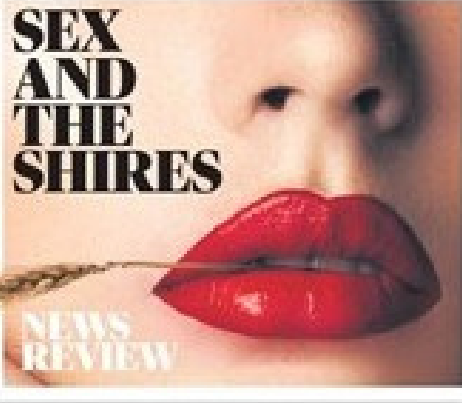




THE SUNDAY TIMES



SEX AND THE SHIRES

NEWS REVIEW

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Tavistock scandal 'is on a par with East Germany's doping of athletes'

Glen Keogh

More than 1,000 children were referred for puberty blockers at an experimental gender clinic where concerns were ignored to preserve a "gold-dust" NHS contract, a new book claims.

Former clinicians at the Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS), part of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust in London, have detailed how some "incredibly complex" children were placed on medication after just one face-to-face assessment, despite many having a variety of mental health or family background problems.

More than a third of young people referred to the service had moderate to severe autistic traits, compared with fewer than 2 per cent in the general population. Some identified not just as different gender, but a different ethnic background. One young person

had "three different alter egos". In the book, former GIDS clinicians speak of their "regret" over the practice of routinely referring under-16s for puberty-blocking and cross-hormone treatment without concrete data on long-term effects. They compare it to the Mid Staff hospital scandal of

the 2000s and the doping of East German athletes in the 1990s and 1990s. The claims come in *Time to Think: The Inside Story of the Collapse of the Tavistock's Gender Service for Children* by Hannah Barnes, to be published this month and serialised in *The Sunday Times Magazine*. Barnes, a BBC News

nightjournalist, spoke to dozens of clinicians who worked at GIDS, trust governors, and children and their parents who used it. She says: "Children as young as three, already living as the opposite gender with a changed name, appearance and possessions, were referred to the service."

The clinic accounted for almost 30 per cent of the Tavistock NHS Trust's income by 2021 and staff said it resembled a "tech start-up"

with regular trips to international conferences.

In 2016, Isiah Green, former head of the pro-trans charity Mermaids, emailed Dr Polly Gorman (by art), who was then the head of GIDS, asking to cut the time children had to spend on puberty-blockers before irreversible cross-sex hormones could be introduced.

Staff raised concerns when, on behalf of families, Green suggested that children's clinicians be

changed to one thought to be more likely to prescribe hormones.

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Chairman 'has undermined trust in BBC'

Richard Sharp's involvement in Johnson loan was a 'serious error of judgment', say MPs

Gabriel Pognand and Harry York

Richard Sharp undermined trust in the BBC and the public appointments system by failing to reveal his role in facilitating Boris Johnson's loan of up to £200,000. MPs have said in a damning report.

The Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) select committee, which approved Sharp's appointment as BBC chairman two years ago, said the failure also constituted a "breach of the standards expected" of individuals applying for public appointments.

Describing it as a "significant error of judgment", the committee urged Sharp to "consider the impact his omission will have on trust in him, the BBC and the public appointments process".

Responding to the report last night, Lucy Powell, the shadow culture secretary, said Sharp's position was "increasingly untenable", adding: "It throws into serious doubt the impartiality and independence that is so fundamental to trust in the BBC."

The findings are likely to heap pressure on Sharp, who is still awaiting the outcome of two reviews of the controversy.

The Sunday Times revealed last month that Sharp, 67, had been involved in discussions leading to

an undeclared loan arrangement of up to £200,000 for Johnson while he was prime minister. Sharp was applying to become the chairman of the BBC, and was awarded the role by Johnson just weeks later.

In September 2020, Sharp was approached at a dinner party by Sam Blyth, a Canadian friend and a distant cousin of Johnson, who told him he wanted to provide assistance to the prime minister because of concerns that he was in financial difficulty.

Several months later Blyth and Sharp spoke again. Sharp offered

to discuss the proposal with Simon Case, the cabinet secretary. By this point he had applied to become the next BBC chairman. Sharp spoke to Johnson and told him in advance of his intention to apply.

Sharp met Case privately on December 4, 2020, when the pair discussed Blyth's offer. In response to questions last month, Sharp said that in this meeting he notified Case he was also a candidate to become BBC chairman, and the pair agreed that he should have no further involvement. He said he and Case agreed he had therefore avoided both the perception of and an actual conflict of interest that would otherwise need to be declared.

Sharp has denied ever providing Johnson with financial advice, a position also maintained by Johnson. Sharp did not disclose his role either to the appointments panel tasked with vetting candidates or the DCMS committee, which held his pre-appointment scrutiny hearing after he was announced as the government's preferred candidate in January 2020. He also did not disclose that he had told Johnson of his intention to apply for the role.

Johnson later secured a loan facility, which he declared in his interest register of interests as being worth up to £200,000. Blyth

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One sister survived, the other died



Hours after this picture of Zeynep Ada Duran, 13, and her sister Yandemur, 15, was taken in Antakya, Turkey, the quake struck their home. Zeynep Ada was freed but Yandemur's body was buried in the rubble

LOUISE CALLAGHAN

Antakya, Turkey

As the stroke of midnight last Sunday, Yandemur Duran and her sister, Zeynep Ada, jumped onto their parents' bed to give their father a present for his 40th birthday. The girls were excited after a long day they had gone for a walk in the freshly fallen snow, and then outside supper as a family.

Four hours later Yandemur, 15, would be dead, killed as the ceiling of their flat in the city of Antakya collapsed on them during one of the most powerful earthquakes to hit the region for 100 years. The family, and the country, would be altered for ever.

Nearly a week on, her body, still in her pyjamas, lies under the rubble, as her parents keep watch day and night, waiting. Like thousands of other families, for help that has come far too late.

Six days after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that tore through southern Turkey and Syria, and the 7.5 magnitude earthquake that followed several hours later, the incomprehensible scale of the devastation is slowly unfolding.

Antakya, one of Turkey's most beautiful cities, is gone. Not a single

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Shamed MP in financial misconduct claims

Gabriel Pognand and Hannah al-Othman

A shamed MP submitted a forged document while applying for a mortgage, used a Freedom Act to conceal his financial interests and failed to declare a £25,000 campaign donation.

David Warburton, the MP for Somerset & Frome, had the Con-

servative whip removed last year after he was pictured beside an apparent baiting tray with four lines of "vocaliser", which he allegedly inhaled "line after line".

He remains under investigation over allegations of sexual misconduct, and has been found to have breached MP's rules after lobbying for a Russian banker who had secretly lent him £150,000

through an offshore trust. Warburton, 57, a married father of two, recently said he intended to stand again in his safe Tory seat, declaring via his representative that he wished to "continue to work for the people of Somerset".

However, new evidence suggests that he may have breached parliamentary rules and the law, submitting a fake document in

support of an £800,000 interest-free application.

Full story, page 7

NEWMAN'S VIEW

I feel, my my losing out - As soon as the BBC celebrates 100 years we will be...





BEST HOTELS IN MALLORCA

Lf you've got city life in your sights, make Palma your base. Or, if you're after those famous family-friendly Mallorcan beaches, head north towards Pollensa and

Alcudia. Looking for something more low-key? Shake off the sand and follow the stream of celebrities to the remote fishing village of Port de Soller. One thing's for sure, wherever in Mallorca you choose, you'll find plenty of striking places to stay — and we've picked the best of the bunch.

EL VICENC DE LA MAR, CALA EL VINCENC

Best for sleek design

Bringing a splash of contemporary style to the rugged north of the island, this five-star retreat is tucked into crinkled cliffs. All soothing taupe and natural stone with touches of brilliant turquoise that reflect the hue of the various pools, it is a soothing spot set right in front of the beach. While away your days relaxing by the rooftop pool, upgrade to a swim-up suite, or retreat to the elegant spa with its relaxation area, heated pool and thermal circuit. Spend cosy evenings in the private cinema, or dine at the two restaurants under the direction of chef Santi Taura; rooftop El Vicenc serves à la carte Mediterranean cuisine, while U Mayol is a relaxed seafood bistro.

