

FLAWED SURVEY ON TRANSGENDER RIGHTS

When the public is asked about the rights of Americans, from any demographic group, the issue is usually couched in terms of equality. But when it comes to the rights of transgender persons, there are two other variables that ineluctably come into play: equity and privacy.

Equality is not equity: it means sameness; equity means fairness. Giving all students the same grade is an example of equality and inequity. Privacy is self-evident.

A new Gallup poll on the rights of transgender persons taps measures of equality and equity, but neglects to tap the issue of privacy.

Asking respondents whether or not transgender persons should have a right to serve in the military is a measure of equality. Most Americans are predisposed to treating everyone equally, so it comes as no surprise that 7 in 10 adults say they favor allowing openly transgender persons to serve in the military.

Asking whether transgender athletes should only be allowed to compete against those of their same birth sex, or whether they should be allowed to compete against those who match their sex identity, is a measure of equity. Most Americans (62%) prefer the former choice, thus showing a preference for equity over equality. In other words, most do not think it fair that those who are born male should have the right to compete in sports against those born female.

Gallup did not ask about the privacy issue, namely, whether biological males who consider themselves to be female should have the right to use the same bathroom and shower facilities as females.

Previous Gallup polls on the restroom issue, taken in 2016 and 2017, showed that most Americans do not agree that those born of one sex should be allowed to use the same public restroom of those who belong to the opposite sex, though the margins were not great. In 2016, 50% said transgender individuals should use the public restrooms of their birth sex; 40% disagreed. In 2017, the respective numbers were 48% to 45%.

There are a few problems with these Gallup surveys.

For one, why didn't Gallup pose the question differently in 2016 and 2017? For example, why didn't it ask respondents whether they approve of those in grades K-12 using the same bathroom and shower facilities of those who belong to the opposite sex? Is there not a profound difference between adults using the same public restrooms as those of the other sex, and boys and girls using the same school bathrooms and shower facilities?

Second, if most Americans today are not in favor of allowing biological males to compete against biological females in sports, isn't it likely that an even higher percentage would oppose them showering together? Why didn't Gallup ask this question?

Allowing males to compete against females in sports, and to access the same locker rooms after competing, does violence to all three variables relevant to this discussion: equality, equity, and privacy.

Males and females are not equal in their biologically determined athletic attributes; allowing males to compete against females is patently unfair; and mixing the sexes in bathrooms and showers is a violation of privacy rights.

No one should be afraid to call this for what it is—madness.