

Bill C-6 Brief: An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)

I agree that forcing someone to feel attraction to a sex that they don't is harmful, and forcing someone to conform to gender stereotypes is also very harmful. However, the definition which describes "conversion" that happens in a medical setting is too vague, so include more specific language to describe it as a "degrading and coercive" practice so that we can avoid future instances like the firing of Dr. Zucker where simply not practising the affirmation model and sticking with the wait-and-see approach was labelled as conversion therapy.¹ Secondly, I disagree that "gender identity" should be included because the term itself isn't defined beyond the nebulous "feeling as a gender." It assumes that we all have a gender identity.

Some argue that these gender roles and preferences are rooted in bio-essentialism, that we can find the proof of "gender identity" in previous MRI scan studies. However, for those with limited time, Lise Eliot's article "Neurosexism: the myth that men and women have different brains" ² gives a quick overview of Gina Rippon's book "The Gendered Brain: the New Neuroscience That Shatters the Myth of the Female Brain" which exposes the bias behind the studies that support gender bio-essentialism. Nobody's arguing that people who experience distress from gender dysphoria don't exist, but let's not cross a line that legislates that we have an innate "gender identity" before science backs it up first with something more concrete than a "feeling."

Furthermore, you would think that we have progressed beyond gender stereotypes, but I argue that the conditions have worsened. In addition to the old religious cultures that harass individuals that don't conform to stereotypical gender expressions, the fight to end gender stereotypes has been subverted by a movement that fights to enforce them stronger than ever. Before, we had these degrading names for girls and boys who didn't conform to society's enforced gender expectations: "tomboys" and "sissies." Now, we've found a "respectable" way to categorize roles and stereotypes in groups - that pink, dolls or dance class are markers of the female gender; being into stereotypical male activities makes you a boy; and the last category, having some combination of preferences between male and female stereotypes makes you non-binary.

In addition, I want your bill to also consider and address the conversion happening beyond the strict walls of a medical practitioner's office, the kind that extends into schools, government institutions, post-secondary intuitions, media coverage, and the internet. The transgender community has loud individuals engaging harmful rhetoric which has a negative mental impact on vulnerable individuals. For example, there was recent reaction-post to the UK court's ruling on Kiera Bell's case that minors can't give informed consent, in which one commenter criticizes the detransitioners for lying to get the treatment instead of acknowledging that there's a problem where the detransitioners are convinced before their first appointment that this is their diagnosis and their treatment. ³ It's disingenuous to call them liars when we acknowledge that nobody would put themselves through the risks of puberty

1 <https://www.thecut.com/2016/02/fight-over-trans-kids-got-a-researcher-fired.html>

2 Eliot, L. "Neurosexism: the myth that men and women have different brains" <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-00677-x>

3 <https://archive.is/ZzZcv>

blockers, cross-sex hormones, and surgery unless they legitimately felt this was the best approach for their well-being.

Another writes: “What [Keira Bell] did is only fueling[sic] all of the people who already hate trans-people.”⁴ This community is fuelled with divisive language framing people with legitimate concerns about the medical risks as haters. The Mermaid organization tweets: “High Court ruling deals a potentially devastating blow to trans under 16s seeking access to life-saving puberty blockers. We will respond in full and expect an appeal from GIDS. **This is a betrayal of trans young people.**”⁵

One concedes: “I will give that I will not blame detransitioners for lying. I don't know the current situation (I doubt it's changed much), but at least when I went through, you goddamn lied through your teeth if you wanted to transition. It was absolutely standard, normal, and recommended.”⁶ It should alarm everyone that there's a subculture which promotes lying to therapists in any capacity, such as masking negative mental health concerns.⁷

I want this bill to be absolutely clear what constitutes as conversion because contrary to previous mental health issues, in current times, gender dysphoria is the first that is self-diagnosed and the individual has already been immersed in an online community that propagates that anything short of affirmation is transphobic. Not only that, we have a disproportionate amount of girls being affected by this and it isn't being addressed publicly.⁸

I close this with a plea to the public to do away with the harmful practice of assigning gender to neutral activities and fashions. Long hair, short hair, makeup, skirts, and pants - they are all neutral. Cooking, sewing, cleaning, childcare, mechanics, and woodworking are neutral life skills. Dance, theatre, sports, art, math, science, and programming are neutral interests.

4 <https://archive.is/noXbJ#selection-4095.227-4095.304>

5 <https://archive.is/vXqhW>

6 <https://archive.is/ZzZcv#selection-3337.0-3337.276>

7 <https://archive.is/WtLDw#selection-3653.13-3653.132>

8 Shrier, Abigail. “Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters”