

A close-up photograph of a microscope's objective lens and eyepiece, with a slide of tissue in focus. The background is blurred, showing other parts of the microscope and laboratory equipment.

## We are all Free to Agree: The Case of Dr Jereth Kok

*By Peter Barnes*

Dr Jereth Kok is a young medical practitioner in Melbourne, and an evangelical Christian who worships with the Christian Community Churches of Victoria. He has taken his place along with Archbishop Julian Porteous, Rev. Campbell Markham, Israel Folau, Bernard Gaynor, and Katrina Tait. Each one has had the temerity to object to the constricting demand of our times that the homosexual lobby - and in Mrs Tait's case the drag queen lobby - rule in the public square.

The Anti-Discrimination Boards can be outdone even by Medical Boards. Dr Kok has been suspended since August 2019 because in the sacred arena of social media he has expressed strong opposition to abortion, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, and aspects of transgender treatment. The process being as onerous as any punishment, the decision of the Medical Board went on appeal to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. There have been Star Chambers in history with more idea of justice than VCAT possesses.

VCAT has allowed a doctor charged with rape to continue to practise, but not Dr Kok. It acknowledged that 'We do not know how, or even if, Dr Kok's strongly held beliefs have impacted or infiltrated his actual medical practice.' In fact, there were no actual medical complaints against Dr Kok. Nevertheless, it

considered that 'public confidence in the medical profession and the willingness of (some) members of the public to seek appropriate treatment will be significantly undermined' if Dr Kok is allowed to continue to practise. In the Bible a conviction required two or more witnesses (Deut.19:15), but VCAT came rather close to saying that a hunch was more than sufficient.

The suspension is open-ended, at the Tribunal's discretion, leaving Dr Kok's sixteen year old career in tatters, and his young family in limbo. If only he had dressed up as a drag queen and read stories to children in a public library, he would have been unmolested, and perhaps been a candidate for an Order of Australia. Legal bodies have increasingly become organs of propaganda.

Modern Western societies still profess some kind of belief in freedom. As George Orwell pointed out: 'If liberty means anything at all it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.' What we are left with today is the freedom to agree with the prevailing fads, or to suffer the consequences.

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