaking to the [MailOnline](#), Emma says that she could not ‘describe’ or ‘rationalise’ the fear she felt at the prospect of a man, or men, being present for her intimate care. Of course, in a rational world, women would not need to justify why they do not want a man to be touching them, especially if they have been a survivor of sexual assault. This is particularly important in a hospital setting, when a patient is likely to be physically immobile and vulnerable. Yet when healthcare institutions find themselves in the grip of trans ideology, all common sense seems to go out of the window.

After Emma [went public](#) with the cancellation of her surgery, Baroness Nicholson, Conservative peer and chairwoman of parliamentary campaign group Children and Women First, took up her cause. Nicholson has [filed a complaint](#) with the health watchdog, the Care Quality Commission.

It still is unclear if or when Emma will be allowed to have the treatment she needs (unverified

social-media reports suggest the problem may now be resolved). The very fact she was put through such an ordeal, not knowing whether she would be able to access surgery, is bad enough. It is clear that the rights of women like her are being ignored in favour of trans ideology. As Emma puts it herself: 'Women's safety, dignity and privacy continues to be sacrificed on the altar of this quasi-religion.' Emma's case is an extreme example of an all-too common problem.

In recent months, there has been some welcome pushback against trans ideology from some politicians and in [healthcare circles](#), but progress is uncertain. There is every chance that under a future Labour government, single-sex care could effectively be abolished.

Just last week, at the *Pink News* awards, [Labour leader Keir Starmer](#) said: 'I've been very clear – my Labour government will uphold the Equality Act we were proud to pass in 2010, including its provision for single-sex spaces. And we will also modernise the Gender Recognition Act.'

These positions are irreconcilable. 'Modernisation' of the Gender Recognition Act is code for the introduction of gender self-identification. This would enable people to identify into whichever sex category they want, based on their say-so alone. Single-sex services and spaces, such as women-only hospital wards, would then become a legal impossibility. Requesting female-only nursing care would certainly be out of the question.

Just a few years ago, it would have been totally unremarkable for a woman to set clear boundaries over who can lay their hands on her body, especially in a hospital setting. Yet today, thanks to the rise of trans ideology, this perfectly normal request is considered beyond the pale – so much so that a woman can be refused life-saving surgery for making it. This is the dark path the mantra of 'transwomen are women' has taken us down.

Raquel Rosario Sanchez is a writer, campaigner and researcher from the Dominican Republic.

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The woke state has failed women

Lauren Smith



The e e ngs o ans peop e a e mo e mpo an han a k ng abou p o ec ng women and ch d en. Tha s he message com ng om p om nen vo ces w h n he UK M n s y o Jus ce and HM sons and oba on Se v ce (HM S).

as week, [hundreds of MoJ employees we e ema ed a gu de](#) as pa o T ansgende Awa eness Week, exp a n ng o hem how o be e ans a es and how o ecogn se 'ansphob c-coded language. The g ossa y con a ned 35 eve yday ph ases ha 'supposed y have cove ansphob c mean ngs. The [eaked gu de](#) condescend ng y sugges s ha [s a educa e peop e hey hea us ng hese ph ases](#) 'about he easons why he use can be deemed o ens ve o upse ng. The documen goes on o c a y ha , a hough 'pass ng uses o hese ph ases m gh no be cons de ed m sconduc , he mpo ance o cha eng ng he use canno be ove s a ed.

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e haps he mos eg eg ous sugges on o a , howeve , s ha MoJ s a shou d no use he ph ase 'p o ec ng women and g s, because 'heav y e es on equa ng ans women w h be ng p eda o y men. The gu de c a m ha , us because he e have been cases o [ansgende p sone s sexua y assau ng women p sone s](#), and us because [MoJ s a s c s show ha he p o po on o nma es conv c ed o sex o ences s a h ghe among ansgende p sone s han s among he gene a p son popu a on, men on ng hese ac s s a ansphob c dogwh s e. S m a y, he gu de wa ns aga ns d scuss ng he 'e asu e o women and g s o 'o c ng ch d en o ans on, on he g ounds ha he dange s o such h ngs have been w d y exagge a ed by so-ca ed TERFs.](#)

A e he gu de made n o he p ess and spa ked an a m gh y back ash, he son Se v ce was qu ck o emphas se ha had been pub shed by a s a ne wo k and d d no ep esen he 'co po a e HM S v ew. The son Se v ce even p om sed a ev ew o n e na commun ca ons. The ne wo k n ques on was [de n son and oba on \(\)](#), a goup ha s s 'po cy ev ew among s espons b es. s cu en y [adv s ng](#) on ma e s o secu y and coun e - e o sm. Wh e s no an o c a HM S body, has cea y p ayed a o e n o m ng po cy when comes o ansgende sm.

Rega d ess o he m nu ae o h s s o y, beyond he ques on o whe e exac y h s documen came om w h n he MoJ, s cea yan a emp o s ence gende -c ca d scuss on. And s an exam y o a much b oade cu u e o ea. As one MoJ sou ce o d he *Telegraph*, emp o ye es ee unab e o a se ob ec ons o gende deo ogy 'o [ea o be ng abe ed a ansphobe](#). MoJ s a a be ng asked o unc ca y accep an deo ogy ha has a ack eco d o ha m ng women, mos shock ng y n he case o ema e p sone s.

The e have been a numbe o ou geous cases nvo v ng ansgende nma es. The e was he case o Ka en Wh e (bo n S ephen Wood) n 2018 - he conv c ed ap s who was ans e ed o a women s p son, whe e he wen on o sexua y assau a eas wo ema e nma es. The e was conv c ed mu de e [Soph e Eas wood](#) (o me y Dan e), who, appa en y no con en w h hav ng p son s a add ess h mas ema e and move h m o o mon women s p son, a so dec ded h s yea ha he den ed as a baby. He demanded he be supp ed w h napp es and pu eed ood. The e was a so Sa y Ann D xon (aka John S ephen), a se a sex o ende and conv c ed paedoph e who was p aced n a women s p son h s yea. (To g ve you a sense o us how deep he o uns n ou c m na - us ce sys em, a Tw e use who c c sed h s dec s on was wa ned by Sussex o ce ha she [may have comm ed a ha e c ne](#).)

As s ands, ma e p sone s who den y as women can be ans e ed o women s p sons w hou equ ng med ca ans on, o even a Gende Recogn on Ce ca e. A change o he u es, ecen y o posed by us ce sec e a y Dom n c Raab, wou d mean ha ans nma es w h n ac gen a a cou d no onge he housed a ongs de he oppos e sex. Th s wou d be a v a s ep n mak ng p sons a sa e p ace o women. Bu as he ud c ous ansphob a gu debook shows, he e s s ac ma e o ea among MoJ s a when comes o add ess ng hese ssues.

G ven a h s, s a s ck oke ha c v se van sa he M n s y o Jus ce have been d scou aged om a k ng abou 'p o ec ng women ha hey have essen a y been adv sed o p o se he po en a o hu ee ngs ove women s we a e. By un h nk ng y emb ac ng gende deo ogy, he B s h s a e has a ed some o he mos vu ne ab e women n ou soc e y.

Lauren Smith san n e na *spiked*.

Picture by: *Twitter / NoXYinXXprisons*.

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We need to talk about woke homophobia

Brendan O'Neill

If someone had told me a few years ago that in Britain in 2022 a gay-rights organisation would be branded dangerous, hateful, parasitical and even Nazi-like, and that it would be denied public funding so that it couldn't spread its poisonous message to the masses, I'd never have believed them. Homophobic McCarthyism in modern Britain? The ruthless censorship of homosexuals in such a gay-friendly nation as ours? No way. Won't happen. Only it has. The LGB Alliance, the only organisation in the UK that caters exclusively to the needs of homosexual and bisexual people, has once again found itself monstered and silenced by Britain's cultural guardians.

The [Telegraph](#) reported at the weekend that a leading figure in the Arts Council, the government body that gives out millions of pounds to art projects, denounced the LGB Alliance as 'divisive' and 'anti-trans'. The LGB Alliance is sceptical of the [ideology of transgenderism](#), which makes it 'anti-trans' in the simpleton morality of the new elites. In a virtual Arts Council meeting earlier this year, deputy chief exec Simon Mellor slammed the alliance and said it was a 'mistake' for the council to have awarded it £9,000 to make a film about gay people's contribution to the life of the nation for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Then, five days after that virtual chat, on 19 April, the grant was withdrawn. The Arts Council insists it didn't take the decision to withhold funds – that call was made by a secondary funding body, the London Community Foundation. But it is at the very least striking, and more than a tad concerning, that a gay-rights organisation was deprived of Arts Council money shortly after an Arts Council higher-up denounced it as transphobic.

It gets worse. Unofficially, Arts Council employees took to the internet to rage against the LGB Alliance in the most extraordinary and intolerant fashion. Arts Council staff circulated a petition against the funding of the alliance, with one employee describing it as a 'cultural parasite and a glorified hate group' whose supporters are 'neo-Nazis, homophobes and Islamophobes'. Another said the alliance is a 'hate group', not unlike the KKK. Formally, the Arts Council may not have issued the edict saying 'take away the alliance's money', but it cannot shirk its part in whipping up hysteria about the alliance, in contributing to the chattering classes' feverish view of this organisation as a nest of fascists masquerading as gay liberationists. For Arts Council leaders and staff to put about bile about the LGB Alliance and then say 'It wasn't us' when the alliance lost Arts Council money is a bit much.

This isn't the first time the LGB Alliance has been viciously rounded on by the correct-think set. Since its founding in 2019 it has been the target of a ceaseless smear campaign. Barely a week passes without a Twitermob emerging to denounce the alliance as hateful, disgusting, creepy and, worst of all, *old*. Nothing seems to offend the neo-Maoists of the over-educated 'queer' set more than the sight of people over 50 talking about their rights. Woke mobs have lobbied for lottery funding to be withheld from these pesky homosexuals and even for the alliance's charitable status to be relinquished. The trans youth charity Mermaids even took the alliance to court to challenge its status as a charity. That has backfired spectacularly and – forgive me – hilariously: Mermaids itself has now been made the subject of a statutory inquiry by the Charity Commission after 'concerns' were raised about its governance. People in glass houses, right?

We should all be concerned about the Arts Council's behaviour. Even if we accept that the council wasn't responsible for the decision to defund the LGB Alliance, it's still the case that its employees made highly politicised and even quite spiteful judgements about the alliance. For council employees to brand the alliance as parasites and Nazis and similar to the KKK is not only nasty and false – it also calls into question the political neutrality of the council, its ability to award arts funding in a cool, impartial manner. Is it only groups that win the approval of the

politically correct that get funding from the Arts Council? There's an undeniable vibe of McCarthyism to this. It seems you can find yourself frozen out of the arts world if your views offend the elites. 'Blacklisting', they used to call it, back when censors were more honest.

I'm sure the impassioned castigators of the LGB Alliance think of themselves as progressive and pure. All we're doing is standing up for trans people, they no doubt tell themselves. But sadly for them, some of us are old enough to remember when it was the reactionaries of the religious right that hounded homosexual organisations in this way. When it was sections of the tabloid press that would brand homosexuals as parasites and perverts, likely to corrupt the morals of the nation and the innocence of the young. And I'm afraid we see unmistakable echoes of all that in your relentless demonisation of the LGB Alliance as a social menace whose ideas should be sidelined, whose art should be censored, and whose very right to exist should be extinguished. You call it trans activism, we call it neo-homophobia.

The LGB Alliance's thoughtcrime is well known. It believes that the cult of transgenderism has nothing in common with same-sex attraction, and in fact poses a threat to the rights of the same-sex attracted. Writing off such concerns as 'transphobia' is infantile and foolish. Not least because they are correct. The trans idea, in its current manifestation, has ushered in a world where lesbians find themselves branded '[genital fetishists](#)' if they refuse to sleep with transwomen (ie, men). Where young people who would very likely grow up to be homosexual are put on a conveyor belt of hormonal treatment and even bodily mutilation to turn them into their 'real' gender. Where young lesbians are having utterly unnecessary mastectomies. Where young gay men are being subjected to the kind of medical interventions that were once horribly foisted on people like Alan Turing.

For the crime of his homosexual desires, Turing was made to [undergo hormonal correction](#) that feminised his body, rendered him impotent and gave him breasts. Sound familiar? We once viewed such violent meddling in the lives and bodies of gay men as an abomination. Now we call it 'trans' and cheer it to the rafters. We put Turing on the £50 note as an apology for what we did to him, even as we do the same thing to 18-year-old lads who, just a few years ago, in the pre-trans era, would have grown up to be normal, happy gay men.

The LGB Alliance is absolutely right to talk about these things. We are witnessing the re-pathologisation of homosexuality. A return to the pre-gay-liberation view of same-sex attraction as a disorder to be treated and potentially corrected. A rehabilitation of the backward view of homosexuals as perverts ('genital fetishists') and parasites. And a return of the censorious belief that homosexual 'propaganda' must be defunded and deplatformed, lest it warp the minds of the young and offend the sensibilities of the elite. Neo-homophobia must be confronted. Shame on the woke lynch mob that is trying to crush the one organisation that is committed to doing precisely that.

Brendan O'Neill is *spiked's* chief political writer and host of the *spiked* podcast, [The Brendan O'Neill Show](#). Subscribe to the podcast [here](#). And find Brendan on Instagram: [@burntoakboy](#)

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This is a dark day for women and children in Scotland

James Esses

The Scottish parliament is on the cusp of passing a new bill that will undermine both the safeguarding of vulnerable children and the sanctity of same-sex spaces. Today, the [Gender Recognition Reform \(Scotland\) Bill](#), first introduced by the Scottish government on 2 March 2022, faces its final vote before becoming law. If passed, it would enable individuals in Scotland to 'self-identify' as the opposite sex. And it is almost certain to pass the SNP-dominated Holyrood.

This devolved piece of legislation would supersede existing UK-wide law – namely, the Gender Recognition Act (GRA) 2004. The UK-wide GRA enables individuals who have fulfilled certain criteria to obtain a 'gender-recognition certificate', thereby legally changing their gender. But it also maintains significant safeguards to protect against abuse. In thrall to gender ideology, the Scottish government under Nicola Sturgeon wants to relax those safeguards.

South of the border, NHS England recently published guidance explaining the risks involved when children who present with gender dysphoria are 'socially transitioned' – that is, where teachers, parents or practitioners use a child's new name and pronouns. Affirming children in their adopted identity, it advises, risks encouraging them down a slippery slope towards an irreversible transition that they may later regret.

One of the elements to social transition is legal transition. UK law currently reflects the view of the UK [Women and Equalities Select Committee](#), that to be properly able 'to consider future ramifications of legally transitioning', an individual needs to be at least 18. In 2020, the Tory government scrapped proposals to change the GRA, with the then [minister for women and equalities, Liz Truss](#), stating that the legislation as it stands ensures 'proper checks and balances'.

The SNP disagrees. Scotland's GRA reforms will lower the age at which someone can obtain a gender-recognition certificate, from 18 to 16. The new law will also reduce the period for which an applicant must have lived in their acquired gender, from two years to just three months. The proposed law also removes the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria in order to obtain a gender-recognition certificate.

This is a profound threat to safeguarding, watering down the existing checks and balances designed to ensure that those who wish to transition are genuine. It would also make it difficult for medical professionals to question someone's decision to transition, even if they felt it was not in the patient's best interests. Gender dysphoria is a recognised mental-health condition and those who present with it should be referred to mental-health services – not railroaded into making irreversible changes to their bodies.

The SNP's gender-recognition reforms also pose a significant risk to women's spaces. Particularly in light of a recent decision in the Scottish courts, which ruled that having a [gender-recognition certificate legally changes someone's sex](#)

[for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010](#). This means that a man would need to live as a woman for just three months to be afforded the same legal protections as a woman. Justifying the changes earlier this year, the Scottish government described the current process for obtaining a gender-recognition certificate as '[intrusive](#)'. What about the intrusion into women's spaces that this legislation will enable?

In ploughing on with this bill, the Scottish government is disregarding public opinion. Earlier this year, over 11,000 people responded to a consultation by the Scottish Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee. The responses overwhelmingly rejected plans to reform gender-recognition laws, with 60 per cent disagreeing with the proposal to lower the age at which people can obtain a GRA. Even more people were opposed to removing the legal requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria. Opinion polls similarly suggest the Scottish public is firmly against all of the central provisions of this bill.

We can only hope that members of the Scottish parliament recognise the many harms that this bill will cause, see sense and change their minds. All the evidence so far, however, suggests that the SNP's embrace of gender ideology will continue unabated.

James Esses is co-founder of Thoughtful Therapists.

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Ireland's dangerous experiment in self-ID

James Esses

Shortly before Christmas, the Scottish parliament passed sweeping reforms to the legal process of gender recognition. The new law essentially allows anyone in Scotland to change their legal sex by self-identification alone, a policy widely known as 'self-ID'. The majority of Scots are opposed to self-ID. And significant concerns were raised by feminist campaigners, the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the UK government itself, who fear that these reforms will [drive a coach and horses through child safeguarding and women's sex-based rights](#).

Throughout the debate on gender self-ID, such concerns were blithely dismissed as scaremongering. Proponents of self-ID often cited the example of the Republic of Ireland, which has had a system of self-ID since the passing of its own Gender Recognition Act in 2015. This is often presented by gender ideologues as a success story. However, when you drill down into the situation in Ireland, the dangers of self-ID become clear.

Just as in Scotland, the Irish gender-recognition reform was pushed through against the wishes of the public. The Irish people never had a formal say on self-ID and polling over the years has shown that the majority of people do not approve of it. In [2021, a poll showed](#) that just 17 per cent agreed with Ireland's gender-recognition law as it stands.

Like Scotland, Ireland's legislation enables anyone over 18 to obtain a gender-recognition certificate without the approval of medical practitioners. And the legislation makes it clear that once a man has a gender-recognition certificate, legally his '[sex becomes that of a woman](#)'.

This conflation of gender and sex has serious ramifications, particularly when it comes to preserving sex-based rights and women-only spaces.

Just take the now-infamous case of '[Barbie Kardashian](#)'. In 2020, Gabriel Gentile threatened to torture, rape and kill his mother – crimes for which he was convicted in 2021. In August 2020, however, Gentile was issued with a gender-recognition certificate by Ireland's Department of Social Protection. Legally, he became a woman called 'Barbie Kardashian'. This biological man is today being held in custody in the female wing of Limerick Prison. In other words, a man, convicted for threatening to rape and kill women, is being housed in a women's prison thanks to gender self-ID. There can hardly be a more flagrant example of the threat gender self-ID poses to women.

The statistics are also telling. Last year, a report by the [Department for Social Protection](#) showed that in the seven years since self-ID was introduced in Ireland, just one of the 909 applications for a gender-recognition certificate was rejected – or 0.1 per cent of the applications. This suggests that self-ID could be an open door for abusers to exploit.

These reforms also pose a threat to children. It is already possible for 16- and 17-year-olds to change gender in Ireland – something which could put them on the path to an irreversible medical transition. And although there remain some

safeguards in the law (such as a requirement for parental consent), having already embraced gender ideology, Ireland is now on a slippery slope toward further changes.

Following the 2015 Act, a [‘review group’](#) was set up by the Irish government to review the legislation and to propose future amendments. The group’s recommendations are extremely troubling.

It recommends extending ‘self-ID’ to children aged 16 and 17. It has also recommended extending the above provisions to those who seek to identify as ‘nonbinary’, something which will further dilute sex-based rights. Work is already underway in the Irish parliament to formally draft these proposed legal changes.

Most worrying of all is the review group’s proposal that ‘a system of gender recognition should be introduced for children of any age’. This means toddlers could transition in the near future. The review group even recommends introducing a legal process to ‘address cases where there is not consent from both parents or it is not possible or safe to obtain [the] same’. In other words, parents who do not want their children to legally change their sex are considered a problem for the Irish state to ‘address’.

Not only has Ireland’s gender-recognition law undermined women’s spaces and posed a risk to children, but it has also given the green light to trans ideologues to demand even further measures.

Time and time again, whenever criticism of self-ID is raised, proponents maintain there is absolutely nothing to worry about. The example of Ireland shows just how dangerous and dishonest that claim is. The UK must pull the brakes on gender self-ID before it is too late.

James Esses is co-founder of Thoughtful Therapists.

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