

Sheila Jeffreys: the McCarthyism of Transgender and the Sterilization of Transgender Children

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Meghan Murphy has published a [wonderful podcast titled “Where have all the Radicals gone? When feminism gets moderate.”](#) She addresses the current backlash against feminism, “funfeminism”, “sexpoz”, the re-writing and misquoting of radical feminist thinkers, the future of women’s liberation, and so much more. The highlight for me was the brand spanking new interview with the brilliant Sheila Jeffreys, which was conducted on April 10, 2011. Do give a listen. Highly recommended.

A brief excerpt from Sheila Jeffreys addressing the McCarthyism of Transgender and the Sterilization of Transgender Children is transcribed below.

“Radical feminist theory was and is particularly revolutionary because it means a total transformation of male domination. So it means the removal of it at its most basic level. It means the total transformation of culture. It means for instance no *respect* for culture. And I’ve been writing recently about multiculturalism because my new book is on religion, called “Man’s Dominion: the Rise of Religion and the Eclipse of Women’s Rights” (which is coming out later this year). So I’ve been writing about how multiculturalism becomes *multi-faithism* and how there’s this requirement in multicultural society is to respect culture- which is of course completely impossible since all cultures are based upon the subordination of women and the creation of two different sexes and two different genders and the construction of oppression out of that. And that- if you walk in any street, just look at the way people are dressed , if you look at anything that’s going on on the television, the extraordinary *length* to which the *expression* of women’s subordination and men’s domination go is immediately clear to you and that’s in major cities of the western world that I’m talking about. So of course the radical feminist critique is about overthrowing that deep, deeply *cultural* construction of women’s subordination. Its perhaps clearest on an everyday level, in what women are required to wear. The showing of their bodies: the short skirts, the shaved legs, the high-heeled shoes. The extraordinary lengths to which they have to go to punish and be cruel to their own bodies and be degraded in public places.

Now that’s very very clearly about male domination as far as I can see. But it cannot be *recognized*. It simply cannot be recognized. So that, there’s a tremendous forgetfulness of the construction of what is these days is called “gender”. Of course I would call it “sexual oppression” I think is that is probably a more reasonable way of looking at it. And its strongest manifestation of course takes place in what’s called “transgenderism” which is a practice in which persons who do not adhere to the correctly gendered practices that have been placed upon the biological sex are considered to have something called Gender Identity Disorder and they’re expected to cross over into the other sex. Not *criticize* the gendered system as it exists, because that’s *unthinkable* but to make some kind of “journey” by mutilating their bodies and taking dangerous drugs for the rest of their lives in order to supposedly represent the opposite sex.

Now that shows to us how clearly, and to what an extraordinary *depth* the idea that there are two genders, with different behaviors, constructed from how different we are biologically has entered culture. Because of course, it doesn't make sense. I mean, I don't have a gender. I've no intention of having a gender. I don't do masculinity which is the behavior of male dominance, and I don't do femininity which is the behavior of female subordination, women's subordination. I hope to engage in *human* behavior and I hope at some point in the future everybody will be able to do that too, but gender I definitely do not have. I am a conscientious objector to gender as I would be indeed to being drafted into the military – and I see these things as having some connections (laughs).

So, the problem with transgenderism – which is obviously an expression of men's sexual rights as well of course(it's very much about the right to be sexually excited by female clothing, and subordination and so on). But it also comes out of the gendered system. And it means that in order to support transgenderism , *gender* has to be supported. So the subordination of women *has* to be supported in order for transgenderism to be supported. Transgender as a phenomenon is the clearest possible indication of the *strength* of the structures of the male domination going on right now. Of course we know that in Iran homosexuals are routinely transgendered because they're not allowed to be homosexuals.

I've been looking at the stuff on transgendered kids in the U.S. There are lots of organizations now to support transgendered kids and their families. There's lots of clinics and therapists, who can identify "transgender kids". And they're being recognized as transgender from four or five years old even though the literature tells us, and they tell us themselves, that 70% of those recognized as transgendered will end up as homosexual in later life. So one of the things they are trying to do is eradicate homosexuality at it's very possible origin, (or they'll prefer a connection necessarily between homosexuality and gender) but they're maybe being bullied for having the wrong kind of behaviors and so on. So what's happening in the states is that children are now to be identified in school, to be identified by their parents. This is what we – you know in the seventies we fought against the idea that there were "correct" forms of behavior, "correct" toys and so on for children. It wasn't radical to do so, that was quite mild I thought. Now these children are being put on programs, where- and this is the big demand now- they have drugs to prevent them, hormones to prevent them from developing the body of their biological sex. So they've got to be on these hormones for about nine years – you can see how the medical profession loves this: the drugs, the medical expertise and so on, it's a very big money maker for them. And very conservative that they even believe in gender. So these poor children are not going through puberty in the normal way, they're not having the ordinary biological changes. Then by sixteen they'll be put on the cross-gender hormones of the opposite sex which will make them sterile. So they're actually being sterilized. It's the sterilization of the "un-fit". When it happened in the thirties and the Nazis did it , you know it's now considered that was unacceptable to do it: it went on until the sixties, in America, the sterilization of the disabled , the unfit. *It's happening now*. Those who do not conform to correct gender stereotypes are being *sterilized* and they're being sterilized as *children*. At eighteen years old they're expected to move on to surgery, so parts of their bodies are going to be lopped off. And then they'll be on these drugs for the rest of their lives.

Eventually I'm sure, within – because things are moving fast and there's a lot of criticism of this particularly by young radical feminists now- within the next ten, twenty years it will come to be realized as a *horrendous* human rights violation. But for these children and young people who have been sterilized, this is a terrible, terrible cost. Because they've lost parts of

their bodies, they've lost the ability to reproduce. It really is a human rights violation on a massive, massive scale.

Now, because I criticize this, I am sort of “no platformed” pretty much, by lots of feminist, lesbian and gay organizations who will not allow me to speak. Even in my own city I was not allowed to be invited to speak at the Reclaim The Night because I was seen as “transphobic”. A major conference in Britain that invited me to speak this year is basically not going to happen because some others said that I was transphobic and shouldn't speak and everything collapsed and so on. The kind of McCarthyism that's going on around transgenderism now – if you criticize it, or if somebody who is your friend *knows you* and you're known as a “transphobe”, they *also* are now getting told they cannot speak. So it's spreading out, and it's spreading out. The National Union of Students in Britain, their Lesbian and Gay Bisexual Transgender Conference, the agenda I've just been looking at actually has a resolution saying that Julie Bindel- who's also a feminist critic of this practice in Britain and a journalist “is vile”. (laughs) That's all it says: “Julie Bindel Is Vile”. This is a resolution of the National Union of Students Conference. And of course she is no-platformed, no students organizations may invite her to speak anywhere because she's also critical of transgenderism.

So really, gender is of course the sort of last bastion because it is the *foundation* of the subordination of women. And it's being defended *to the death* in this extraordinarily grim way. Which means that any radical feminist critics must not be allowed to speak. A reading group that discussed my book and said online that they've done so has been told that they were transphobic and that they should not be allowed to discuss my book, so it is an attempt to eliminate, expatriate, from the public discussion and the public forum, any discussion, writing and so on that could possibly *criticize gender*. Because that's what it's about, really. It's *criticizing gender*. And that's the very foundation of feminism and we really have to hold onto that. We've got to claw back the ground now. And I'm very pleased to say that there are quite a lot of radical feminist blogs that are not only being very critical of transgenderism, but even dare I say it, *laughing* at it. Which is a very very naughty thing to do. But sometimes the oppressed and the subordinate have to laugh at the dominant ideology that oppress them.

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This is a tiny excerpt from a long and brilliant podcast that is worth every moment of your time. Thank you so much to Meghan Murphy for creating it.