

Johns Hopkins Psychiatrist: Transgender is 'Mental Disorder;' Sex Change 'Biologically Impossible'

By Michael W. Chapman August 20, 2014

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(CNSNews.com) -- Dr. Paul R. McHugh, the former psychiatrist-in-chief for **Johns Hopkins Hospital** and its current Distinguished Service Professor of Psychiatry, said that transgenderism is a "mental disorder" that merits treatment, that sex change is "biologically impossible," and that people who promote sexual reassignment surgery are collaborating with and promoting a mental disorder.

Dr. McHugh, the author of six books and at least 125 peer-reviewed medical articles, made his remarks in a recent [commentary](#) in the *Wall Street Journal*, where he explained that transgender surgery is not the solution for people who suffer a "disorder of 'assumption'" -- the notion that their maleness or femaleness is different than what nature assigned to them biologically.

He also reported on a new study showing that the suicide rate among transgendered people who had reassignment surgery is 20 times higher than the suicide rate among non-transgender people. Dr. McHugh further noted studies from Vanderbilt University and London's Portman Clinic of children who had expressed transgender feelings but for whom, over time, 70%-80% "spontaneously lost those feelings."

While the Obama administration, Hollywood, and major media such as *Time* magazine promote transgenderism as normal, said Dr. McHugh, these "policy makers and the media are doing no favors either to the public or the transgendered by treating their confusions as a right in need of defending rather than as a mental disorder that deserves understanding, treatment and prevention."

"This intensely felt sense of being transgendered constitutes a mental disorder in two respects. The first is that the idea of sex misalignment is simply mistaken -- it does not correspond with physical reality. The second is that it can lead to grim psychological outcomes."

The transgendered person's disorder, said Dr. McHugh, is in the person's "assumption" that they are different than the physical reality of their body, their maleness or femaleness, as assigned by nature. It is a disorder similar to a "dangerously thin" person suffering anorexia who looks in the mirror and thinks they are "overweight," said McHugh.

This assumption, that one's gender is only in the mind regardless of anatomical reality, has led some transgendered people to push for social acceptance and affirmation of their own subjective "personal truth," said Dr. McHugh. As a result, some states – California, New Jersey, and Massachusetts – have passed laws barring psychiatrists, "even with parental permission, from striving to restore natural gender feelings to a transgender minor," he said.

The pro-transgender advocates do not want to know, said McHugh, that studies show between 70% and 80% of children who express transgender feelings "spontaneously lose those feelings" over time. Also, for those who had sexual reassignment surgery, most said they were "satisfied" with the operation "but their subsequent psycho-social adjustments were no better than those who didn't have the surgery."

"And so at Hopkins we stopped doing sex-reassignment surgery, since producing a 'satisfied' but still troubled patient seemed an inadequate reason for surgically amputating normal organs," said Dr. McHugh.

The former Johns Hopkins chief of psychiatry also warned against enabling or encouraging certain subgroups of the transgendered, such as young people "susceptible to suggestion from 'everything is normal' sex education," and the schools' "diversity counselors" who, like "cult leaders," may "encourage these young people to distance themselves from their families and offer advice on rebutting arguments against having transgender surgery."

Dr. McHugh also reported that there are "misguided doctors" who, working with very young children who seem to imitate the opposite sex, will administer "puberty-delaying hormones to render later sex-change surgeries less onerous – even though the drugs stunt the children's growth and risk causing sterility."

Such action comes "close to child abuse," said Dr. McHugh, given that close to 80% of those kids will "abandon their confusion and grow naturally into adult life if untreated"

"Sex change' is biologically impossible," said McHugh. "People who undergo sex-reassignment surgery do not change from men to women or vice versa. Rather, they become feminized men or masculinized women. Claiming that this is civil-rights matter and encouraging surgical intervention is in reality to collaborate with and promote a mental disorder."