

TRANSADVOCATE

Debunked: JoeySalads' Transgender Bathroom Hoax

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Abstract

Once again, news media around the globe proves that they'll promote just about anything anti-trans, without verification. Zinnia Jones released an in-depth analysis and debunking of YouTuber Joey "Salads" Saladino's "transgender bathroom experiment" wherein Saladino dons a bad wig so that he can stage and film what he presents to be the actual fear of (cis) women when they encounter [...]

Article



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Zinnia Jones released an in-depth analysis and debunking of YouTuber Joey "Salads" Saladino's "transgender bathroom experiment" wherein Saladino dons a bad wig so that he can stage and film what he presents to be the actual fear of (cis) women when they encounter what's supposedly a trans woman in the women's bathroom. The UK's Daily Mail -the same news agency that hounded the trans woman, Lucy Meadows to death -- featured Saladino's hoax not just once, but twice, asserting that Saladino's

hoax was part of an ongoing “debate” around the existence of trans people:

[Figure] B... B... But, it's all part of the “debate”: the Daily Mail promoting Saladino's hoax

Never mind that several of Saladino's videos were debunked by YouTubers in the past, the Daily Mail would have you believe that this time, what you see in Saladino's supposed “social experiment” is real.¹ When directly asked, Saladino will claim that while all his videos are real, he sometimes dramatizes his social experiments saying, “like with the social experiments, sometimes, it's really hard to capture it and sometimes I'll just have whatever situation it would be, just go out and just do it, and I'll record a dramatization of exactly what happened.”

As for Saladino, he claims that his hoax is merely part of a larger two sided “debate”:

[Figure] debate

Discuss the media's use of the “transgender debate” trope in the TransAdvocate Forums

Saladino's YouTube channel is his job and he flies between his two homes in LA and New York. It's reasonable to, therefore, conclude that Saladino relies upon the attention his videos generate to pay for his two homes. In the 15 days since Saladino posted his transgender bathroom hoax, it's estimated that his “experiment” has made him between three and eight thousand dollars in ad revenue.²

Zinnia opens her debunking by challenging the controls of Saladino's “experiment” before moving on to expose the video itself as a sham. Zinnia notes the “experiment” is carried out in what is presented to be a busy doctor's office. However, Zinnia is incredulous, “Accepting this video to be candid would require believing that this facility has simply allowed him and his camera person to loiter outside their restrooms indefinitely, even after repeatedly frightening other patrons.” Leaving this improbability aside, Zinnia does an excellent job of breaking down the artifacts of a staged production:

The second clip features him following two women into the restroom while the light is off, and the door then closes behind all three of them. Were these two women just standing in the completely darkened and enclosed space while they loudly argued with a stranger who they believed could pose some kind of threat? - Zinnia Jones

View post on imgur.com

While Saladino clearly wants viewers to conclude that the restroom is multi-use, Zinnia proves that, given Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) space limitations, the restroom could only be a single-use facility. Given this fact, Zinnia states, “Even if the reactions depicted were entirely genuine, this would not be an issue of trans women and cis women sharing a restroom. This is a stranger following individuals into a single-user bathroom; an unacceptable behavior completely aside any matters of gender.”

To Zinnia's observations, I would add that it's telling that, while these reactions supposedly took place in an apparently sizable doctor's office that was open for business, other than the well mic'd objections of the women in the restroom, no ordinary doctor's office sounds can be heard. Moreover, notice that a cleaning crew has set out a sign warning of a freshly mopped hallway. Office cleaners most

oftentimes clean office spaces after normal business hours.

Zinnia continues:

Joey Salads video has been picked up by Mashable, the Daily Mail, and a number of conservative blogs, all of which seem to believe that these events took place as described. In the midst of a political firestorm that's painted a target on our backs over something as simple as access to bathrooms, his video has been viewed over 2.2 million times. Mr. Salads has tossed away any lick of integrity by spreading this wholly fabricated experiment, fanning the flames of popular prejudice for cheap hits. As brazen and irresponsible as this deception is, it's certainly not unique. Transphobes are not above inventing controversies out of whole cloth to advance their agenda.

The LA Incident

The Salt & Light Council, an anti-LGBT organization, went on the news in California to claim that trans children were scurrying up and over bathroom stalls so they could watch people use the restroom. ABC channel 10 repeated the Salt & Light Council's claims without fact checking them:

[Figure] ABC Ch. 10 News

Gottlieb said claims that the accommodating transgender students will lead to rampant abuse is fear mongering. "There are other school districts like Los Angeles Unified that have had similar policies that have been very successful," said Gottlieb. In response, Reese pointed out a recent case in which a Los Angeles-area high school student complained to her school that a transgender boy harassed her and peeked at girls over the stalls. The girl's family hired an attorney, but has yet to file a lawsuit.

The TransAvocate called the Los Angeles Unified School District and fact-checked the story:

Los Angeles Unified School District: Office of communications

Cristan Williams: I'm calling to verify some information that I saw on the channel 10 news.

LAUSD: I'm sorry, what information are you trying to verify?

Williams: Sure, sure, on channel 10 news it says that, at least on their website, that an LA high school student complained because a transgender kid was in the restroom peeking over stalls. And so that's on the news and I just wanted to fact check that claim. Have you actually received complaints of transgender children climbing over stalls to look at other people as they're in the stalls?

LAUSD: I will have to check that for you. I believe that was fabricated, but give me one second. I need to verify. Hold on for a second.

Williams: Okay.

LAUSD: Because it's been a few days since we got that report. So hold on for me.

Cristan: Sure.

[On Hold]

LAUSD: I apologize for the wait. They did get the complaint and it turned out that it was fabricated by

one of the parents who oppose transgender students in schools. So it was an unfortunate situation, to have to put the students through, but it was fabricated.

The Oakland Incident

Signature gathers, attempting to scare cis people into signing petitions that would legalize bullying California trans children, told prospective signers that trans girls had been raping cis girls in Oakland bathrooms:

Signature Gatherer: Registered voter?

TransAdvocate Auditor: Yeah

SG: You hear about the co-ed bathrooms?

TAA: Mm, what?

SG: Governor Brown passed a bill where it's okay for boys and girls to go into restrooms together because of -- 'transgender' children? Right now we're having problems in the bathroom already. I work for the school district. And we're...

TAA: What kind of problems have you had in the bathrooms?

SG: Uhm, first of all, kids. They're just kids, y'know, they experiment, they, uh, [unintelligible], things like that, but, uhm, something, we've had a couple of rapes, we've had molestations...

TAA: You've had rapes? Where?

SG: Oh, yeah!

TAA: What school do you work at?

SG: Oh, we're in Oakland...

TAA: You're in Oakland...

SG: Yeah, we're in Oakland, uhm, but it happens at - various- schools, it's not just Oakland schools, you just don't hear about that stuff. Uhm, and then, basically, uh- older kids- as- as they get older, right now, boys - teenage boys heard about this and they're going into girls' bathrooms saying they're gay, and they're trying to take pictures of girls...

The TransAdvocate reached out to the Oakland Unified School District to fact check this signature gatherer's assertions. Unsurprisingly, the signature gatherer was lying:

[Figure] Troy Flint, Director of Communications, Oakland Unified School District

Thanks for bringing this to our attention. Contrary to the allegations contained in your email, we have not received reports of sexual assault or sexual harassment perpetrated by transgender students. Nor does OUSD support efforts to marginalize this population. Quite the opposite, OUSD has been a leader in advocating for equitable treatment where gender and sexual orientation are concerned. - Troy Flint, Director of Communications, Oakland Unified School District

Evergreen College Incident

An anti-LGBT group went to FOX News who, failing to fact check the hate group's claims, reported that "a 45-year-old male student, who dresses as a woman and goes by the name Colleen Francis, undressed and exposed his genitals on several occasions inside the woman's locker room at Evergreen State College."

The TransAdvocate called the college to fact check the claim. As it turned out, the claims were false. It turned out that Francis was only guilty of sitting in an adult sauna with a cis woman friend talking.

The Florence High School Incident

An anti-LGBT group claimed that a trans girl was sexually harassing cis girls in the restroom. Fox News, failing to fact check the claim, simply repeated the claim ad nauseam:

O'Reilly: All right, the second one is in Colorado, and we predicted this would happen here and of course the left wing press went wild, but more and more school districts are saying that if you are a transgender person - that's all subjective, you don't have to prove that - you can go and use any bathroom that you want, any locker room you want.

Fox News supporters began calling for the trans girl's mutilation and death and after the Daily Mail picked up the story, the trans kid was placed on suicide watch. The TransAdvocate fact-checked the hate group's story and it turned out to be false. The Daily Mail was forced to remove the hoax from their site and the anti-LGBT group that targeted the trans girl was named a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

The Rio Incident

In 2008, the anti-LGBT group, Citizens For A Responsible Government, claimed that a man pretending to be transgender was harassing the women of a gym bathroom, proving that trans people pose a danger to women. TransAdvocate editor, Autumn Sandeen fact-checked the claim. It turned out that the man was part of the anti-LGBT group and that the group harassed the women as part of a stunt to drum up anti-trans fear and animus.

The Palmdale Incident

It was claimed by Breitbart that because on a non-discrimination policy inclusive of trans people, a trans woman was able to sneak into the women's bathroom and film women. Moreover, this person's behavior was made legal due to the trans-inclusive policy. Snoopes fact-checked these claims and found them to be false.

The Quarryville Incident

It was again claimed by Breitbart that because of non-discrimination policies that are inclusive of trans people, a man was able to film women in the bathroom. Snoopes fact-checked this claim and found it to be false.

Snoopes has created a "bathroom bill" archive to track their fact-checking of claims about trans people and bathroom use.

1. In the past, the Daily Mail was caught propagating another anti-trans bathroom hoax; their story was later removed after it was proven to be a hoax by the TransAdvocate.
2. Based upon revenue per 1000 Impressions (RPM), which is usually between \$1.36 to \$3.40. Saladino's video has, at the time of writing this, 2,393,071 views. This translates into an estimated ad revenue between \$3,254.58 and \$8,136.44.

Suggested citation

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