Twitter Thread by Caroline - Real Feminists XX ■■



Caroline - Real Feminists XX ■■
@radicalhag

I think the UK trans debate has teased out the sticking points for feminists, and it might be useful to lay them out given that the battle in the US, with a very different legislative environment, is just starting.

The GRA of 2004 gave trans people the ability to change legal sex via a GRC, but only if they had a psychiatric diagnosis of dysphoria and only after having lived in role for 2 years. The spousal veto gave spouses a chance to annul or obtain a favourable divorce.

While this ultimately created the loophole in women's rights that we've been fighting against in the last few years, it catered for a tiny number of dysphoric transsexuals and so did not have an enormous impact.

Discussions with trans friends and allies make it clear that, although surgery wasn't a requirement for a GRC, the diagnostic procedures were expected to trap and exclude males who did not want surgery, thereby preventing fetishists and opportunists from exploiting a GRC.

The Equality Act of 2010 defined the various protected characteristics, including both sex and 'gender reassignment', and provided for sex-based exemptions, under the auspices of which it is legal to exclude trans people from some single-sex spaces and services.

The campaign to reform the GRA to remove medical gatekeeping and make changing gender a matter of self-id was where women put our foot down. The GRA gave a very limited group of MtF transsexuals access to our spaces. Self-id would have made this any man who said he was a woman.

In addition, transactivists were demanding the removal of sex-based exemptions from the Equality Act. This would have left women with no ability to exclude males from any space on any basis, thereby removing every protection gained in the last century of feminism.

This is the effect of self-identified 'gender identity' (the ideological concept on which this rides) combined with the deliberate conflation of gender identity with sex. There is no possible point at which women can draw a line.

Our resistance to this campaign was successful; I think most people recognise that it isn't reasonable to allow any male to identify into women's spaces on his say-so. It was, however, self-id which was rejected, leaving women's rights open to further attacks.

Transactivists claim that the current process for obtaining a GRC is invasive and onerous, and continue to push for a reform they claim is 'merely administrative' (this doesn't gel with the attacks on the Eq2010 sex-based exemptions, though: https://t.co/MpxjXv5IoL)

They use the struggles of dysphoric people as a weapon, and by pushing back against self-id we replicate this. Personally I think the best place to attack the ideology is on the conflation of gender identity with sex: https://t.co/zN0ziAZzyM.

> If we want fair play for both women and trans women, then it is time to confront the "trans women are women" mantra head-on, highlight why it is misogynistic and deeply harmful to women, and refuse to tolerate its use.
>
> — Caroline - Real Feminists XX \U0001f1ff\U0001f1e6 (@radicalhag) January 16, 2018

This means that we say yes to all the demands of transactivists *except* the one which conflates TW with W, which effectively forces the declaration of a third (and possibly fourth) gender and the provision of facilities for them.

It means we're onboard with self-id, access to medical care, non-discrimination, ability to serve in the military etc, which of course we should be in any case. We do NOT want to get gaslit into a kneejerk rejection of anything trans, which makes us sound like rightwingers.

BUT it also means we insist on a positive, sex-based definition of woman, and force TRAs to show their hand. We know perfectly well what we're dealing with here; we want to force them to demonstrate to the public that their agenda is access to women's spaces, not trans rights.

This worked like a bomb when the UK govt provided a trans prison wing so they could remove MtFs from the female estate. The squawking and wailing about being 'othered' and 'caged' was epic, and Joe Public went "Yeah, right."

Basically it's a position which says: you're free to have a gender identity. You're not free to tell me *I* have a gender identity. And you are definitely not free to tell me that your gender identity is in any way comparable to my sex.