

Expert Psychologist Blocked on Twitter for Expressing Clinical Opinion on Transgenderism

By Tyler O'Neil May 12, 2019

Update below.

In the early hours of Sunday morning, an expert Ph.D. psychologist who helped write the official psychological position on transgender identity was blocked on Twitter for expressing his opinion informed by clinical experience. His well-reasoned position was flagged for "hateful conduct."

On Saturday, Ray Blanchard — the Ph.D. psychologist and adjunct professor at the University of Toronto who served on the working group for gender dysphoria (the persistent condition of identifying with the gender opposite your biological sex) for the DSM V, the gold standard of definitions helping psychologists diagnose disorders for patients — tweeted out his clinically-informed opinion on transgender identity.

He still affirmed the controversial idea that sex-change surgery is the "best treatment" for "carefully screened, adult patients, whose gender dysphoria has proven resistant to other forms of treatment," but he opposed "treating" children who may change their minds. (Even this position is debatable, as people who have undergone sex-change surgery after persistent gender dysphoria have [later rejected their transgender identity](#) and lamented the [mutilation of their bodies](#).)

(2) Sex change surgery is still the best treatment for carefully screened, adult patients, whose gender dysphoria has proven resistant to other forms of treatment.

— Ray Blanchard (@BlanchardPhD) [May 11, 2019](#)

After this qualified statement of support, Blanchard explained his clinically-informed opinion that "sex change surgery should not be considered for any patient until that patient has reached the age of 21 years and has lived for at least two years in the desired gender role."

This call for a delay is controversial, as many transgender activists encourage hormonal and surgical treatments for minors, even children. Some researchers have received government grants to try such treatments on [8-year-old children](#), and a British transgender activist [took her 15-year-old son to Thailand](#) to get him castrated. When a Catholic woman complained about this child abuse on Twitter, U.K. police investigated her for abuse. Last year, 17-year-old transgender celebrity [Jazz Jennings](#) had his male organ surgically removed. Yet studies have shown that the vast majority of children who identify as transgender will revert to their biological sex if they are allowed to go through puberty. For this and other reasons, Blanchard's position makes sense psychologically.

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reached the age of 21 years and has lived for at least two years in the desired gender role.

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Blanchard defended this restriction by explaining the roots of gender dysphoria.

"Gender dysphoria is not a sexual orientation, but it is virtually always preceded or accompanied by an atypical sexual orientation – in males, either homosexuality (sexual arousal by members of one's own biological sex) ... or autogynephilia (sexual arousal at the thought or image of oneself as a female)," the Ph.D. psychologist explained. "There are two main types of gender dysphoria in males, one associated with homosexuality and one associated with autogynephilia. Traditionally, the great bulk of female-to-male transsexuals has been homosexual in erotic object choice."

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While activists may find this offensive, Blanchard correctly referenced the true statistics on gender dysphoria.

Although the Ph.D. psychologist supported sex-change surgery for 21-year-old adults whose gender dysphoria has persisted against other forms of treatment, he acknowledged that even post-operative transgender individuals are still biologically male or female beneath the surgical changes. No matter how good transgender surgery gets, a biological male still has X and Y chromosomes in virtually every cell of his body and a biological female still has two X chromosomes. No surgery or identity can alter this.

Ostensibly for this reason, Blanchard took a nuanced, scientific approach. "The sex of a postoperative transsexual should be analogous to a legal fiction," he tweeted. "This legal fiction would apply to some things (e.g., sex designation on a driver's license) but not to others (entering a sports competition as one's adopted sex)."

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This approach takes into consideration both the true struggles of those with gender dysphoria *and* the concerns of conservatives and feminists who warn that full societal inclusion for transgender identity would allow biological males to invade women's spaces, bringing their natural advantages of strength with them. For instance, men who identify as women have [displaced high-performing females](#) and won [world records in women's sports](#). Voyeurs have [spied upon women in bathrooms and changing rooms](#), posing as transgender. Men who identify as women have [sexually assaulted women](#) in women's prisons.

Blanchard's position showed a true understanding of these issues *and* clinical support for what he sees as the proper treatment for gender dysphoric people. Activists can disagree

with him, but his positions are scientifically based, rational, and based on his professional experience.

It seems transgender activists reported his tweets to Twitter, and the company chose to ban him. Helen Joyce, an [editor at *The Economist*](#), called this decision "unreal."

"Ray Blanchard served on the gender dysphoria working group and chaired the paraphilia working group for DSM V," Joyce tweeted. "He is a world expert in the field. Twitter has just suspended his account for a thread setting out his findings from A lifetime of research. Unreal."

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A lifetime of research. Unreal pic.twitter.com/vgQCd4OzYs

— Helen Joyce (@HJJoyceEcon) [May 12, 2019](#)

Others echoed her outrage. Jesse Singal, contributing writer at *New York* magazine, expressed his fear that "as a journalist who often writes about science," he worries that he will not be able to continue using Twitter's platform.

"Gender dysphoria is in the DSM-5. Despite endless rumor-mongering and misinformation to the contrary, it *is* considered a mental disorder. Maybe it shouldn't be! But it's beyond insane to suspend someone for expressing an opinion which lines up with the DSM," Singal tweeted. "I have less and less faith that, as a journalist who often writes about science, I will be able to continue using Twitter without getting punished for communicating scientifically accurate information (*sic*)."

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— Jesse Singal (@jessesingal) [May 12, 2019](#)

"Twitter is making a terrible and embarrassing error here that it should fix," Singal declared.

But he also warned that this is part of a growing inability among progressives to accurately convey the findings of science. "Anyway, this is part of a larger problem of a complete meltdown, in elite progressive spaces, of the ability to accurately convey science on stories having to do with social justice. Journalism, academia, social media -- same story everywhere. It's a slow-motion disaster," Singal argued.

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"This is how you get the most important outlet in the world running an extremely misleading

column on testosterone, the ACLU arguing women can compete w/and beat men in competitive sports. etc. We're approaching a Soviet/fundamentalist/take your pick level of science denialism," he added.

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<pic.twitter.com/SJ6ia3NvLe>

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Singal dared Twitter to suspend him for accurately citing the DSM. "I am begging you," he tweeted. "It would give me the perfect excuse to stay off this site and I will have too much pride and ego to delete my accurate tweets."

6/ In conclusion , Twitter, PLEASE suspend me for accurately citing the DSM. I am begging you. It would give me the perfect excuse to stay off this site and I will have too much pride and ego to delete my accurate tweets.

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Activists have [dismissed and demonized](#) the Ph.D. psychologist's conclusions, but James Shupe (formerly Jamie Shupe), a man who used to identify as a woman and then as "non-binary," [said he discovered the truth](#) about himself in Blanchard's writings.

Twitter should restore Blanchard's account and apologize for this embarrassing mistake, or perhaps it should make its position clear and just ban every user who cites the DSM or refuses to jump on board with the most radical elements of transgender identity. After all, many feminists who disagree with transgender activism have been [suspended on Twitter](#), even just for [reporting activists who harass women](#) in the name of transgenderism.

If Twitter will become a hostile censor, enforcing transgender orthodoxy against science and medical standards, it should make this position clear, and scientists and dissenters should find another platform. This suspension is absurd.

Update: After about 24 hours, Twitter freed Blanchard from Twitter jail and apologized "for any inconvenience this may have caused." Yet to some degree, this was a non-apology. The company went on to defend its error, saying, "Twitter takes reports of violations of the Twitter Rules very seriously. After reviewing your account, it looks like we made an error."

Twitter has unlocked my account and graciously apologized for their error. My sincere thanks to the people who expressed their concern during the past 24 hours.
<pic.twitter.com/fblijhdi5k>

— Ray Blanchard (@BlanchardPhD) [May 13, 2019](#)

It *looks like* you made an error?! You banned a Ph.D. psychologist who helped write the book on gender dysphoria, for his clinical opinion on gender dysphoria and transgender identity. More than this is required.

Follow Tyler O'Neil, the author of this article, on Twitter at [@Tyler2ONeil](#).

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