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## The Gender Illusion

Or—*please* don't believe everything 'they' tell you...

I was watching the news the other day when someone, discussing the Scottish Government's proposed Gender Identity Law, said that she was aware of people being...

***“..born in the wrong body.”***

That expression brought me up short. Wouldn't that be like a manufactured commodity emerging from the factory in the “wrong” container? In a box, say, instead of the intended tin?

Suggests that a baby's body conceals some alien content at birth...

We all know about the birds and the bees, don't we? That a fertilized ovum becomes an embryo, which develops *in utero*, hopefully, into a viable organism—a baby. That all human embryos initially appear

female. And that embryos present gill slits, a ‘fishy’ heritage from our evolutionary past.

Indeed, the whole body is intimately interconnected, organically interactive and *holistic*, i.e. with the organic parts being *comprehensible only by reference to the whole body, functioning in its environment. No evidence of alien content*

What about other animals. Could a foal be born in the wrong body? Could a baby chimpanzee? Or, a baby elephant? Meaningless? Yes, I’m afraid it is... We mammals “get the whole body, and nothing but the whole body, that develops in the maternal womb.”

There may be fetal abnormalities, abortions. And even successful outcomes never produce offspring precisely as expected. But can we ever accept that the foal/chimpanzee/elephant/human is in the “wrong body”? Don’t believe so...

**I** was required to fill in a government form just two days ago. They asked me for my sex: Male. Age: 87. Gender Identity. ??? ***I don’t identify as a gender.*** Oh, there was a button for “Does not wish to answer.” But no button for “Your question does not compute.”

*“Gender identity as a concept was popularized by **John Money** in the 1960s. He founded the Gender Identity Clinic at Johns Hopkins University and formulated, defined, and coined the term “gender role” and later expanded it to gender-identity/role.”*

Younger people seem to have absorbed this gender identity notion. Not we older ones, of course—we were brought up on grammatical gender in Latin, French and German. “Girl” in German is neuter gender. In French, “two-syllable nouns ending in ‘e’ *without life*,” may be feminine gender.

Wonder how the *EU* gets on with “gender identity.”

**S**o, how did this all come about, and why have some people felt the need to “invent” gender as an independent version of sex, so that a person may be of one sex, *biologically*, but supposedly of a quite different sex/gender, or no sex/gender, or non-binary, shall we say, *psychologically*.

[And, is this related—or not—to those unfortunates attempting “transition” from one biological sex to another? Or, could that be a separate issue, concerned with resolving sexual

dysphoria medically? You know, I think it might. Quite separate.

Sexual dysphoria is a seriously distressing and disturbing condition that may have existed for the last 2 million years, or so—during which time, we affected humans—and, no doubt other affected animals, too—have had no choice but to “put up with it...”]

However, this “gender identity” invention is a puzzle. Stay with me, if you will, while we look at the issues holistically and organismically...i.e. the ‘systems approach.’

First, let’s consider humans, and the human condition. We humans are self aware. We are not the only animals like that: bottlenose dolphins, elephants and the Great Apes (gorillas, bonobos, chimpanzees, orang-utan and *homo sapiens*) are all thought to be self aware. And, *self-awareness* is generally offered as the *prime example* of *emergence* from the human brain.

Self awareness is not the only thing to *emerge* from the brain-in-the-body, however. In addition, we have: “*Personality*—the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual’s distinctive character. So,

*nature*, disposition, temperament, make-up, **persona**, **psyche**, **identity**.

- **Persona:** *the aspects of someone's character that are perceived by others*
- **Psyche:** *the human soul, **mind**, or spirit*
- **Identity:** *the characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is.....”*

*Oxford Dictionary*

And there's that word **identity** again. As an aspect of personality...and **persona** & **identity** must surely include a person's *sexual orientation*, or *sexuality*...

**H**ere's what a psychologist had to say about Personality:

*“We used to think of personality as a fixed entity within the mind. Then we realized that personality could be affected by interacting with other parts of the mind. Then we realized that personality could have an effect on the health of the whole body—and that the health of the whole body could affect the personality, too. And we came to realize that personality*

*could be affected by interacting with other personalities...”*

...all of which suggests that **persona**, **psyche** (*mind*) and even **identity**, once thought to be fixed, are not fixed, but can be affected by interacting with other parts of the **psyche** (*mind*), by the health of the whole body, and by interacting with other personalities.

**O**f course, there are differing views on this topic. For instance, there is so-called psychological dualism:

*The most common dualism psychology definition is **the view that the mind and the brain are two separate things**. The brain can be seen as a physical object only, while the mind is seen as something beyond the strictly physical.*

**S**o, what is the **psyche** (*mind*), then?

*“The element of a person that enables them to be aware of the world and their experiences, to think, and to feel; the faculty of consciousness and thought.”*

*“A person’s mental processes, contrasted with physical action”*

*“ A persons’ ability to think and to reason; the intellect.”*

*Oxford Dictionary*

**S**o, the systems approach would surmise that the mind, or *psyche*, is emergent from the brain and body, but that the mind/*psyche* inevitably *supervenes* on the brain, and cannot, therefore, escape from its organic roots.

[That is NOT to say that the mind/*psyche* can be *reduced* to the brain. But, neither can the one be independent of the other: whatever affects the brain may also affect the *psyche* (*mind*)...and *vice-versa*.]

**A**ll of which brings us back to *gender identity*. Is it *reasonable* to ascribe sex-posing-as-*gender* to an individual’s *psyche* that differs from their biological sex?

**Consider.** The *psyche* (*mind*) is not so much a *thing* as a *cerebral capability* for:—

- *Rational thought and intuition*
- *Logical analysis*
- *Communication*

- *Creating mental images (as in dreams)*
- *Perceiving the ‘outside’ world through its various senses, and converting the inverted 2-D binocular images from our retinas into upright 3-D images within the visual cortex, with dynamically integrated/correlated’ sights, sounds, feelings & smells—and memories, to fill in any blanks.(sic).*
- *Constructing mental images of surrounding environments including other people and the self:*
  - *Detecting movement and change in dynamic mental images, and reacting ‘appropriately.’*
  - *Coordinating responsive physical movements*
- *Storing and retrieving memories of faces, names, sounds, smells, feelings, events, music, narratives, loved ones, friends, foes, situations, threats, successful strategies and tactics, environments, etc., etc., etc...*
- *Imagination. Appreciation & Creativity*
  - *Spiritual “imagining” of supernatural deities, afterlives, etc. Religions, and, rules to live by...*
  - *Art, music, literature...*
- *Attraction, cheat detection, pair bonding, mating, procreation, parenting...*
- *Etc., etc., etc...the list is endless.*



If we can accept that the psyche, or mind is essentially a phenomenal *capability* within the brain, rather than a ‘thing’—physical OR transcendental—then it follows that “gender identity” is meaningless. *Capability* has neither gender nor sex...

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*“Gender identity,” then is an illusion, a fabrication, an imagining...well-meaning, no doubt, but illusory none-the-less.*

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Now, if you accept the above—and it seems to be rational and logical—*then it would seem that the Scottish Government, with its proposed Gender Identity Bill, may not be—shall we say—on the right track? And I need no longer face irrational questions about illusory gender identity on government forms!*

**W**e humans, with our big brains, are perhaps the most complex organisms on Planet Earth, and it seems to be inescapable that the embryonic and fetal development of such complex creatures may occasionally go more or less awry... Especially remembering that the role of sexual reproduction is to create variability between generations, such that some variations may be more suited to

a changing environment than others, and so preserve the respective genes through natural selection in an ever-changing world.

Of course, in the contemporary absence of natural selection to ‘weed out’ the unsuitable variations, we may just find that increasing numbers of us are, shall we say, not entirely suited to the present environment...

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