



The Reckoning, Kara Dansky, 2023, 334 pages.

Review by K. D. Kragen, KaveDragen Ink, January 2026

Kara Dansky is a lawyer, feminist, public speaker, and author of *The Abolition of Sex: How the 'Transgender' Agenda Harms Women And Girls*. A one-time Democrat, she has been executive director of the Stanford Criminal Justice Center, senior counsel at the ACLU's Center for Justice, and is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University (BA) and University Of Pennsylvania Law School (JD). karadansky.com/about

An important aspect of the anti-transgender ideology movement over the last decades is that it draws on all sectors of the political and social spectrum, left-right, religious-secular, liberal-conservative, gay-straight, including women and men from the academic and scientific communities; well-known persons such as author J. K. Rowling, Olympic athletes Jennifer Sey and Riley Gaines, scientists and evolutionary biologists Colin Wright, Jerry

Allen Coyne, and Richard Dawkins, are just a few examples of transgender ideology critics.

And these critics have likewise paid a steep price for speaking out. For all critique of trans rights and trans youth has been for some time *culturally taboo and professionally hazardous*, even as most of the mainstream media and press continues to falsely characterize criticism of transgender rights as coming wholly from Republican and right-wing “transphobic” hate groups. Part of Dansky’s story tells of her ostracism from left-feminist-Democrat colleagues and long-term professional associations. Similarly, many individuals in the legal, medical, and professional sports worlds have likewise found their careers and lives threatened and black-listed.

The main thesis of the book is that the ontology of women, and girls, is being denied and their existence erased by rejecting the objective truth that there is such a thing as a woman, by rejecting objective truth as a whole and replacing it with the epistemic relativity of “my truth” and “your truth” (p. 272-23). Keep in mind this book was written during the Biden Administration.

As an example, Dansky talks about how Tulsi Gabbard, Democratic representative, Hawaii, in December 2020, “joined Republican Representative Markwayne Mullin to introduce the Protect Women’s Sports Act, ... [which] would have made it a violation of Title IX ‘for a recipient of Federal funds who operates, sponsors, or facilitates athletic programs or activities to permit a person whose biological sex at birth is male to participate in an athletic program or activity that is designated for women or girls’” (p. 271). In October 2022 Gabbard decided to leave the Democratic Party; she stated, “‘We have an administration in the White House ... [and] a Supreme Court justice who are unable and unwilling to define what a woman is. How is it controversial to define what a woman is? It is the height of hypocrisy for those who claim to be feminists, who claim to be champions for woman over decades ... to deny that there is such a thing as a woman. Those who deny the biological differences between a man and a woman are not only erasing women as a category of people; they’re denying the existence of objective reality, and the “truth” becomes whatever those in power want it to be’” (p. 272).

Both in the U.S. and abroad, people who espouse transgender critical views are often referred to as a “Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist” or TERF activist. Giving some historical context, on page eight Dansky briefly lists some transgender ideology advocates, many being traditional left-leaning (or progressive) justice and gay/lesbian advocacy organizations: e.g., the ACLU (where Dansky worked for many years before being black-listed as espousing “hate speech” for questioning gender ideology), Amnesty International, HRC (Human Rights Campaign), NARL (now RFA, Reproductive Freedom for All), and Planned Parenthood.

Gender-critical groups and individuals, both in the US and abroad, have one thing in common. They view the last 10-20 years of gender ideology to be based on psychological fantasy rather than biological and scientific reality. A key irony, and especially aggravating for traditional feminists, this transgender ideology traffics in classic 20th century gender stereotypes of male and female rolls and appearance, designed predominantly by misogynistic men, and driven by a highly profitable, economically powerful medical and pharmaceutical industry. Dansky, in lawyerly fashion, spends a significant portion of the book making a solid case for this point. “Gender-affirming care” cannot, of course, change a person’s biological sex, which is impossible. Rather medical and surgical goals focus solely on one’s “physical gender expression,” making one *look like* and *sound like* the opposite sex.

The Reckoning also tells the story of when and how the “T” (i.e. transgender) became attached to the “LGB” activist movement, as well as, *one*, how transgender ideology betrays both women and girls as a sex class, and, *two*, how gender ideology is perpetrating the worst medical scandal in recent history, specifically through a cult-like controlling “gender dysphoria” mythology, which brainwashes children into believing one can be “born into the wrong body.” That is, that a boy who exhibits traditional, often stereotypical feminine characteristics must be a girl born in a male body, and, visa-versa, a girl exhibiting stereotypical “tomboy” characteristics must be a boy trapped in a female body. Then, with no scientific evidence, this gender ideology dictates that the only socially “just and caring response” to gender dysphoria is a lifetime of medicalization through what is euphemistically called “gender affirming care” – i.e. puberty blockers, castration of boys, breast removal in young girls, often leading to sterility and myriad other health complications. (One typical example of “gender affirming care” philosophy: <https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/washington/health-wellness/gender-affirming-care>.)

In her clearest response to transgender dogma (in the section titled “School Indoctrination”) Dansky writes, “Our society is teaching children that sex-stereotypes are innate and that ‘gender identity’ overrides the material reality of biological sex. Our society is teaching an entire generation of confused children that sex isn’t real, that it is possible to be born in the wrong body, and that if they are confused about sex then it is perfectly fine to block puberty, take wrong sex hormones that cause sterility and other long-term health problems, and it is maybe even okay to change your genitals if doing so helps you align with the sex you think you are. Schools are ‘transing’ kids and they are doing it without parental knowledge. This is unforgivable and the educators should be unabashedly ashamed of themselves for promoting this toxic poison by teaching it to children” (p. 220).

One excellent, and creative, response countering the dogma of gender ideology and “gender-affirming care” among trans youth – that gender dysphoria is a symptom of “being born into the wrong body” – comes from Parents with Inconvenient Truths about Trans (PITT): “So, what is this new intervention that is so good at alleviating Gender Dysphoria? *It is Puberty!* Yes puberty. As it is a bit of a turbulent time it can of course be associated with some increased risks of mental health concerns as a person develops, however it also presents opportunities for positive development and maturing” (<https://www.pittparents.com/p/what-is-this-new-intervention-that>). In other words, puberty is a lot less destructive to a child’s mental and physical health and well-being than extreme chemical and medical intervention which is euphemistically called “gender-affirming care.”

Two motivations have drawn me into trying to better understand the anti-transgender ideology movement. *The first* reflects my background as a peace-and-justice, pro-life, egalitarian feminist, from the early 1970s when the hopeful ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) was almost encoded into the law of the land. It was a time when anti-abortion feminists, pro-immigration, anti-nuke, and gender equality advocates often found it hard to find a home in the political arena, neither Republican nor Democrat but sometimes a little of both, neither socially conservative nor liberal but somewhere in-between. Similarly I’ve found that the transgender ideology critical movement is made up of individuals and organizations worldwide that come from all political/social sectors, radical feminists (TERFs),

conservative to more centrist PITTs (“Parents with Inconvenient Truths about Trans”), theists, atheists, and nones. As an older pro-life feminist, the transgender critical movement seems curiously familiar to me – as a ragtag coalition of trans ideology dissenters and independent thinkers.

The second motivation enticing me to better understand this controversy is being a writer and philosopher with graduate degrees in epistemology, philosophy of science, and philosophy of language. As a philosopher, my curiosity is peaked when I hear of a cultural taboo that bans all *questioning of a particular cultural/political trend*, backed up with harsh social and legal sanctions. In the present case even a hint of questioning gender ideology dogma is branded transphobic hate speech, racist, fascist.

As can be seen from the “Table Of Contents,” *The Reckoning* not only makes a strong case against transgender ideology, it traces this cult-like movement’s roots, philosophy, economic and political power backing – it “follows the money.”

Many traditionally liberal countries and societies that once, like the US, pushed transgender ideology are now rethinking their support, and not for any shift toward conservatism but because of a shift toward a strong science-based anthropology and sound scientific methodology. England is a prime example, as discussed in the book *TERF Island*, by Fiona McAnena, 2025 (<https://a.co/d/6dILe6Q>).

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Further Resources

- The TERF Report, Kara Dansky - <https://karadansky.substack.com/> & <https://www.karadansky.com/>
- Jennifer Say - <https://jennifersey.substack.com/>, XX-XY Athletics - https://x.com/xx_xyathletics
- Parents with Inconvenient Truths about Trans - <https://www.pittparents.com/> & their book of the same name, subtitled “Tales from the Home Front in the Fight to Save Our Kids,” 2023
- Women’s Declaration International - <https://www.womensdeclaration.com/en/>
- WoLF, Women’s Liberation Front - <https://womensliberationfront.org/>
- Canadian Women's Sex-Based Rights (caWsbar) - <https://www.cawsbar.ca/>
- Society For Evidence Based Gender Medicine - https://www.segm.org/about_us
- Bad Facts, Glenna Goldis - <https://badfacts.substack.com/>
- Book: *DeTrans: When Transition Is Not The Solution*, Dr. Az Hakeem, 2023 (<https://a.co/d/ecKXBuh>)
- Book: *TERF Island*, Fiona McAnena, 2025 (<https://a.co/d/6dILe6Q>)