

Critical of “Gender Critical:” Part V of the ‘Sexing the Body is Gender’ Series

By Cristan Williams

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Abstract

Many of the TERFs I’ve had the displeasure of meeting move through life belligerently sexing physical phenomena and behavior (especially rape) while simultaneously (and ironically) proclaiming themselves to be critical of gender. For TERFs, there is no difference between mentally contextualizing a body as a sex attribute and the body itself. TERFs have such a long history of, with all [...]

Article



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TERFs have such a long history of, with all the asperity of a hellfire creationist, asserting that sexing everyone is better/different/more natural than gendering everyone that I hold no hope they will see past their own obtuse equivocations. Theirs is a movement that’s not even wrong, full of bombastic

trolls who are sure that if trans people would just take up their sex labeling system, they would have dealt a serious blow to the oppression women face.

When a TERF asserts that gender must be obliterated before women are free they are either equivocating about what gender and oppression are or they are demanding the unattainable. When a TERF asserts that gender is an oppressive system that must be abolished, all one need do to reveal the inherent fallacy of their ideology is to ask what they would change about gender. A TERF will oblige you by describing a new set of taboos, norms, language and identity labels all must adhere to. After they've described their new cultural system, they will ironically assert that the new normative sex system is somehow not gender and that under the rubric of their new system, all are liberated.

The human need to contextualize phenomena isn't going to be eradicated and in that regard, the abolition of gender is not possible. Having said that, there are the practical steps we can - and do - take to undermine oppressive systems of power contextualization. One of the reasons I do abortion clinic defense each week is that I understand that supporting the ability to choose one's biological destiny has everything to do with breaking down patriarchal systems of oppression (for an ironic laugh, ask a TERF about the last time they did abortion clinic defense). The social justice work that I do is aimed at codifying a more equitable society partly because equality isn't conducive to the flourishing of kyriarchal systems of oppression. The thicket of intersectional oppression women face isn't defeated though the window dressing of forcibly imposed label systems; rather, it is defeated by upturning systemic power inequalities which are invariably linked to and rely upon intersectional systems of oppression (poverty, racism, fundamentalism, etc). [1]

In its simplest form, gender arises from the mind's inherent and unending instinct to note that A is like B and C while being different than X, which is itself like Y and Z. For gender to truly be abolished, this hard-wired mental process must not exist. Since this process exists as a relational state within the mind, each person's subjective experience will be, in some ways, at least somewhat unique. These unique perspectives will inevitably invite discourse, giving rise to collective norms and taboos which become cultural systems influencing human behavior to one degree or another.

While working to understand, deconstruct and attack how power is oppressively contextualized within the collective experience of gender is critically necessary, useful and beneficial work, framing gender itself - and not oppressive power contextualization - as the problem is a bit like saying that all forms of currency itself - not crony capitalism, etc - is the problem. In the same way that humans will buy and sell goods and services using favors as social currency or more sophisticated concepts of currency, no matter what, humans will continue to contextualize the subjective and collective experience of having bodies with sex attributes.

TERF: we are here to abolish the genders

Feminist: Oh, so we won't use gendered pronouns anymore?

TERF: no keep those

Feminist: Gendered clothing?

TERF: no thats ok

Feminist: Segregated bathrooms?

TERF: no those are important

Feminist: So, we're going to do something about the gender binary, yes? We're going to attack the idea that gender is intrinsically linked to one's anatomy, and we're going to boost the visibility of trans and intersex people, who face the most violent consequences of the sex and gender binaries – yes?

TERF: no

Feminist: Then what are you going to do, exactly?

What is your plan?

How are you going to accomplish this?

TERF: abolish gender

Feminist: How?

TERF: abolish it



Figure 1. abolish-gender-terfs

Instead of questioning the embedded patriarchal value some TERFs place on “masculine” expressions of self, they’re happy to attack trans men in an attempt to force these men to adopt the gender system preferred by TERFs. Instead of questioning their own discursive materialization of sex, they instead obsessively police the sex contextualization of everyone else. Consider the need of the following TERF to manufacture a sexed lens through which people should view me.

Here, the construct is that I am still that which is pictured, and my name is not my name. This is another example of how TERFs do gender. When a TERF asserts that a trans woman is male, insists upon using male pronouns, uses the person’s old name/old picture to construct a sex context for the trans woman to occupy within a cultural system, they are engaging in forced gender performance.

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Chad Molloy and the Advocate @TheAdvocateMag @ParkerMolloy

by Cathy Brennan



Chad Molloy, also known as Parker, is a man who identifies as a woman ([here he is begging for cash on the internet to get a lady face](#)). He writes propaganda for *The Advocate* that purposefully defames Lesbians. He takes specific issue with the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, and has written an "article" on the festival by

Figure 2. Parker Molloy being forcibly stripped of self-hood by TERFs

Guide to the Sexing the Body is Gender Series

1. Introduction: 8/11/14
2. Contextualizing the Body: 8/12/14
3. Debunking TERF Essentialism: 8/13/14
4. TERFs Selling Women into Rape Culture: 8/14/14
5. Critical of "Gender Critical": 8/15/14
6. TERFism as an Obsessive Sadistic Fetish: 8/16/14
7. TERF Reflections: 8/17/14

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