

# Moral Outrage Becomes the Law in California

On Saturday, California Gov. Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 1172 into law, making it illegal for a minor with unwanted **same-sex attractions** to receive professional counseling, even with parental consent. Yet it is currently legal in California for parents to give hormone blockers to their child in order to delay the onset of puberty so the child can determine his or her true “gender identity.” How can this be?

SB 1172 is an outrageous denial of the client’s right to self-determination and a frontal assault on parental rights. In fact, this was the very purpose of the bill. In the words of California Sen. Ted Lieu, the sponsor of the bill, “The attack on **parental rights** is exactly the whole point of the bill because we don’t want to let parents harm their children.”

**SB 1172** is also an egregious act of overreach by the government of California, which has now intruded itself into the relationship between counselor and client. What right does the government have to ban counseling and therapy that many clients found to be tremendously beneficial?

As for the gay men and women who claim to have been harmed by the counseling they received as young people, their negative experience is certainly no grounds for the government to ban such counseling. As noted by Dr. Christopher Rosik, “Anecdotal stories of harm are no basis from which to ban an entire form of psychological care. If they were, the psychological professions would be completely out of business.” Quite true!

Of course, even without SB 1172, the current state of affairs already reads like a very poor joke, as noted by conservative journalist Matthew Cullinan Hoffman:

“A man goes to a psychologist with a problem. ‘Doctor,’ he

says, 'I'm suffering terribly. I feel like a woman trapped inside the body of a man. I want to become a woman.'

"The psychologist responds: 'No problem. We can discuss this idea for a couple of years, and if you're still sure you want to be a woman, we can have a surgeon remove your penis, give you hormones for breast enlargement and make other changes to your body. Problem solved.'

"Gratified, the first patient leaves, followed by a second. 'Doctor,' he says, 'I feel terrible. I'm a man but I feel attracted to other men. I want to change my sexual preference. I want to become heterosexual.'

"The psychologist responds: 'Oh no, absolutely not! That would be unethical. Sexual orientation is an immutable characteristic!'"

Family therapist Adam Jessel offered a similar observation: "In today's climate, if Bill tells me that he is attracted to his neighbor Fred's young child and he wants to reduce these attractions, I, as a therapist, can try to help him. If Bill has an unwanted attraction to Fred's wife, this too is something I am permitted to help him with. But if Bill has an unwanted attraction to Fred himself, then it's regarded as unethical for me to help."

But it gets worse. One year ago, another California story was in the news: "The lesbian parents of an 11-year-old boy who is undergoing the process of becoming a girl ... defended the decision, claiming it was better for a child to have a sex change when young. Thomas Lobel, who now calls himself Tammy, is undergoing controversial hormone-blocking treatment in Berkeley, Calif., to stop him going through puberty as a boy ... At age 7, after threatening genital mutilation on himself, psychiatrists diagnosed Thomas with **gender identity** disorder. By the age of 8, he began transitioning."

Yes, this is legal in California, while it is now illegal,

effective Jan., 2013, for a 17 year-old with unwanted **same-sex attractions** to receive professional counseling. What kind of world are we living in? And what kind of misguided “compassion” champions the right of a confused young boy to live as a girl—even to the point of tampering with his physical development—while at the same time denying the right to professional counseling to a teenage boy who doesn’t want to be attracted to other boys and who would like to marry a woman one day? Isn’t this a fundamental assault on freedom of religion and freedom of choice?

But this, after all, is California, and for some years already, according to official school policy in San Francisco, “Students shall have access to the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity exclusively and consistently at school.” In other words, if 6-year-old Jane identifies as John, she can use the boy’s bathroom (and locker room).

Not to be outdone, according to the Los Angeles Unified School District Reference Guide, “‘Gender identity’ refers to one’s understanding, interests, outlook, and feelings about whether one is female or male, or both, or neither, regardless of one’s biological sex.” So, your biologically male child can identify as male or female or both or neither, and that is perfectly fine and eminently sane.

It is time for the church of California to awaken and arise. We need a revolution.

**Michael Brown** *is the author of The Real Kosher Jesus and the host of the nationally syndicated talk radio show The Line of Fire on the Salem Radio Network. He is also president of FIRE School of Ministry and director of the Coalition of Conscience.*