

Eagle Forum Report

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Lives Are Worth Living

CHILD ABUSE IN THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

by Erin Brewer, who grew up in Salt Lake City, earned a B.S. from Hampshire College, and a Master's and Ph.D. from Utah State University in Education.

"Why do you feel like you were assigned the wrong sex at birth?"

"Did your gender dysphoria start as a result of something like a trauma?"

"Have your parents or friends encouraged you to believe you are trans?"

These are just a few questions that a therapist is no longer able to ask children in states that have banned "conversion therapy." According to the Equality Act, which was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, "conversion therapy" is a "discredited practice" and "is a form of discrimination that harms LGBTQ people by undermining individuals' sense of self-worth, increasing suicide ideation and substance abuse, exacerbating family conflict, and contributing to second class status."

When the general public hears the term "conversion therapy", they are encouraged to believe that it means electro-shock therapy or other physically and mentally abusive types of intervention designed to turn a gay person straight, otherwise known as reparative therapy. "Conversion therapy" is an umbrella term that is not defined in the Equality Act, but generally refers to any form of therapy

that does not *affirm* sexual orientation or gender identity, including talk therapy.

Despite the claims of activists, there is no evidence that failing to "affirm" a child's sexual orientation or gender identity "undermines" self-worth or increases suicidal ideation and substance abuse or that the therapy exacerbates family conflict.

Instead, the evidence suggests that both sexual orientation and gender identity are influenced by environmental factors, including peer and family pressures. Early childhood trauma can also cause children to identify as gay or transgender.

Children who believe they are transgender are encouraged to "transition" and adopt stereotypical characteristics of the opposite sex. Transitioning to the opposite sex includes starting puberty blockers or cross-gender hormones as young as eight years old. Girls are having their breasts amputated as young as thirteen, known as "top surgery". Boys are being castrated as

young as sixteen, known as "bottom surgery".

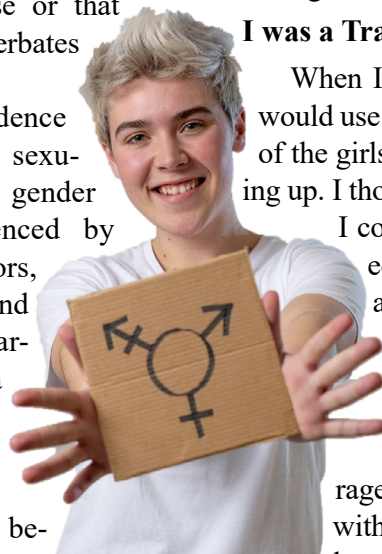
A therapist's referral is generally required for children to start these treatments. In states where "conversion therapy" bans have been enacted, a therapist is unable to question the desires of a child to start medically transitioning — because a therapist asking questions would be failing to "affirm" the trans feelings of the child.

I was a Transgender Child

When I could get away with it, I would use the boys bathroom instead of the girls. I practiced peeing standing up. I thought if I could master this,

I could "pass" as a boy. I hated it when I had to dress as a girl. I hated my female body. Sometimes I would put duct tape over my vagina to hide it. Sometimes I would go into a rage and pound my vagina with a rock until it was swollen with bruises. Sometimes, when I brushed my hair, I would experience such self-loathing that I would beat my head with the brush, sharp bristles tearing into my scalp until my hair was matted with blood.

My first grade teacher, Ms. Hick- en at Howard R. Driggs Elementary



(Continued on page 2)

School, was concerned about my behavior and my insistence that I was a boy, so she referred me to the school psychologist. The school psychologist met with my mother, my teacher, and the school principal and made some suggestions for how they could help me feel more comfortable with myself.

Some of the recommendations from the psychologist included putting me in Bluebirds (Campfire Girls) or Brownies (Girl Scouts) so that I was around other girls, encouraging me to stop wearing my brother's hand-me-downs, and exposing me to strong women who would be good role models. In states where "conversion therapy" is banned, it is illegal for therapists to make the simple recommendations that I had.

A man I recently met told me that as a child he was sexually assaulted by an uncle. As he grew up, he struggled to make friendships with other boys. He craved male companionship and started engaging in same-sex relationships. But today, a therapist's suggestion that the boy is not old enough to decide if he is gay or straight is not permitted in states where "conversion therapy" is banned. Bans on "conversion therapy" prevent therapists from telling children that they are too young or too immature to be having gay sex.

Both this man and I were sexually assaulted as children. His assault led him to believe he was gay. My assault resulted in my developing a trans identity with the belief that if I wasn't a girl, I wouldn't be sexually assaulted again.

If he were a child today, "conversion therapy" bans would require therapists to tell him that he was born a homosexual and that being a homosexual is normal and natural. His therapist would never address the underlying cause of his same-sex attraction, and he would be denied therapy

that would help him understand the impact the sexual assault had on him.

If I were a child today, "conversion therapy" bans would require my school psychologist to report to my teacher, principal, and mother that I was a "trans" kid. The school would allow me to dress like a boy, be called by the boy's name [I'd picked out "Timothy".] and use male pronouns. The school psychologist would likely insist that I be allowed to use the boys' bathrooms at school and play on the boys' teams. The school psychologist would "affirm" my belief that I was born in the wrong body and that my self-hatred was valid.

Between kindergarten and first grade my brother and I were abducted by two men and taken to a public restroom. I was brutally sexually assaulted and my brother was not. In my child's mind, I thought that being a boy would prevent me from ever being hurt the way those men hurt me. Not my mother, not my school teacher, not my school psychologist knew that my trans identity was based upon my desire to keep my body from being sexually violated again. It took years of therapy before I understood the connection. If therapists had not been allowed to question my gender identity, I never would have made the connection. I never would have understood that my hatred of my female body was the result it being violently violated. I never would have realized that my transgender identity was a coping mechanism.

The talk therapy that helped me and many others is now illegal in many states. Children are being denied appropriate mental health services and therapists are required by

law to "affirm" a child's transgender identity or same sex attraction.

Transgender activists have adopted a philosophy regarding children with gender identity issues; children should be transitioned to the gender they identify with, first socially, and as they reach puberty, medically. These activists deny that talk therapy is helpful in managing and resolving gender dysphoria, and assert, without any proof, that it is harmful. No evidence supports transgender advocates' contention that transitioning children is benefi-

cial in any way, but there is strong evidence proving that transitioning can be harmful. A Swedish study shows that those who transition have a higher suicide rate.

Transgender advocates scare parents, telling them that if they do not allow their children to transition, their child is at risk of depression, anxiety, drug use, homelessness, and suicide. This fear-mongering convinces parents to allow children to dictate name changes, preferred pronouns, and medical interventions even though we recognize that children are not capable of making these kinds of life-altering decisions in any other situation.

There is no other situation in which therapists are encouraged, required, or legislated to affirm a child who has inaccurate perceptions about themselves. A child who suffers from anorexia is not "affirmed" in her perception that she is fat. A child who suffers from bi-polar disorder is not "affirmed" in a belief that he will rule the world when he is manic. A child who is crippled by anxiety is not "affirmed" that her anxiety is a healthy coping mechanism. 



IS THERE LIFE AFTER *ROE V. WADE*?

by Allan E. Parker, the President of The Justice Foundation, and Phillip Jauregui, J.D., the President of Judicial Action Group, which monitors the federal judicial selection process.

Is there life after *Roe v. Wade*? Can such a thing be possible? Will there come a time when abortion is no longer a constitutional right in America?

Yes, it is not only possible, but we believe it will happen soon. This crime against humanity — which is the legalization of abortion by the Supreme Court — can and should soon be reversed by the Court itself.

Over a quarter million Americans have now signed a petition calling abortion a crime against humanity and asking the Court to reverse its abortion cases. There are new reasons today that will convince an open-minded court to reverse legalized abortion. But when it is reversed, even if abortion were banned everywhere in America, no woman would have to care for a so-called “unwanted” child.

First, we have a new and little-known way to eliminate the perceived burdens of child-care and parental responsibility. Under the Safe Haven laws, a woman can, within a set time after birth, leave her child with the state with no questions asked, usually at an EMS or fire station or hospital emergency room and not be charged with abandonment. The state will then take care of that child until he or she has been adopted or reaches age 18. Many, many parents are waiting to adopt newborn babies. Every state in the union now has such laws.

The Safe Haven law eliminates the need for any pregnant woman to care for an “unwanted” child. There is no longer a legal rationale for abortion. Why do women want abortions? Because they cannot care

for or don’t want the “burden” of child care. As the Texas abortion facility owner in the most recent Supreme Court abortion case stated at trial, “*nobody gets pregnant to have an abortion.*”

The vast majority of reasons for abortion are essentially eliminated by society’s willingness to totally remove the burden of child care after the baby is born. For example, if a woman is afraid that having a baby would interfere with her ability to work or continue her education, she can simply leave the child with her local hospital or fire station at birth or within the set time allowed and she won’t have a responsibility that conflicts with her future plans.

Simply drop the child off. No questions asked. No complicated legal procedure. She can transfer the responsibility to society. Now, in order for parents to avoid the substantial cost of child-care it is no longer necessary for them have an abortion which takes the life of a baby, and injures the parent emotionally and often physically.

Of course, there is still the cost and difficulty of maternity and childbirth. No one can take that lightly, but maternity is not a disease. Moreover, the remedy for the difficulty of maternity need not be the extreme

case of taking the child’s life. Furthermore, it is likely that charities and public funding would be available to help women — especially low-income women and single women with the costs of maternity and childbirth.

These are practical reasons *why* *Roe* should be reversed. It is quite another matter to discuss *how* the Supreme Court will go about reversing *Roe* under the principles of judicial precedent. Legal scholars generally agree that the Supreme Court can reverse itself when:

“[t]he decision has been met with general dissatisfaction, protest, or severe criticism Similarly, the courts consider whether there has been a significant change in circumstances since the legal rule was promulgated.”



So, as the Supreme Court goes about reversing *Roe* here are factors they would likely consider.

Serious Criticism

Abortion is more than simply wrong; it is gravely, seriously wrong. It is in fact a crime against humanity. Crimes against humanity occur when the government withdraws legal protection from a class of human beings resulting in serious deprivation or death. One example is the *Dred Scott* case wherein the U.S. Supreme

(Continued on page 4)

Court made slavery a supposedly permanent part of the Constitution; this resulted in the Civil War. The Supreme Court also committed a crime against humanity in 1896 when it legally approved segregation in a decision called *Plessy v. Ferguson*. In this case, serious criticism led the court to change course. Forty-six years after *Roe*, the criticism against it is not only gravely serious but increasing. It is time for the Court to follow its own example of ending segregation by reversing *Plessy v. Ferguson* with the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* and today reverse *Roe* and end this present crime against humanity. *Plessy* was 58 years old when it was reversed.

New Science

In 1973, in *Roe*, the Supreme Court said: *"We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins. When those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy, and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary, at this point in the development of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to the answer."*

The time has arrived: science now shows that life begins at conception. The U.S. 8th Circuit Court of Appeals has already ruled there is adequate scientific evidence to support a requirement that abortionists be required to disclose to women that abortion is the "termination of the life of a separate, unique, living human being." Under the Law of Precedent, when science changes, the law changes. Precedent does not require that Courts adhere to the lack of scientific knowledge of 1973. The Court itself called the child in the womb "**infant life**" in *Gonzales v. Carhart* and it is past time to

adequately protect this scientifically proven life.

Abortion Hurts Women

In 1973, the Supreme Court claimed it was helping women by giving them freedom from unwanted child care, but surely the Court did not know that millions of women would suffer the terrible tragedy of "devastating psychological consequences," and "depression and severe loss of self-esteem" by killing their own child. We now know that abortion hurts women, and it is time to better protect all women from the lie that abortion doesn't hurt women.

A Better Alternative to Abortion

There is now a better way to give women freedom from unwanted child-care without killing the child. As is discussed above, Safe Haven laws in all 50 states allow a woman, at no cost, to drop her child off at all hospitals or fire stations or other locations within a certain period of time after birth and the state or adoptive parents will take care of the baby. Unlike abortion, it is free — equally available to the rich and the poor. There is no required legal procedure and the mother does not have to travel to another state. Coat hanger abortions remain un-necessary and this change in circumstances warrants that *Roe* be reversed.

Millions of People Want to Adopt Newborn Babies

What will happen if women choose Safe Haven laws and give life to their babies? Those babies will be welcomed into loving homes. Over a million people in America are waiting to adopt newborn children partially because we have a huge infertility problem in America. They are praying for a child. A change in circumstances of the availability of adoptive

parents is a factor that weighs heavily in favor of reversing *Roe*.

At long last, the abortion wars can end because every child in America is "legally" wanted and the demand for the abortion of "unwanted" children can be stopped. Consensus is possible. The reversal of *Roe*, *Doe* and *Casey* is legally warranted. Moreover, it is a win-win for society as a whole; any individual woman who is not yet ready or able to care for her child; and for unborn women (and men) who deserve for their lives to be recognized and protected by the Highest Court in our Land. 

Editor's Note:

A BAD LAW COMING TO YOUR CITY AND STATE

Politicians of all stripes are trying to get on the bandwagon of passing laws to "ban conversion therapy." Please work to stop these laws from passing, because these new laws *harm* children. Politicians are not trained therapists nor medical professionals, but they are trying to regulate the speech of counselors.

Politicians should not try to legislate biology. No one can choose to change his or her sex; the chromosomes in the blood forever identify the gender at birth. There is nothing wrong with a therapist helping a child to realize who he is — and not to try to medicate or sterilize the child to fit a "transgender" agenda. 



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