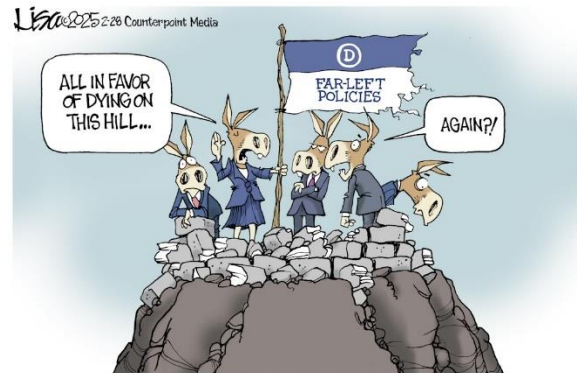


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## **Woman: not an abstract concept**

Steve Bakke  April 2, 2023



America is soaked in outrage. It usually occurs at the extremes of political ideology. Too often the moderate majority doesn't participate in the debate. Rather, they quietly despair that our modern world has been "turned upside-down." And when only political "extremists" are actively debating, trying to seek agreement using common sense is always futile. The transgender debate is one such issue.

While the transgender debate comprehends many questions, this article deals with the issue of biological males competing in biological female sports. Title IX legislation, and later the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act in 1994, gave women's rights a consequential lift. We've been diligently working to comply ever since.

The expressed purpose of this decades long effort has been to assure female athletes equitable access to participation in competitive sports. One goal was to provide separate competition for men and women, officially recognizing the disparity of size, strength, and other physical characteristics of the two genders. This was easily understood, fair, and non-controversial – we thought.



Since then, a small minority has created chaos by redefining who can compete in women's athletics. A new, more abstract concept of womanhood came into vogue. Rather than exclusively based on biology and physiology, the definition of a woman athlete was lost in confusion.

This new definition can be independent of one's body. It's based on an individual's internal sense of gender. It's commonly referred to as "trans-gender" and has led to biological males competing in women's sports.

In 2021, sheepishly bowing to misguided pressure, President Biden issued Executive Order 14021 which guaranteed educational environments would be discrimination free, "including sexual orientation or gender identity." The Department of Education committed to enforcing that order.

One of the arguments supporting the "transgender friendly" Biden policy is that numbers are too infinitesimal for there to be this level of concern. Nevertheless, if that is a

fact, why should a tiny fraction of 1% of the population win transformative preferred treatment over 51% of the population, i.e. biological female Americans.

SheWon.org is tracking this information. According to their recent tally, 791 female athletes have been deprived of 1,121 awards in 545 competitions. A UN report provides similar statistics. One example comes from Connecticut. Two biological males recently came away with 15 track and field championships in the female division, competing against biological females.

This phenomenon hasn't yet overwhelmed the women's athletics, but left to expand, biological males will eventually dominate the record books for women's sports. President Trump has issued an Executive Order to reverse the Biden order. The NCAA no longer permits biological males to compete in women's sports. And there are movements afoot to invalidate the "records" that have been won by biological males.



Fairness and safety shouldn't die on this misguided sword of "inclusiveness." We have always gone out of our way to promote fair competition. We prohibit drugs as performance enhancers. Cheating of any sort is taboo. How could we permit this blatant violation of fairness that has physically superior biological males competing in women's sports?

The huge moderate majority of Americans could, if left to their own devices, effectively sort out most wedge issues. In the specific issue of biological men competing against women, the public has spoken. By a wide margin, Americans of both parties want the traditional rules of Title IX to prevail. In spite of that, democrat leadership chose this hill to "die on" politically. And their preoccupation with litigating the use of pronouns leaves little time for meaningful communication with their constituents.

Some argue that traditional rules prohibiting biological males competing against females is arbitrary. Much to the contrary, the rules of analysis and conclusion for biology and physiology are not arbitrary. Let's take a deep breath and agree that the reality of contrasting characteristics for men and women has not evolved into an abstract concept.

Gender confusion can be real for some, but that reality must not be permitted to spread so far that the meaning of "woman" becomes an abstract concept. We should find another way to deal with issues of that sort. We can't let the recent "cancel culture" phenomenon cause the cancellation of the valid traditional definition of "woman."