

The Gender Revolution: A Biblical, Biological and Compassionate Response

**Weerakoon, Patricia, Robert Smith and Kamal Weerakoon.
*The Gender Revolution: A Biblical, Biological and
Compassionate Response*. Sydney: Matthias Media, 2023,
198 pages.**

If your teenage daughter tells you she's the only cisgender person in her class and has decided to be agender, how do you show love and understanding? How should your small group care for a man who says he is transitioning and wants to be called by female name and pronouns at church? How should your Christian school respond when a teenage boy starts wearing a dress and using girls' bathrooms and change-rooms? What if the parents of a six-year-old say he is transitioning and teachers must show support?

I've heard many Christians ask these questions. Sunday School teachers concerned for gender-questioning children but feeling unqualified to help. Parents not wanting to meddle or work against health professionals. Pastors not confident to contradict the gender theory, which has so rapidly appointed itself as the only view in polite society, even though it seems at odds with

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their Christian worldview, and not wanting to expose the Church to charges of bigotry. Christians in psychology, social work, medicine or education have told me that questioning transgender theory can get you fired and (in Victoria at least) sued, so they keep quiet. Some feel discomfort. Some are trained in mainstream gender theory and say it's hard to integrate that with their Christian worldview.

I've been highly recommending this book as a tool for addressing these issues. It offers compassionate, practical advice on scenarios like the above, having first given a clear explanation of gender and related issues as part of a worldview strongly based on peer-reviewed research and biblical theology. While it deeply challenges the mainstream view, it cites a growing number of respected researchers and government bodies internationally. These scholars also challenge that mainstream, even if they are rarely cited in Australian media, and claim the tide is turning.

This book is not at all from the cringe fringe - readers are in the safe hands of a leading medical doctor / academic sexologist who has directed an award-winning Graduate Programme in Sexual Health at the University of Sydney and published research at the highest level, along with two experienced pastor/theologians with relevant postgraduate qualifications. A major strength of this book is its calm, reasoned style and its authors' obvious empathy and experience in caring for people with gender issues. It clearly aims

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to promote understanding and “compassionate care, not censure” (p.159), so that Christians “actively oppose all forms of oppression” (p.14).

The authors say that sometimes “the only way to love others is to speak the truth with clarity” (p.3), and they are frank about what they see as harmful. They argue that transgender theory denies the biological realities of the body as described by objective science. They explain the binary biology of human reproduction, and the things that go wrong in a fallen world with various DSDs (disorders of sexual development), perhaps including the people who Jesus said were born eunuchs (Matthew 19:12). They say transgender ideology denies science and instead promotes “feelings fundamentalism”, in which a person’s temporary and changeable feelings are allowed to define reality. This can lead people to damage “healthy bodies by destabilising their normal hormonal operation, removing perfectly healthy, functional sexual organs and replacing them with cosmetic ones” (p.70) that have serious issues, and beginning a lifetime dependence on pharmaceutical cross-sex hormones.

The authors cite research showing that up to 30% of transitioners later regret it. Many try to de-transition and are traumatised to find their reproductive future, their voice and their appearance have all been irreversibly changed. The research behind the mainstream gender affirmation model (“the Dutch protocol”) has

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since been found to have falsely concluded that gender dysphoria disappeared after transition, reported only the best-case outcomes, and not examined risks even though a “significant proportion” of the sample suffered adverse effects.

Yet transgender ideology is urged on children. The authors describe how a child who doesn't conform to gender stereotypes may be told they are transgender: a girl who likes playing football would once have been accepted as a sporty “tomboy” but is now told she really is a boy. Kids who don't fit in easily are told that transitioning will solve their problems – and schools, health professionals, media and books for very young children now support this. Children see trans kids receiving instant hero status and attention from teachers or perhaps divorced and distracted parents (p.117). Kids are put on the trans conveyor belt immediately, often without carefully checking for depression, anxiety, autism, or poor self-esteem, which have been found to be deeper causes or “co-morbidities”.

The book describes a staggering twenty-fold increase in the number of teenage girls experiencing Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria (ROGD). A girl may quite sensibly reject our culture's porn-affected image of what a woman is and does, or dislike the hypersexualised attention she receives from men who have been pornified. Easy solution: don't be a woman anymore! She may find some aspects of puberty difficult or disgusting, and be told

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that puberty can simply be avoided. She hears this from numerous social media with no expertise in medicine or psychology and who do not know her or her situation. Friends may support this, so ROGD often happens in clusters, often called “social contagion” (p.131) Yet research shows that if these children go through puberty, 85% will lose their gender dysphoria and become happy with their sex. Most of the 15% who don’t are found to be gay or lesbian, and this has led to tension between the LGB and the T, with LGB organisations calling transgender theory the new homophobia (p.119).

While puberty blockers are touted as safe, the authors show that blocking puberty can negatively affect brain development, bone strength, cardiovascular health and fertility, and disconnect kids from friends who are going through puberty.

Trans activists often use the threat of suicide: “Do you want a dead son or living daughter?” But the authors cite research showing “no strong empirical evidence to suggest that puberty blockers reduce suicidality or suicide rates” (p.105). One Swedish study found transitioning may even increase suicidality, and other research shows doctors and psychologists focusing excessively on suicide may create dangerous self-fulfilling prophecies (p.143).

The authors see two types of trans men. One has genuine discomfort with their gender, usually experienced since childhood,

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often by men who are homosexual. The other has autogynephilia, a condition in which a man is sexually aroused by the thought of himself as a woman (p.130).

What does *The Gender Revolution* advocate for the Church to do? Love people, especially the teen who doesn't fit the stereotype. Listen, empathise, understand people's experience, and learn the science and psychology around gender. Encourage "supportive waiting", in which people continue in their biological sex while digging into deeper issues like anxiety, depression, autism, family issues like parental mental illness, or bullying, and addressing those (p.134). Teach that one's identity consists of many parts, including sexuality and gender, but is best found in creation and redemption by a loving God. Look forward to the "glorious body" we will receive when Jesus returns. Encourage a climate of ongoing discussion of all life issues, including sexuality and gender, so that people do not feel singled out when these issues are discussed.

I've found parents, teachers, ministry workers and at least one curious high schooler with gender issues have found this book a fascinating and reliable introduction, and professionals working in the area have enjoyed it and begun following its footnoted sources.

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