

The War On Gender

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There's a troubling trend arising in our [postmodern age](#), an era that has also given rise to 'post-truth'. New information platforms, social upheaval and the overabundance of global communication networks are giving this idea traction and we're seeing it take root and grow, with potentially devastating consequences.

This is the generation that has unequivocally waged war on 'gender'*.

Firstly, What Is Post Truth?

[Post-truth](#) can be summarised in the following way:

"Truth, many will assert, is merely subjective – in reality, there is no such thing as 'truth', or 'the truth', only 'truths'; plural. These are felt differently by individuals and are as real and as true as each other. All emotions, thoughts, feelings or beliefs are correct, inasmuch as the person feels or believes them to be true. Validity and public opinion is based on emotional appeals, not necessarily connected to factual or provable information. In fact, facts themselves are potentially viewed as restrictive, negative, pessimistic, anti-society, or phobic in nature. "Post-truth is the burial of objective facts under an avalanche of emotional and personal belief. Post-truth is not only about winning votes, siding with friends, or dealing with political foes. It has more sinister effects. It is a [gaslighting](#) exercise." | ([The Conversation](#)).

The History Of Post-Truth

“More than 30 years ago, academics started to discredit “truth” as one of the “grand narratives” which clever people could no longer bring themselves to believe in. Instead of “the truth”, which was to be rejected as naïve and/or repressive, a new intellectual orthodoxy permitted only “truths” – always plural, frequently personalised, inevitably relativised.” | [The Conversation](#)

Post-truth discourse includes communication which is simply hot air, often a clever mix of nonsense, humour, and boldly presumptive assertions. It all sounds impressive but is never based on factual objective examination of a subject. The ‘importance of truth’ may be talked about a lot, as part of these conversations, to lend credibility to the statements or claims.

“The proponents of post-truth communication relish things unsaid. Their bluff and bluster is designed not only to attract public attention. It simultaneously hides from public attention things (such as growing inequalities of wealth, the militarisation of democracy and the accelerating death of non-human species) that it doesn’t want others to notice, or that potentially arouse suspicions of the style and substance of post-truth politics. This engendered silence is not just the aftermath or “leftover” of post-truth communication. Every moment of post-truth communication using words backed by signs and text is actively shaped by what is unsaid, or what is not sayable.” | [The Conversation](#)

How Post-Truth And The War On Gender Are Connected

The war on gender seems to fall squarely in the camp of post-truth proponents.

We're seeing more and more, in the media, in public conversation, in our schools and communities, the push for a redefining of what is meant by 'gender' – to the point where facts and provable science relating to human biology are being discounted or ignored.

Gender has traditionally been agreed to be [determined at fertilisation](#) and confirmed (assigned) at birth. Broadly speaking, and in normal fetal development, there will be 23 pairs of chromosomes (46 in total), one of which are a pair of sex chromosomes (either X or Y). One X chromosome is always required. Two of the same sex chromosomes (XX) means the foetus is female. Two different chromosomes (one X and one Y) means the foetus is male.

Despite seeing gender clearly defined all around us as distinct and fixed (male or female), gender is now being described as 'fluid' or even non-existent. Descriptions such as 'non-binary', 'genderqueer', 'transitional' or 'transgender' are common-place. In fact, there are now over 53 recognised and accepted terms used to describe gender now found in our vocabulary.

Men and women are different in many ways. These differences include both biological phenotypes and psychological traits. Some of these differences are influenced by environmental factors. Yet, there are fundamental differences between the sexes that are rooted in biology.

"Of particular interest are sex differences that have been identified in the brain. Although the brains of men and women are highly similar, they show consistent differences that have important implications for each sex. That is, brain sex differences uniquely affect biochemical processes, may contribute to the susceptibility to specific diseases, and may influence specific behaviours. Such biological differences should never be used to justify discrimination or sexism." | [US National Library of Medicine](#)

A [recent conclusion](#) by Professor Robert Plomin of Kings College London, drawn from 45 years of research and hundreds of studies, is that “the single most important factor in each and every one of us – the very essence of our individuality – is our genetic makeup, our DNA.”

Yet ‘gender’, determined at the level of our DNA, is being increasingly thought of as ‘fluid’ or unfixed. ‘Gender’ can also be used to mean ‘gender identity’, now considered to be a spectrum on which you can decide, on any given day, which you ‘feel’ you are.

*“And then I found that gender can have fluidity, which is quite different from ambiguity. If ambiguity is a refusal to fall within a **prescribed gender code**, then fluidity is the **refusal to remain one gender or another**. Gender fluidity is the ability to freely and knowingly become one or many of a limitless number of genders, for any length of time, at any rate of change. Gender fluidity **recognises no borders or rules of gender**.” | Kate Bornstein, Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women and the Rest of Us, 1994 (emphasis is ours)*

The idea that gender isn’t rigid and fixed but rather a choice, based on feelings, is put forward as the higher ideal of utopian society:

“Ideally, we’d live in a world where everyone could exist as whatever gender they are without constantly having to explain or defend themselves. In a world like that, we might not have to put a name to a gender. But that’s not where we’re at right now. Instead, we live in a world where gender defaults to man or woman, and society at large rarely talks about genders that exist outside of that binary.” | Refinery29

Parents are being applauded for raising their children as ‘non-gender’ or ‘gender-neutral’ (*they’ll decide when they’re older*) or withholding announcing the gender of their child at

birth (as if stating a biological truth is a negative). Even asking the most natural of questions ('*did you have a boy or a girl?*') has become potentially fraught with disapproval.

Gender Dysmorphic Disorder And Gender Reassignment Surgery

Reading through the [statistics regarding children and gender issues](#) is alarming, to say the least. In the UK, children as young as four are being referred for gender reassignment surgery, with 50 children a week visiting a GP to discuss gender.

*"Figures suggest a record number of kids now **believe they were born in the wrong body** and are being sent for controversial treatment."* – [The Sun](#)

Children 11 and older are being prescribed powerful hormones to stunt puberty in preparation for future gender reassignment surgery.

Closer to home, in Australia, an estimated 45,000 school-aged children (1.2%) are thought to identify as transgender. Being transgender or gender diverse is now considered to be "part of the natural spectrum of human diversity."

"Gender may be the most important dimension of human variation, whether that is either desirable, or inevitable. In every society, male and female children are raised differently and acquire different expectations, and aspirations, for their work lives, emotional experiences, and leisure pursuits. These differences may be shaped by how children are raised but gender reassignment, even early in life, is difficult, and problematic. Reassignment in adulthood is even more difficult." | [Psychology Today](#)

In the mid-twentieth century, [John Money, Ph.D.](#) helped

establish the views on the psychology of gender identities and roles. In his academic work, Money argued in favour of the increasingly mainstream idea that gender was a societal construct, malleable from an early age.

[John Money's ill-advised experiment](#) in gender identity however proved ultimately disastrous for identical twins, Bruce (later David) and Brian Reimer. Reading through the [twins' story](#) and the outcome of Money's interventions is difficult and disturbing.

*"After a botched procedure for circumcision at six months resulted in severely damaged genitals, and on the advice of John Money, Bruce Reimer's parents decided to raise Bruce as a girl. Physicians at the Johns Hopkins Hospital removed Reimer's testes and damaged penis, and constructed a vestigial vulvae and a vaginal canal in their place. The physicians also opened a small hole in Reimer's lower abdomen for urination. Following his gender reassignment surgery, Reimer was given the first name Brenda, and his parents raised him as a girl. He received estrogen during adolescence to promote the development of breasts. Throughout his childhood, Reimer was not informed about his male biology. When he was fourteen, Reimer began the process of reassignment to being a male. In adulthood, Reimer reported that he suffered psychological trauma due to Money's experiments, which Money had used to justify sexual reassignment surgery for children with intersex** or damaged genitals since the 1970s. As an adult, he married a woman but depression, and drug abuse ensued, culminating in suicide at the age of thirty-eight."* | [The Embryo Encyclopedia Project](#)

Money's ideas about gender identity were forcefully challenged by Paul McHugh, a leading psychiatrist at the same institution as Money. The bulk of this challenge came from an analysis of gender reassignment cases in terms of both motivation and outcomes.

McHugh denied that reassignment surgery was ever either medically necessary, or ethically defensible. To bolster his case, McHugh looked at the clinical outcomes for gender reassignment surgeries. He concluded:

“Although transsexuals did not regret their surgery, there were little or no psychological benefits: They had much the same problems with relationships, work, and emotions, as before. The hope that they would emerge now from their emotional difficulties to flourish psychologically had not been fulfilled.” | [Paul McHugh, Ph.D](#)

There is no doubt that there is a marked increase in children, young adults and adults who are distressed with their assigned gender. Gender dysphoria is a real and observable phenomenon. Yet surely gender reassignment is not the solution, but simply a band-aid approach to a deeper, far greater and more serious issue.

Intelligent Design: Let's Talk About God

“He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them “Mankind” when they were created.” | Genesis 5:2 (NIV)

The Bible, once considered a verifiable source and its author, the intelligent designer of all creation, states that humanity's genders were clearly defined from the beginning – as male and female. Bible language, throughout all 66 books, confirms this by using specific pronouns such as 'he' and 'she' – gender-specific and certainly not ambiguous. Jesus himself believed and confirmed the Genesis record in Matthew 19:4 (also Mark 10:6), saying “Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female.'”

The differences between the genders are unique and distinctive, both designed by God with purpose in mind (Titus

2:1-5, 1 Peter 3:7) (1 Timothy 3:1 – 4:16). Both genders are intrinsically valuable and precious to God, and we see His characteristics displayed by the perfect merging of both the masculine and feminine traits. These distinct genders are the fundamental building blocks of God's creation and are part of God's plan for His family. His definition of marriage (Genesis 2:24) and the procreation of the species (Genesis 1:28) is the natural outcome of the union of male and female and clearly supports the biological truth embedded in our DNA.

The diversity found in humanity is to be celebrated at the same time as the definitive nature of our gender is to be applauded.

Furthermore, [the church](#) (the 'body of Christ') is described in poetic language as a bride (female), with Christ as the groom (male) (Ephesians 5:22-33); the symbolic language echoing the reality of human biology.

"While technically God's design for man and woman may not be a [salvation truth](#), practically it is indispensable for every person to know and experience in order to live their lives as [followers of Christ](#) in this world, as beings created by God as male or female by design and for a purpose." – [Crossways](#)

Yet, the rejection of a Creator, of intelligent and purposeful design or a greater purpose at work, leads to the inevitable outcomes that we are seeing take root in today's society. We are being encouraged to believe that there is no truth, only *truths* (each individual's truth as true as any other), and subjective at that. Definitions and boundaries are deemed to be outdated and irrelevant.

And it seems gender won't be the only casualty to result from the post-truth era – reason and the pursuit of knowledge and understanding are being lost in the clamour of opinion and emotional verification and in their place we find an epidemic of [narcissism, arrogance and cynicism](#).

“Come now, and let us reason together”, God says in Isaiah. Although His ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8-9), He encourages humans in the pursuit of knowledge, He takes pleasure in the reasoning of the human mind and the desire of mankind to understand the intricacies He has created.

“It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.” | Proverbs 25:2

Paul McHugh, Ph.D Has The Final Word

*“In a [recent] interview from his home in Baltimore, where he still sees patients, McHugh explained that the “duty of all doctors who propose a treatment is to know the nature of the problem they propose to treat. The issue of transgender [people] is, the vast majority coming for surgery now don’t have a biological reason but a psychosocial reason.” While McHugh successfully lobbied for more than 30 years to keep gender-reassignment surgery from becoming a Medicare benefit, he supports the operation for those born with an intersex** condition, which means having a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn’t fall into the typical definition of male or female. People with abnormalities of development should be helped to find their place as they see it best,” McHugh said. “But they are a tiny number of the transgender population seeking and being given treatment.” | [The Washington Post](#)*

I recognise that this is a controversial topic and one that is being fiercely debated, all around the world and from both points of view. I also acknowledge that my opinions and thoughts on the matter are obviously based on a certain worldview and my belief in an intelligent designer (God), and that you, the reader, may not share these views. This article

is not intended to be offensive or divisive in nature, but rather to open a channel of respectful conversation about a subject that is deeply important to many people. I do not encourage discrimination, hate-speech or sexism towards anyone, at any time, but, particularly in this instance, towards anyone who does not share this point of view.

*Historically, 'gender' and 'sex' are words used to describe and define the anatomical and physiological differences between men and women. Modern terminology uses 'sex' to refer to biological characteristics and 'gender' to refer to the individual's and society's perceptions of sexuality and the concepts of masculinity and femininity. This article is using 'gender' and 'sex', as defined in the historical sense.

**This article also purposely does not address or discuss the issues surrounding chromosomal abnormalities or intersex conditions.

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Radical Social Change: A Letter To Philemon

"Injustice: unfairness, unjust act, *Unfair:* not equitable or honest, not impartial or according to rules, *society:* organised and interdependent community, system and organisation of this" – The Australian Oxford Dictionary, Third Edition

The issue of social injustice* has always been one that is close to my heart. It's something that I like to talk to my kids about often, to try to impress upon them just how fortunate they are in many aspects of their life. They live in

a modern, western country and are possessors of freedoms and rights still not available to many other peoples of the world. My daughters, particularly, have liberties still not accessible to many other [girls and women](#). And on the delicate subject of race, my children haven't had to endure the criticism or racial bigotry experienced by those who clearly display the truth of their indigenous ancestry by the colour of their skin (and who have been and are still being treated unjustly because of it).

Historically, social injustice has often been tolerated or, even worse, promoted on the basis of prejudice and [erroneously applied religious doctrine](#). Religious intolerance has fuelled many of this world's wars and God has been made the "scapegoat" for much of what is the worst of humanity.

One only needs to look, for example, at the [founding document](#) of the devoutly Christian American nation, the Declaration of Independence, to see that what people say and what people *do* are often two quite different things.

The statement in the second paragraph, **"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness"** did not prelude American citizens from denying those same rights to thousands of men and women during the infamous period of slavery, based simply on the colour of their skin.

Mistreatment of slaves was further bolstered by their ignorant and prejudicial application of Bible passages. It took nearly 250 years for the official practice of human trafficking and slavery to be abolished in America and yet the affects of slavery are still felt and are at work today in many parts of America, and indeed the world.

Social injustice, however, is not just an American problem, or

a historical problem. It's a world problem, manifested in many different ways, and is still a very relevant conversation for modern times.

"Over and over again, in the history of the world, man has made life into chaos." – Oswald Chambers

What Does God Have To Say About Social Injustice?

God, the creator of all, made all equal. The only difference commented on in Genesis, at the creation of humanity, was our genders – both uniquely special and individually reflective of God's glory. We're told throughout the Bible that God makes no distinction between people based on their social status (Jeremiah 22:3), their ethnicity (Acts 10: 34-35), or their gender (Galatians 3:28).

In fact, we're told that God is just, fair, and completely impartial (Deuteronomy 10:17, Romans 2:11). He despises mistreatment, discrimination or prejudicial treatment:

"Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause." | Isaiah 1:17 (ESV)

"This is what the LORD Almighty said: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other'" | Zechariah 7:9-10 (NIV)

"Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." | John 7:24 (NIV)

This impartiality is thrown into sharp relief against the

story found in the letter to Philemon.

Philemon, squeezed between the epistle to Titus and the letter to the Hebrews, is often overlooked and under-read. But it is a truly astonishing and socially radical exposition of exactly how God views all men and women. It tackles the serious and often difficult shift in thinking that is required and shows that belief in and love of God must affect our relationships with others in positive ways and with complete impartiality.

Sometimes, these effects are profound and far-reaching, as in the case of Philemon.

Who Was Philemon?

Philemon was a wealthy, Christian slave owner, living in Colosse, a city which is now in modern Turkey. The area of Asia Minor was a huge melting pot of ethnicities and also one of the [first areas to flourish with converts to the new religion of Christianity](#). Overlaying this was the fact that this area was part of the hugely expansive [Roman Empire](#), at the height of its glory and, as such, was subject to Roman law and Roman customs.

In many cities in the Roman Empire, up to [30% of the population were slaves](#). They undertook the bulk of the work required to keep the empire running and were considered to be the legal property of their owners. There were some rules against cruelty, but we would recognise them as the equivalent of 'animal rights', certainly not as human rights. Owners, like Philemon, essentially had the right to treat slaves however they wanted.

Who Was Onesimus?

Typically, a slave would take on the religion of his or her master and Onesimus, the subject of the letter to Philemon, was one such slave. Having converted to Christianity, he then,

at some point, fled his master's household and travelled hundreds of miles to where Paul was, the heart of the empire itself, to Rome. Rome differed from Greek city-states in that freed slaves were allowed to become citizens and perhaps this was Onesimus' objective in seeking out Rome.

The testimony of a slave could not be accepted in a Roman Court and they had no rights at all under the law. A master could punish a slave, however he wanted, and punishments included branding, scourging, torture or death. The punishment for a runaway slave was often branding in the forehead and the deliberate breaking of bones or joints.

This was Onesimus' expected fate, under Roman law, and Philemon had every right, as a master and Roman citizen, to enforce such punishment.

Jesus Changes Our Culture

Paul's letter, however, is full of warm entreaty on behalf of Onesimus. He reminds Philemon that God's rule of love transcends any man-made law and that, in Jesus, both slave and master are equal. They are considered brothers, both children of a Heavenly Father. Paul was sending Onesimus back to Philemon, not as just a slave, but as family.

Paul tells Philemon to add any debt owed by Onesimus to his own account but, in fact, considers it a favour to be done for Jesus. Paul is more than confident of Philemon's response and gives much emphasis to "this faith we hold in common...and that people recognise Christ in all of it".

The remarkable transformative power of the Gospel spills from the words in this letter – showing the dramatic ripple effect a response to God has in our personal lives. It challenges everything we do, our belief systems and possibly even misplaced prejudices about others. It compels us to behave justly to others, with impartiality, even though the world

around us might not be just or impartial. **It compels us to do better and be better, simply because Jesus is.**

The Gospel of Good News often causes radical upheaval in our own lives as it forces our practices and beliefs to fall into line with the ideals of a true, loving, and socially just God.

“He’s already made it plain how to live, what to do, what GOD is looking for in men and women. It’s quite simple. Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be compassionate and loyal in your love, and don’t take yourself too seriously – take God seriously.” | Micah 6:8 (The Message)

***In this article, “social injustice” is used in conjunction with the dictionary definitions noted at the beginning. Social injustice can be considered to fall into two categories, which are often inter-connected. These categories are defined as ‘Inter-Social Treatment’ and ‘Unequal Government Regulation’. “Inter-Social Treatment involves unequal treatment of a group(s) of people within the local and regional scale. The basis for this unequal treatment is usually due to a personal belief about that group(s): Unequal Government Regulations are laws and regulations that purposefully or otherwise, discriminate a group(s) from the same opportunities and resources, based on differences that are unique to that group(s)”**

(cited: <https://www.pachamama.org/social-justice/social-justice-issues>) Examples may include: unfair labour practices, racial, gender, age or ethnicity discrimination, inequality of health care or education based on certain criteria and to the worst degree, systematic genocide based on certain criteria.

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