

Opening Address by Dr. Gad Saad (Canadian Senate, May 10, 2017)

I have spent 20+ years working at the nexus of evolutionary psychology and the behavioral sciences, a central feature of which is to explore how evolutionary and biological principles shape our human nature. At the root of this grand objective is the profoundly obvious reality that humans are a sexually reproducing, sexually dimorphic species consisting of reproductively viable males and females. This in no way rejects the equally obvious fact that the rich human tapestry includes other personhoods such as intersexed and transgendered individuals.

Following a 2014 lecture that I delivered at Wellesley College on the thought police, I had a conversation with a student who argued passionately that professors should poll their students at the start of class about their gender identities. While most might have construed her position as outlandish back then, some now consider it too tame.

Take the Office of BGLTQ Student Life at Harvard University who recently distributed a flyer to combat transphobia wherein it was stated that one's gender identity and gender expression could change daily and that "fixed binaries and biological essentialism" constitute "transphobic misinformation" that is tantamount to "systemic violence."

Was the Wellesley student transphobic since she did not potentially consider the daily fluidity of one's gender identity? What about minute-to-minute changes? Should professors poll their students every 10th minute of every lecture to find out if their gender identities have changed since last asked?

Should academics no longer design surveys wherein a participant's biological sex is measured as a binary variable? Would this be "transphobic systemic violence" since it perpetuates "fixed binaries and biological essentialism"?

Facebook and NYC allow 50+ and 31 genders respectively as part of one's profile. Should professors develop surveys that recognize all of these genders? Would it be "systemically violent" to not do so?

Should evolutionists no longer explain how sexual selection works, namely the fundamental process by which sex differences evolve? This mechanism recognizes two sexes and hence it might "disenfranchise" those who reject "fixed binaries and biological essentialism."

Bottom line: Foundational tenets of evolution might be construed as legal transgressions under Bill C-16.

Ongoing governmental efforts are pushing for a gender-neutral society to cater to an extraordinarily small number of non-binary or non-gendered people who feel marginalized at having to provide their biological sex as part of their profiles. This is the tyranny of the minority. 99% of the population should acquiesce to having a default

feature of their personhood erased because a few individuals might be inconvenienced by it.

The slippery slope of totalitarian lunacy awaits us. Some are now proposing that racial categories constitute “biological essentialism” and instead we should respect racial self-identities. This is known as transracialism (as per Rachel Dolezal, born white but who self-identifies as black). How long before the government tables legislation to combat bigotry against the transracial? What about fat phobia? There are many more Canadians who are overweight than transgendered, and the collective abuse that they experience is sizeable. Should the government legislate such hate? The road to hell is indeed paved with good intentions.

As someone who escaped religious persecution in Lebanon and whose parents were kidnapped in Beirut, I fully support the protection of all individuals from institutional discrimination. That said I am weary of the ethos of victimhood that has parasitized our culture. The operative motto is not “I think therefore I am” but “I’m a victim therefore I am.” I refer to this condition as *Collective Munchausen*, namely the pathological quest for sympathy and empathy by proclaiming victim status using identity politics and intersectionality. People have the right to live as equal citizens under the law. They do not have the right to demand that their identities be coddled and celebrated lest they might otherwise get offended. Thank you.