

# The Transgender and Anti-Israel True Believers

By Phyllis Chesler

## Birds of a Feather ...

The transgender issue has become as toxic and as polarizing as that of the Israel/Palestine matter. A far-fetched comparison? Not really.



The Palestine True Believers and the Trans True Believers both prize their narratives over and above the evidence of history, archeology, anthropology, geography—and far above the reality of biology and genetics.

Such True Believers constitute tribes whose members maintain that human beings can disappear facts; that they have the right, even the obligation to radically re-interpret matters to justify their own desires. Nature, and whatever God and humanity have created, can and must be improved upon through science, medicine, technology, and/or via propaganda, indoctrination, peer pressure, Group Think, and terror. True Believers will cancel you if you dare depart by a millimeter from their views.

True Believers are righteously aggressive on behalf of their narratives. No opponents, no matter whom they may be, are immune from their wrath. J.K Rowling, the Mistress of Magic,

has been publicly castigated by the lead Harry Potter actors for her “politically incorrect” views on the trans issue.

I have been defamed and dis-invited many times for my views on both the trans and Israel/Palestine issues. However, I’ve been spared from what many anti-trans radical feminists in the UK, in Canada, and in the United States, have faced. They have not only been demonized and censored—they have also been stalked and verbally and physically attacked by aggressive, angry, transwomen who demean them as “trans-exclusionary radical feminists” (TERFS).

The anti-transgender analysis has been disappeared in the media and in national and international bodies. American universities have also been ideologically “cleansed” on these two issues. Professors who are pro-Israel or who challenge hormones and surgery for children are castigated, isolated, and purged.

An outgrowth of the universities’ fragmentation into grievance group disciplines since the 1960s, transgender ideology first gained a foothold in women’s and feminist studies departments, eventually transmuting the feminist notion that gender is socially constructed into “extreme gender plasticity,” the belief that one’s gender identity completely negates biological reality. This is the new normal.

Arriving on campus in the 2000s at the same time DEI enforcement bureaucracies were expanding, colleges and universities welcomed transgender ideology by divesting themselves of the human sex binary, enforcing the use of chosen pronouns, mandating “gender inclusive” bathrooms and locker rooms (Yale University has 332 gender inclusive restrooms created at the reported cost of \$8.3 million.<sup>1</sup>), replacing “sex” with “gender” on official forms, insisting that researchers cease classifying skeletal remains as male or female,<sup>2</sup> removing books deemed too “cis” or “heteronormative,”

and dropping hard-won commitments to single-sex athletics. As of this writing, the largest collegiate athletic association (the NCAA) has refused to ban biologically male transgender women from competing in women's sports.

The vehemence with which campuses policed the boundary of acceptable transgender discourse was evinced in vitriolic attacks on dissenting faculty, most notably the 2018 attack on Brown University behavioral scientist Lisa Littman. Littman's study, published in *PLOS One*, indicated that peer group pressure, often via social media, affected "Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria" in teenagers, especially girls, triggering a fierce backlash. The implication that the rise in transgender identity could be attributed partly to "social contagion"—presumably lessening the role of inherent self-discovery—led activists to demand that the paper be withdrawn and Littman censured. Obediently, the publication *PLOS One* began a "post-publication review" and Brown University pulled a promotional press release from its website. Littman ultimately published a revised version of the study that Rutgers University psychology professor Lee Jussim described as an "Orwellian correction" having nothing to do with the requisites of sound scholarship.<sup>3</sup>

This vigilant policing of transgenderism made another quite public appearance in 2023 when academic publisher Springer retracted a paper by Ray Blanchard and J. Michael Bailey on Rapid Onset Gender Dysphoria."<sup>4</sup> In 2024, the Baptist-affiliated Belmont University in Nashville cancelled a scheduled appearance on campus of the Promise Keepers, a Christian men's group that believes God "created male and female with equal worth and dignity—and there was no mistake in that design." These basic Christian beliefs, in the view of the ostensibly Christian college, "unnecessarily fan the flames of culture wars and are harmful to members of our community."<sup>5</sup>

**Feminism Meets Conservatism**

In the past, radical feminists and conservatives have been ideologically aligned on issues such as pornography, prostitution, and surrogacy. The trans issue is one on which conservatives and many radical feminists agree; namely, that biology, genetics, anatomy, and lived history are real and cannot be denied or supplanted by ideology, surgery, medicine, or by “gender affirming” mental health care; and that it is grossly unfair for biological boys and men to compete in sports against biological girls and women.

I must note that such anti-transgender radical and liberal feminists are *also* anti-Israel. Worse: Many high profile *pro*-transgender feminists, for example, Judith Butler and Masha Gessen, believe that Jews would be better off back in the diaspora where their military helplessness would constitute an ethical virtue, and Western “wokesters,” such as themselves, would not have to bear the burden of being Jewish in an anti-Zionist/Jew-hating world. Life is complicated in my intellectual neck of the woods.

Radical anti-transgender feminists, and radical *pro*-transgender feminists believe that the IDF, not Hamas, is committing genocide and is guilty of war crimes. Well-funded left-wingers, communists, and anarchists, share this view—and have persuaded generations of Western professors and students that Islamic Jihad and Islamic gender and religious apartheid are “progressive.”

Thus, post October 7—the day Hamas conducted its deadly raid on Israel and after which anti-Israel and antisemitic global radicalism came to the fore—we saw young American girls don hijab and niqab (face veils) for “Palestine” in the belief that they were supporting freedom and justice, not fascism. They fervently viewed 10/7 as an act of resistance, and either celebrated it or remained utterly silent about a pogrom in which Israeli civilians in southern Israel were raped, tortured, be-headed, burned alive in ovens, murdered, kidnapped, and held hostage.

Most conservatives are pro-Israel and pro-biology. They understand that Iran and its poisoned proxies ( Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Houthis, the Palestinian Authority) are bloodthirsty barbarians who wish to ethnically cleanse Jews from the Middle East, especially from “the river to the sea,” which is where Israel is located. Conservatives also understand that this is a religious war, not one about territory and that it is also a war against the Judeo-Christian West by those who wish to conquer and colonize the world for Islam.

Saying so is considered “Islamophobic.”

As both a radical feminist *and* a conservative, I am not suggesting that those who identify themselves as transwomen or transmen be denied human or civil rights. Nor am I suggesting that they be forbidden to transition—as long as they are twenty-one-years of age. Nor do I believe that all transitioners are mentally ill, or that gender appropriate care should be withheld from adults. Finally, I do recognize that some pro-transgender advocates genuinely want to help those who say they are suffering.

My generation of feminists did not fight for gender-based identity rights but for sex-based rights. We failed. Thereafter, what became known as feminism or “feminisms” focused on imperialism, colonialism, slavery, and racism, (only against people of color, never against Jews). These historical and ongoing crimes have been attributed solely to the Judeo-Christian West and never to the Islamic world. For the last forty years, academics have disappeared Women’s Studies which became Gender and Sexuality Studies. Any concern with sexual harassment, rape, incest, and battering became expanded to include prostituted transgender and queer women of color—as if they were a majority in the West and elsewhere.

Am I exaggerating the rise of a transgender movement? Here’s a few personal experiences.

In 2021, I sat in the waiting room of a New York City hospital awaiting my first vaccine shot for Covid-19. A nurse handed me a form to fill out which asked me if I was a “transwoman,” a “transman,” “non-binary,” “bisexual,” or if I “don’t know.” One of the older women online with me, (many were from Asia, Africa, and South America, and their English was limited), worriedly asked me: “What’s the right answer?”

I said there is no right answer.

When I was asked to identify my race, (Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Asian, African, Caucasian) I answered: “Human, alas.” But I also penciled in “Jewish,” which was missing from the choices on the menu.

In 2022, on a visit to a physician at another hospital, she looked around, closed her office door, and whispered to me: “We have been instructed to hire transgender physicians, nurses, and social workers to work with transgender patients and to change the signs on our bathrooms.” Indeed, the bathrooms now read, “All Genders Welcome.”

Over the last twenty to thirty years, guidelines, proclamations, and legislation have been steadily passed. The White House, federal and state legislative bodies, and Hollywood celebrities have constituted a cheering squad.

For example, in 2015, New York State’s Department of Education released a guide about how schools should protect “transgender and gender non-conforming students” whose needs have previously gone unrecognized. The document was created by the New York Civil Liberties Union and the Empire Pride Agenda. Schools are prohibited from informing the child’s parents what is going on.

In America, women do not yet have a sex-based Equal Rights amendment—and yet, the current Democrat administration wants to expand Title IX rights to include gender identity rights and to spell out what the punishments are for discriminating

against or bullying those who claim such identities.

In 2017, New York City teachers were “required to call students by their preferred pronouns.” In 2021, the U.S. Department of Education issued a Notice of Interpretation explaining that it will “enforce Title IX’s prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sex, to include 1) discrimination based on sexual orientation; and 2) discrimination based on gender identity.” Other states have followed suit.

On March 29, 2021, an Open Letter Supporting Trans Women and Girls was widely circulated. It stated that: “We acknowledge with clarity and strength that transgender women are women and that transgender girls are girls. We believe that honoring the diversity of women’s experience is a strength, not a detriment to the feminist cause ... It is time for the long history of assaults (legislative, physical, social, and verbal against women and girls to end.”) Signatories include Hollywood celebrities (Halle Berry, Margaret Cho, Cynthia Erivo, Selena Gomez, Janelle Monae, Christina Ricci, Reese Witherspoon), as well as powerful influencers such as Chelsea Clinton, Gloria Steinem, Ms. Magazine, and the Ms. Foundation. Many black and black queer organizations also signed on.

In a sense, the transgender issue has positioned itself as an anti-racist movement and as an anti-violence against black, queer, transgender “sex worker” movement. Of course, there are many more biological girls and women who have been prostituted and trafficked—but perhaps they are not as trendy and are too numerous in number and therefore too great a challenge to focus upon.

The anti-Israel movement has also positioned itself in America as a pro-black movement against white Zionist supremacists. The fact that nearly half of Israelis are dark-skinned Arabs, from Yemen, Ethiopia, and North Africa, remains irrelevant; and the fact that Muslim countries still enslave black

Africans and that black Muslims were crucially involved in the Atlantic slave trade remains unrecognized.

We know that the anti-Israel propaganda campaign has been massively funded by Iran, by Arab, Muslim states, and by left wing Western billionaires—so too, has the rise of the transgender rights movement also been massively funded. Investigative journalist Jennifer Bilek has done pioneering work in this area.

But I first want to name some very honorable radical feminist and lesbian feminist groups and individuals including: The Women's Liberation Front (WOLF), Feminist Current (Meghan Murphy), 4W (M.K. Fain), *Dignity: A Journal of Analysis of Exploitation and Violence* (Donna Hughes), and Spinifex Press (Renate Klein and Susan Hawthorne.) These groups, websites, journals, and one publisher have kept us superbly informed on this issue.

Four years ago, a conservative, Dr. Abigail Shrier, Esq., (*Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*, 2020), broke through an enormous media barrier to document a worrisome trend of young American teenage girls who are becoming boys. They were opting for hormones and surgeries which may have life-long and negative consequences—perhaps because they were suffering from other psychological, psychiatric, cognitive, and neurological issues and wanted a quick fix for their suffering. Or, because they wanted out of sex-based discrimination.

Dr. Shrier documented the worrisome, even tragic trend in which young teenage American and British girls have been threatening suicide if they are not allowed to become boys, to surgically remove their breasts, take dangerous drugs in order to grow facial hair, deepen their voices, and to dress and live as boys. Their former female names are “dead” names and their new names and pronouns must be used by their parents, physicians, teachers, counselors—or there may be legal



consequences.

We are also losing our grip on reality. So many teenagers are normally uncomfortable with how their bodies are changing; some may also be suffering from undiagnosed and untreated psychiatric challenges such as depression, autism, eating disorders, etc. One quick fix solution that fits all has increasingly been sold to these girls: Change your gender and you'll instantly find a supportive peer group, a supportive community, admiration rather than isolation or rejection.

This trend is part of the systematic rejection and erasure of womankind that we see in many other areas including the hiring of what are termed "surrogate uteruses" to gestate babies for infertile women and for gay men; and the rise of an exceptionally aggressive male transgender movement that has disappeared lesbians and gay men from gay activism. Gay pride marches are dominated by transgender women and drag queens as are university curricula, legislation, media coverage. Bruce Bawer has written a superb piece on this subject at *Frontpage* titled: *Happy Pride Month?*<sup>6</sup>

Shrier's work was published by Regnery, a leading conservative publisher, but it was not meant to see the light of day. Even before anyone read it, Regnery was flooded with letters demanding that it not be published. According to Shrier, prominent journalists refused to review it, "even Kirkus ... never reviewed it." Then, Amazon barred her publisher "from sponsoring ads on the specious grounds that the book "claims to diagnose, treat, or question sexual orientation."

When Shrier was finally interviewed on Joe Rogan's program, "employees of Spotify, which exclusively hosts the show, threw a fit, demanding that the interview be stripped from the platform. On the basis of twitter complaints, Target "pulled" the book from their shelves. More letters arrived, demanding that it be reinstated—and it was.

Again, according to Shrier, “parents who had witnessed this craze up close ... started a GoFundMe campaign to put up billboards across the country to promote the book. In time, “GoFundMe shut the parents’ efforts down.”

The main criticism concerned Shrier’s belief in the reality of sex-based biological differences. This was her thought crime. She was viewed as a traitor to all those who wish to be free of biological essentialism, that which reduces us to our biological selves and the fear that this dooms us to pre-ordained social roles.

Radical feminists focus on something else. They reject the transwoman’s appropriation of culturally enforced stereotypical femininity as if that is what being a woman is about. Thus, like drag queens, transwomen sometimes (but not always), wear overly glamorous dresses, very high heels, and lots of makeup. Some cultivate an “ugly” look for reasons that are truly beyond me—but not beyond the TERFS.

Dr. Sheila Jeffreys, (*Penile Imperialism: The Male Sex Right and Women’s Subordination*, 2022); investigative journalist, Jennifer Bilek (*Transsexual, Transgender, Transhuman: Dispatches from the 11th Hour*) have done extraordinary work in this area as has Dr. Janice Raymond who published an early book titled *The Transsexual Empire* (1979, 1994), as well as a more recent work titled *Doublethink: A Feminist Challenge to Transgenderism* (2022).

Both Drs. Sheila Jeffreys and Jan Raymond view the transgender cult as a movement to normalize, even glorify “male perversions.” Jeffreys sees it as yet another form of male sexual violence, public sexual harassment, and as part of an increase in pornography and prostitution. She sees it as a new kind of anti-feminist men’s rights movement carried out by a sexually fueled and well-financed group of male transvestites flying under the banner of progressive rights. Her chapters on pedophilia, “kink,” and male sexual fetishes taught me things

I never knew but that are crucial for an understanding of this contemporary reality.

Publishing in the *Federalist* in 2018, Bilek found, as of 2002, massive pro-transgender funding by “billionaire, gay, white men,” major left-wing foundations (Tides, Pike), tech giants (Google, Microsoft, Apple, Intel, Dell, and IBM), and Big Pharma (Johnson and Johnson, Pfizer, Abbott Laboratories, Bristol-Meyers Squibb). Ironically, the transgender movement even gained the support of the anti-capitalist, left-wing Occupy Wall Street and antifa movements. The campaign was launched as a “human rights” issue.

Bilek also documented an international acceleration of Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies together with “gender identity ideology.” Guides, frameworks, and laws were sponsored by international as well as national organizations, including the United Nations and Western governments. Bilek found that these policies, (ESG and DEI) “had morphed into a global agenda known as the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals” (SDF). Bilek writes:

In 2013, I took up researching the money going to the LGBT NGO political apparatus ... or why a small group of men with a fetish for dressing up as women needed the protection of world governments, corporations, legal bodies, and university heads ... By June 2013, Penny Pritzker (of Reliant Pharmaceuticals), was appointed Obama’s Secretary of Commerce and her cousin James (now Jennifer) released a statement ... indicating that he was now a woman ... Laws were changed to accommodate attempts at disowning one’s sexed reality, all being framed and enforced onto society as a human right.

Bilek has numbers. Imagine who stands to profit from this movement? Not only drug companies (hormones, etc.), but also surgeons and mental health providers who see a lifetime fortune to be made from those who transition.

Earlier in 2024, Dr. Hillary Cass published a landmark report on gender care for youth in the UK. Her report is modest, self-effacing, fair, and yet serves as a serious critique of medicating children for “gender dysphoria.” Based on her review of scientific studies on such gender treatments, she concluded that the “evidence supporting the use of puberty-blocking drugs and other hormonal medications in adolescents was remarkably weak.” Based on her recommendations, Britain’s National Health Service will no longer prescribe puberty blockers outside of clinical trials.

Dr. Cass also recommended that testosterone and estrogen be prescribed with “extreme caution.” Based on her findings, one major clinic providing gender care in the UK was shut down. However, many American physicians and American medical organizations have rejected her findings as “political,” and, as such, view them as having no place in the examination room.

It isn’t immediately clear why the Cass report seems to have had a more transformative effect on transgender care in Britain and other European countries than it has in the U.S. Perhaps the size and strength of America’s civic and political pressure groups is greater than in Britain, where activism may be muted by health care nationalization. The Cass report was, after all, commissioned by Britain’s National Health Service.

The power of activist groups in the U.S. was recently revealed by the release of documents in a court case (*Boe v. Marshall*), challenging an Alabama law prohibiting sex-trait modification for kids. The documents suggest that the Human Rights Campaign, a powerful gay rights group that now focuses mostly on transgender activism and has deep roots in the Democrat party, cowed the Biden White House into changing its already vague preference for “mental health care” over surgery and puberty blockers for trans kids. The White House now says it supports a gender-affirming “continuum of care” for trans kids, and its assistant secretary for health, Rachel Levine, a transgender woman, leaned on the World Professional

Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) to eliminate age minimums from its latest “standards of care.”<sup>7</sup>

Our Brave New Future is already here.

### **Bye, Bye Tomboys and Gay Men**

If gender and transgender identity rights trumps women’s still-unrealized sex-based rights, teenage girls and women will be forced to compete against biological males in athletics and the biological girls and women will always lose. They already are. Consider the shameful Olympic boxing match between a biological Algerian man and a biological Italian woman. Girls will also be forced to change and shower in locker rooms together with transgender women with penises. Women in all-female prisons, who are already sexually endangered by male guards and by each other, will now also be sexually assaulted and impregnated by transwomen criminals with penises.

Those as young as twelve and who are uncomfortable in their bodies will be advised to take hormones and undergo surgery which may or may not help them and which may, in the long run, harm them terribly. Society may lose its tomboys and gay men, both of which exhibit opposite sex tendencies and are therefore encouraged to transition.

Drag queens, (sometimes entertaining for adults), will be normalized for kindergarten children. From a radical feminist point of view, drag queens are mocking women by exaggerating stereotypical womanhood. In a sense, this is the equivalent of white people “blacking up” and putting on minstrel shows.

Transgender advocates are disappearing women linguistically; they call for “chest feeding,” not breast feeding; “front holes” not vaginas; instead of women, the phrase is now “cisgender,” motherhood is now “parenthood,” birthmothers are “surrogate uteruses.” This is what I mean when I write that

the erasure of women and of womankind is fully upon us.

**Phyllis Chesler** is an emerita professor of psychology at the City University of New York and the author of 20 books, including *Women and Madness*, *The New Antisemitism*, and *An American Bride in Kabul*. She co-founded the Association for Women in Psychology, the National Women's Health Network, and the Jerusalem-based *Original Women of the Wall*.

<sup>1</sup> "All Gender Restroom Map," Yale Office of LGBTQ Resources, <https://lgbtq.yale.edu/restrooms>.

<sup>2</sup> "Don't give skeletons a gender or categorise their race as this 'contributes to white supremacy,' woke activists demand," *Daily Mail*, July 23, 2022, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11042793/Dont-skeletons-gender-categorise-race-woke-activists-demand.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Meredith Wadman, "New paper ignites storm over whether teens experience 'rapid onset' of transgender identity," *Science*, August 30, 2018; David Geary, "Understanding the Rise of Transgender Identities," *Quillette*, February 10, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Bailey, "My Research on Gender Dysphoria Was Censored. But I Won't Be," *The Free Press*, July 10, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Wingfield, "Belmont says no to Promise Keepers after warning of 'mutilated bodies' in anti-trans post," *Baptist News Global*, June 21, 2023; Angele Latham, "Belmont University cancels Promise Keepers event, sparking debate," *The Tennessean*, June 30, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Bruce Bawer, "Happy Pride Month?," *Frontpage*, June 7, 2024, <https://www.frontpagemag.com/happy-pride-month/>

<sup>7</sup> Leo Sapir, "The White House's Transgender Tangle," *City Journal*, July 8, 2024.

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