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#NotYourSupportHuman

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Aaaaand, we're back. All the fun of the techno-Platonist-dystopia-fair. Martine Rothblatt 'From Transgender to Transhuman' (link to part 1) Chapter 1 - 'Billions of Sexes.' Everyone sitting (un)comfortably?

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So, while we're on the subject of techno-Platonism (@PankhurstEM), I've decided to read Martine Rothblatt's 'From Transgender to Transhuman: A Manifesto on the Freedom of Form.' I think I'm going to have to livetweet some of it as I go, otherwise my brain might explode.

4:36 PM · Jul 23, 2018



100



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So, first off I'm just going to say, this book is so damn confused it's going to be hard to parse it easily. There is a complete, utter, and abiding refusal to understand the distinction between material differences and what culture does with those differences laid over an in-itself-confused effort to argue that there are no material differences (because everything is a spectrum and it's only our minds that make distinctions and that's bad because 'discrimination' and even if there are differences they don't mean anything anyway).

This passage is a good e.g. of what we're up against. Rb starts the chapter by talking about the culture of primogeniture, then talks about race (we'll come back to that), and then runs it into sex. And then we get a claim like the one in blue here.

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possible the birth status of a particular individual. And for categories of birth status—firstborns, children of children of one or another religious or ethnic group—the begin to lose rigid social meaning. This is because the category of persons is but the meaning assigned to them and society. Ultimate equal opportunity means that we are persons first, free from then on to choose such classifications as they like. Ultimate equal opportunity means any label: child/bastard, black/white, or male/female

The distinction between 'child/bastard' is entirely cultural. The distinction between 'black/white' is a cultural hierarchy laid on top of a biological continuum.

The distinction between 'male/female' is (let's just say Rb means gender here, because it's almost never clear) a cultural hierarchy laid on top of a biological difference (with a tiny number of intermediate cases). Ergo: THEY ARE NOT ALL THE SAME KIND OF THING.

So race: This is such a clusterfuck I can't even. Racism is bad (Okay). Now racism is over! (UM) 'Apparent' (OMG) African Americans can now do whatever they want! (No. They. Can't.) White people can be Rastas! (Erm). Race is a 'choosable culture.' (Get. To. Fuck.)

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skin tone meant being channeled into a menial life. Today we recognize this as fundamentally unfair. Law, and gradually society, accepts the choice of apparent African Americans to work in any profession or to identify as nonracial citizens. Similarly, there are young Europeans who identify as dreadlocked Rastafarians, Asians who have adopted African culture and increasing numbers of persons of all geographic backgrounds who identify themselves simply as human.

Gradually, "immutable race" is becoming "choosable culture." The analogy to sex is unmistakable. Manhood and womanhood can be life-style choices open to anyone, regardless of genitalia. It is law and custom, not biology, that makes birth order, birth parents, skin tone, or genitals relevant to one's ability to choose a culture, perform a job, or adopt a life-style. Liberated from legal constraints and archaic stereotypes, our social identity

The language of commodification is threaded through the whole argument (*billionaire writes social theory SURPRISE!*). Race and sex are not not a fucking 'lifestyle choice.' Towards the end of the chapter re: human reproduction/IVF, we also get this beauty:

of men's monopoly on
commodity. And as long
relevance of women's
comes a commodity.

So, sex differences. I'm just going to go through and list the claims, because it's all just throw-a-ton-of-mud-at-the-wall-and-see-what-sticks.

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classes. What on earth does 'arbitrary' means here?? And what about secondary sexual characteristics??? I thought it was us who were obsessed with what's in people's pants????

2. Childbearing may have had something to do with this. But that only became relevant after the evil discriminators made an arbitrary genital-based classification. And after the division of labour?????

The shape of one's genitals would appear to be a for determining to which of two fundamental huma should belong. How did we arrive at this situation? S prehistory, our ancestors recognized that genital sha recognizable difference among humans. Categorizin ital shape was a simple method for establishing a div early human communities. Childbearing and child- of women further led our ancestors to establish a ge society. As civilization advanced, extensive gender-b toms reinforced the ancient genital-based division o

3. Now, (just like race yeah?), who does the childbearing and childrearing is irrelevant to the 'division of society.' It's all just one long breezy capitalist choosy-choice-choice! HURRAH!

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Today progressive people accept as self-evident that technology (shape) is irrelevant to one's productive role in society. Child nurturing are a matter of choice. Hence, whatever shape had for a division of society into men and women, reasons and traditions are obsolete as we move into the 21st century. Unfortunately, the gender-based rituals that grew out of these distinctions still weigh heavily on our heads. As noted sociologist Lewontin has observed, "The immense superstructure of power that has been built historically on the base of biological differences has long ago become independent of the actuality

SEXISM DOES NOT EXIST KLAXON. (Like, this whole chapter is a naturalistic-fallacy-in-reverse car crash. Something should not exist, and voila!, it doesn't. Which is pretty germane to the arguments we've been having over the last few years...)

4. Okay, now we get to the spectrum arguments. a) Chromosomal variation b) Different levels of hormones means there is a 'continuum of male and female possibilities' c) What about the infertile people???? d) Intersex, aaaand, e) NIPPLES ON MEN INDICATES 'UNIVERSAL INTERSEXUALITY'

'SHOULD NOT be treated' =/= 'ARE not treated.' This is the whole fucking problem right there. You cannot undo patriarchy with a magic wand and unicorns people.

Then there's something from Bade Ginsburg about how it would be nice for men to help with childcare which is read by Rb to mean 'childcare has nothing to do with women.' And then of course, there's the Beauvoir quote - ARGHHHHHHH.

[It's rhetoric, about female socialization (that thing you don't believe in remember?), not an assertion that female people are not born female. Why do we even have to say these things??????]

And now we get to the slippery move that the 'argument' turns on, viz. 'Feminists say women shouldn't be treated as members of a sex class and it's but a 'short step' (AH-HA-HA) from that to our 'thesis' (that's too kind) that SEX CLASS IS IRRELEVANT AND/OR DOESN'T EXIST'

No, it's not a fucking 'short-step. It's a giant Neil-Armstrongesque cosmic leap in ten league boots. One in which you nattily jump over the *entire* structure of patriarchy as an EXISTING system of sex-based oppression and simultaneously erase feminism as a liberation movement.

Because who needs a liberation movement when we could just solve the problem by playing let's pretend??? And really, those people who keep on insisting on pointing at the problem are just SUCH A DRAG.

So, tell me, do we *really* believe that Rb - and all the others spouting this shit - believe a sentence like this one. Is it possible that they *cannot* distinguish the fact of sexual dimorphism from the structure laid on top of it. Do they really care? Or is it just strategy?

So, I'm going to spare you the next section 'Scientific Developments' - in which we learn that reproduction may be a thing but is not really a thing because we can implant zygotes in cavities near male baboon's intestines.

More 'feminism says sex-based oppression does not exist' brainsploding BS:

Then there's a section on 'Transgenderism' which, wey-hey, at least recognizes that there are both transexuals and transvestites involved - although doesn't analyze what that might mean. Notably, there's no explicit 'trans women are women' claim.

Instead, we get this:

[If you change that 'sex' to 'gender' I'll take it]

Okay, now onto 'The Apartheid of Sex.' What we find here is the muddle-headed - but by now all-too-familiar claim - that erasing sex is liberatory and feminist, because *if there's no sex then no one can be oppressed by sex.* PATRIARCHY, TAKE THAT.

Some policy objectives: 1. Medical/psychological community to 'adopt resolutions' that sex is continuous (CHECK) 2. Prohibit sex classification except for necessary medical purposes (WORKING ON IT) 3. Adopt educational programmes to tell kids sex is self-defined (DOUBLECHECK)

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me about who has what ass backwards.

Back. The Fuck. Away. From Prince. NOW.

[While we're on that, on Genderquake, Kaitlyn Jenner was all 'Prince and I were good friends' (no you weren't) and 'he was very supportive' (I'm sure he was, did you call him a vagina-fetishist and tell him it was bigotry? I suspect he'd be a little less supportive after that...)]

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transhumanist techno-fantasy in which "feminism, technology and transgenderism have debunked the myth of a 'male and female' world' and 'homo sapiens' will gradually be replaced by 'persona creatus.'

Bodies. Vaginas. Who fucking needs them eh?

HUMANNESS IS NOT JUST IN THE MIND YOU PLATONIST DINGBAT. (And minds are not not in bodies either).

So I tried 'thinking of this' and decided a) Your analogies really suck and b) NO THANKS.

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I dunno, I think I'd rather send you back to Plato's 'Symposium,' and you can get shit-faced with Socrates and wiffle on about mindware babies and spiritual pregnancy, and then I'll blast you both into space and save us all 2 and a half millennia of this bullshit. DEAL?

"Mind is deeper than matter."

No. It's. Not.

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