



SIBYLS LOGO - ROBYN GOLDEN - MANN 28/MAY/2018

“It matters not what someone is born but what they grow to be.” Albus Dumbledore

Sibyls Newsletter 109

Dear Sibyls

Forgive me if I start by being a little political. Since my last pontification to you we have had the election and Sir Keir’s resounding victory, inviting comparison with Tony Blair’s landslide in 1997. The Blair/Brown governments, whatever the disappointment one might ultimately feel about them, repealed Section 28 and passed the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010. 1997 was a time of hopeful new beginnings. Lots of trans people, over the subsequent decades, felt encouraged and permitted to start coming out. Then of course came the reaction to our greater visibility, the backlash and “moral panic” and for years now progress has stopped and we have lived in some fear of whatever regressively transphobic measures the Conservative governments under Johnson, Truss and Sunak might visit upon us. Liz Truss, incidentally, blamed her downfall not on her own poor judgement but on the machinations of the “deep state” which she alleged included a cabal of trans people.....

Well, let’s hope that under Starmer, even if there is not the same hope as in 1997, a little sanity has returned. For trans people, the way in which the new government handles the Cass Report is likely to be a key test of their credentials. It is worrying the way in which Starmer and Streeting have equivocated, sat on the fence and even rowed back on some of their previously positive positions on trans people. They were quick to welcome the Cass Report which is now seen, in the eyes of many reputable medical authorities, including the BMA, to be biased and flawed. I have included in this newsletter Tina Beardsley’s excellent critique of the Report. There is more at stake here than just the health and well-being of trans children, crucially important as that is – the way in which the government responds to Cass (and the responses to it) will likely set the tone for the treatment of all trans people. As trans Christians we have to be people of hope so let us pray that Starmer and Streeting

will listen to their better angels, ignore the transphobes in the media, churches and their own party and remove the fear that has hung over the trans community for far too long.

Thank you for reading the newsletter. I hope there is some material here to amuse and enjoy as well as provoke. Let me finish by saying it is such a pleasure to meet other Sibyls each month by zoom or in person at St Anne's for south-eastern Sibyls. Our residential weekend at Purley Chase is now not far off and I look forward to seeing a good many of you there for a time, I am assured, of fun, revelry, good food and drink and laughter.

Pauline

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THE SIBYLS

Christian Spirituality Group for Gender-Variant People

Sibyls is a nationwide group for Christian transgender, non-binary and intersex people, partners and allies. Sibyls offer companionship along your journey, and supports advocacy work with churches and faith groups on behalf of trans people. Sibyls seek to fulfil the two great commandments of Jesus: to love God, and to love each other as ourselves, which we hope to do by -

Living faithfully - accepting yourself as you worship, and in day-to-day life

Spiritual upholding – encountering the freedom to pray and to seek God's will

Fellowship - sharing with Christians who understand what it is to be transgender

Listening – respectfully and confidentially to each other

Sibyls' website

Visit our website www.sibyls.co.uk to find more information on joining the Sibyls confidential mailing list; planned events, supportive churches and inclusive faith groups; resources, such as books and sign-posted web links.

Facebook Groups

There are two Facebook groups which enable Sibyls and other trans Christians to communicate and exchange views and news. They are:

- Sibyls Members' Group – send a request via Facebook to join this confidential group
- TranschristianUK – an open group, do join up if you are not already a member.

Contact Sibyls committee

By post - c/o 10, Ffordd Las, Rhyl, LL18 2DY

By email - enquiries@sibyls.co.uk

Sibyls' Listening Service

We know that sometimes it is necessary to talk to someone who understands the basics of being transgender and Christian. If a listening conversation could be of particular help, you can call any of the following:

Jenny-Anne Bishop OBE jennyannebuk@yahoo.co.uk Telephone: 01745 337144 or 07500 741955

Pauline Fleck pauline.fleck@btinternet.com Telephone 07581 553357

Meetings for personal conversation and sharing

It is possible that some of you would appreciate the opportunity for more personal conversation on Zoom, rather than the regular large sessions. We can help arrange meet-ups for just three Sibyls - this would enable easier direct conversation and sharing (with some ground rules). If you would like this please email pauline.fleck@btinternet.com and we will see what is possible.

The Sibyls newsletter archive is now available on:

<http://sm.gndr.org.uk/newsletters3/newspaperarchiveopen.html>

Also orders of service liturgies etc for past events is available at:

<http://sm.gndr.org.uk/meetings3.htm>

2024 Services and Events

We are currently planning the following events:

Sibyls Zoom Services and Fellowship Meetings are planned to take place **ONLINE** on usually the 25th of the month. We aim to send out zoom links a week or so beforehand.

In person services and gatherings at St Anne's Church Soho London. The next meeting will take place at 18.00 on Wednesday 11th December.

These services and gatherings are **NOT ONLINE**.

The Sibyls residential weekend at Purley Chase in 2024 will be from 15-17 November. (Especially well organised Sibyls might like to note that Purley Chase has also been booked for 14-16 November 2025 and for 13-15 November 2026.)

Here is the programme and booking form for the weekend:

Purley Chase November 2024 Sybil Weekend Programme

15th - 17th November

Quite deliberately it will be a much lighter hearted affair than last year involving watching a movie, arts and crafts activities, games and sports as the opportunity to meet and chat informally. There will be the usual disco of course and a Eucharist service. Visits to nearby places of interest such as Coventry Cathedral, the National Memorial Arboretum or a local nature ramble are all possible. A more serious part of the weekend will be on Saturday morning when Pauline Fleck will lead a discussion on *Trans Health Care in the light of the Cass Report*. Lorraine has offered to be the weekend photographer and will be taking informal portrait photos throughout the weekend for those who would like them. Also, Lorraine hopes to have A/V recording of her D-Day trip to share with us.

The proposed programme

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Arrivals from 15.00 with afternoon tea available

FRIDAY EVENING

Supper - 18.00

A movie to watch after supper which will be *Pride*; a 2014 historical comedy drama film written by Stephen Beresford and directed by Matthew Warchus based on a true story. It depicts a group of lesbian and gay activists who raised money to help families affected by the British miners' strike in 1984 at the outset what will become the lesbian and gays support for the minors group. If you're looking for spoilers visit [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pride_\(2014_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pride_(2014_film))

SATURDAY MORNING

Breakfast from 08.30

10.00 *Trans Health Care in the light of the Cass Report*

A discussion session led by Pauline Fleck. Please note that this session is entirely optional and alternative activities will be available.

Elevenes

Games and craft type hobbies

Chess led by Mary

Cards led by Peter

Napkin and paper flower making - led by Hilda

Painting and drawing led by Amy

Construction kits - bring your own

Sports

Table tennis and snooker challenge led by Pauline

Lunch at 13.00

SATURDAY AFTERNOON FROM 14.00

More games and craft type hobbies and sports

Or

A trip out somewhere: Coventry Cathedral, the National Memorial Arboretum, a local nature ramble; to be decided on the day

Afternoon tea available.

SATURDAY EVENING.

Supper at 18.00

The disco at 19.30

SUNDAY MORNING

Breakfast at 08.30

Free time before Eucharist which could be used for sharing of the ups and downs of our trans lives or for quiet reflection

Elevenes

Eucharist Led by Nicki at 11.00

Lunch at 13.00

SUNDAY AFTERNOON -

Depart from 14.00

BOOKING FORM FOR THE SIBYLS WEEKEND 15th – 17th November 2024

Your name _____

Your address

Post code

Phone No _____

Email address _____

Is your partner attending? If so partner's name _____

Are you a member of the Sibyls?

Yes No

If not a member, you are welcome to attend but in applying you are agreeing to keep confidential to non-members the identities of all those taking part.

Please tick one accommodation option:

En-suite rooms:

£198 full board per person (full-board is Friday dinner until Sunday lunch)

- Ensuite Double room
- Ensuite Single room
- Adapted ensuite facilities with wet room (*There are 3 double rooms and 2 adapted rooms with wet facilities*)
- Sharing an ensuite twin room:

Name of other occupant you are willing to share the room with

Standard dormitory - accommodation with shared bathroom:

- £172 full board per person** (full-board is Friday dinner until Sunday lunch)

Not staying overnight:

- Whole weekend: **£80 per person** with Lunch & Dinner
- Would you like breakfast as well?

Please tell us about your access or mobility needs

Do you have dietary requirements?

Allergies

Transport - would you like help with transport to the Purley Chase Centre?

Can you offer a lift to someone?

Payment

- I wish to pay by electronic bank transfer - please use these account details:

Mr. P A Raftery

08-93-00

80470524

I wish to pay by cheque.

Cheques should be made payable to Mr. P.A. Raftery – The Sibyls

Please send the completed booking form and cheque to

Dr Hilda Ruth Beaumont

Flat 9B College Court

108 – 114 Eastern Road

Brighton

East Sussex

BN2 0BF

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS BOOKING FORM BEFORE MONDAY 17 OCT

Directions to Purley Chase Centre

The Centre is easily accessed by road and rail.

Address

Purley Chase Centre,

Purley Chase Lane,

Mancetter, Atherstone,

Warwicks, CV9 2RQ.

By car – The centre is just over 2 miles south of the A5 near Atherstone.

Travelling along the A5 take the B4111 towards Mancetter. After about a quarter of a mile on B4111, just past the church, take a right turn signed Ridge Lane. Over the traffic-light controlled bridge, follow the road round to the right and up through the trees, Purley Chase Centre is about a quarter of a mile further on, on the right.

By rail – The nearest main line railway station is at Nuneaton, about 6 miles away.

Slower trains go through Atherstone station which is about 3 miles away from Purley Chase Centre. Both stations are on the Euston Crewe line.

Lifts can be arranged for people arriving at either Nuneaton or Atherstone stations.

There are also taxi services: Atherstone Taxis (01827 712427) charge £15/£16. Triple A Taxis (01827 713637) charge £13/£14. Both Nuneaton and Atherstone are served by various bus and coach services.

Invitation from Jenny-Anne Bishop OBE, URC Elder, Manchester

UNIQUE Transgender Network is a voluntary group supporting Trans (transgender), Non-Binary and Gender Diverse people in North Wales and West Cheshire.

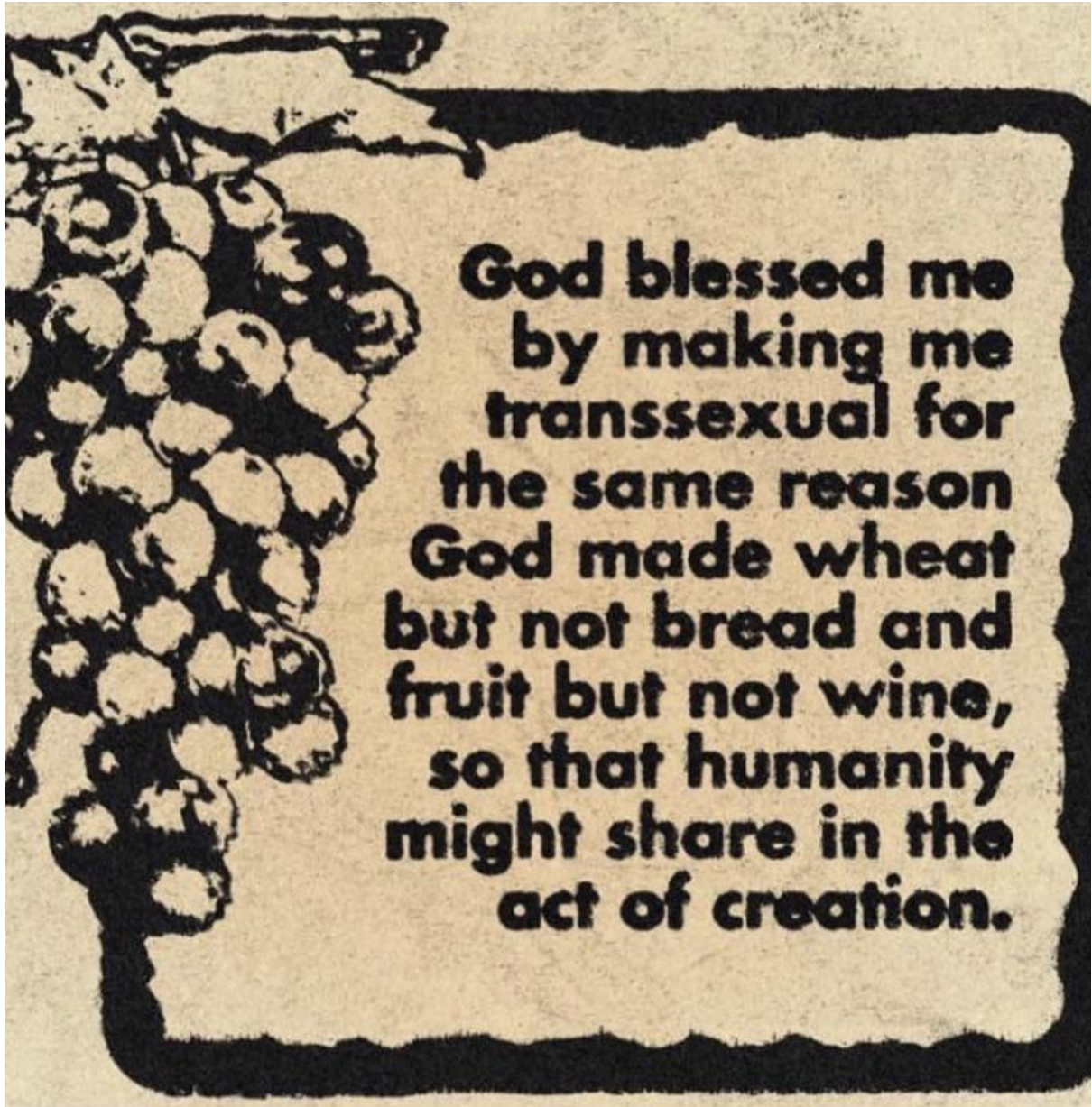
Unique's prime aim is to help all Trans, Non-Binary and Gender Diverse people accept themselves, and find acceptance from others and inclusion by service providers.

Information about Unique's activities is available on their website:

www.uniquetg.org.uk

Activities include an online service for LGBTQ+ people every Sunday afternoon at 4.00 p.m. This service is from Wibraham St Ninians United Reform Church in Manchester. Zoom link is:

<<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88502951623>>



**God blessed me
by making me
transsexual for
the same reason
God made wheat
but not bread and
fruit but not wine,
so that humanity
might share in the
act of creation.**

A Walking “Holiday”



It was Nicky von B’s fault. She is a walks-leader for HF Holidays and for some time I have wanted to join her on her walks. This summer the planets aligned and off I set on 26 July for a 7night Southern Snowdonia walking holiday. I thought it might be a good idea to check on the state of my old boots so the night before setting off I went out for a stroll – to find my toes protruding through the end of one of the boots. So a hasty visit to Cotswold in Leeds was required where I bought a beautiful new pair of Jack Wolfskin hiking boots. They were very comfortable in the shop.

The train journey to Machynlleth was grisly. I thought the train from Leeds to Birmingham was crowded (I got a seat at Sheffield) but the train from Birmingham to Machynlleth was so full that there was no room even to stand – some people were unable to get on. I eventually got a seat at Shrewsbury. A friendly taxi driver drove me to beautiful Dolserau Hall where I had a decent room and met the others who included a large group of delightful Dutch people, a couple of Belgians and a

contingent from the USA. Plus a few Brits including me and Nicky.

On HF holidays each day you have 3 options, easy, intermediate and hard, roughly speaking. I chose option 2 (intermediate) on the first walk, which was led by Nicky. We walked through varied and in places rugged terrain in the wild and beautiful region of the southern part of the Snowdonia (or Eryri) which is much less frequented than the northern part so we met very few other people on any of our walks. The morning was a little damp and overcast but by lunchtime the sun broke through and for the rest of the week we had nothing but uninterrupted warm (sometimes hot) sunshine. Amazing. It was like paradise. Except for my feet. I soon realised that my boots were too small and every step became cripplingly painful. I staggered to the end of the walk and Nicky drove me to Dolgellau where I bought another new pair of boots, this time the right size. So the level of pain in my feet was reduced to the point where I was able to continue walking.

The walk for the next day was the one I was most looking forward to – the ascent of the magnificent Cader Idris. I chose option 3 which involved walking along most of the extended summit ridge. Our leader was Neil. The previous evening I heard him talking and asked if, like me, he came from Newcastle. Not only was Neil a Geordie but he went to the same school in the same year as me. Rather oddly we didn't remember each other, possibly because Neil was doing sciences and I languages and history. Of course I have changed more than most since then...I enjoyed reminiscing with him about the horrors (many) and pleasures (few) of our school days. But back to the walk. I realised fairly quickly that this was going to be a very arduous ascent. I have done a fair bit of hill walking in my time but the last time was some years ago. It was so gruelling I wondered if I would have to give up. However, the option 2 (intermediate) walk was following the same route as ours for the first part of the walk so I was able to defect from option 3 to option 2, led by the very energetic and cheerful Susanna.

Helped (or hindered) by Susanna's cajoling, I just about made it to the summit ridge, past a beautiful, mysterious lake said to be bottomless. Throughout this walk I had in mind Susan Cooper's wonderful fantasy novel *The Grey King* (part of the *Dark is Rising* sequence of novels) which features a dark, brooding and powerful entity with Cader Idris as their domain. I cannot say that I encountered the Grey King but I am pretty sure I felt his malevolent presence weighing down upon me as I toiled my way up his hill.....

In the evenings we had various entertainments including a skittles competition and a quiz. And it was great chatting to the other walkers. The oldest walker was a Dutch woman aged 83. Another Dutch woman proudly told me about her children – one a trans man and another a lesbian woman. One of the Americans was from Oregon. He was a Democrat but to my mind had eccentric views about gun control. He invited me to visit him in Oregon – in the unlikely event that I go I won't be going hunting with him!

The day after Cader Idris was our free day. Nicky drove us both to Barmouth where we had a delightful swim in the sea. While sitting eating a sandwich a seagull swooped on me from behind and stole it from my hand.....daring and skilfull! I greatly enjoyed spending time with Nicky and comparing notes about our respective gender

and faith journeys.....

None of the remaining walks I went on were anything like as arduous as the Cader Idris walk but still tough enough for me to regret my loss of fitness (and youth). One walk took us up the Hill of Offering (Foel Offrwm) which sounded quite ominous (sacrifices are supposed to have been made there in pagan times and there are Iron Age remains). The way back was via the Precipice Walk. This too sounded quite ominous! It was a narrow, in places eroded, path a metre or so wide with a sheer drop on one side. We met a strange apparition on the path from the other direction. A very large man (or small giant?) with a shock of white hair and copious, flowing white beard who spoke in Welsh as he passed us. Could that have been Merlin from the Susan Cooper books I wondered? He answered the description quite well.

One walk took us to Harlech Castle where in the gift shop I bought some Welsh whisky and a red Welsh dragon. At the end of the week I rather gloomily contemplated my return journey, hoping it would be more comfortable than the outward journey. Most of the Dutch people were getting a coach from the hotel to Manchester airport and offered a free seat on it! So I was pleasantly driven there, whence an easy train journey back to Leeds. Looking back on the holiday, I think it was one of those experiences looked on with more fondness retrospectively than at the time. Much of it was delightful but also a bit of a reality check with regard to my level of fitness. However, I have no hesitation in warmly recommending HF Holidays as an option very welcoming and friendly to trans women and indeed to all single women. The walks took place at the same time as the Olympics on television which led me to reflect on the effects zero (or near zero) testosterone has on strength and fitness.....but that's another story. *Pauline*



Trans faith

European Forum of LGBTQ+ Christian Groups' position statements on gender equality, conversion therapy and same sex marriage:

<https://www.lgbtchristians.eu/about-us/our-positions/>

Fears of trans Muslim following riots:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/08/07/trans-people-of-colour-far-right-violence-riots-uk/>

Mormons reject trans people:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/08/22/mormon-church-lds-transgender-lgbtq-handbook/>

How Pope Francis opened the Vatican to trans sex workers:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/05/05/pope-francis-transgender-sex-workers/>

Sr Luisa Derouen's ministry to trans Catholics:

<https://www.newwaysministry.org/2024/08/19/personal-encounter-is-at-the-heart-of-pioneering-nuns-transgender-ministry/>



Trans law and politics

Trans woman Roxanne Tickle wins landmark legal case in Australia over definition of a "woman":

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c07ev1v7r4po>

Scottish debate over definition of a "woman" in the Equality Act goes to Supreme Court:

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/24125114.scottish-row-definition-woman-head-supreme-court/>



Trans health

Trans teen protest at NHS England:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/07/01/trans-teenagers-nhs-england-protest/>

Brain research underscores that sex and gender are distinct:

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-07-sex-gender-identity-linked-human.html>

Dr Aidan Kelly: clinicians not courts should decide on use of puberty blockers:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/article/2024/jul/19/transgender-children-ban-puberty-blockers-wes-streeting>

Susie Green, ex-Mermaids CEO, sets up clinic to bypass ban on puberty blockers:

<https://inews.co.uk/news/mermaids-ceo-clinic-avoid-ban-puberty-blockers-children-3179213>

Gender self-determination as a medical right (Journal of Canadian Medical Association):

<https://www.cmaj.ca/content/196/24/E833>

BMA calls for pause and evaluation of Cass Report:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/08/01/bma-cass-report-implementation-review/>

“It is vitally important we take time and care to get this work right. This is a highly specialised area of healthcare for children and young adults with complex needs, and as doctors we want to be sure they get the most appropriate care and the support they need. The task and finish group will make recommendations to improve the healthcare system that has, for too long, failed transgender patients. It will work with patients to ensure the evaluation invokes the old adage in medicine of ‘no decision about me without me’. It is time that we truly listen to this group of important, valued, and unfortunately often victimised people and, together, build a system in which they are finally provided with the care they deserve.”

...but dissent within BMA:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/article/2024/sep/07/bma-stance-on-cass-review-of-transgender-care-has-damaged-its-reputation>

Long waiting lists at new children’s gender services:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/article/2024/aug/05/waiting-list-for-childrens-gender-care-rose-after-opening-of-new-specialist-hubs>

How NHS England proposes to implement Cass Report:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/children-and-young-peoples-gender-services-implementing-the-cass-review-recommendations/>

Tina Beardsley reflects on Cass Report:

Not ‘everyone’s business’: the Cass report, evidence and lived experience.



Image by Karollyne Videira Hubert. Unsplash.
by **Tina Beardsley**

One highlight of studying for my master’s degree in healthcare chaplaincy was the module on research methods, and there are basically two: qualitative and quantitative.

I have an arts background, and my doctoral research was about the life and work of the Victorian Romantic preacher, FW Robertson (1816-53). As well as published sources, I read unpublished papers, including a diary containing secret code describing his infatuation with a married woman. Robertsons had also thought deeply about gender, and in relation to Christ. Eventually, my findings took the form of a biography:

Very generously, my publisher has made the Preface, Introduction and second chapter of my book available online,

Here: <https://www.lutterworth.com/wp-content/uploads/extracts/unutterable-love-preface.pdf>

Here: <https://www.lutterworth.com/wp-content/uploads/extracts/unutterable-love-intro.pdf>

And here: <https://www.lutterworth.com/wp-content/uploads/extracts/unutterable-love-ch2.pdf>

Historical research – analysing manuscripts, sermons, letters, and diaries – is a form of qualitative research. I could have number crunched the sermons, checking the frequency of

various words or theological themes, but these were easily identified by qualitative techniques.

My familiarity with qualitative research meant I was ready to explore quantitative research for my healthcare degree dissertation. The subject area was new to me, and I looked forward to learning about statistics.

My research project was a quantitative study of patient satisfaction with the chaplaincy department where I worked, though the questionnaire did include a qualitative question, for people to express their views in words in addition to choosing options on a sliding scale. I wrote up the findings as an article which was published in *Clinical Medicine*, the journal of the Royal College of Physicians, and the full text is available here:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5922636/>

The chaplains' prayer, 'competence' (the sense that they knew what they were doing in a crisis), listening skills, and pastoral sensitivity were the four factors, from a range of options, ranked highest for satisfaction by participants.

Quantitative research is not just a numbers game: there is a story to be told as the charts and figures are interpreted by the researcher to the reader. Spiritual care can be 'measured', to an extent, but the sums are done to construct a narrative and, arising from that, recommendations for service improvement. The numerical is complemented by the story it tells and its implications.

But the emerging narrative must be faithful to the data that has been gathered and presented. Should the author veer off into opinion, the data is there, on public view, to provide a check and a reference point. This is why data collection and analysis are so important, and hedged around with protocols to protect the data from 'contamination'.

I'm sure most people reading this post will have guessed by now that this is no mere reminiscence about my own research projects. I'm setting out my research credentials with a view to commenting on the Final Report of the Cass review.

In 2020 NHS England and NHS Improvement commissioned Dr Hilary Cass, a retired consultant paediatrician, to chair an Independent Review of gender identity services for children and young people. Dr Cass's interim report appeared in 2022, promising 'a fundamentally different service model', now set out in her Final Report published this spring. Ominously, amongst the Interim Report's 'Key points – moving forward' is the sentence, '*The care of this group of young people and children is everyone's business.*' The following sentence implies that 'everyone' in this context refers to clinicians, but during the past 6 years, trans people's lives have become '*everyone's business*' in a truly alarming manner.

During this period, the media and, shockingly, the UK government itself, have spread disinformation, talked about us in our absence, and made this country a less safe place for trans people. There has been a totally unfounded and frankly frightening 'moral panic' about trans people, and it is not over yet.

Everyone has an opinion about us, it seems, with the most ill-informed and hostile platformed the most. This public discussion is now so toxic that trans people's voices are rarely heard anymore. We've grown wary of conversations that deny our reality, or we're considered 'activists', unfit to participate in public conversations that affect us most.



Image, Basit Abdul. Unsplash.

Gender diverse children have been particularly affected by this hostile social climate, so an independent review, examining the evidence objectively, and with the promise of an improved model of care should have been a welcome initiative. Sadly, though, since the publication of Dr Cass's Final Report, its lack of independence and objectivity has become increasingly apparent.

Although the Report acknowledges the toxicity of the UK conversation about trans people, the research process mirrored it by excluding from its governance both clinicians specialising in gender diverse young people, and service users.

The exclusion of practitioners of affirming care for gender diverse young people, and the inclusion of those opposed to such care, reflects the bias against trans people that characterised the previous government. The exclusion of service users is also astonishing given the centrality of patient-centred care in the NHS in recent decades and indicates paternalism as well as bias within project.

A blog post is not the place to embark on a detailed analysis of the Cass Report. In any case, researchers and clinicians coordinated by Yale Law School have done this in 'An Evidence-based Critique of the Cass Report' which you can read here:

https://law.yale.edu/sites/default/files/documents/integrity-project_cass-response.pdf

What strikes me though, thinking of the Report in terms of the broad research categories, qualitative and quantitative, that I've been discussing, is the mismatch between the data and the narrative.

For example, the quantitative data, arising from interviews with gender diverse young people and their parents, contradicts the Report's principal claims, that adolescent gender identity services had abandoned holistic assessment, and that puberty blockers were being routinely prescribed. The patient data, quoted in Appendix 3 of the Report, confirms that the actual approach was conversational, cautious, and far removed from the quick medical fix that young people had expected.

So why all the fuss? Why the closure of the children and adolescent gender identity service based at the Tavistock? Why a four-year long review? Why the withdrawal of puberty blockers for gender diverse children? Here's a clue, from the qualitative data narrative in the Cass Report (Appendix 3 page 1), where gender identity is described as 'a sensitive (and contested) topic.'



Image, Patrick Perkins. Unsplash.

Ah yes, 'contested'. Can you think of anything that isn't contested? What on earth does the word mean in this context? That it divides public opinion? Like Brexit? 'Contested' has become a dog-whistle for those opposed to affirming trans people, and has no place in a Report of this kind. It is consistent, though, with much of the Report which has rejected relevant evidence and whose narratives are frequently contradicted by its own data.

Hardly surprising, though, if one excludes the experts in the field, both clinicians and those with lived experience. I'm proud to belong to the latter group. As Dr Cass knows, for she kindly engaged with a presentation I gave to a medical ethics committee on this subject with

my friend Ash. Twice that afternoon one of the academics present affirmed us both as ‘the experts’ because of our lived experience as trans people.

It’s experts like me and Ash who need to be heard from now on – and young people especially – if we’re to have proper functioning gender identity services here in the UK. And it’s gender diverse experts with lived experience of trauma and healing that I’m looking forward to hearing at the Transgender Theology Conference in a few weeks’ time.

What science can tell us about gender row in Olympics boxing:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1r8gp813ko>

Scientific American: how testosterone changes the immune system in trans men:

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-testosterone-changes-the-immune-system-in-trans-men/>

Tens of thousands of trans people might be missing out on cancer screenings:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/09/23/thousands-of-trans-people-could-be-missing-out-on-routine-cancer-screenings/>



Trans life

Mermaids Trans Youth manifesto:

<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/transyouthmanifesto/>

Transphobic Musk (though you knew that already):

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1vd097z7rvo>

....Musk deadnames trans daughter and vows war on “woke mind virus”:

<https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2024/07/elon-musk-claims-his-trans-daughter-is-dead-because-she-transitioned/>

Sex eligibility controversy over Algerian boxer at Olympics:

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/article/2024/aug/02/boxing-olympics-lisa-nandy-imane-khelif-lin-yu-ting>

Olympian trans man does not take T – our hormones do not define us:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/08/05/hergie-bacyadan-paris-olympics-trans/>

Italian runner is first out trans woman to compete in paralympics:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/08/13/transgender-athlete-paralympics/>

Bullying of trans civil servants on the rise:

<https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/09/05/civil-servants-bullying-harassment/>

2021 Census might have overestimated numbers of trans people (officially 0.5% of population). Of course the number might also have been underestimated owing to those not wishing to out themselves:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3030519849o>

Fourth plinth sculpture in Trafalgar Square is tribute to murdered trans women:

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2024/sep/18/teresa-margolles-fourth-plinth-review-transgender>



Trans world

Trans-friendly countries: <https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/06/29/trans-travel-article-uk/>

Trans Russia (yes, it's pretty bad!):

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cl7yk21925xo>

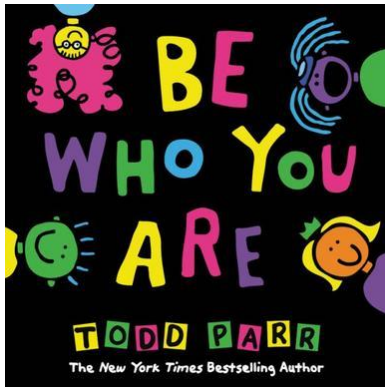
Trans woman killed in Tbilisi, Georgia:

<https://www.ekhokavkaza.com/amp/v-tbilisi-ubita-transgendernaya-zhenschina-kesariya-abramidze/33125338.html>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy0lnpn019xo>

Trans Kenya: enby Muriithi's story:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/article/2024/sep/10/identity-queer-kenya-chris-muriithi-lgbtq-activist>



Trans Books and Media

Terf – poor review for play about JKR and transphobia:

<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/article/2024/aug/02/terf-review-assembly-rooms-edinburgh>

Oxford Di-verse poetry festival:

<https://www.transgendertheologyconference.com/2024/07/oxford-di-verse-poetry-festival/>

“transformations grounding theology in trans and non-binary lives” – new book from Sibyl Rev. Doctor Alex Clare-Young.

Alex captures the rich, complex lived experiences and theological perspectives of 10 trans and non-binary people, offering a resolutely affirming and trans-positive view based on voices far too often excluded from theological discourse.