

# TYSON'S TWADDLE – WOKEISM POSING AS SCIENCE

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*[Is there a more obnoxious jerk who epitomizes woke arrogant*

*speaking-for-science fraudulence more than Neil DeGrasse Tyson? Read on how he was so masterfully exposed by two knowledgeable Brits.]*

Bruce Thornton and others have usefully dubbed it “scientism”: “Dressing up ideological beliefs or even fads in the quantitative data and forbidding jargon of real sciences like physics or engineering.”

It allows progressives who actually know and care nothing about science to boast that they “believe in science” or “follow the science” whereas their reactionary opponents, presumably, do not.

For some years now, the premier prophet of scientism in America has been Neil DeGrasse Tyson, who since 1996 has been the director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York, and who, like his fellow astrophysicist Carl Sagan before him, has won fame as a promoter and popularizer of science.

There's one crucial difference between Sagan and Tyson, however, and it's this: unlike Sagan, Tyson routinely puts scientism ahead of science. He's totally on board, for example, with the cult of climate change. During the COVID lockdown, he was a reliable supporter of Fauci and company; appearing last January on the Patrick Bet-David podcast, he not only defended the vaccines but also, rather cold-bloodedly, defended the dismissal from their jobs of Americans who refused the jab:

**“There’s a public health contract that you have signed, implicitly, as a citizen of a country where in part we depend on each other for our health, our welfare, security, and the like. And that contract is, in the best scientific evidence available at the time, if you do not get vaccinated, you will put other people in this organization at risk, and this organization does not want to take that risk, and so you do not have that job anymore if you decline it.”**

Aside from inventing out of whole cloth the notion of a “public health contract” and ignoring the fact that what Fauci was serving up wasn’t the “best scientific evidence” at all (not to mention Fauci’s dissembling on the Wuhan lab and other matters), Tyson ignored the fact that the childhood vaccine mandates and school closedowns made no sense given COVID-19’s very low rates of lethality in younger persons, that the guidelines on masks and public distancing were capricious at best, and that the big promises about the single vaccine’s efficacy proved to be utterly bogus.

In short, he was a total scientific-establishment toady, absolutely insensitive to the tyrannical conduct of supposedly democratic governments in the name of public health and, one might add, thoroughly condescending toward Bet-David, saying to him: “I’ve read all the things you have, but I’ve read it [sic] as a scientist.”

But never has Tyson abandoned science for scientism more completely than he has when discussing gender ideology.

Last May, when he was a guest on the Stephen A. Smith podcast, he replied to a question on the topic by serving up a ten-minute routine (which could easily have been reduced to thirty seconds) about a recent ride on the New York subway during which he noted that he could tell the male and female passengers apart because of “secondary and tertiary” features such as the way they dressed and wore their hair.

His point apparently being that while X and Y chromosomes aren’t visible to the naked eye, such superficial signs of gender *are* visible, and can in some cases reflect an inner sense of identity that is, in fact, at odds with chromosomal identity. Tyson contended that it’s common to feel “80% female” on some days and “80% male” on others. (Really?)

In any event, he demanded, “why do you care?” Why, he asked, *can*’t people say “I’m a little of both”? He cited “tomboys” as examples of children who cross the gender line and Joan of Arc, who “dressed like a man,” as “an early example of someone who didn’t fit a gender category held by others.”

In using these examples of cross-sex conduct and attire, Tyson implicitly misrepresented gender ideology, which insists that such matters aren’t just about passing feelings and style choices (or about the need to put on a soldier’s uniform to save France), but about deep-seated identities that transcend mere biology.

He then asserted, rather breezily, that the conflict over biological men in women's bathrooms and sports is easily solvable: instead of dividing teams by biological sex, for example, why not divide them by hormone levels? In sum, he insisted, it's "intellectually lazy" not to "embrace transgenderism." Smith didn't challenge a bit of it.

Then, the other day, Tyson was interviewed on Britain's popular Triggernometry podcast, whose savvy hosts, Konstantin Kisin and Francis Foster, went viral last year when they exposed Sam Harris, once celebrated as a hero of rational thought, as a sufferer of Trump Derangement Syndrome at its most irrational.

Could it be that Tyson wasn't aware of that interview, which all but destroyed Harris's career? Had Tyson not heard of Kisin's impressive book, *An Immigrant's Love Letter to the West* (2022), or of his bravura Oxford Union presentation that went viral on YouTube last January?

I suspect not, for Tyson certainly seemed – at least at the beginning of the episode, which was entitled "Have We Lost Trust in Science?" – to feel that he was talking to a couple of easily manipulated simpletons. (Perhaps that feeling comes naturally when you've just done, as he admitted, a series of interviews with local TV news reporters.)

After civil exchanges with Kisin and Foster about space exploration and environmentalism, Kisin brought up the trans issue. Tyson had his usual schtick ready. "When you see another person," he asked, "do you see their chromosomes?" Kisin snapped back: "No, you see the phenotype."

Tyson, visibly thrown by Kisin's use of the word phenotype, chided him for it, then went into his overlong subway story, explaining, as he had to Smith, that by observing his fellow passengers' "secondary and tertiary accoutrements" he could tell who was male and who was female.

Upon hearing this, Kisin instantly shot back, stressing that the controversy centers on such matters as ladies' restrooms and women's sports teams. Tyson, visibly riled, asked if Kisin had a third example, and, without waiting for an answer, sniffed obnoxiously: "Probably not!"

But Kisin had other examples: in the UK, he told Tyson, there are "female-only shortlists for positions in Parliament," plus "diversity targets" for women in corporations. "Therefore," said Kisin, "when you make a claim that you are female, you are attempting, whether intentionally or not, to insert yourself into categories that are specifically designed to protect women's interests."

As on Smith's podcast, Tyson claimed that solving such problems is easy, proposing that teams be separated not by sex but by hormone levels. But where Smith had nodded along, Kisin shot back instantly that the differences between men and women aren't just hormonal, but include such attributes as hip angle, lung capacity, and bone density.

Tyson seemed gobsmacked. When he suggested that the challenge of "trans women" in sports could be met by introducing weight classes, as in wrestling, Kisin replied that it would be unfair, for a plethora of biological reasons, even for men and women of equal weights to wrestle each other.

Bringing to mind his snotty comeback to Bet-David, Tyson said, condescendingly, to Kisin: "I respect how active your brain is, but I've thought about all this." But he kept proving, rather, that all he's thought about is

ways to push gender ideology on the politically woke and intellectually lazy.

Eventually, after being calmly told by Kisin that one of his answers hadn't "address[ed] the question at all," Tyson took refuge in the lame claim that gender ideology is here to stay and that its opponents, quite simply, aren't "fully informed" and are clinging to an "older view of the world" that, he said, brings to mind the era of separate black and white water fountains.

Tyson, of course, is black. And in going for the water-fountain line, he was playing the race card. By the end of the show, then, he'd left actual science far behind. It was a sad performance for any viewer who'd expected Tyson to address the trans issue as a scientist and not a booster.

But if his rank scientism was disappointing, it was a pleasure to look through the hundreds of comments by YouTube viewers, who were almost united in their sanity – and in their disdain for Tyson's twaddle.

"Neil's transition from scientist to influencer is complete," wrote one. "He is one of the major reasons why there is a trust issue with science," maintained another. And a third lamented: "Neil loses all his credibility with his take on trans issues. How does he not see that?"

And perhaps the comment that summed it all up was this one: "In times like these I wish Carl Sagan would still be with us."

Alas, it's hard not to see the decline from Sagan to Tyson as mirroring the social and cultural and, yes, scientific decline that has afflicted America since the days when Sagan sat next to Johnny Carson on late-night TV.

Sagan enthusing over the Apollo program, imagining the space explorations of the future, and talking eagerly about the "billions and billions and billions" of stars in the night sky – yet all the while never to trying to use his scientific clout to try to make the latest popular but scientifically indefensible flimflam sound remotely legitimate.

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