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Review by Don Milligan, July 10, 2024

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I've just caught up with this book. It was published three months ago, and you can get it readily from Amazon or other online booksellers. It's about genderism – a neologism that Gareth Roberts uses as a handy word for talking about the idea that one can change one's sex.

However, the word “idea” does not convey the full weight of genderism. In fact, the belief that people can change their sex through a mental process of discovery is more akin to an act of faith. It is similar to belief in the virgin birth, which Roman Catholics regard as rational. For Christians the virginity of Mary is a miracle announced by an angel sent from God. But for those who believe that a human male can become a human female, it is a mental act, ratified by an individual's public declaration of their metamorphosis; it is a kind secular annunciation independent of material reality. Any subsequent chemical or surgical intervention is intended to drag the person's body into alignment with their mental state; it is a purely

cosmetic procedure. The sex of the person remains the same regardless of appearances.

Gareth Roberts's encounter with these mysteries is fuelled by the observation that the belief that gender should supplant sex is inherently hostile to homosexuality. This is because, homosexuals, both male and female are attracted, like heterosexuals, to the sex of the person, rather than their gender presentation. If sex is supplanted by gender then homosexuality is obliterated by gender, because an imagined body rather than a real body is thought to play the major role in why people are intimately attracted to each other.

The *Shame* of the title refers primarily to the prominent gay men who have played a major role in the promotion of genderism over the last nine or ten years. Gareth's contention is that gay men have shamefully participated in a movement against sex-reality to the detriment of people who choose partners of their own sex – people with the same genitals as themselves.

Gay men, strange as it may seem, are responsible for a *lot* of the spread of genderism, which from its redefinition of sex onwards is blatantly, obviously homophobic. This is an ideology that says there is something wrong with camp little boys and butch little girls and that they need to be fixed. Research, time after time, shows that left alone, the vast majority of these kids grow up to be gay men and lesbians. And that some gay men have cheered on the ideology behind this, and they have enforced it and spread its poison. Shame on them! This book is an attempt to figure out why, and put that into context.

The book goes on to discuss the relative novelty of same-sex relationship between adult men. History has produced a great variety of homosexual relationships, but Gareth insists that today's gay

relationships are uniquely and strikingly modern – less than a hundred and fifty years old – and that this contributes to the relative instability of gay identity.

*Gay Shame* is a personable account, and at times amusing, and at others, revealing, particularly at how the genderists have projected transsexuality back into history – claiming that transvestites and others in the past were really transexuals all along, they just didn't realise it.

This book engages in a thoughtful and fertile discussion, but it is not successful in attributing support and advocacy for genderism amongst gay men to insecurity about the nature of their homosexual identity. However, Gareth Roberts has made a useful and bold foray into this troubling arena. Why are gay men so prominent in the promotion of the idea that the genitals of the desired person are irrelevant, and that what matters above all else, is the gendered presentation, rather than the real sex of the person?

It is a troubling question and Roberts can be congratulated in this first attempt at an answer. His book is well worth reading, and somebody needs urgently to write a more sharply focused sequel.