

*Disciples who think  
and engage:*

*Good News about Sexuality  
and Gender Identity*

| **Paul Coulter**

# Who am I?

- Medical doctor (no longer practising)
- BSc medical genetics
- Youth worker and pastor within and across cultures
- Practical Theologian / missiologist (PhD in divinity)
- Husband and father

# Sober-mindedness

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and  
being **sober-minded**  
(1 Peter 1:13)

Ready

The end of all things is at hand; be self-controlled  
and **sober-minded**  
(1 Peter 4:7)

Faithful

Be **sober-minded**; be watchful. Your adversary the  
devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking  
someone to devour.  
(1 Peter 5:8-9)

Aware

# 1. Aware Seeing clearly



# 2. Faithful Christian thinking



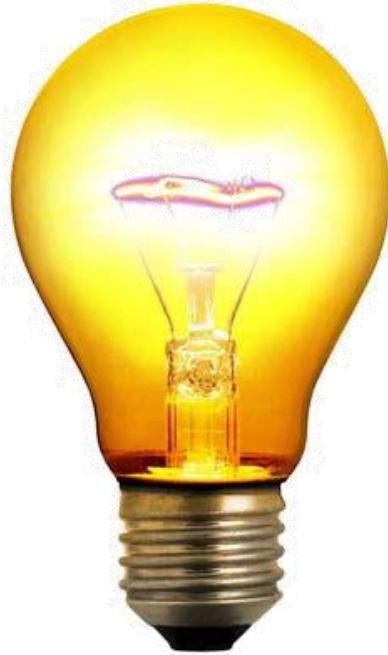
# 3. Ready Stepping out



[www.paulcoulter.net/SA](http://www.paulcoulter.net/SA)

# 1. Aware

## Seeing clearly



# NEWS

Home | UK | World | Business | Politics

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## Ireland same-sex marriage bill passes

23 May 2015 | Europe



# Belfast Telegraph.co.uk

Thursday 28 May 2015

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Home Opinion Editor's Viewpoint

## Ashers verdict may be right in law, but it leaves deep unease

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# one Transsexual Stories

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Three personal stories

How we made the programme



This programme is not currently available on BBC iPlayer

## Last on



Mon 24 Aug 2015

22:40

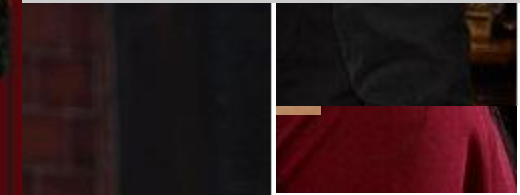
BBC ONE SCOTLAND  
HD ONLY



Sorry, this episode is not currently available

## Transgender Kids

maica



# 50 years of change

- 1967 Homosexuality decriminalised – England & Wales
- 1968 Homosexuality declassified as an illness
- 1981 Homosexuality decriminalised – Scotland
- 1982 Homosexuality decriminalised – N. Ireland
- 2000 Homosexual people allowed to serve openly in military
- 2001 Equal age of consent – GB
- 2002 Transsexualism declassified as an illness
- 2005 Same-sex civil-partnerships – UK ; Adoption – England & Wales; right to change legal gender – UK
- 2009 Equal age of consent – N. Ireland; Adoption – Scotland; access to IVF, couples on birth certificates – UK
- 2013 Adoption – N. Ireland
- 2014 Same-sex marriage – GB



## NEWS

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# Scottish Episcopal Church approves gay marriage

8 June 2017 | [Scotland](#)[f](#) [Twitter](#) [WhatsApp](#) [Email](#) [Share](#)[News](#) > [UK](#) > [Home News](#)

# Scottish cathedral becomes first in the UK to allow same-sex marriages

'I want to live in a world where same-sex couples can feel safe walking down the street hand in hand and in which they can feel joy walking hand in hand down the aisle of a church too'

Samuel Osborne | [@SamuelOsborne93](#) | Tuesday 25 July 2017 08:28 BST | [1 comment](#)

# How Evangelicals Are Changing Their Minds on Gay Marriage

Elizabeth Dias

Jan 15, 2015



If evangelical Christianity is famous for anything in contemporary American politics, it is for its complete opposition to gay marriage. Now, slowly yet undeniably, evangelicals are changing their minds.

Jack Jenkins [Follow](#)

Senior Religion Reporter at ThinkProgress. Player of harmonica and ukulele. Tips: [jjenkins@thinkprogress.org](mailto:jjenkins@thinkprogress.org)

Jun 3, 2014 · 4 min read

## Southern Baptist Minister Explains Why He Changed His Mind On Homosexuality

The pastor of a Southern Baptist church in Los Angeles, California announced last month that he is now “gay affirming” and has accepted his son’s homosexuality, a declaration that is causing a rift in his local congregation and sparking controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention.

# LGBTQIA

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- Queer
- Intersex
- Asexual

# ‘Intersex’

Disorders of sexual development (DSDs)  
(formerly hermaphroditism or pseudohermaphroditism)

Conditions in which sexual characteristics do not align in the normal male or female pattern: chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, external genitalia, secondary sexual characteristics

Usually manifest either at birth or puberty

# Am I Gay?

Share



It's thought that or not isn't always hand...

“

Sexuality  
of gathering  
it's about

# Gender Dysphoria & Transgender

Share



If you were born female, but are not happy with being a girl, or born male and feel that you are unhappy being a boy; this is known as gender dysphoria.

DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL  
MANUAL OF  
MENTAL DISORDERS

FIFTH EDITION

DSM-5™

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

“gender nonconformity is not in itself a mental disorder. The critical element of gender dysphoria is the presence of clinically significant distress associated with the condition.”

# Apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate

**Certificates, register offices, changes of name or gender**

- you're 18 or over
- you've been diagnosed with gender dysphoria (discomfort with your birth gender) - this is also called gender identity disorder or transsexualism
- you've lived in your acquired gender for at least 2 years
- you intend to live in your acquired gender for the rest of your life



News story

# New Action to Promote LGBT Equality



From: [Government Equalities Office and The Rt Hon Justine Greening](#)

MP

Part of: [Equality](#)

Published: 23 July 2017

The consultation on the Gender Recognition Act, to be published in the Autumn, will look to improve the recognition process and reduce the stigma faced by the trans community. Proposals will include:

- Removing the need for a medical diagnosis of gender dysphoria before being able to apply for gender recognition. The current need to be assessed and diagnosed by clinicians is seen as an intrusive requirement by the trans community; and
- Proposing options for reducing the length and intrusiveness of the gender recognition system.

It will aim to relieve the bureaucratic and medical burdens for those who choose to change their gender.

**Transgender** Opinion

The Tories are on the right side of the transgender debate

Matthew d'Ancona



Unlike biological sex, gender is indeed a social construct: accordingly, an individual's identity is an essential part of their autonomy. Why should a trans 16-year-old require a doctor's permission to declare herself a woman? And why should NHS resources be wasted on such humiliation?

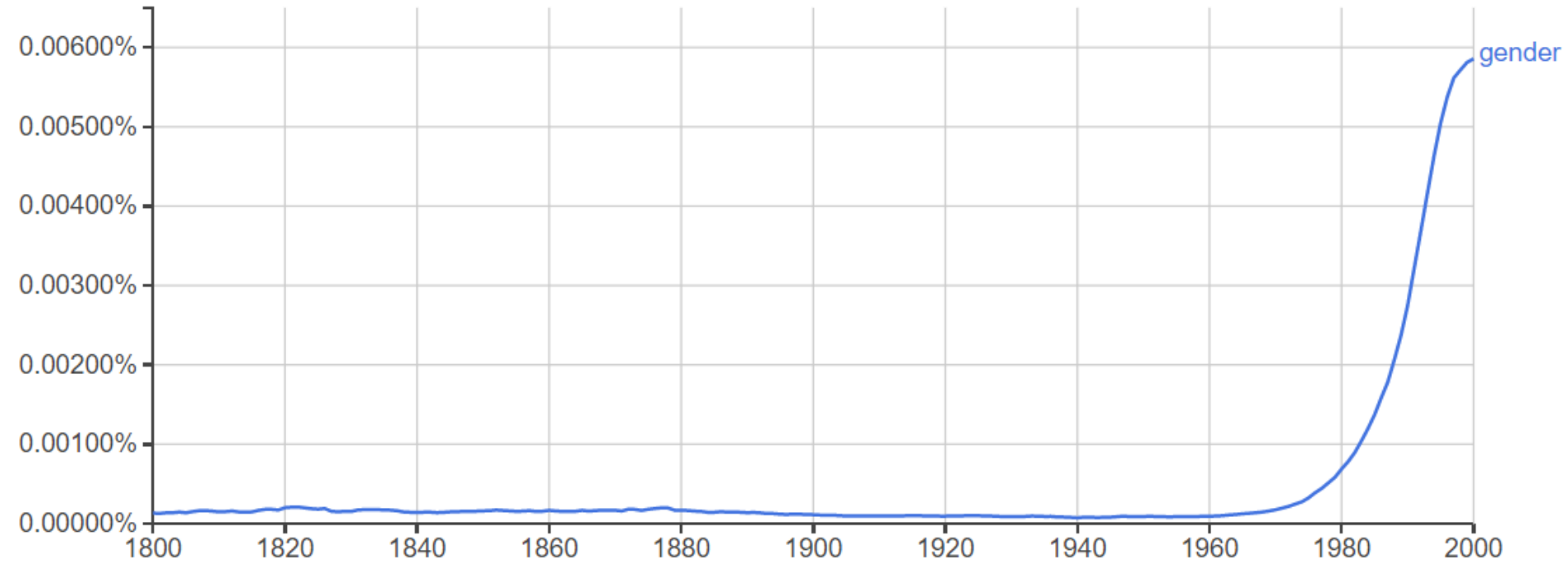
# Transgender Statistics (UK)

- 20 per 100,000 (1000 people) <sup>1</sup>
- 6000 have transitioned (80% male to female)
- 1% may have some degree of gender variation <sup>2</sup>
- 61% to 88% of gender dysphoric children do not persist into adulthood (although many identify as homosexual)

<sup>1</sup> [Gires](http://www.gires.org.uk) (www.gires.org.uk), 2009

<sup>2</sup> [Survey by Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2012](#)

# Google Books Ngram Viewer



# Terminology

homosexual  
bisexual

**1892** Used by neurologist Charles Gilbert Chaddock in translating Richard von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* from German

transsexual

**1949** Coined by sexologist David Oliver Cauldwell to denote people whose “psychological sex” was different from their “biological sex”

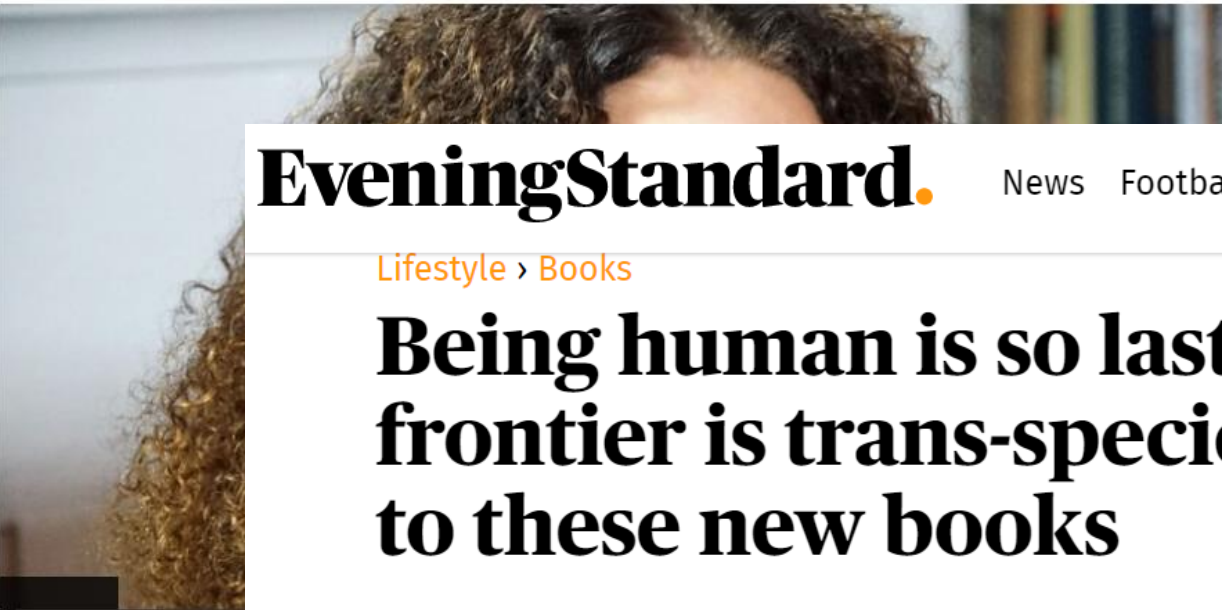
gender

**1955** An older word (early 15th Century) for human sex redefined by John Money to mean socially assigned roles distinct from sex

transgender

**1965** Coined by psychiatrist John F. Oliven in *Sexual hygiene and pathology* as a synonym for transsexual; redefined in 1970s by activist Virginia Prince for identifying as other gender without surgery

# Where does it stop?



Rachel Dolezal: 'The idea of race is a lie'

EveningStandard.

News Football Going Out Lifestyle Showbiz

Lifestyle > Books

## Being human is so last year, the next frontier is trans-speciesism according to these new books

David Sexton reports on the new titles that explore what it's like to live as an animal

DAVID SEXTON | Tuesday 19 April 2016 12:57 | 1 comment

**Gender is less like this:**



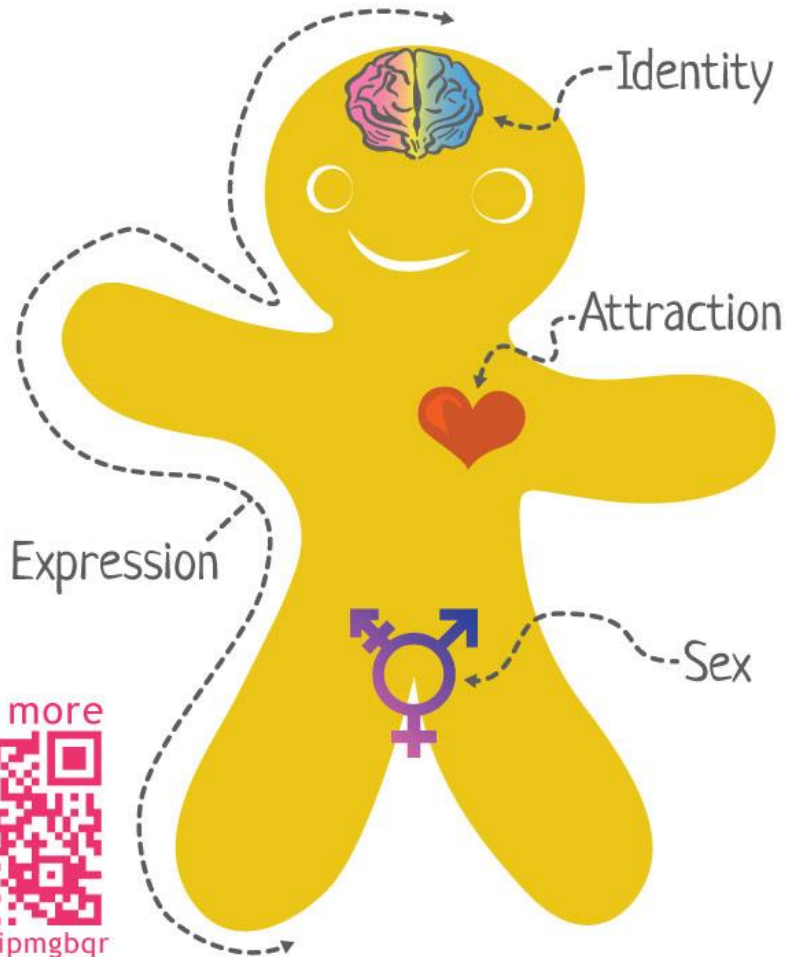
**And more like this:**



# The Genderbread Person v2.0

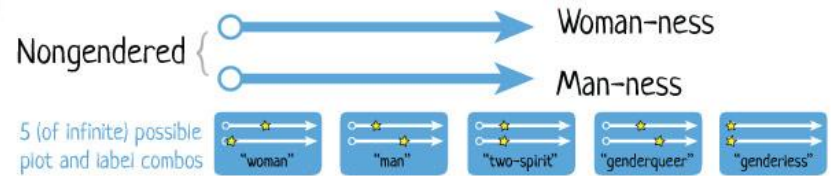
by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more.

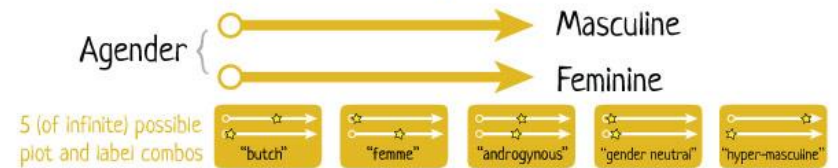


read more  
  
[bit.ly/ipmgbqr](http://bit.ly/ipmgbqr)

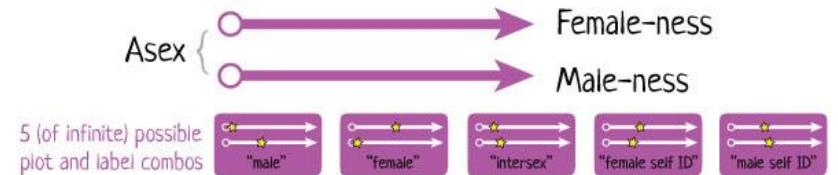
## Gender Identity



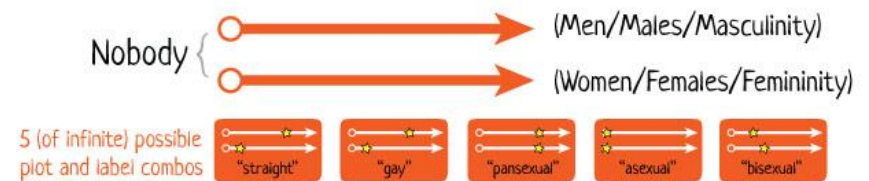
## Gender Expression



## Biological Sex



## Attracted to





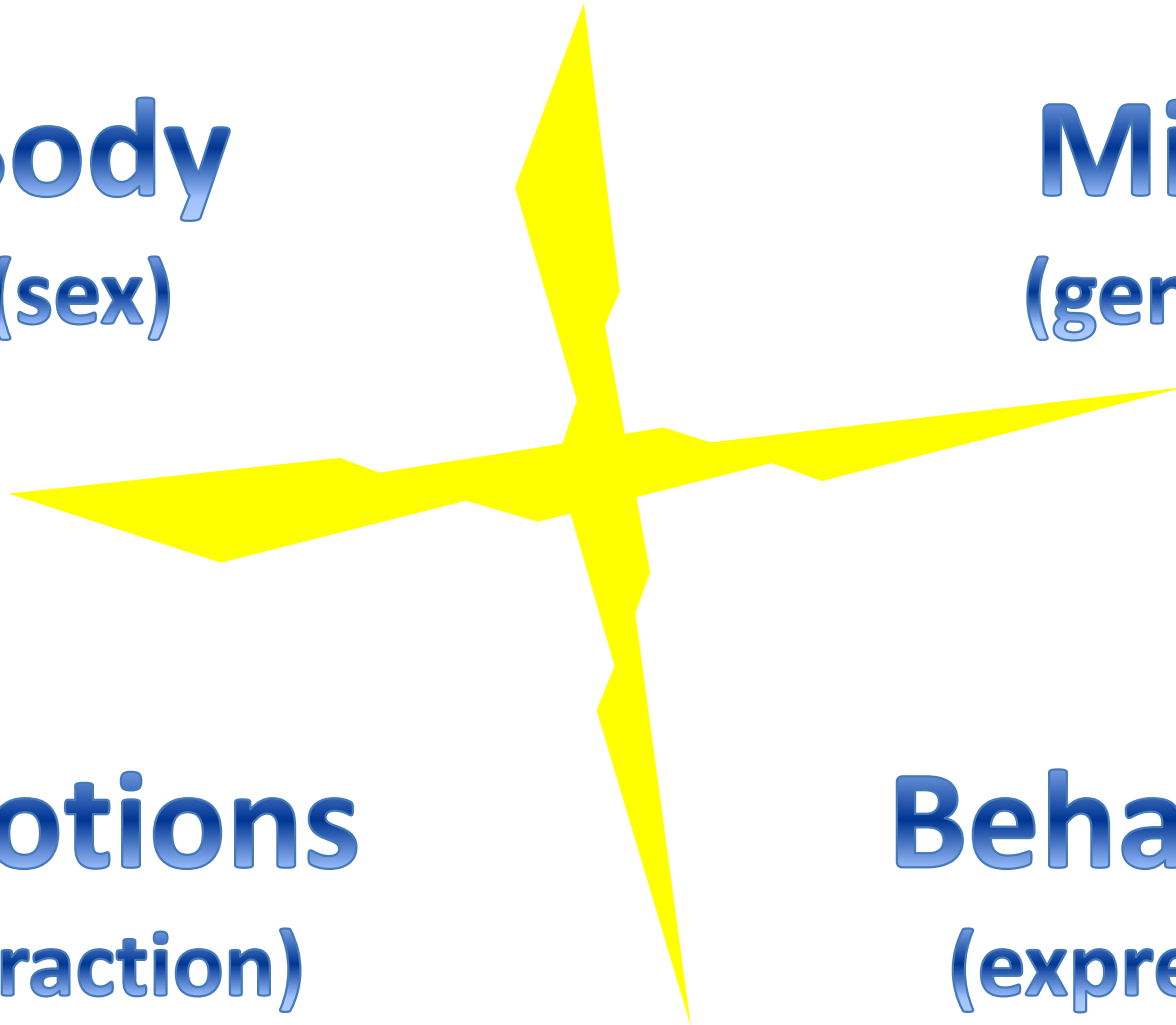
# The split self?

**Body**  
(sex)

**Mind**  
(gender)

**Emotions**  
(attraction)

**Behaviour**  
(expression)



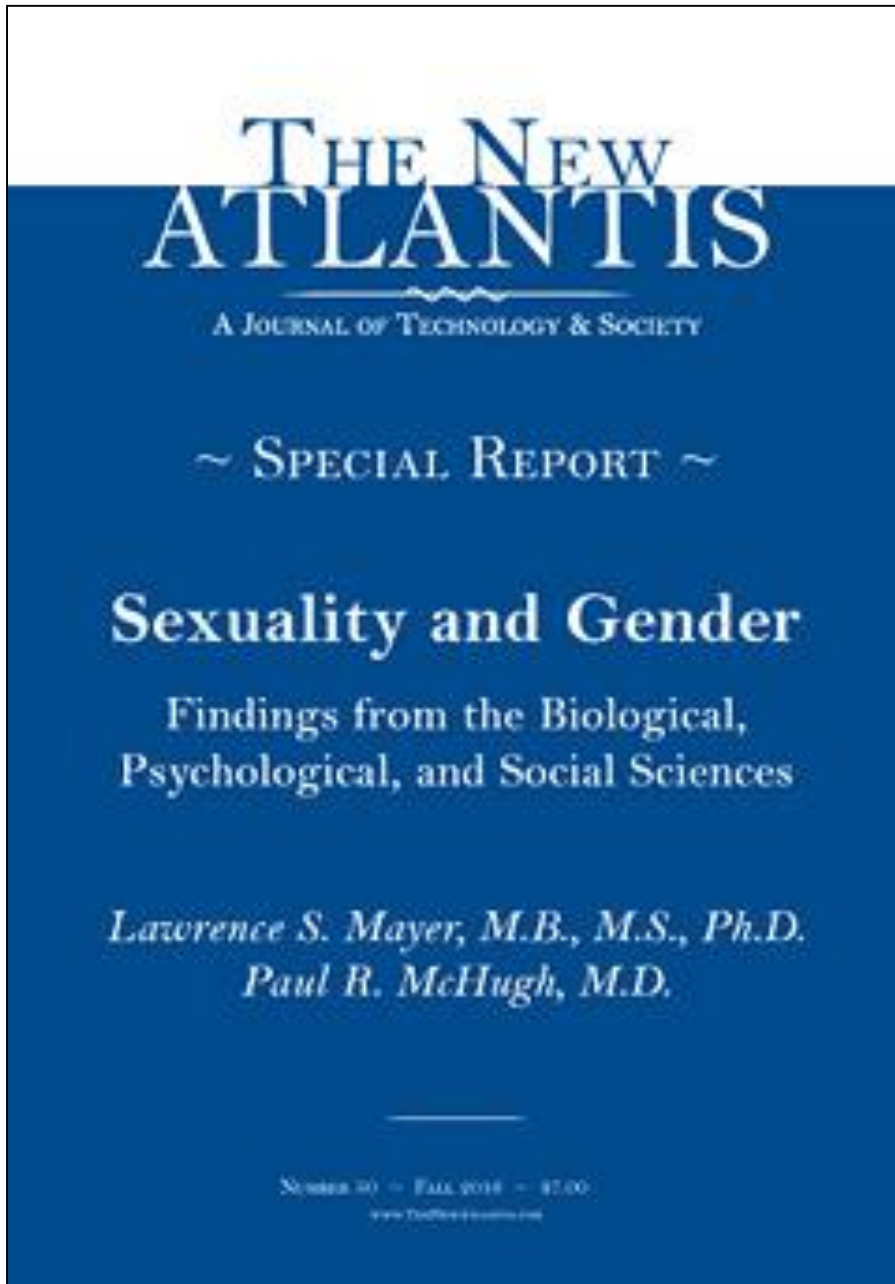
# Is it 'real'?





# Op-Ed Are gender feminists and transgender activists undermining science?

- Gender feminists denying differences in male and female brains
- Transgender activists denying statistics on desistance



**Lawrence S. Mayer**  
Statistician



**Paul R. McHugh**  
Psychiatrist

# Not evidence based

- Higher rates of mental health problems are due exclusively or predominantly to social pressures
- Homosexual and transgender people are “born this way”

“Yet despite the scientific uncertainty, drastic interventions are prescribed and delivered to patients identifying, or identified, as transgender. This is especially troubling when the patients receiving these interventions are children.”

models hold in common [...] the **assumption** that experiences of same-sex attraction signal who the person 'really is.'

[...]

This is what we refer to as a *gay explanatory framework*. It carries with it a number of **assumptions** about personal identity that are not argued for, but are **assumed** to be true.

Yarhouse, M.A. and Tan, E.S.N. (2005)  
Sexual Identity and Being a Christian  
*Journal of Psychology & Christianity*, 24(1), p.61

# The assumptions

**Where did I come from?**

Nowhere

**Who am I?**

Self-actualisation  
(experience / feeling)

**What is right?**

Free choices

**What is my goal?**

Happiness through  
being true to self

**Where am I going?**

???

# 2. Faithful Christian thinking





# How does Scripture speak?

## Performative

- **Poetry**, expressing faith and doubts

## Formative

- **Narratives**, resonating with experience and imagination

## Normative

- **Gospel**, describing the true story of God and humankind

## Transformative

- **Principles**, guiding belief and behaviour (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

# Principles

## Old Testament Law

You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. (Leviticus 18:22)

A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.  
(Deuteronomy 22:5)

## New Testament

- Romans 1:26-27
- 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10

# Romans 1:26-27

For this reason God gave them up to dishonourable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

(Romans 1:26-27)

- Unnatural = not in line with God's intention in creation
- Root problem = rejection of God and idolatry (v18-25)

# *malakoi & arsenokoitai*

1 Corinthians 6:9

- “men who have sex with men” (NIV)
- “men who practise homosexuality” (ESV)
- “male prostitutes ... practice homosexuality” (NLT)
- “effeminate ... abusers of themselves with mankind” (KJV)

Malakoi

- *Softness* – possibly moral laxness?

Arsenokoitai (also 1Timothy 1:10)

- lying with (*koitai*) a man (*arseno*)
- Coined to echo Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

- Passive and active partners in male homosexual activity?
- Men who act like women and those who have sex with men?

iWonder

# What's it really like to be transgender?



1. A community in transition

2. My transgender life

3. Difficulties transgender people can face

4. Transforming attitudes?

5. No big deal

6. Where next?

Although the word transgender has only been in use for the past 40 years – as a community we have been around for thousands of years.

An umbrella term for people who feel their real gender is different from their birth gender, transgender people are referenced in almost every major religion and society - with

Often considered the forgotten and underrepresented component of the LGBTI community - for decades trans people have

been vilified, ridiculed and misunderstood by many in society. However a recent, seemingly insatiable, media interest in the subject is helping to pull the trans community out from the sidelines and placing them firmly in the spotlight. But is this visibility necessarily translating to a shift in attitudes and acceptance of this long marginalised community?



Presented by  
**Rebecca Root**  
Actor



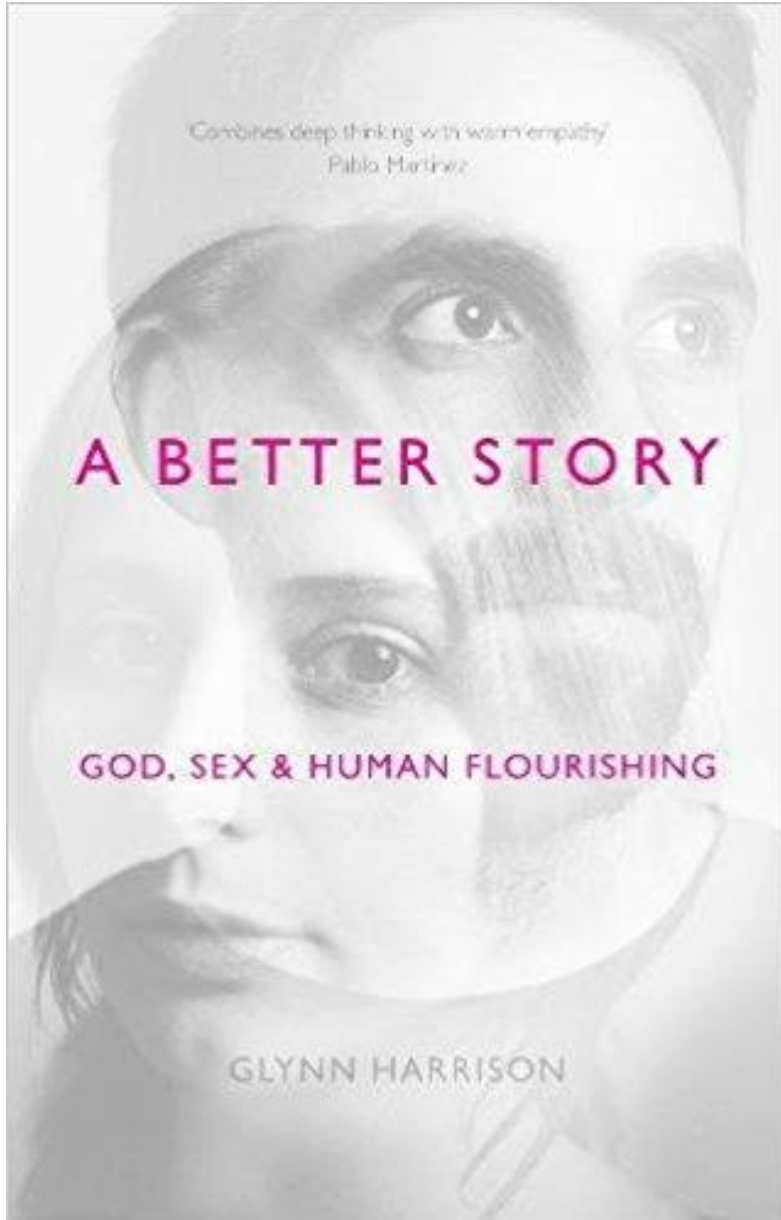
# A better story?

The sexual revolution is not held in the popular imagination as a list of facts - **it is held as a story** [...] about the freeing of the human spirit from the stifling shame of Christian tradition. [...]

In response we have often deployed complicated arguments, or listed the 'deviances' and the diseases. This simply doesn't work. **We have to tell a different story**. A better story that appeals to imagination as well as intellect.

Prof Glynn Harrison (2015)

Paper for CMF Annual Conference

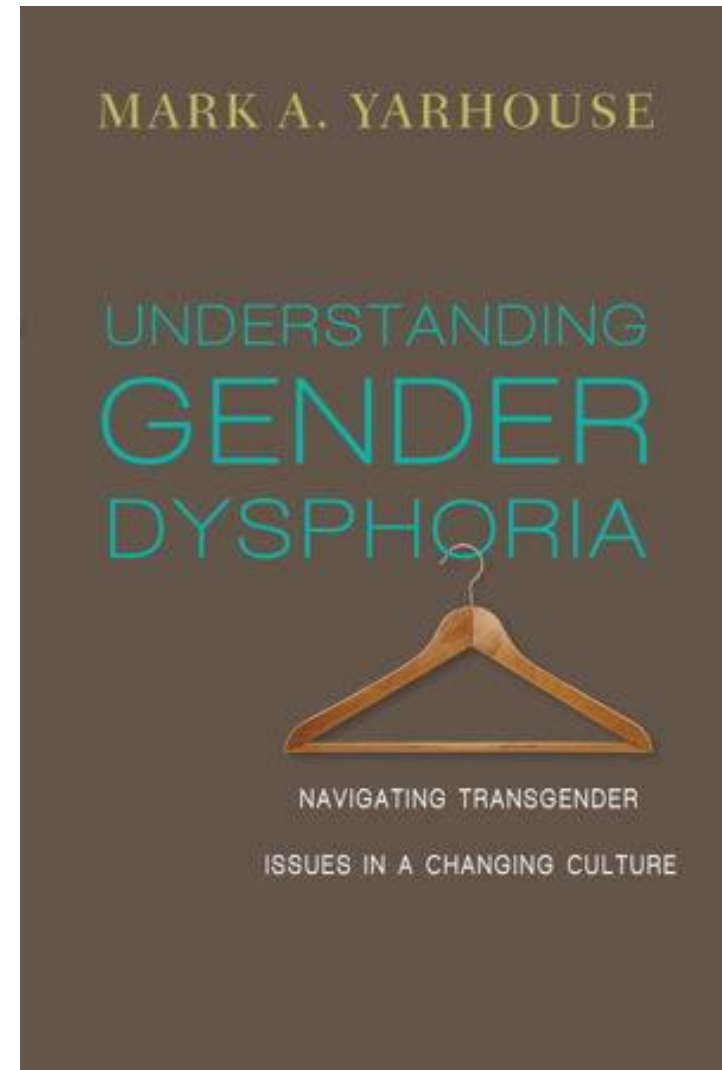


## Two suggestions:

- The best story is the true story (even if the truth is inconvenient)
- The ultimate goal is not human flourishing, but God's glory (the gospel is theocentric, not anthropocentric)

# A Christian framework?

- a) Insist on “integrity”  
Focus = original creation
- b) Support for “disability”  
Focus = Fall
- c) Celebrate “diversity”  
Focus = glorification
- d) Integrated framework  
Focus = redemption





# A gospel perspective

- God rules – created male and female to reflect God's image to creation (Genesis 1 v27); marriage is an enactment of God's covenant love (Genesis 2 v20-25)
- We rebelled – sin causing delusion, confusion and rebellion, including bringing abuse and distrust between the sexes (Genesis 3 v16)
- God redeems – forgiveness for past sins and hope through Jesus Christ
- We respond – we need to repent, believe and obey, living positively as male and female, single or married
- God restores – we can know the Spirit's help in the present individually and corporately in the Church and we have living hope for the future (suffering and struggles in perspective)

# Gospel answers

**Where did I come from?**

Created by God

**Who am I?**

Dignity / depravity

**What is right?**

Repent, believe, obey

**What is my goal?**

Becoming like Christ

**Where am I going?**

Glory (our inheritance)

# 3. Ready

# Stepping out



# Sex-specific roles in marriage and Church?

- 1 Corinthians 11 v1-16
- Colossians 3 v18-19
- Ephesians 5 v22-33
- 1 Timothy 2 v8-15
- Titus 2 v1-6
- 1 Peter 3 v1-7

# Honour everyone

- **Start where they are**
  - E.g., reversal of surgery may not be possible; adopted children need care; use of pronouns / names
- **Listen and seek understanding**
  - Do not condemn or pre-judge; distinguish feelings from actions; do not affirm behaviours and identity
- **Seek to align with biological sex**
  - Health = wholeness
- **Promote the biblical vision**
  - True principles within the true story

# Pastoral responses

- **Dysphoria (or inner struggle)** – help and healing for pain through presence and prayer
- **Attraction** – resisting temptation; denying desires; seeking transformation
- **Actions** – repenting for sin; choosing faithfulness; persevering in loving community
- **Identity** – refusing non-biblical labels; correcting unbiblical ideas (e.g., feelings = identity; experience attraction c.f. be 'gay')

# Challenges for Church

## Limits to fellowship?

- Within congregations
- Within denominations
- Across denominations
- Across time and place

## Interface with the State

- Equality legislation; anti-radicalisation
- Charitable status ...

# A deeper question

How do we relate Scripture and experience as sources of truth?



Divine truth revealed in the Word

Commitment to trust and obey Christ

Inner life of emotions and desires  
(response to experiences)



# No, God would not have approved of gay bishops

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Matthew Parris

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August 9 2003, 1:00am,  
The Times

“Inclusive”, “moderate” or “sensible” Christianity is inching its way up a philosophical cul-de-sac. The Church stands for revealed truth and divine inspiration or it stands for nothing. Belief grounded in everyday experience alone is not belief.

Jesus was never reluctant to challenge received wisdoms that He wanted to change. He gives no impression that He came into the world to revolutionise sexual mores.

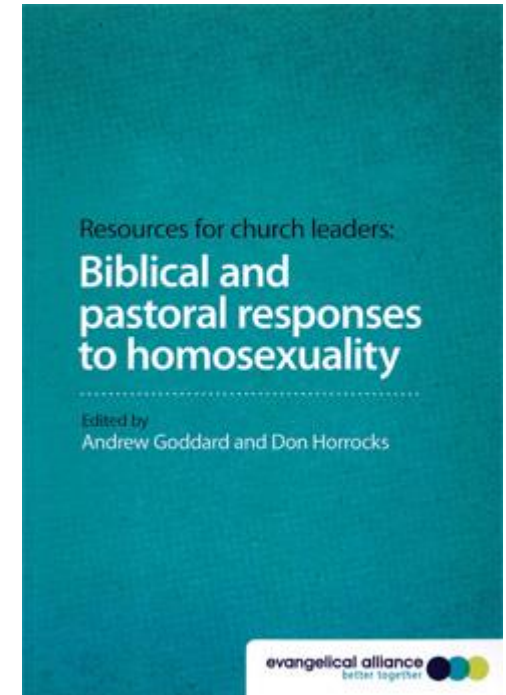
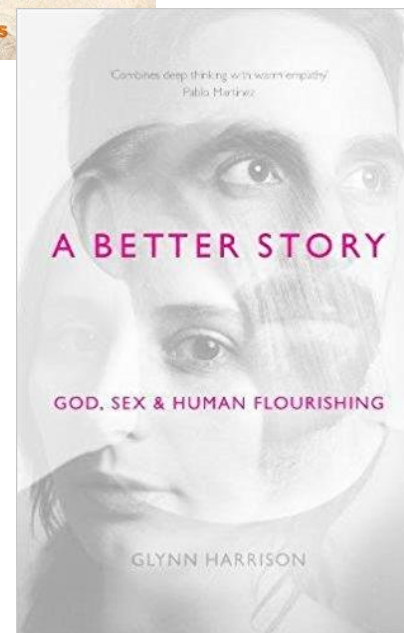
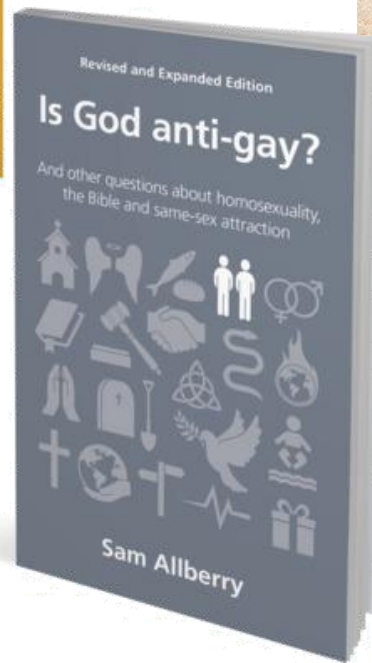
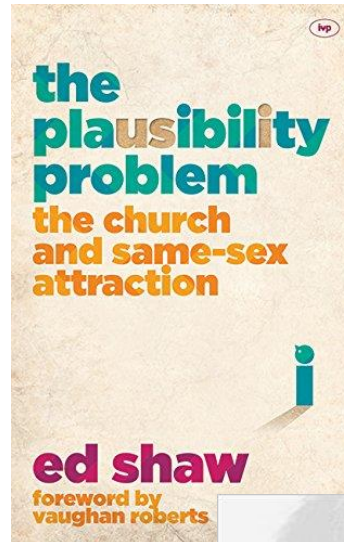
Revelation, therefore, not logic, must lie at the core of the Church's message. You cannot pick and choose from revealed truth.

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Save



# Recommended reading





[www.paulcoulter.net/SA](http://www.paulcoulter.net/SA)