

RESPONSE TO THE WOMEN AND EQUALITY COMMITTEE'S CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON THE
POSSIBLE REFORM OF THE GENDER RECOGNITION ACT

I am making this submission in my personal capacity.

I do so on the basis that all law and public policy in relation to sex and gender, the way in which these terms are defined, and how a person's sex and gender are to be recognised, are not a private matter, but affect everyone.

I would like to make the following points:

[1] It is too early to be considering changes to the Gender Recognition Act 2004

Great concern has rightly been expressed about the large number of children and young people who are presenting as being unhappy with their birth and biological sex. The reasons for this surge have not yet been fully or adequately identified, and the precise circumstances and backgrounds of the young people concerned vary considerably. There are currently far from sufficient grounds for authoritative conclusions.

The government's announcement in July 2018 that there would be an inquiry into the current GRA, and wider issues surrounding gender identity, indicated that the inquiry's terms of reference were to include the following:

- O The sharp rise in gender dysphoria referrals among children, particularly girls;
- O The possible role of social media in that sharp rise;
- O The fact that the same trend has been seen in other countries;
- O The implications of little yet being known about the long term impacts of the trend.

These are exactly the right issues which need to be investigated.

In that same statement, the government indicated that there would be further research to help to inform any fresh decisions to be taken. Presumably this present call for evidence is part of that "further research." However, the questions highlighted in the call for evidence do not address the vital issues in the above four

bullet-points. The present call for evidence is likely to yield a large amount of opinion, but less in the way of factual data.

All the issues relating to sex and gender are profound and fundamental, and it is vital therefore that both stakeholders and the British public as a whole should be made aware of as much thoroughly reliable factual information as can be ascertained, in order to ensure that the right decisions are made in respect of any changes to the GRA.

What is needed therefore is that the Committee should complete its factual research on the above bullet-points, objectively assess the findings and make recommendations which are based on the authoritative facts. The happiness of a large number of people is at stake.

[2] "Gender dysphoria" is a very recent phenomenon

When I was of Secondary School age (1958-1964), and outside school was involved in a number of youth organisations and leisure activities with other young people, I never met anyone who was discomforted by, or concerned about, their birth sex. No-one ever felt that they were "born in the wrong body." This strongly indicates that the reasons for the present onset of "gender identity" concerns are social or environmental, rather than medical.

The world has existed for thousands of years without such concerns. Human society has existed peaceably and uncontroversially in accordance with God's creation of two distinct sexes - male and female - and no other. [Genesis 1:27].

[3] Overturning the created order would be harmful to individuals and society

For individuals, It is self-evident that they are happiest when comfortable with their birth sex. Most people never have an issue with this.

Medical interventions, both pharmaceutical and surgical, are potentially risky and unsatisfying, and to various degrees can have long-term damaging effects. There have been numerous examples of regret among those who have embarked on these procedures. It would be much better if those who have gender identity problems are instead helped back to contentment with their birth sex.

This is why it is important for the Committee to give priority to its promised research into the subject areas covered by the four bullet-points set out earlier in my submission. Discovering the cause is a vital first step in identifying the remedy.

For society as a whole, it is best to do nothing which will destabilise and undermine the natural order. Formally to recognise something different from that would encourage uncertainty, leaving society open to campaigns on behalf of any number of gender identities, thus greatly increasing the confusion likely to be experienced by vulnerable young people. Given that sex and gender used to be uncontroversial and uncomplicated, the ideal is that they should return to that happy state.

In the public sphere, compelling people by law to accept that someone who has the biology of a man is, in fact, a woman, is unreasonable. No-one who sincerely believes that Genesis 1:27 is correct can possibly do this. Respecting and recognising a person's legal rights is essential, but that is not the same as recognising that the law in question is justified and based on truth.

Deciding how to arrange facilities which are specific to a particular sex - such as public toilets and changing rooms - is a so far unresolved dilemma. The provision of these in a gender-fluid world would create immense social problems.

Women and girls in particular have already expressed concern and discomfort about the prospect of their privacy being compromised. Abuse by male sexual predators self-identifying as women in order to gain access to women and girls for their own sexual gratification is also an obvious threat.

Changing facilities in clothes shops are for the most part individual and safe, but this same safety cannot be guaranteed in many other public contexts - railway stations, theatres, sports venues and heritage sites, where communal facilities are the norm.

Replacing all communal facilities, in the public and private sector, into sufficient completely separate single cubicles would solve the sensitivity problem, but would be a huge financial and practical burden.

November 2020

Written evidence submitted by GRA1434 (Mr Rod Badams)