

## Impact on Adolescent Girls and Young Women

Girls are experiencing an epidemic of sexual harassment in schools and abuse within relationships<sup>1</sup> Abuse is based on the fact that girls are the female sex, not on how they identify. Sexual abuse of the female body and harassment based on the physical attributes of the female body is a form of discrimination and misogyny towards women and girls as a sex. The ways in which this discrimination is further increased, and protections taken away, by legislation which prioritises "gender identity" over "sex" are already evident.

- Online bullying and harassment from the transgender community: rape and death threats, offensive sexualised language, and a whole new form of abuse eg. rape by a "woman" with a "lady penis" <sup>2</sup> Girls and young women are especially vulnerable to being silenced by bullying tactics
- The erasure of language with which to describe, or even recognise, the abuse as sex-based or to recognise the perpetrators as male, without being labelled "transphobic"
- The erasure of the right to expect understanding and support for this abuse as an aspect of male violence against women if it cannot be named as such
- The pressure on young people to be "inclusive" silences girls who experience abuse, for fear of being seen as transphobic and "exclusive"
- The distinction between boys and girls, if defined by gender identity rather than sex, takes away girls' right to define themselves, understand and talk about themselves as a sex, ie as female
- Girls grow up to believe they have no right to their own boundaries as a sex; that they must accept male bodied people in their private spaces and that the gender identity and feelings of males are more important than the biological reality of being female and the feelings of discomfort, embarrassment or fear that girls may experience
- Girls who speak up to protect their private spaces are condemned for their ignorance and lack of understanding of transgender people, the accusation that they are right-wing/religious/prudes and their need for "re-education" - another powerful way of silencing girls and a form of victim-blaming
- The strong need for young people to be seen as "inclusive" makes it impossible for girls to demand their own spaces as a sex, or even recognise the need and the right to those spaces
- Young lesbians encouraged to redefine themselves as "trans guys" on online trans forums on Tumblr and Reddit are not protected from the indoctrination of these sites whose message is only validated and reinforced by all trusted adults in their lives such as teachers
- Young lesbians are being pressured and bullied online to accept "lesbian" males as sexual partners and being accused of transphobia if they reject someone with a penis. Sexual orientation is effectively redefined as gender orientation<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeg/91/91.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://terfisaslur.com/>

<sup>3</sup> From Gendered Intelligence website: "Sex education generally has quite a lot of emphasis about bodies, but within the trans community we realise that it's **identity that's more important**. How you look, how you speak and how you have sex are all aspects of you, **but your identities [sic] paramount. A woman is still a woman, even if she enjoys getting blow jobs. A man is still a man, even if he likes getting penetrated vaginally.**"