

November 2, 2020

Submission to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights
Respecting Bill C-6

Bill C-6 is a bill to make conversion therapy illegal and punishable by the courts. This is to be understood as trying to change one's sexual orientation or gender identity. There has been much written about the terrible consequences in our past about how conversion therapy has been used to convert people's sexual orientation to heterosexual. Bill C-6 handles this well.

But with regard to gender identity, it is not clear at all that there is such a thing. The first problem with C-6 is that the bill omits a clear definition of the term "gender identity" and says only that attempts to change one's gender identity should be illegal in the same way any attempts to change one sexual orientation will be if the law is adopted.

If we look at how the word "identity" is defined in dictionaries from its etymology, it is rooted in:

Middle French *identité*, from Late Latin *identitat-*, *identitas*, probably from Latin *identidem* repeatedly, contraction of *idem et idem*, literally, same and same (from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/identity>)

And a more modern definition:

a: the distinguishing character or personality of an individual : **INDIVIDUALITY**

b: the relation established by psychological identification

(from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/identity>)

My question to those on the committee, is do you believe that children and teens have an unchangeable and fixed "gender identity", or even a fixed "identity" before they become adults?

I ask myself related to Bill C6, which seems to forbid any outside influences from interfering with the development of one's identity, whether or not I would be who I am today without these influences from society & culture. In fact, I think we become who we are because of all the social interactions we have and along the way our sense of self is changed along the way. ie; I was a tomboy at 12 and became a feminist at 27.

Bill C-6's text re: "Conversion Therapy"

Definition of *conversion therapy*

320.101 In sections 320.102 to 320.106, ***conversion therapy*** means a practice, treatment or service designed to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour. For greater certainty, this definition does not include a practice, treatment or service that relates

(a) to a person's gender transition; or

(b) to a person's exploration of their identity or to its development.

RE: (a) While this clause would supposedly protect a parent from prosecution for discouraging a medical transition, it also legalizes & protects gender clinics promoting medical transition to developing teens.

RE: (b) While this clause would supposedly protect psychotherapists from having conversations with gender dysphoric youths, any discussions related to their gender identification that is not affirming their present gender ID could make them liable for prosecution and would discourage them from engaging with this type of patient. (See the clauses below)

Forced conversion therapy

320.102 Everyone who knowingly causes a person to undergo conversion therapy against the person's will is

(a) guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than five years; or

(b) guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction.

Causing child to undergo conversion therapy

320.103 (1) Everyone who knowingly causes a person who is under the age of 18 years to undergo conversion therapy is

(a) guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than five years; or

(b) guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction.

Bill C-6, if passed the way it is now, will endanger youth's natural social development by making it more difficult for youth trying to explore their gender identity outside of gender clinics.

I was a tomboy at age 12 and became a feminist at age 24. I may have chosen to transition as a teen if gender clinics had been around in the 1960's. But becoming a feminist and studying at l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir at Concordia University, I came to see the concept of gender as being the socially constructed rules around the sex that one is born with. I have fought all my life to be free from these constraints and if Bill C-6 is passed in its present form, AND would make it easier for more individuals to explore life & live as they want without these constraints, I would not be writing this brief.

Gender ideology has been built on the concept that if the limitations of gender do not suit you, you can change your body to make it match the traditionally defined sex you wish to be. So more and more, medical transitioning is being encouraged and an entire pharmaceutical industry is now thriving. Is this why there are an increasing number of medical professionals supporting an individual's desire to escape the sex they were born into? Why also, has the number of females who are transitioning via cross sex hormones & surgeries increased so much in this past decade?

In the United Kingdom, this question has been asked. Please see the following:

<https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/tavistock-transgender-transition-teenage-girls-female-to-male>

Gender identity, as a concept with its foundation built upon traditional male and female gender stereotypes and role playing, is regressive and instead of making the goal of equality of the sexes closer to being realized, is doing the opposite by reinforcing these constricting stereotypes. Transgender activists are promoting medical transitioning while the long term health effects of using steroids over a long period of time have resulted in contraindications against using them:

<http://gdworkinggroup.org/2018/10/24/the-gender-identity-phantom/>

I am writing this brief also as a parent of a female who was diagnosed with severe anxiety at age 13 and with Borderline Personality Disorder later. She has been in the care of a psychiatrist because in her teens was terrified to go to school. When my daughter began to hate her body as her teen years progressed, her psychiatrist added gender dysphoria to his diagnosis. By this time, all her social activities had been centered around the social media platform Tumblr. She had begun to believe she was supposed to be male & her body was the problem. When her psychiatrist recommended that she begin transitioning, she made the decision to do it.

P is an adult now, has been on testosterone for a year, has gained 50 lbs, and still hates her body. But she no longer identifies as male, but non binary. Has her mental health improved from taking testosterone? I would say an unequivocal “no”. She failed to complete a stage that was part of her “Youth & Child Care” program and was told she should concentrate on fixing her mental health. She regrets that she has lost the singing voice she had and is beginning to recognize that the testosterone & its changes to her body have not helped her. And the long terms effects of her continuing to take it are unknown:

<https://4thwavenow.com/2018/06/18/testosterone-young-females-what-is-known-about-lifelong-effects/>

But where is the support for those who need help getting off testosterone?

Recommendation:

Remove gender identity from Bill C-6 and figure out how to help parents who have children who are showing serious issues with their mental health. Why is medical transitioning covered by Health Acts in most provinces but most mental health therapies are not? Thank heaven I had supplemental health insurance to cover some private psychotherapy. Unfortunately, it was never enough.

Sincerely,

Louise Matchett