



LIES THAT GO UNCHALLENGED SERIES . . .

**LIES THAT GO  
UNCHALLENGED™  
IN POPULAR CULTURE**

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*Lies That Go Unchallenged in Popular Culture*

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SECTION ONE

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# RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL



# LIE 1 We have the freedom of choice to be who we want and to do what we want.

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**Underlying Worldview:** Individuals derive their rights from themselves, are responsible to no higher authority, and are free to pursue their own destinies as long as they don't hurt others.

As a culture, we no longer know the Author of life who created us in his image. Instead, we define human beings as the products of a random evolutionary process and we believe that we will survive and grow if we do what is most fulfilling to our selves. This worldview extends to the autonomous shaping of our gendered identities and their outward expression in our sexuality. As an example, you'll see in this section how adolescent girls explore various options of sexual identity, including bisexuality and lesbianism, before settling on a final preference. When they see heterosexual pop icons such as Britney Spears and Madonna kissing intimately, they consider that anything and everything must be acceptable.

When moral guidelines are not based on the holy character of our Creator, we think that we are free to set our own agendas. Apart from our inherent selfishness, this credo gains much of its seductive and deceptive power from the kernel of truth that it distorts. God does want each of us to survive and thrive by doing what is most fulfilling to us. As Jesus put it, "I have come that they may

have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). The problem lies not with our desire for deeply fulfilled and satisfying lives, but in our failure to understand that God has placed our true desires deep in our hearts. Following the guidelines that our Creator established for us leads to our true fulfillment and happiness, but as philosopher Robert George states the secular belief, “Moral rights cannot come as a divine gift because there is no divine giver.”

This section presents the view that no one has the inherent right to tell us not to abort our children, have sex with them, or genetically alter them. According to this view, we come into this world as free persons with no inherent guilt or responsibility, but with a “blank slate” that is filled in by our environment. We find celebrity talk show host Rosie O’Donnell promoting gay adoption by telling us that as a lesbian, she is also a good mother of three adopted children, even though statistics clearly show that children of gay parents suffer from the lack of both gender models in the household.

Since we are our own private universe, as one judge stated, we question whether we can even punish something as barbaric as cannibalism, if both parties consent. In one article in this section, a man who cannibalized another man defended himself because the victim authorized this horrible act. With the complete sovereignty of the individual, we are headed toward the ungovernable chaos of anarchy. In another article, the quadriplegic movie actor Christopher Reeve leads a campaign for cloning and, later, for stem cell research. It seems that if it is for “humanitarian purposes,” it is morally acceptable to take the Creator’s role into our own hands.

To combat these lies, we need to articulate a Christian worldview that stands squarely against the cult of autonomous individualism. We were created for perfection, intended to be like God and to worship him forever, yet we have disobeyed the just laws of this all-loving Creator and have paid the consequences in our fallen nature. He has redeemed us at the cost of his own life, and when people speak of “rights,” we need to recognize that everything we are and have is God’s gift to us, intended to be invested in wise stewardship. The more important issue is our obligation to be reconciled to God in order to become all that we were meant to be as individuals.



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# CHECKING BOXES

*Transgender Chic*

Members of the next incoming freshman class at Brown University will enjoy a new option when it comes to on-campus housing—what the school calls a “gender-neutral option.” Students selecting that option will live in a dorm with “lockable bathrooms for use by one person.”

While we all like our privacy, just what kind of student requires these special accommodations? The answer is the newest fashionable minority on college campuses: “transgender students.”

Fifty years ago, George Jorgensen stunned the world when he

checked into a Copenhagen hospital and left as Christine Jorgensen after the world's first sex-change surgery. Until recently, claims that someone was "a man trapped in a woman's body," or vice versa, were regarded with skepticism. The reason is clear. Many of the people making these claims suffer from some kind of mental illness, and what they really need is treatment, not radical surgery. Even more important, there was a well-founded reluctance to believe that nature had somehow made a mistake.

Now, as events at Brown demonstrate, we don't hesitate to think that nature might have made a mistake. In fact, we deny that nature has anything to do with a person's sex. That's because of the influence that feminism and "queer theory," as it is called, have on college campuses. For both of these philosophies, the idea that there is such a thing as fixed or biologically determined human nature, especially with regard to sexuality, is the enemy. If we are, as the Scriptures say, created male and female, then this limits our personal autonomy—which is, after all, the *summum bonum* of modern American life. And so postmodern academics replace the word *sex* with *gender*, a word historically associated with classification and description. This enables feminists to claim that the qualities normally associated with the sexes are socially constructed, that is, imposed from without as opposed to being inherent. "Queer theorists" depict human sexuality as a continuum instead of an either-or. So a man, biologically, can choose to be feminine, and vice versa—it's just another life choice.

While these ideas haven't held much sway among ordinary Americans, they've become articles of faith on college campuses and among the elite. They've been added to another staple of postmodern thought—"identity politics"—which views member-

ship in a particular group as the basis for all action. The result is separate dorms for “transgender students”—men who choose to be feminine and women who choose to be masculine.

If this sounds absurd to you, you’re not alone. Phillip Johnson tells a story in his great book *The Right Questions*, about a fellow faculty member at Berkeley who taught his students the postmodern line. Then his son began cross-dressing, and Dad, despite his proclamations, was embarrassed to introduce him at a dinner party. All the young man was doing, of course, was following his father’s teaching. Even postmodern academics can be awakened when they see where their worldview leads. On some level they still understand that being transgender, as it is called, is a violation not only of the moral order but also of the biological order. It takes a lot more to overcome “male and female he created them” than checking a box on a college housing form.

## **TRUTHS TO CONSIDER**

Exploring various forms of sexuality in order to evolve as a sexual person is destructive of God’s intentions. It ends in the brokenness of the inner person and in a compromised capacity for permanent marital relationship.

We were designed in God’s image as male and female, and God has always chosen whether we should be men or women. Now many believe that they should decide for themselves which sex they will be.

In today’s moral and sexual climate, our young people need encouragement, support, and guidance as they explore and clarify their sexual identities.



## GROUP STUDY

*The Spiritual Dimension:* Have you ever resented or disliked being the sex that you are? Explore the roots of this distress and seek the help of the Holy Spirit in becoming the fulfilled man or woman you were created to be.

*Group Approach:* Does your church provide venues where sexual issues can be discussed in an informative, prayerful, and supportive setting? How can you be supportive of those who struggle in these areas?

*Influencing Culture:* The church is the wild card as to which worldview will prevail in light of recent cultural changes. How can the church be salt and light to the secular culture that surrounds it?