

**Submission  
No 4**

**INQUIRY INTO EDUCATION LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT (PARENTAL RIGHTS) BILL 2020**

**Name:** Dr Kevin Donnelly AM

**Date Received:** 11 February 2021

---

**Dr Kevin Donnelly AM - A Submission to the Education Legislation Amendment (Parental Rights) Bill 2020**

My professional qualifications and experience are as follows:

- B Arts, Dip Ed, M'Ed and a Ph'D focusing on the school curriculum and the nature and purpose of education (La Trobe University);
- Experience includes teaching for 18 years in Victorian secondary schools, acting as a board member of the Victorian Board of Studies and involvement in various commonwealth school related enquiries, co-chair of the 2014 review of the Australian National Curriculum and currently a senior research fellow at the Australian Catholic University;
- Author and journalist researching a writing extensively on the impact of progressive, centre-left theories on society, including political correctness, the culture wars and the impact of radical gender and sexuality theory; and
- Research and publications have had a particular focus on the neo-Marxist inspired Safe Schools program and the impact of radical gender theory on schools.

**Main Points**

1. International agreements including Article 5.1 (b) of the *Convention against Discrimination in Education* and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* guarantee parents' rights "to ensure the religious and moral education of their children (is) in conformity with their own convictions".
2. Parents are the primary educators and moral guardians of their children and the state has no right to interfere or indoctrinate students with radical and unsubstantiated views about gender and sexuality.
3. Teachers have a duty of care and a responsibility to educate students in a balanced, impartial and objective way free from bias or indoctrination. Promoting transgenderism as well as basing lessons on materials and resources associated with the Safe Schools program denies that responsibility.
4. The material and resources being promoted in schools endorsing gender theory, especially transgenderism, are misleading and unsubstantiated. While the Safe Schools material argues about 10% of students are same sex attracted the figure is closer to 0.8 for lesbians and 1.6 for homosexuals; unlike 14.7% of students being LGBTIQ+ as claimed by Safe Schools research shows the figure is closer to 3 to 5 per cent.
5. While justified as an anti-bullying program Safe Schools and associated websites and materials championing transgenderism are ideological in nature and based on neo-Marxist inspired gender theory calculated to undermine the family and society in general. Roz Ward, one of the designers of Safe Schools, argues "Marxism offers both the hope and the strategy needed to create a world where human sexuality, gender and how we relate to our bodies can blossom in extraordinary new and amazing ways that we can only try to imagine today". Ward also admits "Safe Schools Coalition is about supporting gender and sexual diversity, not about stopping bullying". She says it's about "sexual diversity, about same sex attraction, about being transgender, about being lesbian, gay, bisexual – say the words transgender, intersex".

6. The origins of radical gender theory that argues boys can be girls and girls can be boys, despite the fact that human biology proves otherwise, can be traced to Germany's Frankfurt School established in the early 1920s. The Marxist academics associated with the Frankfurt School argued the most effective way to overthrow the status quo and to remake Western societies was to engage in the culture wars by taking the long march through the institutions. One of the academics associated with the Frankfurt School was Wilhelm Reich whose seminal book *The Sexual Revolution* heralded a revolutionary and far reaching critique of traditional sexuality and institutions like marriage.
7. During the cultural revolution of the 60s and early 70s Reich's book was re-discovered and what become known as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ+) movement emerged as a significant global movement; especially in Western societies like Australia.
8. The 60s and early 70s was also a time when the word 'gender' was redefined from being a grammatical expression to one mistakenly suggesting sexuality was fluid, dynamic and limitless. Primarily responsible is the researcher John Money from the Johns Hopkins University who redefined the word 'gender' to refer to an individual's sexual identity. Instead of biology determining whether a person was female or male, Money introduced the description 'gender' on the basis that sexuality was a fluid and dynamic social construct. Money's obituary in the *New York Times* describes this ground-breaking research as follows: 'He was the first scientist to provide a language to describe the psychological dimensions of human sexual identity: no such language had existed before'.
9. Proven by research carried out both here and in America the reality is approximately 98% of adults identify as women or men. Given human biology and the fact the overwhelming percentage of babies are born with either XX or XY chromosomes that should not surprise. As argued by the American College of Pediatricians, "human sexuality is an objective biological trait" and "Human sexuality is binary by design with the obvious purpose being the reproduction and flourishing of our species". It's important to note that opposition to transgenderism crosses ideological boundaries. While criticism is normally associated with conservatives, America's radical feminist Camille Paglia is also very critical. Paglia argues the "DNA of every cell of the human body is inflexibly coded as male or female from birth to death". Australian feminist Germaine Greer and tennis great Martina Navratilova (who identifies as a lesbian) are also opposed to transgenderism.
10. Normalising transgenderism, in particular, is dangerous to young and vulnerable students who, for whatever reason, are experiencing gender dysphoria. Illustrated by the British High Court's decision to ban puberty blockers for children under 16 the reality (and in opposition to the Safe Schools material) is that young adolescents are not in a position to make a critically informed and rational decision.

Given the above I fully endorse the intention of the Parental Rights Bill to ensure schools recognise that parents are primarily responsible for the development and formation of moral and ethical standards and the social and political values in their children, including an understanding of personal identity and questions of gender and sexuality and to prohibit schools, teachers and training courses from teaching gender fluidity, and for other purposes.