

Chapter 8: Explaining transgender

	page
Some explanations	3
It's male supremacy	5
Feminism	6
Beyond my earlier account	7
Dissociation and arrogant entitlement	8
Delusions	10
False memory syndrome	13
The money	26
‘Transhumanism/dehumanisation	29
Conclusion	32
References	34

On the surface, there is a simple explanation for the success of the transgender lobby. So-called ‘trans people’ are presented as an oppressed minority and the modern liberal West is accustomed to making accommodations for oppressed minorities—although in neutralised, spuriously equal categories that include the dominators as well, e.g. race (which includes the white race), sex (which includes men), sexual orientation (which includes heterosexuality). Creating categories of disadvantaged individuals is a way of acknowledging the harm of domination without acknowledging the overall system that causes the harm.

Transgender individuals fit neatly into that model, or they would if what they said about their ‘vulnerability’ were true. It isn’t. Far from consisting of a set of ‘vulnerable’ individuals, the transgender agenda has managed to change institutions in its own interests. As Helen Joyce (among many others) has pointed out, ‘A movement that focuses on the levers of power rather than building grassroots support is one in which a few wealthy people can have considerable sway’ (Joyce, 2021: 388-9). But as long as their claims are not questioned, as long as no one thinks too hard about the trans phenomenon, they fit neatly into the ‘oppressed minority’ pattern.

The transgender agenda itself tends to eschew explanation, either in terms of individuals and the aetiology of the transgender condition—the ‘gender dysphoria’, or the ‘gender identity’ of the opposite sex or of no sex at all—or of how that condition might relate to the social norms and mores within which it arises. A social explanation is ruled out by transgender’s individualistic focus. The usual answer to the question of where it came from is ‘don’t know’.

The UK Department of Health, for example, which is not a transgender organisation (and nor should it be) but which has swallowed the trans agenda whole, said that ‘[t]he reason why some people experience GD [gender dysphoria] is not fully understood’, citing their own research as evidence for this lack of knowledge (UK Department of Health, 2019: 3). They do give the usual evasive non-explanation: ‘It is

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likely that the development of gender identity is multifactorial and influenced by both biological and social factors' (UK Department of Health, 2019: 3). While this sentence is perfectly well-formed grammatically, it is in fact meaningless. And even though the Department don't know what causes the supposed transgender condition, they do know what to do about it: 'gender affirming medical treatments' (p.9).

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There are two kinds of 'why?' questions raised by the transgender phenomenon: why would anyone want to be the opposite sex, in particular, why would men want to be 'women', especially given how denigrated women are under conditions of male supremacy? and why has the trans movement been so successful? The first question focuses on the individuals: what is it about individuals that leads them to want to be the opposite sex, or even just to say they are? The second focuses on society: what is it in society that accepts, even warmly embraces, the belief that people can change their sex, despite the fact that it is false?

In fact, these two questions are in the end the same question, since the answer to both of them is the same: the social relations of male supremacy. The social relations within which individuals are situated are also situated within us. They are what give meaning, value and understanding to the way we live our lives. This is not meant as an absolute statement. Meanings can be contested and our understanding of the world changed. But human beings are not isolated self-engendered entities sufficient unto themselves. We are all more or less creatures of our social environment, even though we are also capable of refusing to be implicated. The assertion 'I feel like a woman therefore I am one' uttered by male individuals, has struck a chord with important segments of society, so there must be something about society that is compatible with accepting men as 'women'. A society that finds that acceptable is a society that regards women with contempt, and the most appropriate name for such a society is 'male supremacy'.

Explanations in terms of the enormous sums of money that have gone into funding the transgender phenomenon is of course an explanation in terms of social relations, money being generally agreed to be a social relation (Harcourt, 2014; Ingham, 1996, 2004; Pixley and Harcourt, eds, 2013; Wray, ed., 2004). The *kind* of social relation it is is obviously capitalism, since capitalism is the only economy we have; and capitalism is a form of domination, although it's usually called 'inequality' (e.g. Piketty, 2013). One commentator did note that, 'the most important feature of monetary authorities in the capitalist global North [is that] they are, with a few exceptions, wealthy white men who share a privileged and hegemonic perspective' (Mann, 2013: 205). Once again, the success of a social phenomenon (transgender in this case) owes much to the privileged and hegemonic perspective of wealthy white men in the capitalist global North.

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In the rest of this chapter, I first briefly allude to a number of explanations, acknowledging that they all have some truth in them but that they miss the crux of the matter, namely, male supremacy. After a brief discussion of male supremacy and feminism's exposure of it (brief, because that theme is a constant structuring principle of everything that is said here), I discuss the dissociation and arrogant male entitlement characteristic of transgender, expressed most clearly in its assertion of a

male sex right that makes ever-increasing, ever-successful demands on society, especially women.

I then go on to discuss transgender in terms of delusion, followed by an extended discussion of the egregious ‘false memory syndrome’. This so-called ‘syndrome’ was no such thing. Rather, it was a successful strategy to undermine women’s claims of recovered memories of childhood sexual abuse by their older male relatives, often their fathers, in the privacy of their own homes. The connection between transgender and ‘false memory syndrome’ is an unfortunate tendency on the part of some of transgender’s critics to interpret the *recovered memories* as the delusion, as evidence of an earlier mass delusion, rather than the ‘syndrome’ (which was no delusion but a deliberate strategy of lying).

I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the money behind the transgender agenda, and then of ‘transhumanism’ as an emerging capitalist market prefigured by transgender, and as an extreme form of the dissociation of male supremacy.

The next chapter continues the theme of explaining transgender, this time focusing on the kinds of individuals involved, mainly the men but also the women. While this is a focus on individuals, it situates them within the meanings and values of male supremacy. It is not an account of etiology, of how individuals come to acquire their ‘gender dysphoria’. That is the focus of the pre-transgender explanations, but they are too individualistic to explain transgender as a social phenomenon. In my account there is no reference to any particular persons, no case studies, no naming of names. Rather, it is an account of some of the ways in which male supremacy manifests itself within the psyches of individuals who represent those meanings and values.

Some explanations

If transgender is reluctant to explain itself, its critics have filled the gap. None of these explanations sees transgender as an individualistic phenomenon, as something that arises spontaneously and independently in the psyches of separate, autonomous individuals. All locate the cause in some aspect of society: transgender activism; social justice ideology; homophobia; capitalist consumer society; ‘gender’ stereotypes; the influence of academic theories such as postmodernism; the sexual revolution; the objectification of women; and (aspects of) feminism.

For an argument that the appearance of ‘discordant gender identities’ and the upsurge of transgender medical procedures are the result of ‘a targeted campaign by transgender activist organizations’, see: Anderson, 2018;

for an account that attributes her initial belief that her four-year-old son was ‘transgender’ to her belief in ‘social justice ideology’, which she subsequently deeply regretted, see: Anonymous, 2022, 2023;

for suggestions that the US congress’ commitment to the transgender cause results from ignorance of the consequences of the proposed changes to the *Equality Act* (e.g. abolition of the offence of indecent exposure, the ruination of women’s sport), or from ‘a new way to be nice’, or most likely, from the inability or refusal to ‘think very much about the rights, privacy and safety of women and girls at all’, see: Chart and Nance, 2019);

for an argument that homophobia is behind transgender's success—'we as a society still have a problem with the mere *potential* of one's children turning out homosexual', see: Donym, 2022;

for an account from a Marxist perspective, arguing that transgender is 'a product of the times', i.e. neo-liberalism and the increasing exhaustion of capitalism; the 'individualistic identity politics' following on from 'a long period of defeat for the working class'; and a 'pushback against the gains in women's rights', see: Duncan, 2020;

for reasons why teenagers might question their 'gender'—stereotypes; 'underlying mental health conditions'; an illusory belief that a change in gender identity might be a solution to internal pain; the influence of friends and the internet; being lesbian, gay or bisexual or having a neuro-developmental condition; identity exploration; the impact of puberty and the sudden unfamiliarity of the body; and a 'railing against gender stereotypes, misogyny and misandry', see: Gosling and O'Malley, 2022;

for arguments that 'developments in academia played a central role' in the speed with which the 'privileg[ing] [of] self-declared gender identity over biological sex' happened in so many institutions—the use of the word 'gender', the work of Judith Butler, queer theory, postmodernism—together with transactivism, their claims of civil rights, financial backing by billionaires, the possibility of profits for pharmaceutical companies and the health care industries, and 'an admirable, but poorly thought-out, sense of compassion for trans people', see: Joyce, 2021;

for an argument attributing the origins of the transgender movement to developments in modern surgical techniques, the de-moralising of transsexualism from a perversion to an identity, and something she calls 'the politicization of everything', see: Kearns, 2019;

for an explanation attributing the phenomenal success of the transgender agenda to the methods it uses to plead its cause, as outlined in the IGLYO report (2019), namely, removing parental consent, presenting governments with finalised policy documents, tying trans campaigns to more popular reform (e.g. same-sex marriage), and limiting public exposure of what is really going on, see: Kirkup, 2019. See also: Cowen, 2020;

for a number of reasons for transgenderism's success—the relentless march of the sexual revolution; the elevation of the narcissistic autonomous Self; patient desire as the primary if not sole determinant of medical treatment; the cult of experts; hubris ('Change a man into a woman or a woman into a man, and ye shall be as gods'); the decline of religious faith; and 'one of the oldest temptations known to humanity: greed'—from a right-wing source that quotes a number of feminist and lesbian sources, see: Robbins, 2019;

for an account of transgenderism's success in terms of: prejudice against 'gay, trans and other sex-nonconforming people'; trans activist propaganda; and the objectification of women and its defining of women as just a set of outward appearances, see: Stock, 2021: chapter 7.

Transgenderism is overdetermined (as we used to say back in the day), i.e. there are multiple accurate explanations for men's desire to embrace it (and women to support them), and multiple explanations for its success. As long as they are in good faith and

not attempts to deny reality, all of the factors mentioned in these explanations undoubtedly play some part in the rise and rise of the transgender phenomenon (except for feminism—see the ‘Feminism’s fault?’ section of the ‘Language’ chapter), but none of them explicitly mentions male supremacy (except for the feminist accounts—see the ‘Feminism’ section below).

It’s male supremacy

There is another kind of explanation needed than those listed above. Given the colossal influence of an ideology based on lies, it is an explanation that identifies the power relations that abolish reason in favour of nonsense. If (as I insist) there is no such thing as ‘trans’ people, what are the interests being served by a phenomenon so powerful that it can override reality? As mentioned a number of times in previous chapters, I attribute the inordinate success of the transgender agenda to male supremacy. It is, as I said in the ‘Introduction’, its latest ruse. That’s the short answer.

Elsewhere I have discussed male supremacy at length (e.g. Thompson, 1991, 2001), arguing that it is indeed the earliest form of domination and the model for all other forms. I initially used the term ‘male *domination*’, but then I found myself using the term ‘supremacy’ instead. I think the reason for the change is that the word ‘supremacy’ is somewhat more appropriate than ‘domination’ for naming a social system. ‘Domination’ tends to imply that individual men are doing the dominating. That certainly happens—male violence against women is even recognised by the mainstream, although euphemised, as ‘domestic violence’, or as ‘a nice guy’ who just snapped, or as variations of ‘she drove him to it’.

But the social system that is male supremacy is not confined to the behaviour of individual men. It has other effects as well, e.g. hierarchies of human worth and worthlessness including among men, a rapacious economy that channels the world’s wealth into the hands of a few men, and of course, war, genocide and the belligerent technological destruction of people’s homes and environments. I have also used the term ‘masculinity’ (Thompson, 2020) because the system is by, for and about men, with women either condemned to ‘femininity’ or ignored altogether. I don’t use the term ‘patriarchy’ because male supremacy is not based on fatherhood (Thompson, 2001), although it is often used in feminist contexts as a synonym for male supremacy.

The theory of male supremacy is not a conspiracy theory, which is defined by the online Cambridge dictionary as ‘a belief that an event or situation is the result of a secret plan made by powerful people’. (Interestingly, most of the examples of the use of the term ‘conspiracy theory’ given on this site are taken from the Hansard archive of the UK Parliament, suggesting that it is a term much favoured by politicians). Although the theory of male supremacy does imply the existence of ‘powerful people’, i.e. (some) men, it doesn’t subscribe to the methodological individualism entailed by that definition. It doesn’t assume the existence of individuals consciously and deliberately making secret plans to bring something about. Neither does it assume that there is something inherent in men that makes them either conspirators or powerful.

Rather, it’s a theory about systematic meanings and values that result in the subordination of women (which is the starting point of the feminist investigation), although no particular individuals are responsible for creating that system. Individuals

can be held responsible for *maintaining* that system—by prostituting women, by consuming pornography, by failing to apply legal penalties for rape, by ignoring the prevalence of male violence against women and men’s sexual abuse of children, etc. Individuals are also responsible for, and capable of, *resisting* it. But there is no ‘plan’ deliberately devised to oppress women, which is never acknowledged as the effect of those meanings, values and behaviours anyway. Prostitution, for example, is regarded as an inescapable part of human existence that’s ineradicable because that’s just what ‘human beings’, i.e. men, are like, instead of a moral choice men make that they are perfectly capable of *not* making, or they ought to be. That’s the ‘secret’ part, not in the sense that somebody knows something they are not telling, but in the sense that the real meanings and values must remain hidden because they expose the truth that the system is dehumanising. Evil is an appropriate word too.

Feminism

Of course I’m not alone in identifying transgenderism as an aspect of male supremacy. Radical feminism has been saying it for years, beginning with Janice Raymond’s *Transsexual Empire* in 1979, where she said,

[t]ranssexuals are living out two basic patriarchal myths: single parenthood by the father (male mothering) and the making of woman according to man’s image ... the therapeutic fathers *make* women, not only in their image, but *out of men*’ (Raymond, 1980: xx, xxi—original emphases).

She noted that explanations for transsexualism tended to be ‘restricted to the domain of psychology and medicine’ but that, from an ethical standpoint, it was clear that the phenomenon was ‘imbued with male-defined values and philosophical/theological beliefs—beliefs about the so-called natures of women and men’ (p.1). Transsexualism was

basically a social problem whose cause cannot be explained except in relation to the sex roles and identities that a patriarchal society generates ... Transsexualism is thus the ultimate, and we might even say the logical, conclusion of male possession of women in a patriarchal society. Literally, men here possess women (Raymond, 1994: 16, 30).

For Raymond, it was patriarchy, with its rigid and stereotypical norms of masculinity and femininity that created transsexualism, specifically through the institution of medicine that produced transsexualism’s ‘social and individual action and meanings’.

Genevieve Gluck expressed it succinctly:

Gender ideology represents the literal embodiment of male entitlement to women, and the sexualized power hierarchy that feminists once described as gender, or sex role stereotypes. This eroticization of power and powerlessness has the effect of naturalizing women’s subordinate role in society. When men perform a parody of femininity and claim this farce is what women truly are, they are fundamentally deconstructing women’s humanity, reducing half the human population to a demeaning and objectified fantasy; but crucially, they are redirecting women back to the restrictive roles that afforded them power over the female sex in the first place. The belief that womanhood can be attained through a combination of desire reframed as devout suffering, alongside the purchasing of products—clothing, cosmetics, surgeries—is, at its core, a belief that

women are commodities which men are entitled to possess. It is a belief system that attempts to define women as fetish objects and reduces women to the Freudian castrated male (Gluck, 2021).

And even more succinctly, Jane Clare Jones noted pungently that:

the wires are currently full of male people running around stanning [being obsessive fans] for the absolute progressive power of gender fluidity, who seem to think they are the living breathing instantiation of “smash the patriarchy” because they dare to pair some nail-varnish with their beards, all while acting like exactly the same entitled, narcissistic, dependency-denying, mind-over-matter, female-erasing assholes that they always were (Jones, 2019).

Sheila Jeffreys sees transgenderism as male supremacist because it serves to maintain ‘gender’, a term she uses to mean male dominance and female subordination (Jeffreys, 1997, 2002). Gender, she said, ‘provide[s] the framework and rationale for male dominance’. It is ‘the mechanism which orders the sex caste system ... represent[ing] a socially constructed and temporary way of separating persons into dominants and submissives in a hierarchy’ (Jeffreys, 2014: 42, 161). As should be clear from what I said in the ‘Sex-gender distinction’ section of the ‘Language’ chapter, the same point can be made without using the word ‘gender’. The term ‘male supremacy’ says it all, although examples of the way it operates are necessary to fill out the meaning.

Nonetheless, Jeffreys’ point remains. Transgenderism is male supremacist. One example she gives involves the ‘contemporary rage of male-bodied transgenders at being denied entry to women’s spaces’. She quotes Marilyn Frye, who likens the situation of women refusing access to men under male supremacist conditions, to the situation of slaves refusing their masters access to their huts. Transgender activists are reacting with a sense of entitlement similar to that of the slave-masters of old. Their rage at being excluded also indicates how important the principle of separatism is if women are to have any freedom at all (Jeffreys, 2014: 165).

Here, I want to add to the feminist accounts by discussing in detail some of the ways in which transgenderism subscribes to the meanings and values of male supremacy.

For other feminist accounts of the connection between transgenderism and ‘patriarchy’/male supremacy, see: Brew, 2021—“Transgenderism: a new operating system for patriarchy”; Brunskell-Evans, 2020: Chapter One.

Beyond my earlier account

Elsewhere (Thompson, 2020: 354-60), I suggested that there were three different kinds of explanations for the transgender phenomenon: ‘those preferred by transsexuals themselves; psychological/psychoanalytic explanations; and feminist explanations’ (p.354). I found all three not entirely adequate, and the transsexual one wholly inadequate because of its individualistic appeal to feelings and/or biology (not to mention its falsehood). I suggested that the psychological explanations might have some validity to the extent that the transsexual man sincerely believed he was a ‘woman’, but that they couldn’t explain the growing number of men who were claiming to be ‘women’ while retaining their male genitals (the ‘self-id’ phenomenon). I was largely in agreement with the feminist explanations, except that the ‘sex roles’ terminology didn’t quite grasp the essence of the problem, namely, male supremacy.

I explained male transsexualism in terms of the culture of male supremacy, as ‘a conflict between the demands made of males within a male supremacist reality on the one hand, and what I have called the genuinely human on the other’. I said that it started as ‘a genuinely human desire to escape from the burden of masculinity, its demands to participate in or be subjected to bullying, contempt, degradation and violence, and the emptiness of its dissociated existence’:

But the solution to the dilemma is a male supremacist one—take over the only other persona offered, the feminine one ... [and] attempt ... to storm the last bastion to hold out against masculine intrusion: femaleness. Femaleness is the one space men cannot occupy, but the dissociation characteristic of male supremacy enables that knowledge to be repressed and to resurface as aggrieved entitlement. The genuinely human alternative would be to accept the body one was born with while rejecting the demands the male supremacist culture makes of it (Thompson, 2020: 360).

Although I still (partly) agree with this account, it needs qualification. It was too focused on the aetiology of male transsexualism, even though I attributed it to male supremacy. But it had too little to say about that weird phenomenon of people and institutions everywhere, not just outright transgender organisations, embracing the belief that men who castrate themselves become ‘women’, or worse, that fully intact men are ‘women’.

Neither did my earlier account mention the young women and the enormous increase in the numbers presenting themselves to ‘gender identity’ clinics; nor did it mention the children, nor the female acolytes who so willingly embrace the transgender version of reality. These phenomena are fully in line with male supremacist values, but in different ways from the adult men. And my earlier explanation is far too kind to the trans activists who bully and threaten anyone who disagrees with them and attempt to shut down any opposing views, usually successfully. There is nothing genuinely human (in the sense in which I used the term in that book) in insults, sneering contempt and death threats.

I no longer believe that there is any genuinely human desire to escape the demands of masculinity behind the transgender phenomenon. It might (or might not) apply to the traditional male transsexual who didn’t make the same demands on women and society as transgender does (although they were no more women than the more recent claimants). But it certainly doesn’t apply to the transgender mob, whose reactions of violence and demented rage when they are disagreed with, indicate that there is no genuine motivation at all behind their claims.

Dissociation and arrogant male entitlement

As I argued elsewhere (Thompson, 2020), male supremacy (or masculinity as a cultural phenomenon, as I designated it there) is characterised by dissociation both from reality and from common human decency, and by arrogant male entitlement. Both elements are neatly encapsulated in the transgender phenomenon, with its dissociation from the reality of two sexes, and its male entitlement, not only to take over the category of women, but to impose their dissociated claims on society as a whole.

Denying reality is rife under conditions of domination, e.g. an economic system that denies its own responsibility for the production of poverty by blaming its victims, the

waging of war that denies people's right to live by killing them. But there must be powerful reasons why the denial of reality prevails over the truth. In the case of the economy, the reason is the wealth accumulation in the hands of a few men and the power that enables them to wield, even to destroy the biosphere we all inhabit; in the case of war, the reason is the deadliness of male supremacy and killing as the clearest expression of male power.¹ In the case of the transgender agenda, the power that has enabled it to be so enormously influential, to wreak havoc throughout society, especially for women and children, but also for anyone who challenges its hegemony, no matter how inadvertently, is male supremacy.

It is typical male supremacist dissociation, amounting to dehumanisation, that is behind transgenderism's denial of biology and its use of human bodies as a source of wealth, what Jennifer Bilek called 'body dissociation and the commoditization of human sex into medical identities' (Bilek, 2020d). (Another example is surrogacy). According to Bilek, transgenderism is part of a wider capitalist strategy to commodify bodies, called 'transhumanism'. This is discussed further in the 'Transhumanism/dehumanisation' section below.

Overweening male entitlement is most notably expressed in their sexual behaviours and demands. Sheila Jeffreys (2022) calls male sexual entitlement 'male sex right', which she sees as the reason transgender has had such enormous success, because 'male sexuality is forged from the power relations of male domination' (p.285). Society is already saturated with men's entitlement to sexual access, namely in the ever-increasing social acceptance of more and more bizarre perversions (many of which Jeffreys describes in detail), in the continuing existence and widespread acceptance of prostitution and pornography, and in the inordinate reluctance to punish male sexual impositions on women (and children), including rape.

It is male sex right that is behind the disproportionate numbers of young women presenting to 'gender' clinics to be 'changed' into 'boys'. As Jeffreys points out, awareness of the very existence of lesbianism is suppressed under conditions of male supremacy, where heterosexuality is still compulsory given the absence of any alternative and the silence about lesbianism (Jeffreys, 2022: 52-3). Most of the young women presenting to 'gender' clinics are lesbians, and lesbians are women who refuse sexual access to men. In the male supremacist mind, refusing men sexual access is the most abhorrent offence imaginable, justifying any punishment including sexual abuse, physical assault, rape and murder.

The trans lobby has demonstrated this clearly in its reactions to that refusal, whether on social media or in baying mobs threatening rape and death and drowning out women's speech. Rather than acknowledging lesbian existence (along with the acknowledgement of gay men, the abolition of laws against them, and the acceptance of 'same-sex marriage'), our male supremacist society has devised another way to deal with the lesbian threat to male sex right: destroy as much of their femaleness as is possible with current medical technology while purporting to turn them into 'men'. But why do the girls accept this? For the same reason the rest of society has accepted

¹ As I have argued elsewhere (Thompson, 2020: 20), feminism has been saying for years that the culture of male supremacy is deadly: men are the sex which kills (Beauvoir, 1972: 195-6); 'In male culture, slow murder is the heart of eros, fast murder is the heart of action, and systematized murder is the heart of history' (Dworkin, 1988: 214-15).

it, including the medical profession that carries out the procedures: male sex right. The shame and loathing the young women feel about their lesbian desires is male sex right in operation.

Delusions

The transgender phenomenon is a mass delusion. The delusion is the belief that there are not two sexes but a spectrum of 'gender' instead, that men can become women either aided by the latest in medical technology or just by saying so, and that medical and surgical interventions on healthy children's bodies are perfectly acceptable. It is massive because it has spread throughout society.

It would seem that humanity is prone to mass delusion. William J. Bernstein (2021) gave a number of historical and more recent examples, confining himself to religious and financial crazes in order to keep the book to a manageable length. (He didn't discuss the witch crazes, for example). His description of the deluded mentality could have been written specifically to describe the transgender phenomenon. 'Novelists and historians', he said,

have known for centuries that people do not deploy the powerful human intellect to dispassionately analyze the world, but rather to rationalize how the facts conform to their emotionally derived preconceptions ... When presented with facts and data that contradict our deeply held beliefs, we generally do not reconsider and alter those beliefs appropriately. More often than not, we avoid contrary facts and data, and when we cannot avoid them, our erroneous assessments will occasionally even harden and, yet more amazingly, make us more likely to proselytize them. In short, human "rationality" constitutes a fragile lid perilously balanced on the bubbling cauldron of artifice and self-delusion (Bernstein, 2021: 3).

Transgender is constantly reinterpreting facts to fit its preconceptions; and the fact that it is driven by emotion is exposed every time a true believer makes threats of physical assault and death against 'terfs' or a baying mob silences women's attempts to speak. The emotion is rage and hatred, generated by aggrieved entitlement on the part of the adult men, identification with male entitlement on the part of the female acolytes, shame and disgust on the part of the lesbians who want to be 'men', distress for any number of reasons on the part of the children and young people, and on the part of the 'be kind' contingent, fear generated by reluctance to see men as violent deranged misogynists rather than as ordinary human beings. And the more facts transgender is presented with, the harder it doubles down on its version of 'reality'.

Bernstein explains this human tendency to delude oneself in terms of 'two different types of human thought processes', the one emanating from the emotional lower brain of the limbic system ('System 1') and the other from the conscious reasoning of the cortex ('System 2') (Bernstein, 2021: 28-37). Because it reacts instantly to stimuli, System 1 tends to override the much slower System 2. In other words, emotion tends to override deliberate, rational thought processes. Emotion is generated by stories ('narrative'), Bernstein said, whereas rationality deals with facts and data. 'If you want to convince someone', he said, 'target their System 1 with narrative, not their System 2 with facts and data' (p.33). And certainly, transgender has heartrending stories to tell, although the stories are implied rather than told outright. There are the 'vulnerable and marginalised' and the 'trans people are being murdered' stories, for example, frequently asserted but never actually substantiated. This is not surprising,

given that the supposedly ‘vulnerable and marginalised’ are usually adult men, and those men are less likely to be murdered than anyone else. But, as Bernstein pointed out, statements backed up with facts and data, i.e. the truth (not to mention rational argument), can’t be heard over relentless emotional pleas like those of the transgender lobby.

Or take this example from the American Civil Liberties Union, a self-styled human rights organisation that has embraced the transgender agenda with enthusiasm. ‘Across the country’, says the ACLU,

politicians are attacking the fundamental rights of transgender and non-binary people—shutting people out of public spaces, basic services, educational institutions, and ultimately compromising the ability of trans people to survive ... Trans people have a right to live in safety, to thrive, and to be treated with dignity. A trans patient in need of care should receive it. A trans student should be able to play sports, use the restroom, and participate in activities alongside their peers. Trans people must have safe conditions in prison, jail, immigration detention and other sites of confinement, including shelters, and must be able to utilize facilities and services as their true selves (ACLU, 2020).

This is certainly a heartrending narrative, but it arouses compassion by lying. The ‘people’ referred to are fully intact adult men, the ‘public spaces’ they claim to be ‘shut out of’ are single-sex spaces where women should have a sex-based right to be free from male intrusion, and the sports and the restrooms they feel entitled to enter are women’s. Adult men are excluded from them for very good reasons. As for those ‘peers’ alongside whom they are supposedly being prevented from participating, the only peers adult men claiming to be ‘women’ have are other adult men claiming to be ‘women’. But that’s not what the ACLU are talking about. Given that the activities mentioned are all women’s, the ACLU are making the ludicrous claim that *women* are these men’s peers.

It is not ‘the fundamental rights of transgender and non-binary people’ that are being attacked, but the rights of women to protection from male intrusion and the violence perpetrated by adult men, whether they’re ‘transgender’ or not. It is *women*, not the adult male ‘trans people’, who need ‘safe conditions in prison, jail, immigration detention and other sites of confinement, including shelters’, conditions that can only be guaranteed by keeping men out of them.

Bernstein’s advice to use narrative rather than facts and data to convince misses the point. Because the trans narrative is riddled with lies, it is futile to challenge it with alternative narratives. Narrative makes no truth claims, so it can’t counter lies. It might be argued that a more pitiable narrative could counter a less pitiable one. But transgender pity is all reserved for themselves, and relevant segments of society would appear to agree with them. Besides, the trans-critical opposition to transgenderism is also full of heartrending stories, from women subjected to transgender violence, from detransitioners regretting their trans trajectory, from trans widows betrayed by their husbands, from people who have lost their jobs for refusing to kow-tow to trans demands. But most of these narratives are by, for or about women and are ignored. And finally, those in the grip of a delusion are not available for persuasion by any means. All that can be done by those still in touch with their rational faculties is to keep providing the facts and data, the truth, not to convince the deluded, but as the

only resource with which to counter the lies, flimsy protection though it might be against the fury of transgender rage.

For another account of transgender as delusion, referencing Charles Mackay's 1841 book, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* (Bernstein also discussed this book), see: Laidlaw, 2018.

There are other accounts of phenomena similar to the delusions Bernstein discusses. There's Jung's concept of 'psychic epidemic', which Lisa Marchiano (2017), a clinical social worker and Jungian analyst, used to explain the transgender phenomenon. 'Psychic epidemics' are mass psychoses, delusions that overtake whole populations, and Jung saw them as the main threat facing humanity today. They manifest especially in times of war, in Jung's case the First World War. But they can appear at any time of historical crisis when humanity is faced with a new problem for which (as Jung saw it) there is no immediate solution. Because there is no obvious way of dealing with them, the ideas and emotions they arouse are collapsed 'too quickly into concrete form' (Marchiano, 2017: 346). In the transgender case, the ideas and emotions are related to one of the most basic aspects of the human condition, the existence of two sexes. The concrete and premature form it has taken is the discursive abolition of any separate category of 'women', and the medical and surgical rearrangement of the sexual aspects of the physical bodies of the young.

Marchiano quoted Jung describing what can happen under the influence of new and strange ideas that seem to appear from nowhere:

"We can never be sure that a new idea will not seize either upon ourselves or upon our neighbors. We know from modern as well as from ancient history that such ideas are often so strange, indeed so bizarre, that they fly in the face of reason. The fascination which is almost invariably connected with ideas of this sort produces a fanatical obsession, with the result that all dissenters, no matter how well-meaning or reasonable they are, get burnt alive or have their heads cut off or are disposed of in masses by the more modern machine gun" (Marchiano, 2017: 362-3, quoting from Volume 10 of Jung's *Collected Works, Civilisation in Transition*).

Fanatical obsession with transgender has not (yet) literally resulted in burning dissenters alive, cutting off their heads, or mowing them down with machine guns. But the desire is there. Take, for example, this tiny sample of a tiny sample of pro-trans sentiments expressed on social media. (I suggest that readers with a low tolerance for verbal filth skip over this quote):

I'm not into mass murder but I'll commit terf genocide if I have to ... That's the only thing terfs deserve, being doxxed and killed ... Terf=trans exclusionary radical feminist—burn them all ... Trans women are women. Everyone denying that is invited to die in a fire ... Terfs should be shot ... Hope someone slits Germaine Greer's saggy throat ... Murder Germaine Greer ... You know I can't even be bothered setting the terfs on fire myself go and fucking self immolate you cunts ... Round up every terf and all their friends just for good measure and slit their throats one by one ... Suck my girlcock cunts. Preferably choke on it.²

² <https://www.peaktrans.org/terf-is-a-slur/>

Jung's solution to the problem of fanaticism is the ancient Greek maxim, 'Know thyself'. Marchiano quotes Jung to the effect that, if we are to resist being swept up in seductive ideas, we have to be grounded "not only in the outside world, but in the world within". We need to cultivate, in Jung's words, "the eternal fact of the human psyche". Whatever that might be (it probably relates to his theory of the archetypes), I doubt that it would have much purchase, either with those whose feelings of safety and security are bound up with fanatical commitments, or with those who cannot admit to having made a mistake.

Marchiano's own suggestions are more relevant than Jung's for the current transgender situation. She says that what needs to happen, at least in the case of children and young people, is 'to accept the material reality of the body', to change society not children's bodies, to reduce bullying and social stigma, to offer treatments for distressed children that don't involve life-long medication or surgical mutilation, etc. (Marchiano, 2017: 360-2). This is good advice, although it is unlikely to be taken up by those with too much to lose. Like facts and data and rational argument, it is not as compelling as something driven by fear and hatred. But they are the only resources with which to resist the transgender message with any integrity.

Wilhelm Reich discussed a similar phenomenon to Jung's 'psychic epidemic', which he called the 'emotional plague', although for Reich, the 'emotional plague' was not a reaction to a new historical crisis, but a constant feature of the human condition. It was that which repressed people's libidinal energy. Although I am not going to argue the case here, much of what Reich described could, with changes in terminology, be interpreted as male supremacy. In particular, his *The Murder of Christ*, could be read as the destruction of humanity, if 'Christ' is read as what it is to be truly, decently human.

But whether mass delusion, psychic epidemic or emotional plague, the transgender phenomenon is not an individual problem, to be 'cured' by medical interventions, or even by psychotherapy, which deals only with individual instances of something that has far wider ramifications than the individual psyches caught up in it. I would suggest that transgenderism is a way of fighting off the challenge feminism poses to male supremacy. The historical crisis to which transgender is a reaction is the feminist undermining of much that has been believed about reality. Feminism challenges male prerogatives, and since male prerogatives are the world-taken-for-granted under conditions of male domination, undermining them can feel like undermining reality itself.

There have been other responses to feminism, some of them good. But feminism's project of asserting the full humanity of women is far from being achieved, so deeply entrenched is the notion that only men count as 'human'. The feminist project has caused a major historical crisis because it requires a re-thinking of everything we thought we knew, since everything we thought we knew was only by, for and about men. Well, not everything. Sometimes men could get access to their own humanity in the creation of their grand projects, despite the dehumanising effects of excluding women. But anything created by excluding women must be subjected to radical investigation for the extent to which it is dehumanised. It is not sufficient just to add women to already established institutional arrangements in the name of 'equality'. It is that radical investigation that is required to account for transgender.

'False memory syndrome'

There is one phenomenon commonly cited by some of transgender's critics as evidence for the existence of mass delusions, that in fact was no delusion at all. This is the phenomenon referred to as 'false memory syndrome', i.e. the assertion that women who had forgotten about being sexually abused as children and then remembered it later in life were either lying or deluded, usually because they had been talked into it by their psychotherapists. Some critics of transgenderism see parallels with this so-called 'false memory syndrome', i.e. with a supposed epidemic of false memories of childhood sexual abuse. In fact, the parallel should be drawn between transgenderism and the *accusation* that the memories were false. Not only was the accusation false, the methods employed by its proponents to get its message across to the wider society bear a striking resemblance to the methods used by the transgender agenda.

Nonetheless, there are a number of trans critics who believe in 'false memory syndrome'. Lisa Littman (2018), for example, is one. 'In the 1990s', she said,

the beliefs and practices of many mental health professionals may have contributed to their patients' creation of false childhood memories consistent with a child sexual abuse narrative and research since then has shown that false childhood memories of mundane events can be implanted in laboratory settings ... It may be worthwhile to explore if, in today's culture, there might be beliefs and practices of some mental health professionals that are contributing to their patients' creation of false childhood memories consistent with an "always knew/always were transgender" narrative (Littman, 2018: 33/44).

In support of her 'creation of false childhood memories' assertion, Littman cited three publications, one of them only a page long. Another was a publication by Elizabeth Loftus, Board member of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF). She is (or was) a nationally recognised expert on memory, but her reputed expertise rested partly on her self-promotion in a mass media only too willing to believe in the innocence of guilty men. She also devised a somewhat dubious 'research' project on 'implanting' memory, and acted as defence witness in the trials of men accused of sexual abuse, including of children (see below). She is hardly an unbiased source of information about any so-called 'false memories', given her willingness to defend the men accused by those memories she insisted on labelling 'false'.

The third publication cited by Littman was an article called 'False memory in psychotherapy', in a publication called *The Science of False Memory, Oxford Psychology Series Number 38*. Given that the most pressing social problem is not 'false memory' but men's sexual abuse, whether the women and children subjected to it remember it or not, this is not likely to be reliable publication either. Littman's postulation of 'rapid onset gender dysphoria' (ROGD) was an important insight, but in the case of 'false childhood memories', her insight failed her.

For brief discussions of the supposed similarity between transgenderism and accounts of recovered memories, see: Joyce, 2021: chapter 5; Shrier, 2020: xix; Tavis, 2022; for a detailed, if misguided, comparison between 'gender ideology and the repressed memory movement', see: Marchiano, 2022;

for detailed attacks on any notion of recovered memories, see: Mak, 2004; McHugh, 2008; Watters, 2022.

(At one point I thought that Dianna Kenny also subscribed to the ‘false memory syndrome’ belief. I had downloaded the following comment from her blog: ‘families were torn apart from the “recovered memories” epidemic. Innocent teachers spent many years in jail after false accusations of “ritual sexual abuse” at preschools’. In support of this statement, she referenced her book, Kenny, D.T. (2015) *God, Freud, and Religion: The Origins of Faith, Fear, and Fundamentalism* Oxford: Routledge. But this book discusses neither recovered memories nor ritual sexual abuse; and the link that originally led to the comment is broken. Her book, *Children, Sexuality and Child Sexual Abuse* was published in 2018. Perhaps it was her research for this book that led her to change her mind and delete the comment).

J. Michael Bailey and Ray Blanchard also believe in ‘false memory syndrome’. They compared ROGD to what they said was ‘an explosion of cases’ during the 1990s where women came to remember in adulthood having been sexually abused as children. These memories, Bailey and Blanchard believe, were as false as the young people’s belief that they were the opposite sex:

women came to believe that they had been sexually molested, usually by their fathers and often repeatedly and brutally. They believed these things even though prior to “recovering” these “memories”—most often during psychotherapy—they did not remember anything like them. They believed in the memories even though the memories were often highly implausible (for example, family members would have noticed) ... Some developed symptoms of multiple personality disorder. We know now that the recovered memories were false ... children and adults who experienced trauma can’t repress them (Bailey and Blanchard, 2017).

Bailey and Blanchard did admit that men sexually abused children. They said it was true that ‘men’s sexual abuse of children [was] too common’, but that it was false ‘that it has been rampant, even the rule’ (Bailey and Blanchard, 2017). But it’s not clear what distinction they’re making here. What is the difference between ‘rampant’ and ‘too common’? Both mean that something happens lots of times. ‘Rampant’ is a pejorative term meaning that something is said to be happening so many times that it’s unbelievable, while ‘too common’ is neutral. But when does something become ‘rampant’ rather than just ‘too common’? And if it’s true that men’s sexual abuse of children is too common, then it’s also true that it’s some kind of rule—perhaps of overweening male entitlement and men’s obsession with their penises?

As for their assertion that ‘we know now that the recovered memories were false’, we know no such thing. ‘Family members’ (a code for the child’s mother?) don’t see what is going on because the perpetrator makes sure she doesn’t, including threatening the child with dire consequences if she tells anyone. As well, the child might want to keep it hidden because she feels ashamed and responsible for what is happening to her, and the perpetrator often tells her that she is. If the perpetrator is a man who should be caring for and protecting her, she will probably be torn between love and terror, wanting the abuse to stop but not wanting to make trouble for her father. One abused daughter expressed her own ambivalence thus:

I loved my father and blamed myself for the abuse. I was ashamed and humiliated: While sexually abusing me, he told me that I liked it. I

Denise Thompson

believed his threats of further violence ... As a child I was my father's favorite: He taught me gourmet cooking, built model airplanes with me, and spent time discussing history and mathematics with me. I treasured these special times with him ... I preferred to blame myself, as I had always done, than to blame him (Hoult, 1998: 125, 129).

FMSF

The main source of the belief that recovered memories of childhood sexual abuse (more properly called dissociative amnesia) (Herman, 2015: 256) are false, is the False Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF). It is presumably the work of this organisation that Bailey and Blanchard are relying on for their belief in 'false memories', and yet this is a dubious source. The FMSF was disreputable in its origins, in its 'research' and in some of its Board members, and this information is freely available to anyone who cares to look:

Between 1992, when the foundation was launched, and December 2019, when it abruptly shuttered, it bolstered the defense strategy employed by countless sex offenders, from Michael Jackson to Bill Cosby and Harvey Weinstein. Today, the notion that one's own memories of sexual violence are unreliable is owed, in large part, to how the Freyds responded to their daughter (Heaney, 2021).

The Freyds, Pamela and Peter, the parents of Jennifer Freyd, responded to their daughter's speaking about being sexually abused as a child by her father, by establishing the False Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF). This was soon after Jennifer started remembering the sexual abuse, and told her therapist, her husband, a few close friends, and her parents (Freyd and Birrell, 2013: 119). It was mainly Pamela's initiative, Peter having very little involvement (Heaney, 2021). Its reason for existence was to deny the truth of recovered memories of childhood sexual abuse, no matter how trustworthy the source or reliable the evidence, and to get their point of view across to as wide a public as possible.

The FMSF worked assiduously to spread the message that women who said they had recovered memories were lying or deceived, and to present this message as the findings of academic research. But their 'research' left something to be desired. Their house journal, *Issues in Child Abuse Accusations*, for example, claimed that its articles were peer-reviewed, but it was self-published by Ralph Underwager, FMSF Board member until his support of paedophilia became too well known and he was dismissed (Cheit, 2014: 327) (see below). The FMSF claimed that they had 'empirical data ... from 12,000 families' that validated 'false memory syndrome', but they never provided the data that supported this statement. Nor did they provide the research methods or any other formal procedures they had used to uncover the 'evidence'. Unfortunately, it would seem as though the prestige of the Board members was sufficient for what they said to be accepted without question, even by those who should have known better, i.e. other researchers (Pope, 1996).

Like Bailey and Blanchard, the FMSF did acknowledge the existence of men's rape of children (nicely agent-deleted as 'child sexual abuse' or CSA). 'There is little doubt that actual childhood sexual abuse is tragically common', said Elizabeth Loftus (Loftus, 1993: 521). But she worked assiduously to undermine the credibility of those who recovered memories of abuse of which they had previously been unaware. According to at least one commentator, it was Loftus who was the chief publicist for

‘false memory syndrome’ and the notion that such memories were ‘implanted’ by therapists (Lutz, 2019: 18). In relation to one accused perpetrator (‘Chuck’ Noah—see below), she is quoted saying, “There is absolutely no scientific evidence that these flashbacks [about being abused by Noah] correspond to some specific event ... You can never know if something happened, or didn’t happen, without corroboration ... And in this case, there is no corroboration” (Penhale, 1992). Here, Loftus ignores the fact that there is rarely any corroboration of complaints of child sexual abuse, or of rape more generally, because the perpetrator makes sure either that there are no witnesses, or that any witnesses are either cowed into submission or are co-perpetrators. The corroboration requirement is the main reason why the legal system is useless for penalising rape.

Nonetheless, corroboration is sometimes possible. Judith Herman and Emily Schatzow (1987: 10) found that nearly three-quarters of the 53 women who participated in short-term therapy groups for incest survivors had corroborating evidence from other sources. One of these sources was testimony from other family members. When one of the women told her mother about the abuse, her mother exclaimed: ‘Oh no! Not you too!’ She then told her daughter that her younger sisters had also complained about their father trying to molest them. And sometimes there was physical evidence. When the older brother who had subjected his sister to horrendous sexual torture between the ages of four and seven was killed in Vietnam, the family found a diary in which he had recorded everything that he had done to her. In the latter case, the woman had had no memory of the abuse until she started to do something about her obesity. She only started having flashbacks about the abuse when her weight had dropped to around 200 lbs (90 kilos).

Another source of corroboration was admission by the perpetrator himself (Herman and Schatzow, 1987: 10). The example the authors give is a stepfather who admitted to his stepdaughter that he did ‘fool around’ with her when she was a child, but refused to apologise. He said that he knew she ‘wanted it as much as he did’, and demanded she stop blaming ‘the family’ as she only had herself to blame. As the Wood Royal Commission’s paedophile inquiry found, this is a typical excuse given by child sexual abusers who abuse the children in their family, usually girls. They are typically oblivious to the child’s distress and pain, believe they have a ‘right’ to have sexual access to the child, and misinterpret as ‘consent’ the child’s seeming acquiescence or accommodation of the abuse as a survival strategy (Wood, 1997: 66-8, paras.3.26-3.36).

Loftus was one of the most diligent of the FMSF researchers. She was an original Board member and cognitive psychologist and ‘nationally recognized expert on memory’ (Penhale, 1992). She produced a voluminous body of writings, and evaluating all her claims would take too long for present purposes. But her famous ‘lost in the mall’ experiment supposedly showing that memories can be implanted is one example of ‘research’ that doesn’t prove anything very much at all. The experiment involved a 14-year-old boy being convinced by his older brother that he had been lost in a shopping mall when he was five years old. He was so convinced, Loftus said, that he could even remember specific details of the incident in ‘reasonably clear and vivid’ memories (Loftus, 1993: 532). But, as another psychologist pointed out (Pope, 1996), being lost in a shopping centre is hardly comparable to a five-year-old girl being raped by her father.

For a detailed refutation of one influential piece of FMSF ‘research’, namely, Poole et al, 1995, see: Pope, 1996: 963-5. See also: Olio, 1996.

For the FMSF, and Elizabeth Loftus in particular, nothing would count as corroboration anyway. She was quoted saying that, when she met Noah, she had found him “extremely sincere” when he denied having sexually abused his daughter. There is no record of her having met and spoken with his daughter (Penhale, 1992). Moreover, Loftus’ defence of evil men knows no bounds. She testified for the defence in the 1976 trial of Ted Bundy. (Her testimony didn’t help him. He was convicted and sent to prison, but he escaped and went on to kill many more girls and young women) (Heaney, 2021). She also testified as an ‘expert witness’ for Harvey Weinstein, and once again she did not speak to any of the women accusing Weinstein of sexual abuse. She wasn’t asked to, she said (Associated Press, 2020).

In defending men accused of historical instances of sexual abuse, Loftus was typical of the membership of the FMSF, whose only reason for existence was to throw doubt on such accusations. They were extraordinarily successful in getting this narrative of ‘falsely accused’ men into the public arena. McMaugh and Middleton attribute its success partly to the support of wealthy donors:

Who they were, and what their motives were, certainly deserves scrutiny, particularly in light of what we have learned in more recent years about the sexually abusive behaviour of some of America’s richest men (McMaugh and Middleton, 2020).

These authors also note that

[t]he success of the FMSF would certainly not have been possible without the assistance of the international media and journalists more keen to publish a sensationalistic headline than investigate the complexities of child abuse (McMaugh and Middleton, 2020).

But the success of the FMSF in getting their message across was also in large part due to the society-wide denial that men rape children in the intimate sphere of the family. Even the recent spate of investigations into so-called ‘child sexual abuse’—something of a euphemism since the men are not named—is confined to men who get access to children within institutions. Jennifer Freyd admitted that the idea that people forget being abused in childhood is, on the face of it, implausible. It is ‘this perception of implausibility’, she said somewhat diffidently, that ‘may play a role in the current acceptance of the false memory position by some people who are not familiar with the empirical literature’ (Freyd, 1997: 24). But those who believe in ‘false memories’ do not deserve such a charitable response. If they’re going to make assertions about what is true and false, they should be acquainted with the empirical literature.

‘Witch hunt’

Ross A. Cheit (2014) called the mass media defence of the perpetrators the (false) ‘witch-hunt narrative’, the supposedly innocent ‘witches’ in this case being the accused men, and their ‘hunters’, their accusers. This narrative preceded the formation of the FMSF. Cheit dated its first appearance to 1985, when a group called ‘Friends of McMartin’ placed ads in a newspaper defending the seven staff members at the McMartin pre-school who had been charged with child molestation, and comparing the case to the Salem Witch Trials (Cheit, 2014: 6). The case against five of the accused—the sister and grandmother of the only man at the school, and three

unrelated teachers—was dropped after the preliminary hearing, although they had spent time in jail being held without bail. ‘The injustice to those teachers’, Cheit said, ‘cannot be overstated’ (p.4).

But according to Cheit there was compelling evidence, including medical evidence and the children’s testimony, that ‘Mr Ray’, the son and grandson of the pre-school’s owners, was indeed guilty, and some evidence that his mother was complicit. But although they went to trial they were acquitted. The jury couldn’t agree ‘beyond a reasonable doubt’, largely because of mistakes made by the prosecution. Many jurors said afterwards, however, that they believed he was guilty: “I never voted innocent; I voted not guilty,” said [one] juror ... Asked directly whether she was convinced [the man] was *not* guilty, [she] responded: “I am not.” [Another] juror ... said “the verdicts should not be considered a victory for the defense” (Cheit (2014: 83). The case started, after all, when the mother of a three-year-old boy at the school took her son to a pediatrician because she noticed he was bleeding from the anus and he said something about ‘Mr Ray’ (pp.17, 24-6).

In the ‘witch-hunt’ narrative, the accused perpetrators were portrayed as innocent victims, while the parents and supporters of the actual victims, the children, were portrayed as the instigators of the ‘witch-hunt’. In fact, five of the seven originally accused probably *were* innocent (all women—the three teachers and the man’s sister and grandmother). ‘Mr Ray’ (and his mother) could keep his depredations secret from the rest of the staff because he was usually the only staff member on the premises during after-school hours. This case, said Cheit, ‘gave the witch-hunt narrative its signature song’ (Cheit, 2014: 83).

The FMSF was, not surprisingly, a supporter of the witch-hunt narrative. Peter Freyd was among the list of activists on Jonathan Harris’ Witch Hunt Information Center website, ‘Witchhunt’. Harris had created the website in 1993, and it had a prestigious url—mit.edu—because Harris was teaching in the physics department at MIT at the time and using his work address. Cheit commented that ‘Jonathan Harris may have done more than anyone else to disseminate the witch-hunt narrative in the mid-1990s and beyond’ (Cheit, 2014: 11-12). Harris’ website was no longer in existence by 2014 when Cheit’s book was published.

Individual FMSF members

Although many of the personnel of the FMSF held prestigious social positions, it provided a cosy environment for the perpetrators. There was Mark Pendergrast, author of one of the ‘false memory syndrome’ movement’s most praised books, *Victims of Memory*, who was also accused—falsely, he claimed—by his two daughters of sexually abusing them in childhood (Calof, 1998: 176). There was James Krivacska, a former school psychologist, who published an article in Ralf Underwager’s journal in 1991, arguing against sexual abuse prevention programs in schools because they might ‘cause false accusations’. Krivacska had been arrested for child sexual abuse in 1986, although he did not mention this in his article. He was acquitted in this instance because the testimony of the single child who testified was judged to be ‘tainted’ by the interview process. However, in 1998 he was convicted of charges from allegations at another school, and sentenced to 28 years in prison (Cheit, 2014: 393).

There was Ralf Underwager, who made a living appearing for the defense in child sexual abuse cases during the 1980s (Cheit, 2014: 327-8), and who was, at the very

least, a paedophile enabler. He came under criticism towards the end of 1993, when an interview with him was published in the Dutch magazine *Paidika: The Journal of Paedophilia*:

“Paedophiles spend a lot of time and energy defending their choice. I don’t think that a paedophile needs to do that. Paedophiles can boldly and courageously affirm what they choose. They can say that what they want is to find the best way to love. I am also a theologian and as a theologian I believe it is God’s will that there be closeness and intimacy, unity of the flesh, between people” (Cheit, 2014: 236-7, 458n117 and passim).

This is the man who was the originator of the term ‘false memory syndrome’ (Lutz, 2019: 17). Officially a psychologist and Lutheran minister, Underwager was successfully discredited by the prosecution in at least one instance (in a case where the accused perpetrator was a woman) (Cheit, 2014: Chapter 5), and in 2000, he was referred to as ‘a quack’ by a judge in the US Court of Appeals for the Armed Services (Cheit, 2014: 463n231). As a result of the publicity given in the US to the *Paidika* interview, he was forced to resign from the FMSF advisory board. His wife, Hollida Wakefield, was allowed to remain, and continued to work as an expert witness for the defense in sex-abuse trials, even at the age of 80 (in 2020) (Heaney, 2021).

There was Richard Gardner, originator of the term ‘Parental Alienation Syndrome’, another tactic to portray men as ‘victims’ of ‘false accusations’. According to Gardner, this ‘syndrome’ involved “the mother and children ... so intent on driving away the father that they launch a campaign of disparagement that can include falsely accusing him of sexually abusing his offspring”. He devised a scale that supposedly measured this ‘syndrome’. Although he later withdrew his support for it, it continued to be used by others (Armstrong, 1996: 139). Like Underwager, Gardner was also a proponent of paedophilia. In an article called ‘A theory about the variety of human sexual behavior’, in Underwager’s journal, Gardner argued that men were naturally promiscuous and that “paedophilia ... serves procreative purposes”:

“The child who is drawn into sexual encounters [by adult men] at an early age is likely to become highly sexualised and crave sexual experiences during the prepubertal years. Such a ‘charged up child’ is more likely to become sexually active after puberty ... [when] children can... become pregnant [and] make others pregnant ... and the greater the likelihood the individual will create more survival machines in the next generation” (quoted in Armstrong, 1996: 226-7)

This is a telling example of the dissociation and dehumanisation of male supremacy, not only in calling children ‘survival machines’, but also in the belief that men are naturally promiscuous. This belief implies that men have no choice about their sexual behaviour, that they are not accountable and therefore cannot be held responsible for anything they might do sexually. This view of men is a dehumanised one, not only because being responsible for one’s actions is an important part of being human, but also because it utterly ignores the consequences for women and children of unfettered male sexual rapacity.

There was David P. Hoult, paid up member of the FMSF along with his second wife. His daughter, Jennifer, filed a civil law suit against him after she had begun having flashback memories of being sexually abused by him when she was a child. She had hoped to prosecute him in a criminal court because she was concerned that he was a

risk to the community, but the district attorney's office told her that the statute of limitations had run out and he could not be prosecuted. She therefore filed a civil suit in 1988 and the case went to trial in 1993, with Elizabeth Loftus once again a witness for the defence. The 10-person jury found against her father and awarded her \$500,000 (Hoult, 1998: 130-1). The verdict was affirmed on appeal in 1995, but he still had not paid the money by 2004, and a court had found in 2002 that he had fraudulently hidden money and other assets in order to avoid paying (US Court of Appeals, 2004).

There was Charles "Chuck" Noah, Washington State FMSF coordinator, who was privately accused by his adult daughter of sexually abusing her as a child (Calof, 1998: 170; Penhale, 1992). He denied the accusation and blamed her therapist for supposedly 'implanting' the idea (US Court of Appeals, 2000). Noah was defended in the media by Loftus and described by Pamela Freyd as "a very noble character" (Calof, 1998: 174). And yet he was the leader of a group who spent months violently harassing at least one therapist they accused of supposedly implanting 'false memories', as well as the therapist's family, his lawyer and his lawyer's family, including her young children. On 16 January 1997, Noah was convicted on two counts of harassment of the therapist and his family, receiving a year's jail sentence (suspended by the judge) and a \$5,000 fine (reduced to \$50). In 2000, the Washington Court of Appeals upheld his earlier convictions for harassment and contempt.

For exhaustive details of the behaviour of Noah and his cohorts, see: Calof, 1998; US Court of Appeals, 2000.

Pamela Freyd's denial

Pamela Freyd, Jennifer's mother, denied that the FMSF was representing paedophiles. In an article in the *False Memory Syndrome Newsletter*, she said that there were two reasons why they believed they were not. The first reason was that everyone who attended their meetings was "a good looking bunch of people: graying hair, well-dressed, healthy, smiling"; the second reason was the putative willingness of "all members of the FMS Foundation" to take a lie-detector test. None of them had actually been asked to do this, but if they had been, she said, and agreed to do so, "we will have a powerful statement that we are not in the business of representing pedophiles" (quoted in Pope, 1996: 960).

This is, of course, meaningless. What people look like has nothing to do with how they behave. As Shakespeare had Hamlet say of Claudius, 'one may smile, and smile, and be a villain', and another character in *Julius Caesar*, 'And some that smile have in their hearts, I fear,/ Millions of mischiefs'. As one commentator asked, 'What scientific evidence supports claims that such factors as good looks, dress, health, and smiling serve as valid and reliable indicants of whether or not an individual has engaged in child abuse?' (Pope, 1996: 960). Pamela Freyd's 'ways of addressing this concern' (that the FMSF represented paedophiles) are sheer foolishness, and yet it is that foolishness that has prevailed with the wider society, just as the foolishness of the transgender agenda has.

Similarities

It is the so-called 'false memory syndrome', the *accusation* that the memories were false, that bears the closest resemblance to the transgender phenomenon. Like transgender, it demanded that dissenting voices be silenced. Pope described an

occasion when a proposal to include ‘scientists who might present alternatives to the FMSF view’ in a debate ‘about memory and abuse from a scientific perspective’ was rejected by FMSF on the grounds that those alternative views were ‘unscientific’. The FMSF justified their stance in their newsletter, saying “The ‘science’ of the ‘memory’ is established” (by them presumably). “How could a scientific program about memory be ‘balanced?’” they went on to say. “The notion makes no more sense than trying to balance a program in astronomy by including astrologers” (Pope, 1996: 968). Whether this was the only time FMSF successfully debarred competing views from being heard, or whether it was one of many, the source doesn’t say.

Like transgender too, the FMSF attempted to intimidate the opposition. While there is no record of their organising screeching mobs, they did picket therapists’ offices, thus intimidating clients and damaging the viability of the therapist’s practice. They were also not averse to using violence. Sometimes this was just a generalised assertion that violence might sometimes be justified. Pamela Freyd was quoted saying “If somebody came into your house and shot your child, it would probably be justifiable homicide if you did something, and that’s how these parents feel ... When you get between parents and children, you can expect things to happen”. However, the FMSF made no attempt to stop Noah’s threats of violence against the therapist he was harassing (Pope, 1996: 968-9).

The FMSF was also similar to transgender in labelling those who disagreed with dismissive epithets. Pope tells us that ‘True Believers’ was one of the most common, but the dissenters, explicitly acknowledged as radical feminists, were also compared to Nazis, just as transgender was to do later. Pope referenced a 1995 book (*Diagnosis for Disaster: The Devastating Truth About False Memory Syndrome and Its Impact on Accusers and Families*, by Claudette Wassil-Grimm) which drew a parallel between Hitler and ‘radical feminists’, and between the Jews and the men being accused of child sexual abuse: “Hitler had the Jews; McCarthy had the communists; radical feminists have perpetrators” (Pope, 1996: 970). The author referred to these men as ‘perpetrators’, not because she believed they were, but because that was what they were being called by women she was assuming were not only as evil as the Nazis (and McCarthy), but were seemingly just as socially powerful. The falsity of both these assumptions is immediately obvious, but that was clearly no impediment for the FMSF, whose defence of (alleged) perpetrators bore a shaky relationship to the truth anyway. J. K. Rowling has a delightful answer to such accusations in the transgender context. In response to a tweet saying: ‘Congratulations on aligning ideologically with Stalin, I guess’, she said ‘Very excited to announce that after a long period of being Literally Hitler I’ve become Ideologically Stalin. With luck, hard work and your continued support, I believe I can make Vlad the Impaler by Christmas’ (@jk_rowling, 30 March 2023).

Name-calling and insults aside, the FMSF resorted to other tactics also employed by the transgender lobby. Pope referred to these as ‘confirmation bias, illusory correlation, and false consensus’ (for examples, see the ‘Evidence’ chapter). He said that these were ‘distorting influences’ that could lure people into accepting ‘diagnoses lacking validity’. However, he went on to say,

once set forth as a scientifically valid, established, and institutionalized category, a readily diagnosed formal psychological syndrome gains immense power to influence others (Pope, 1996: 962).

The diagnosis lacking validity in this case was ‘false memory syndrome’, but it could equally apply to ‘gender dysphoria’, which *is* a diagnosis in the DSM5 (APA, 2013: 451, 814), although ‘dysphoria’ more generally is not. Dysphoria is ‘a condition in which a person experiences intense feelings of depression, discontent, and in some cases indifference to the world around them’ (p.821). It is discussed in the context of many of the diagnoses in the DSM5, e.g. ‘depressive disorders’, ‘body dysmorphic disorder’, but the only context within which it becomes a ‘diagnosis’ is ‘gender dysphoria’. Appearance in the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual is indeed immense power to influence others, despite the fact that the scientific validity is dubious, at the very least.

Evidence

Despite the widespread acceptance of a ‘false memory syndrome’, there is no evidence of its existence. The FMSF made claims to having done ‘research’ but it was methodologically flawed, just like transgender’s, including a refusal to provide the raw data that would allow others to check it (Pope, 1996: 960). The evidence uncovered in the literature review by the Victorian inquiry into the practice of ‘recovered memory therapy’ (Victorian Health Services Commissioner, 2005) was hardly convincing. At least some of that ‘evidence’, if it can be called evidence at all, came from the accused abusers and their supporters. ‘Evidence for the existence of false memories’, the report said, ‘comes from ... letters from people reporting to be falsely accused of sexual abuse’ (citing Loftus, 1993, hardly a reliable source) (pp.24, 104). The authors of the Victorian report were not inclined to take such denials at face value. ‘[G]uilty persons might deny they are guilty of sexual abuse for a number of reasons’, they said, ‘such as denial, secrecy, alcohol-induced blackouts, and dishonesty’. As well, they said that there were reports that perpetrators can block memories of the abuse too (p.32). Or as Judith Herman said more forthrightly, ‘perpetrators will fight tenaciously to ensure that their abuses remain unseen, unacknowledged, and consigned to oblivion’ (Herman, 2015: 246).

The Victorian report said there was also ‘anecdotal evidence from people known as “retractors”’ (those who have ‘reported memories of childhood sexual abuse, and subsequently report them to be false’) (Victorian Health Services Commissioner, 2005: 5). The authors noted that this source was not always reliable. ‘[I]t is important to consider’, they said, ‘that people with verifiable histories of abuse are known to alternate between accepting and denying their memories’. They also pointed out that victims of child sexual abuse ‘may be more susceptible to suggestions their memories are false’ (pp.32, 111-12).

Other sources of evidence in the literature came from ‘legal cases, investigations conducted by the Commissioner and media reports’ (Victorian Health Services Commissioner, 2005: 24). But the legal cases were not evidence that the accused men had been falsely accused, the single investigation by the Commissioner came to no definite conclusion about ‘recovered memories’ (pp.27-8), and the media reports tended to see ‘repressed memory therapy’ where none existed (pp.28-31).

Overall, the Victorian report’s literature review found that the psychotherapeutic profession tended to hedge their bets: yes, traumatic events can be forgotten; yes, memories can be implanted. The American Psychological Association said in 1998, for example, both that “[i]t is possible for memories of abuse that have been forgotten for a long time to be remembered”, *and* that “[i]t is also possible to

construct convincing pseudomemories for events that never occurred” (quoted in Victorian Health Services Commissioner, 2005: 39).

Again, the Netherlands Health Council said that it was ‘plausible that memories for traumatic events can become inaccessible, either partially or temporarily, albeit sometimes in fragmentary form’, while at the same time saying that ‘[i]ndividuals can experience imaginary or false memories’ (Victorian Health Services Commissioner, 2005: 43). Nonetheless, the profession as a whole does agree that it is possible to have no conscious awareness of experiences of child sexual abuse for years, and then to remember it later in life, e.g. the British Psychological Society: ‘Complete or partial memory loss is a frequently reported consequence of experiencing certain kinds of traumas, including [child sexual assault]’ (p.41). And contrary to the assertions of the ‘false memory syndrome’ contingent, most of the remembering doesn’t occur in a therapy situation. The Victorian report found that ‘recovery of memory is often not associated with therapy, as patients typically recover memories before entering therapy, with the most common triggers for memory recovery occurring outside therapy’ (p.7).

In its own investigation, the inquiry found no evidence that therapists in that state were practising ‘recovered memory therapy’. According to the report’s authors, that was because the majority of the 335 professional respondents who returned the questionnaire about the extent to which it is practised in Victoria, refused to answer the question. But their reasons for refusing to answer made it quite clear that they were not practising ‘recovered memory therapy’, not least because they did not regard it as a type of therapy at all. Rather, they said it was term ‘created by false memory associations for political purposes’. It would also seem that they found the question insulting. ‘They also stated’, the report said, that ‘they do not initiate the recovery of memories, nor do they suggest the occurrence of past events, but understand and accept that recovered memories are sometimes relevant’ (Victorian Health Services Commissioner, 2005: 10).

The Freyds’ daughter, Jennifer (among others), has cited substantial evidence for the reality of suppressed memories that were eventually recovered. ‘A claim that there is not such evidence (or that those who accept the evidence are not scientific)’, she said, ‘would misstate our state of knowledge. We always have epistemological uncertainty, but this is a lot of data’ (Freyd, 1998: 107. See also: Cheit, 1998). The Australian government’s Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse also found that forgetting childhood sexual abuse was common:

For example, Briere and Conte found that almost two-thirds (59.3 per cent) of a sample of 450 survivors of childhood sexual abuse, who were currently receiving therapy for the abuse, reported having forgotten some or all of the abuse at some point between when it occurred and adulthood (McClellan et al, 2017: 31).

And yet, belief in ‘false memory syndrome’ lives on. One researcher commented, “You get to the point where you wonder when is it going to be enough [evidence]” (Salter, 1998: 121). Another said, ‘I began to learn that victims of sex crimes are held to a public standard that says no amount of proof is enough’ (Hoult, 1998: 131).

For further evidence for the existence of recovered memories, see: Malmo and Laidlaw, 2010; Vogt, ed., 2019; Whitfield et al, 2001; the articles in the 1998 issue of *Ethics & Behavior* 8(2).

Jennifer Freyd coined the term ‘betrayal blindness’ as a way of naming the reason why people might not remember, or even be aware of, being abused, including when the betrayal happens as adults. She argues that betrayal blindness occurs when the usual tactics for avoiding pain—fight or flight—are unavailable. This is especially the case when the attachment situation within which the pain is being experienced is essential for the victim’s survival, or is felt to be in the case of adults. A small child can neither flee the situation nor fight off the adult abusing her. The only solution left is to suppress awareness (Freyd, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998; Freyd and Birrell, 2013).

‘False memory syndrome’ was never accepted as a diagnosis by a mainstream diagnostic system (McMaugh and Middleton, 2020), although it did make its way into the Random House dictionary (Hoult, 1998: 139).³ Louise Armstrong saw it as part of the hostile backlash to the feminist exposure of the existence of father-daughter rape. ‘False Memory Syndrome (along with its siblings, False Accusation Syndrome and Parental Alienation Syndrome)’, she said, ‘is among the more recent retaliatory missiles to be launched in what has by now become the Great Incest War’ (Armstrong, 1996: 2). Another commentator pointed out that, whether or not any of the (male) FMSF members had sexually abused children (and some of them had), their tactics bore a remarkable resemblance to sexual abusers’ attempts to silence their victims (Brown, 1998: 191).

Conclusion

The FMSF finally disbanded in December 2019, ‘not with a bang, but with a whimper, just a little note on the bottom of their website homepage’ (McMaugh and Middleton, 2020). But in the light of the uncritical belief of a number of well-intentioned people in ‘false memory syndrome’, clearly they had been highly successful. ‘False memory syndrome’ *is* a good example of an idea that was widely believed despite its falsity, just like transgenderism. But it wasn’t the memories that were false, as Bailey and Blanchard alleged, but the belief in the ‘syndrome’. There was no ‘explosion of cases’ of (mostly) women making up stories, egged on by their therapists, about their fathers abusing them. There was, however, an explosion of reports, academic as well as mass media, saying that women were making up nasty stories about their fathers, encouraged by therapists who were implanting false memories in them. As two researchers in trauma and dissociation said, ‘There are powerful forces which wish to suppress the voices of women and children ... the “false memory” movement enabled society to ignore a whole new generation of abused children’ (McMaugh and Middleton, 2020).

For detailed descriptions of the ways in which people react to trauma, men as well as women, including dissociated amnesia, see: Herman, 2015.

Arguments in terms of delusion are not specific to the transgender agenda. It is just one of the latest in a long historical line of false beliefs that stir the populace into a

³ ‘Random House College Dictionary ... Acquire the very latest vocabulary, like motor voter, ecotourism, fusion cuisine, false memory syndrome, and more’ (<http://www.librarything.com/work/2232558>).

frenzy, only to die down when conditions change. (The vast majority of the population don't react to the transgender phenomenon with frenzy. They haven't even heard of it. But the behaviour of trans activists in response to disagreement can certainly be described as frenzied). Raising the question of delusion in relation to transgender is another way to counter the ideological individualism of the transgender narrative. Transgender says that there are only individuals: the people whose 'gender identity' makes them 'vulnerable', who would be free to go where they pleased if it weren't for other people; and those ('terfs') who 'exclude transwomen' (i.e. men) by disagreeing that they are women. However, these supposedly 'vulnerable' people have been able to change social institutions of all kinds in their favour, including the law, at everyone else's expense. This indicates that something much broader than individual choice and human rights is operating here.

That 'much broader something', the power behind the enormous success of transgenderism, is something that men are demanding. As is typical of male supremacy, at the very least it is indifferent to any interests women and children might have in the security of their own bodies. At worst, it is driven by that bitter misogyny that never goes away but suppurates beneath every social formation, and a male sex right whose sexual fetishism knows no bounds. Thankfully these demands can be kept in check by a genuine humanity that refuses to die. But where transgender's desire to re-make the category of 'women' to include men prevails, it becomes impossible to make provision for any needs women might have, or even to speak meaningfully of women as a distinct category. This is not just a problem for women. It is a problem for the whole society, e.g. it renders useless sex-specific information in censuses, health provision, demographics, crime statistics, etc.

Nothing that women have ever demanded, no matter how urgent—an end to men murdering women, to domestic violence, rape, prostitution, pornography, surrogacy, and in this context, a recognition that transgenderism harms women and children—has ever had the phenomenal success that the transgender agenda has had. This influence is wildly disproportionate to their numbers, although those numbers are increasing. Nowadays, most of the men who want to be 'women' are not undergoing the castrating surgical procedures (which they don't refer to as 'castration' but as 'infertility'). This is what the 'self-ID' campaign is all about, to legally enable a man to say he's a 'woman' without sacrificing his penis and testicles. The transgender agenda allows men to say they're 'women' while remaining anatomically male, thus destroying any possibility of women claiming a human status as a separate category, with needs, interests, experiences and consciousness different from, or even complementary to, men's needs, etc.

As such, the transgender agenda is dehumanised because men can't be genuinely human as long as women are debarred from human status. While both sexes share in the human condition and sometimes have the same needs (e.g. food, clothing and shelter, freedom from violence), women have needs that men don't have. The most immediately obvious of these relate to the fact that only women give birth. But the transgender agenda wants to take even that obvious difference away from women by asserting that some women are 'men' even when they are pregnant and giving birth. This is the misogynist truth behind the delusion that men can be 'women'.

The money

And then there's the money. Explaining the success of the transgender agenda in terms of money is not an alternative to explaining it in terms of male supremacy. Money, or more accurately, wealth, is male power (Thompson, 2020). So any explanation for the success of the transgender phenomenon must include the money. As Sue Donym said, 'The transgender movement is not marginalized voices finally being heard; it is a case of large amounts of money being heard' (Donym, 2018).

Jennifer Bilek's work is an important voice exposing the power behind the transgender agenda. She has extensively researched the money behind the transgender industry, and published her findings in a series of articles, especially on her blog, *The 11th Hour*. What follows here is largely based on her work. (Bilek, 2018a, b; 2020a-k, 2021a, b, 2022a-f, and 2023a, b). She has identified the individuals who have been funding the transgender phenomenon—the American billionaires, 'the rich, white men', whose money has been subsidising and buying support for the transgender agenda throughout society. Among them are Jennifer Pritzker, a man claiming to be a 'woman' (formerly Col. James Pritzker) (Donym, 2018), and his cousins, Penny Pritzker (an actual woman) and her brother, J.B. Pritzker. The Pritzker family's fortune amounted to around \$US29 billion in 2018, generated by the ownership of Hyatt Hotels and nursing homes. The influence of their money reaches from early childhood education to universities, the law, medical institutions, the LGBT lobby and organizations, politics and the military. The Pritzker funding is not confined to the United States. It reaches other countries via WPATH, in conferences for physicians studying transgender surgery, and by funding universities internationally.

But they are not the only rich benefactors of the transgender agenda. There is Jon Stryker, a gay man, grandson of an orthopedic surgeon who founded the Stryker Medical Corporation, which sold \$US13.6 billion in surgical supplies and software in 2018. He created the Arcus Foundation in 2000, the most powerful non-profit 'LGBT' NGO in the world, which subsidised 'LGBT' programs and organisations to the tune of \$US58.4 million between 2007 and 2010. He was one of the top five contributors to Obama's campaign. Like Jennifer Pritzker, Jon Stryker too has supportive female family members. One of his sisters, Ronda (married to the chairman of Greenleaf Trust), is Vice Chair of Spelman College,⁴ and she was instrumental in acquiring for Spelman a \$US2 million grant from the Arcus Foundation. The grant was named in honour of Audre Lorde, but given that it was earmarked for a 'queer studies' program, it is highly unlikely that Lorde, as a lesbian feminist, would have been pleased, had she still been alive to know about it. Ronda and her husband had given Spelman \$US30 million dollars in total by 2018, the largest gift from living donors in its 137-year history. She is also a trustee of Kalamazoo College, to whom Arcus gave a 'social justice' leadership grant for \$US23 million in 2012, as well as a member of the Harvard Medical School Board of Fellows. Another of Jon's sisters, Pat, has worked closely with Tim Gill, whose Gill Foundation has poured half a billion dollars into small groups pushing the 'LGBT' agenda.

Other inordinately wealthy men who financially support the trans agenda are: George Soros, with his Open Society Foundation and his broad investments in Big Pharma;

⁴ 'a historically Black college and a global leader in the education of women of African descent' – <https://www.spelman.edu/about-us>

Warren Buffett and his Berkshire Hathaway connection to Amazon's push to become a leading provider of transgender medical supplies; and his son, Peter, who funded NoVo Foundation programs for transgenderism. These wealthy men, and others who have ties to the pharmaceutical and medical industries, expect to make even more money in the new burgeoning body-modification industry of transgender/transhumanism.

Another rich white man masquerading as a 'woman' is Martine Rothblatt. While he is only a millionaire not a billionaire, he is an important voice in the transgender universe. His chief purpose is to promote transgenderism as a precursor to 'transhumanism', itself a precursor to 'superhumans', or more accurately, super *men*. While this would be a profitable enterprise for him, heavily invested as he is in biogenetics and transplants, it is part of a wider recent capitalist endeavour involving robots and artificial intelligence. (For more about Rothblatt and his dehumanising agenda, see the "'Transhumanism"/dehumanisation' section below).

But the success of transgender does not rest only on the motivations of individual men, no matter how many of them there are. They would get nowhere if it weren't for the system already in place that enables the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the ruthless few. Capitalism has found a new market in transgender. As Bilek said, 'transgenderism has basically exploded in the middle of capitalism ... [It] sits square in the middle of the medical industrial complex, which is by some estimates even bigger than the military industrial complex' (Bilek, 2018a). 'It's hard to imagine', she said,

a civil rights movement so indelibly tied to the capitalist marketplace that it could be used to sell fashion, makeup, hormones, surgery, cosmetology services, movies, TV series, mental health treatment, and women's underwear, while concurrently being invested in by billionaire philanthropists, the technology and pharmaceutical industries, major corporations, and banks (Bilek, 2018b).

In other words, funded as it is by capitalist enterprises, transgender is not a civil rights movement at all. Bilek names many of the pharmaceutical giants, other corporations, banks, the IT industry and Hollywood that are funding and fuelling the transgender message, along with the fashion industry and other feminine brands that are pushing it, even to the point of absurdity, e.g. the makers of Tampax, a commodity that is only used by women, who can tweet, as though it were an obvious selling-point, that "Not all people with periods are women. Let's celebrate the diversity of all people who bleed!!" (Bilek, 2020g). At the risk of stating the bleeding obvious (pun intended), it is not 'people' who have periods, only women.

The lure of future profit is one of the reasons why so many major institutions are leaping to the defence of such a miniscule proportion of the population (who are not actually an identifiable category of persons, even a tiny one, but an ideology that appeals to the worst aspects of a misogynist society). If society can remain convinced of the 'truth' of transgender, there will be many more medically modified bodies in the future, a rich and ever-expanding source of wealth.

Capitalism requires ever-new sources of profit if it is to continue to grow, and if it doesn't grow it will die. Transgender, and the 'transhumanism' of which it is the first step, is one of capitalism's newest sources of profit. Adult male 'trans people' are not subjecting themselves to medical procedures these days, or at least not getting

themselves castrated (but then, there *is* that ‘Eunuchs’ chapter in WPATH’s Version 8). But many children and young people are. This is the market of the future (always supposing those formerly young people stay on the trans trajectory as they grow up). As Bilek said,

This is why corporations ... governments ... [and] banks “care” ... because they are anticipating more genetically modified bodies. This is what the “diversity” in the new global, corporate thrust toward “diversity and inclusion,” means. The transformation of humanity is the future and any business that is not on board with the developments will become obsolete (Bilek, 2020g).

There is a terrible irony in the fact that transgender’s chief supporters regard themselves as left-wing, and yet they are defending what is in fact capitalism’s newest exploitative enterprise. How is it that transgender’s defenders do not know that its roots ‘are in ruthless, bloody capitalism?’ (Bilek, 2020i).

For funding for Gendered Intelligence from pharmaceutical giant, Burroughs-Wellcome, see: 4th Wave Now, 2015;

for funding by Ferring Pharmaceuticals, the manufacturer of triptorelin, a commonly-used puberty blocker, for the 2006 article on the ‘Dutch protocol’ by Delemarre-van de Waal and Cohen-Kettenis (acknowledged on p. S137), see: Biggs, 2022: 4;

for a discussion of the funding of the transgender movement by George Soros’ Open Society Foundations, see: Biggs, 2018;

for a critical discussion by the ‘Tax Payers’ Alliance in the UK, of the public money that has been paid to Mermaids, Gendered Intelligence and Stonewall see: TPA, 2022.

‘Transhumanism’/dehumanisation

Transgenderism is part of a wider strategy to mine the human body for profit. As Bilek has said, it is a ‘gateway to transhumanism’, a ‘new ad campaign for disembodiment—the body as separate from biological sexed reality’ currently being waged by the pharmaceutical and technological industries. While there is already money to be made in transgender medical procedures, those undergoing those procedures are only a tiny proportion of the population, and most of the adult men aren’t undergoing any procedures at all. ‘The real money’, Bilek says, ‘comes later’. What transgender is preparing the way for is ‘human interfacing with tech, AI, gene splicing, motherless births, etc.’ The changes that are happening in law and language are not about ‘gender’, but about acclimatising the population to future changes to human biology. These are changes in the very definition of what it means to be human, and their motivation is profit. As Bilek said, ‘You are about to become the last & greatest commodity’ (Bilek, 2019. See also: Bilek, 2018a).

Of course, there are many examples of ‘human interfacing with tech’ that are not at all pernicious in the above sense, but which actually contribute to well-being. Pacemakers that steady erratic heartbeats, artificial mitral valves that replace those damaged by childhood rheumatic fever, prosthetic hip and knee replacements that cure the pain from arthritis damage, are all examples of technological modifications of the human body that are beneficial (even if someone does make a profit from them). But these kinds of technological interventions repair the body. They don’t make unnecessary intrusions into healthy bodies, intrusions that cause damage rather than

repairing it. What transgender is preparing the world for is the transformation of natural biological process, including and especially childbirth, into something man-made (literally). Of course it may not succeed, and I suspect it won't. But there is still a potential market if people can be conned into believing in it, and a great deal of money to be made in the attempt. Capitalism is not in the business to improve human well-being, only to make profits.

One of the leading lights in the push through transgenderism to transhumanism is Martine Rothblatt. A man masquerading as a woman, he heads a large pharmaceutical corporation that is heavily invested in biogenetics and transplants. Bilek describes him as 'a founding father of the transgender empire'. He was the author of the first draft of the Transsexual and Transgender Health Law Reports, which later became a so-called 'International Bill of Gender [sic] Rights' (Bilek, 2020c). According to Bilek, Rothblatt has stated outright that "transgenderism is the onramp to transhumanism" and that "[t]he re-creation of the human body has already begun" (Bilek, 2018b, 2020j). She described his 2011 book, *From Transgender to Transhumanism*, subtitled 'A Manifesto on the Freedom of Form', as 'a blueprint for the modern-day trans project to infiltrate every sector of our societies'.

What Rothblatt and his ilk believe is humanity's future is illustrated by a robot Rothblatt had made of his wife, Bina (called 'Bina48' because it has '48 exaflops per second processing speed and 48 exabytes of memory', whatever that means),⁵ with her enthusiastic acquiescence.⁶ Such robots would be combined with a postulated 'digital consciousness' that would be implanted in the robot and survive the death of the actual person (Bilek, 2022f).

A Christian critic of the links between transgenderism with transhumanism (Herin, 2022) supplies some direct quotes from Rothblatt's writings. Naturally, he quotes the bible as evidence that transgenderism and transhumanism are dehumanising, but that is not his only argument. He gives five reasons: they redefine what it is to be human; they promote androgyny; they are contemptuous of, and even hate, the human body; they experiment on people; and they falsely promise salvation. Most cogently, he allows Rothblatt to condemn himself with his own words. In the book mentioned above, Rothblatt wrote:

"I've come to realize that choosing one's gender is merely an important subset of choosing one's form. By 'form' I mean that which encloses our beingness—flesh for the life we are accustomed to, plastic for the robots of science fiction, mere data for the avatars taking over our computer screens ... 21st century software [has] made it technologically possible to separate our minds from our bodies ... The rise of transgenderism provides sociobiologists with evidence of a new species. An important part of most species' signature is the characteristically gender dimorphic behaviors of their members. However ... thanks to culture and technology, humans are leaving those gender dimorphic behaviors behind as they come to appreciate the limitless uniqueness of their sexual identities ... The greatest catapult for humanity into a new species lies just beyond the event horizon of transgenderism. Based upon our rapidly

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5IqcRILeCc>

⁶ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/life-after-life-transgender-ceo-martine-rothblatt-builds-robot-bina48-mind-clone/>

Denise Thompson

accelerating ability to imbue software with human personality, autonomy and self-awareness, a movement of ‘transhumanists’ have joined transgenderists ... The basic transhumanist concept is that a human need not have a flesh body, just as a woman need not have a real vagina. Humanness is in the mind, just as is sexual identity. As software becomes increasingly capable of thinking, acting and feeling like a human, it should be treated as a fellow human, and welcomed as a fellow member of the technological species Persona creates” (quoted in Herin, 2022).

I don’t think we have to worry too much yet about the success of the transhumanism project. The Bina48 ‘robot’ is simply a head and shoulders mechanical portrait that bears no more resemblance to a human being than a sculpture in marble or bronze, especially when it’s ‘speaking’ (vide the videos linked in the footnotes). It is simply programmed with AI to give the appearance of interacting with people, and no ‘digital consciousness’ has so far been created. Nonetheless, the fact that this kind of thing could not only be taken seriously, but also attract enormous amounts of money from men powerful enough to impose their beliefs on the rest of us, is very worrying indeed, whether or not it eventually succeeds.

This is capitalism’s usual hubris. These men think they’re God, with an arrogance that is already wrecking the biosphere and destroying the climate. These men and the system of capitalism they have created and maintained, and that has created and maintained them, are playing God. Some of them even admit it. As a leading proponent of transhumanism and co-founder of Humanity+ put it:

“If we want to live in paradise, we will have to engineer it ourselves. If we want eternal life, then we’ll need to rewrite our bug-ridden genetic code and become god-like” (quoted in Thomas, 2017).

They say they mean well. They say they’re working towards ‘paradise’ and ‘eternal life’ for everyone (although that does raise the question of where everyone is going to fit if nobody dies). But the technological advances that will supposedly achieve these ends are a product of advanced capitalism. As long as it is profitable, capitalism is quite happy with destruction, and if destruction is more profitable than contributing to human well-being, that is where capitalism’s priorities lie. Capitalism has no moral compass, except the compulsion to produce ever-increasing levels of profit. If people stand in the way of profit, they are at the very least by-passed, their desperate needs ignored by the profit-making system. At worst, they are exterminated, as Indigenous peoples everywhere have discovered.

Men’s god-like stance is not interested in creating and conserving the world and all that is in it, including its people, as the traditional ‘God’ is reputed to have done. It’s more likely to involve wholesale destruction than wholesale creation, or even preservation. This might seem hyperbolic, but the already phenomenal success of the transgender agenda suggests that something of this order is happening. If transgender can get society to accept that men can be women, there are no limits to the lengths dissociated, arrogant male entitlement will take us. And there’s nothing new about some man thinking he’s God.

But transgender’s dehumanisation doesn’t rest only on its connection to transhumanism. Transgender is essentially dehumanised because of its abolition of the category ‘women’. It is another aspect of the ugly fascist dream of a world without women (Thompson, 2020: 189-248), and a world without women is the end of the

human race. This might seem implausible, and it probably won't happen, at least not quite like that. But the motivation to do away with women is already among us and already causing havoc. It's impossible to predict precisely the future course of this motivation, but it won't be anywhere good.

Conclusion

Thinking

In a sense, allowing oneself to get caught up in a delusion is a refusal to think. Hannah Arendt had something to say about the dangers of this refusal. It was in the context of her concept of 'the banality of evil' and the 'extraordinary [personal] shallowness' of Adolf Eichmann, the one who exemplified for her at that moment of his trial both evil and its banality. Thinking, she suggested, might be an important aspect of avoiding doing harm: 'Could the activity of thinking ... the habit of examining and reflecting upon whatever happens to come to pass ... be of such a nature that it "conditions" men against evil-doing?' (Arendt, 1971: 418).

Renée Gerlich made much the same point (although without the reference to the Nazi period). Social trends like the transgender phenomenon, she said, 'have never been dominated by evil sadists, but by well meaning individuals too scared to think for themselves' (Gerlich, 2017). Gerlich suggested that the fear is a fear of unpopularity. Supporting the trans agenda is regarded as 'a way to signal one's love and support for marginalised people' within self-styled 'progressive' circles. But she also mentions 'loud wails of "transphobia!"' directed against anyone who disagrees with the agenda. In other words, people are scared of being bullied or otherwise punished if they disagree with the transgender narrative. (See the relevant sections in the 'Strategies' chapter for a discussion of the violence and censorship employed by transgender force to silence dissenting voices).

This reference to thinking as a way of resisting widespread delusions might at first sight appear to be another form of individualism. Thinking is, after all, done by individuals. But to critique individualism in the ideological sense is not to deny that individuals exist. Ideological individualism is denial of the systematic domination that shapes our understanding of the world. But it is possible to recognise the system for what it is, and to resist it, and that is the responsibility of each individual, even though that recognition and resistance will also be collective. A concept of the individual in that sense is important, although I prefer to use the terms 'people' and 'human beings' rather than 'individuals'.

Inability or refusal to think may or may not be an individual failing. That will depend on the context. But the maintenance of ignorance is one of domination's chief mechanisms of social control. The consent of populations is manufactured (Chomsky and Herman, 1988). Ignorance of the harm transgender causes, not to mention its falsity, is an ignorance that is deliberately maintained. The institutions that have bowed to it have had their thinking done for them, largely although not only by feminism, and still they won't hear.

Not a conspiracy theory

To explain human affairs in terms of a system of male supremacy is not a conspiracy theory. There is no set of powerful conspirators secretly plotting ways of oppressing women and aggrandising the power of men. Male supremacy is a belief system that no particular individuals are responsible for creating (although we are all responsible for

the way we deal with it). It shows itself in any number of social phenomena, all of which are characterised both by the dehumanisation of women, e.g. prostitution, pornography, surrogacy, male violence against women, and by dehumanisation more generally, e.g. war, racism, fascism, capitalist environmental destruction. To see the system of male supremacy involves seeing that what connects these seemingly disparate phenomena is a drive for male power, enabled by dissociation from any genuine humanity and a male entitlement that knows no let or hindrance (Thompson, 2020).

This is not something that can be ‘proved’ by pointing to the facts. Facts require interpretation if they are to have any meaning, if they are even to count as facts at all, and interpretations come from interpretative frameworks. Feminism is such a framework, and so is transgender. Feminism says men can’t be women, transgender says they can. Both assertions can’t be true because they contradict each other. Deciding between them depends, not only on deciding which category of ‘women’ to accept (including or excluding men), but also on deciding whether to accept or reject the other issues that trans has brought up, e.g. the medicalising of children, the censorship of dissent, male intrusion into women’s spaces. Saying ‘no’ to these issues is the feminist position. It is also sheer common sense, an interpretative framework based, not only on the knowledge that there are two sexes, but also on the insight that what transgender demands is detrimental to human well-being.

Individuals acting on their own initiative, either alone or together with like-minded others, could not possibly have had such a widespread influence on society unless their views resonated with meanings and values already there. What is already there is that misogynist fear and hatred of women resulting from male supremacy’s foundational principle that only men count as ‘human’—hatred because the continued existence of women gives the lie to that principle, and fear that women might take revenge for what men have done to women.

Misogyny is the default option of male supremacist society. It doesn’t have to be overtly brutal to be harmful to women. Indifference to women, even to their most basic and pressing needs for survival, is adequate for most male supremacist purposes, although violence against women is an everyday occurrence. Obliterating women is standard operating practice. It is transgender’s compatibility with already-existing misogyny, combined with male supremacy’s already-existing dissociation and arrogant male entitlement, that has enabled it to spread so far and so fast throughout society. Transgenderism’s attempt to obliterate women is absurd but its absurdity is ignored because its logic is male supremacist.

For an account of transgenderism as ‘insane’, see: Bilek, 2020e.

The society-wide institutional changes demanded by transgenderism are the latest ruse of male supremacy. It is a backlash against the feminist project of recognising a human status for women, and the rights and dignities that follow from that. If men can be women, feminism loses its material base from which to claim redress from male supremacy’s violence and contempt. But be warned, whenever the feminist project falters, humanity becomes dehumanised and loses its opportunity to build a genuinely human status for all.

As already noted, the next chapter continues with explanations for the transgender phenomenon. But its success also involves the strategies used to get the message

across. Since this requires yet more lengthy explanation, it is discussed in subsequent chapters, ‘Some transgender strategies’, ‘Piggybacking’, and ‘Where is the evidence?’.

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