

The Slowly Boiled Frog, USA

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When a hate group desperately tries to sow confusion

Posted by [David Cary Hart](#) at [4:30:00 PM](#)

[[Photo](#): Nicole and Jonas Maines were identical twin brothers at birth]



[[Photo](#): Part of FRC's graphic]



Friday, Family Research Council offered "[Public School Kids Get Assembly on Sex Changes](#)." Those public school kids were high school students but the piece is disingenuously topped with a graphic of a confused child who is very young. Even if, say, fourth-graders were similarly assembled, those younger children are probably capable of understanding gender. If students are confused it is because of the unscientific, religion-driven claims of groups like FRC. But confusion is just what FRC wants for those who are not religious believers.

FRC would have people believe that there is great uncertainty and disagreement among scientists about gender dysphoria. That is false.

Amy Ellis Nutt is a Pulitzer Prize winning science writer at the *Washington Post*. Family Research Council is a rabid anti-LGBT hate group. FRC is also part of the American Taliban. They seek to conform public policy to their version of conservative Christianity.

Ms. Nutt is the author of the book [Becoming Nicole](#). The book tells the story of identical twin boys, Wyatt and Jonas Maines (now 21 years old). As a toddler, Wyatt (now Nicole) asked when his penis would fall off. At the age of nine, Jonas got it. He told his conservative father: "Face it, Dad, you have a son and a daughter." Think about that. A nine-year-old seems to understand gender. Some adults are hopelessly lost.

Family Research Council doesn't get it. They *refuse* to get it because having gender divergent from natal sex is a challenge to conservative Christianity. They are also wed to the preposterous notion that gender dysphoria is contagious. According to FRC, providing students with scientifically accurate information about gender poses a danger to their well-being.

In dismissive language from Cathy Ruse who has the pretentious title of "senior fellow for legal studies:"

Nutt's lecture hit all the usual notes. Your gender is "assigned at birth" by people who might get it wrong. Toddlers can be transgender. Moray eels change sex and female reef fish produce sperm when there are no males. "Gender is a spectrum," everyone must get "comfortable" with new gender language that is "changing every day." Asking a biological boy to use the teachers' rather than the girls' restroom is "bullying."

Overlooked are the real measurements of quality:

- Was the lecture scientifically accurate and;
- Was it imparted in a way that was understandable by the audience?

FRC and others try to muddy the science and sow confusion through a very small group of religiously motivated crackpots like Paul R. McHugh. However, the consensus of science is represented by peer-reviewed research and the informed opinions of professional peer groups. It is easy to measure the extent to which information comports to the science. Sometimes that requires offering competing views from *within* the scientific community.

Those religious crackpots do not provide plausible competing views worthy of discussion. Were they credible then they would publish to peer-reviewed journals. They do not and have not.

FRC tries to manufacture an issue out of consent:

Did the school make plain to the students that they could decline to attend? That's not clear. In her presentation, Nutt quipped: "Thank you for coming, although I know you're probably required to be here."

Nor is it clear whether parents were fully informed about the assembly in advance. At least one shocked George Mason teacher, who remains anonymous, says parents were not.

Why would students need to decline to attend a scientifically valid presentation? What is FRC afraid of? Why on earth would parental consent be required? If a teacher is shocked by truthful scientific information then he or she should find another profession. Those students and that teacher may very well have a transgender or gender nonconforming kid (or kids) at the school.

Then we get the usual "alternate view" nonsense that is similar to what we are accustomed to hearing from creationists:

What does seem clear is that this public school will not hold another school-wide assembly featuring other views on the issue: such as first-person accounts of the negative consequences of "transitioning," health warnings from pediatricians and other medical experts, or condemnation from the feminist community, from which the term "female erasure" has sprung to describe the transgender program.

This isn't a debate with *responsible* alternate opinions. Nicole's story, authored by Amy Ellis Nutt, is a true story that I find fascinating. Same genes, same natal sex, same upbringing by the same parents in the same home. Yet one has a female gender. Identical twins start out with identical genes because each embryo is derived from the same (split) fertilized egg. However, from that point on, their DNA starts to become divergent as DNA is replicated. Mutations occur at about one in every 100,000 replicated base pairs per generation. It is not a tremendous amount of deviation but it is there.

As for what the school might entertain in the future, if scientists have published recent peer-reviewed articles to scholarly journal then their views are probably welcome. Individuals who have detransitioned are irrelevant due to the fact that they cannot be proven to be part of a representative sample of any significance. Feminists with crazy theories? Come on.

Transgender ideology in children is extremely controversial, not least because so many children who experience gender dysphoria later desist and accept their natal biology. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5) as many as 98% of boys and 88% of girls will "grow out of" their gender dysphoria and accept their biological sex after naturally passing through puberty.

First of all, there is no such thing as “gender ideology.” Gender dysphoria is not part of a faith-based belief system. The applicable passage in the DSM supposedly reads:

Rates of persistence of gender dysphoria from childhood into adolescence or adulthood vary. In natal males, persistence has ranged from 2.2% to 30%. In natal females, persistence has ranged from 12% to 50%.

I cannot guarantee that the quote is accurate since it comes from another hate group, American College of Pediatricians. The ranges are extremely large and note the absence of the word “transgender.” Dr. Kristina Olson explains, in research published to the prestigious *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* (emphasis added):

The 3 largest and most-cited studies have reported on the adolescent or adult gender identities of cohorts who had, in childhood, showed gender “atypical” patterns of behavior. Of those who could be followed up, a minority were transgender: 1 of 44, 9 of 45 and 21 of 54. Most of the remaining children later identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (although a small number also was heterosexual).

However, close inspection of these studies suggests that most children in these studies were not transgender to begin with. In 2 studies, a large minority (40% and 25%) of the children did not meet the criteria for GID to start with, suggesting they were not transgender (because transgender children would meet the criteria). Further, even those who met the GID diagnostic criteria were rarely transgender.

In other words, whatever the desistence rate is, it does not include kids who transitioned. Olson goes on to explain that once they transition they are highly unlikely to detransition. I cannot provide a link because the copyrighted material is not in the public domain. I had to purchase the article.

The bottom line is that the statistics quoted by FRC are misleading and inaccurate. If they have considered competing research published to a respectable journal, they have not cited it. This then leads to further misinformation, perhaps knowingly, from FRC:

There is no medical or psychological test to show which 2% of those boys will persist in their gender dysphoria as young adults. Protocols that encourage school-wide affirmation of every case of gender dysphoria could impede the overwhelming majority of children from accepting their natal biology, as well as sow confusion in other vulnerable children.

Well, it is a range of 2.2% to 30% (somehow the range dropped off the planet) **and it is irrelevant.** The issue is not related to children with gender dysphoria. The issue pertains to transgender kids who are just a small percentage of kids with gender dysphoria. By the time a kid transitions, he or she and his or her parents have exhausted all other options in concert with qualified clinicians. Transition is the only thing that provides relief from anxiety and depression. So, **yes**, schools should encourage the acceptance of those students.

Then it's on to a conspiracy theory:

There has been a spate of articles in recent weeks on the phenomenon of "rapid onset" gender dysphoria in teen girls, thought to be a "social contagion" like anorexia 30 years ago. Details of these cases reported by therapists are heartbreaking.

I haven't seen such articles. My guess is that, if they exist, they are offered by the likes of *Breitbart* and *WND*. There is no link provided to any of the "spate."

After citing a student question and Nutt's answer (you can read the original which is edited for convenience by FRC):

So a person is diagnosed because other people are confused? It's in "the bible of mental illnesses" because it's a healthy condition that the culture doesn't understand? Now I am confused.

That is not what Nutt said. She is explaining that the anxiety from gender dysphoria is the product of societal disapproval and misconceptions. Let us remember that this is a **true story**. Nicole Maines experienced gender dysphoria very early in life, perhaps as early as two. She was raised by conservative parents. She is now about 21 and a college junior. She hopes to become an actress.

Even if society's misconceptions go away, a child whose anatomy differs from their gender is going to experience distress so we cannot blame everything on the ignoramuses among us. If Nutt gave an incomplete answer it changes nothing relative to the underlying story. The full video is below, you can judge Nutt's response for yourself.

Another kid asked if Nicole has had (gender affirming) surgery.

Nutt's answer was bad, and sort of creepy. "Yes. She was 17 at the time...I was there."

"It was not the most important thing...but it was the last thing that she needed to do," said Nutt.

"What was important for her early on was to have her puberty suppressed as a child, so that she knew what she really wanted."

Puberty-blockers are serious business. Puberty suppression and cross-sex hormones can stunt a person's growth and render him completely infertile, never able to have genetically-related children, even by artificial means. You cannot walk back up this road.

I find nothing creepy about that answer. FRC is mixing together puberty blockers and hormones. They are distinctly different. According to the Canadian Health Service (simply the first applicable Google result):

The changes to your body that happen during puberty can be distressing if they are not in line with your gender. Puberty blockers can help relieve this distress. Delaying puberty gives you more time to explore your gender identity, before changes happen to your body

that can't be reversed.

[...]

The effects of puberty blockers are fully reversible. If you decide to stop taking them, your body will go through puberty just the way it would have if you hadn't take puberty blockers at all.

FRC is on a tear:

Nutt's cavalier treatment of puberty blockers was awfully reckless.

Nutt's answer reflects the scientific consensus.

And isn't her logic backwards? How does blocking your natural development tell you what you really want? Isn't it, rather, tipping the scales toward an ideologically pre-determined outcome?

The child has already proven that gender is a separate construct from physical appearance. Otherwise he (then male) would not have experienced the discomfort in the first place. Puberty blockers allow the child to experience gender in a safe, reversible way. If Nicole's gender changed then the puberty blockers would have been stopped. Children naturally would prefer to have gender congruent with natal sex and there are societal pressures. More importantly all of this is being done under the supervision of qualified clinicians.

Furthermore, nothing about this is *ideological*. Conservative Christianity is an ideology. Medical science is not.

Did Nicole even have the capacity to consent to this untested, irreversible medical treatment in the first place? "There is a serious ethical problem with allowing irreversible, life-changing procedures to be performed on minors who are too young to give valid consent themselves," cautions the American College of Pediatricians.

These decisions are made by parents in conjunction with children and their doctors. American College of Pediatricians is a minuscule hate group. The real peer association is the American Academy of Pediatrics. FRC should know better than to quote people who still champion things like gay conversion therapy.

Further quoting Ms. Nutt:

"She will be, for all purposes, physically and biologically a girl. A woman."

Wrong. Biologically, Nicole will never be a girl. Every cell in Nicole's body contains male sex chromosomes. A lifetime of male-suppressing hormones will never change that fact.

FRC refuses to accept that gender is controlling. Yes, Nicole will require hormone therapy which is a relatively small price to pay for relief from suffering. For all intents and purposes,

Nicole is a woman and nothing FRC says or does can change that fact.

Nicole's gender was affirmed incrementally, over a 25 year span. First with puberty blockers and then hormones. Finally with surgery. Her care was a paradigm of medical responsibility and medical excellence. Over time it involved numerous physicians and counselors plus her parents and, of course, Nicole herself.

Children suffering from gender dysphoria deserve our compassion. Surely their suffering is genuine, and profound. But they also deserve an adult response: first and foremost, our recognition that the distress and confusion they are experiencing will give way to acceptance of their natal biology in the vast majority of cases.

It is **not** the *vast majority of cases* and the wide range of statistics in the DSM verbiage on desistence is based primarily on three studies including the 1987 *Sissy Boy Syndrome* and Kenneth Zucker's 1995 article. Zucker is an advocate of what amounts to reparative therapy which has no scientific support. The third most often-cited study is from MS Wallien out of Amsterdam. He confirms pretty much my understanding. Less severe cases of gender dysphoria (the majority) desist. More severe cases, those likely to result in a transition, persist.

When a boy is persistently and adamantly demanding to wear dresses he probably has a more severe case. Boys drawn simply to girls' toys is probably less severe. But I am not a clinician and even if I were, each case is unique unto itself. FRC doesn't allow for **any** transgender people and none of them are medical doctors, let alone experts in this field.

Note the absence of cites by FRC other than to another hate group, ACPeds. They cannot cite McHugh because he never publishes to peer-reviewed journals.

This all winds up in a disingenuous conclusion:

The person with persistent dysphoria who ultimately chooses radical surgery and a lifetime of hormones deserves compassion, too. As well as great sympathy, in my opinion, for treating a healthy body as sick and a troubled mind as healthy.

Nutt obviously disagrees. There is great disagreement on this issue, especially among medical experts.

Who are these "medical experts" and what have they published? Where, exactly, is this disagreement? By whom and over what?

When a public school takes sides, nobody wins. But students, and taxpayers, lose.

FRC insists that there is a controversy. A few religious crackpots who have not published to mainstream peer-reviewed journals does not create a controversy. FRC is manufacturing a conspiracy and disagreement, hoping that people **will** be confused. Amy Ellis Nutt, on the other hand, is a trained observer of science. She seems to be dedicated to **eliminating** confusion. Her talk can be viewed below.

[[Video](#): Becoming Nicole with Amy Ellis Nutt]

<http://www.slowlyboiledfrog.com/2018/01/when-hate-group-desperately-tries-to.html>