

Memorandum

Date: April 13, 2022

To: Opponents of legal sex change

From: Twiss Butler and Patrick Butler

Subject: First Step: Eschew “The Master’s Tools” – His Words

Everyone knows that sex cannot be changed, but new laws—including court and executive orders—are letting individuals change the sex recorded on birth certificates, passports, and driver’s licenses. New laws are also compelling everyone else to treat these individuals as though they really had changed sex. In some jurisdictions, anyone who openly objects to allowing legal sex to be changed is subject to punishment for what new laws define as “harassment.”

Promoters of legal-sex-change laws range from people with psychological disturbances to providers of goods and services. These laws help expand promoters’ markets for scholarly works, media content, political financial support, and “non-profit” advocacy as well as for medical goods and services. By getting the law’s endorsement of their activities, “sex-change” clinics get protection from medical malpractice lawsuits. This protection extends to product liability for manufacturers of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones.

We think that a major reason legal sex change has been this successful is through the words promoters are using to confuse voters. Among the many confusing words they use, promoters seem to have had the most success with the word “gender.”

“Gender” was criticized in a [document Twiss Butler wrote in 1995](#) for the National Organization for Women because the word sows confusion about women’s right to sex-based equality. To insiders, “gender” means “sex stereotypes,” but to the public at large—in being asked almost daily to check either “male” or “female” on “gender” forms—this word is simply a genteel synonym for “sex.” Nowadays, promoters use the two meanings of “gender” interchangeably without warning which makes this word a most insidious confuser.

The confusion can be eliminated by avoiding the word “gender” in favor of one or the other of its two universally understood meanings, “sex” and “sex stereotypes.” These two alternative terms are also recommended by the Women’s Liberation Front’s [2021 Media Style Guide](#). It advises “Don’t say ‘gender’ when you mean ‘sex.’” But the Guide occasionally approves of “gender” when used in combination with other words, e.g., “gender critical.” In our opinion, however, *any* word combined with “gender” is rendered ambiguous and confusing. What does “gender critical” mean with respect to laws validating legal sex change? Therefore, in the vocabulary we use, we have eliminated the word “gender.”

In our scrutiny of other words legal sex change promoters use, we are heeding Audre Lorde’s famous observation “The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.” And clearly the most effective tools of promoters are their own ambiguous words. We are also heeding Kara Dansky’s prescription which she brings out in dialog in her book “The Abolition of Sex” on page 20. We paraphrase it here: “Do not use words you do not know the meaning of!”

In eschewing certain words, we have had to find alternative words that have the opposite characteristics of the legal sex change promoters' words. Each alternative must represent the condition to which it refers as accurately as possible in unambiguous words already in the public's working vocabulary. In developing alternative words, we worked on existing documents containing confusing words needing to be replaced. An example is Meghan Murphy's January 2022 essay: [The BC government removes barriers to changing sex on ID — it's time to stop conflating sex and gender \(feministcurrent.com\)](#) In the comments following Murphy's essay, Patrick Butler posted a copy of her essay showing its original words lined through and replaced with our alternatives.

As another exercise, we used an essay by Colin Wright [published in the Wall Street Journal](#). In it he argues against the useless practice of announcing one's own right-sex pronouns because doing so tends to validate as real various sex-change dogmas. However, Wright's essay itself by using legal sex change promoters' own words also tends to validate these same dogmas. To demonstrate how straightforward it would be to fix this problem, here is one paragraph from it in which we put alternative words in place of words used by promoters and repeated by Wright.

~~Proponents of gender ideology~~ Promoters of laws allowing "sex" to be changed legally have completely decoupled the terms "man," "woman," "boy" and "girl" from biological sex. ~~Gender ideology~~ Sex change law teaches that the terms "man/boy" and "woman/girl"—and their corresponding "he/his" and "she/her" pronouns—refer to a person's ~~gender identity~~ chosen sex stereotype, while "male" and "female" refer to biological sex. While you may define a woman as a female human adult, ~~gender ideology~~ promoters of legal sex change contends that a "woman" is an adult of either sex who simply "identifies" as a woman whose driver's license is marked "Female."

The process of making word changes to the essays of Murphy and Wright brings home to us that the task of choosing alternative words is an ongoing effort, which certainly could be speeded up by the participation of others in omitting the master's words from all communications—both internal and with the public. Arguing the reality that "people cannot change sex" is missing the point that people *are* changing their sex on legal documents.

Our rules for eliminating words derive from the prescriptions of Lorde and Dansky:

- Eschew the words used by promoters of legal sex change.
- Eschew words that you and voters do not know the meaning of.

Also, do not use promoters' words embedded in scare quotes unless discussing in plain words their misleading meanings. Follow the example of prostitution abolitionists: Unless discussing the effects of words prostitution promoters use, abolitionists wisely eschew their words.