

Speech at WRNA Speak Out 21 November 2023 (unabridged)

This is what a lesbian looks like.

I am a lesbian who was born a woman—and I do NOT have a penis.

Everyone knows what a woman and a lesbian is—don't they?

But, no, not any more.

Not the Australian Human Rights Commission.

That august institution of the law and the state has recently ruled that a lesbian group in Victoria cannot “discriminate” against men who claim they are a lesbian, and that the group must allow such men to attend their lesbian only function at the Victorian Pride Centre.

This scenario is coming to NSW if the Minns government brings in gender affirming legislation.

Such legislation joins the bandwagon of similar state-sanctioned changes in other jurisdiction around the world. In Australia, changes were made towards the end of Julia Gillard's time as prime minister, when the Sex Discrimination Act of 1984 was amended in 2013 to include sexuality, gender and intersex as protected categories.

How did this happen and why?

A key time was 2006, when a group of legal and human rights experts gathered in Yogyakarta, on the Indonesian island of Java (a nice place for a working holiday) where they produced a document containing a set of principles that they presented as best practice in human rights. These principles treated with equal attention the rights to define oneself in terms of sexual orientation and the undefine “gender identity”.

Principle 3 argues for a right to have gender identity replace sex on all identity documents and in all situations, and has led to the erosion of women's, and therefore lesbian, sex-based rights.

More recently, one of those experts has recanted. He now states they “got it wrong” because none of them considered the effects these principles would have on women's rights and they had not considered how fully intact men would invade women's spaces, and thus increase the risk of harm to women from male sexual harassment, assault and violence.

That expert—a Professor of Human Rights Law At Kings College London—now believes that, instead of changing laws to recognise “gender identity,” which falsely equated gender identity with biological sex, and therefore with the false idea that it is possible to change your sex, he states it would have been better to simply protect people from violence, harassment or discrimination aimed at their gender non-conforming appearance or behaviour.

We are here today to remind the Minns government that gender affirming legislation they are thinking about introducing into NSW is **NOT** progressive. It is being driven by lobby groups under the rainbow umbrella of LGBTQ+. They do **NOT** speak for the majority of people with an LGB sexual orientation; they speak for a TQ+ men's rights movement that seeks to impose their rights over those of women, lesbians and others.

Lesbians say NO to gender identity—it is a fiction manufactured from sexual desires that are not those of sexual orientation based on loving relations. Rather, ideas about

gender identity (ie, gender ideology) are based on individual performances of appearance and the desire for perfection in the identity one wants rather than acceptance of one's body as it is. [They have been historically driven by fetishistic desires that eroticise clothing or other objects, such as the autogynephilic man's sexual arousal when wearing women's clothing, or the paraphilias of being sexually aroused by, for example, performing as a baby (eg wearing a diaper with a dummy in your mouth) or pedophilic sexual arousal in the presence of, or by images of, children. Arousal can increase with public attention or with secrecy.]

Other unanticipated outcomes of gender ideology's effects are young girls wanting to change their sex as they develop their sexual characteristics and feel uncomfortable with the way men, media and society objectify and sexualise them. It seems far easier to just become a man and enjoy their more privileged position. [The same goes for women who don't want to wear stereotypically female clothing because of the unwanted sexual attention that draws to them.] And the same goes for lesbians and gay men who can entertain the mistaken idea that a gender clinic can change their sex so they can perform the appearance of being in an apparently socially acceptable heterosexual relationship. And all of these performances are being given the veneer of being fashionably new wave liberation.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Gender ideology consists of [a complexity of] smoke and mirrors, of lies and power grabbing, of insecure identities and self promotion, of appeals to people's kindness and acceptance.

Yes, by all means, we need to be kind and care for each other and our relations with each other, just as we need to learn better how to care for our planet through our relations with all life forms and the whole environment.

We have seen many social and technological changes throughout history: the witch hunts of the 14th to 18th centuries the scientific revolution of the 16th & 17th centuries, the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century, the Enlightenment of the 17th to 19th century, French Revolution of the 18th century, the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries, and the suffragette movement of the 19th century.]

I was born in 1948, the same year as the United Nations, a time for healing and searching for hope after the traumatic vortex of WWII. An Australian feminist by the name of Jessie Street[, and a member of the Labour Party,] fought hard and succeed in getting sex added to the United Nations Charter in the clause 'without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion' wherever it occurred.

In this 21st century, we are being traumatised yet again in Australia and elsewhere from a succession of crises: the flare up of hostilities in the Middle East, the shock and fear of contagion of Covid, the financial shock of the Global Financial Crisis of 2007 to 2009, the 9/11 attack on the US in 2001 and the announcement in 1988 warning about global warming and the depletion of the ozone layer that the United Nations now declares is a global climate crisis that threatens equity and the very survival of large populations of people..

As a lesbian and a feminist, I call for women's rights again to be respected as a basic form of care for all women as we strive to maintain global security, peace and social justice for all.