

The Playbook: Equality comes to Houston, the fringe freaks out, threatens to kill Mayor [UPDATED]

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Abstract

On Wednesday, May 28, 2014, the Houston City Council approved a sweeping non-discrimination ordinance barring discrimination against 15 protected classes, including an explicit protection against discrimination due to one's religion. The city's right-wing community immediately claimed to be oppressed, threatened to recall everyone who voted for the ordinance and pledged to put their own religious protections [...]

Article

On Wednesday, May 28, 2014, the Houston City Council approved a sweeping non-discrimination ordinance barring discrimination against 15 protected classes, including an explicit protection against discrimination due to one's religion. The city's right-wing community immediately claimed to be oppressed, threatened to recall everyone who voted for the ordinance and pledged to put their own religious protections up for a popular vote in the November election. More worrisome, the Mayor of Houston is now protected around the clock due to death threats.

The Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO) empowers the religious to become more vigilant about protecting their rights by ensuring that when discrimination occurs, they won't have to go through the trouble and expense of filing a federal lawsuit in order to protect their rights. HERO aims to give the religious a fast-track to protecting their equal rights by supporting unfettered access to justice. Instead of having to buy the time of an attorney and waiting the years it would take to go through the federal courts, the religious can now simply file a complaint with the City and they will investigate and attempt to mediate, without the need of suits.

The religious community, by orders of magnitude, outnumbers any other protected class. More than any other, the religious are in the best possible position to protect their rights due to the sheer number of eyes and ears now empowered to easily act when discrimination occurs. The ability of the religious to officially use the city government as an advocate for their rights could be seen as an enormous victory for Houston's religious community. However, all of this seems like a bum deal to many in the Houston fundamentalist community.

If you're having trouble understanding what has the foes of equality so upset it's simple: equality isn't supremacy and they want supremacy. For instance, a well-known Houston area Christian pastor

asserted that people should have the right to discriminate against Jewish people:

Houston City Council Member Ellen Cohen: If I'm asking for service and my [Jewish] faith is something that troubles them, they have a right to refuse me service?

Pastor Becky Riggle of Grace Megachurch: Yes.

Cohen: So, you're saying yes, they do have a right to refuse me service because I am someone of the Jewish faith?

Pastor: Yes I am... Yes I am saying that.

Speaking before City Council, anti-equality activist Karina Alvarez said, "I feel [that] I have been discriminated against today!" The nature of the oppression she said she faced was that queer people weren't forced to give up their seat to her, a heterosexual cisgender woman. Having shown up late to the City Council proceedings, Alvarez had to stand because all of the seats were taken. Since some of the seats were occupied by LGBT supporters of the ordinance, Alvarez complained, "The [ordinance supporters] have seats and I had to stay standing and I see this as a very discriminatory situation!"

Imagine, a world in which a Jew was equal to a Christian and a queer person didn't have to surrender their seat to a cis/hetero person. For the forces of anti-equality, equality is unacceptable because it means surrendering their status as a member of a superior class.

Those who benefit from oppressive systems are generally never truly honest about what bothers them about equality. Instead, bigots have devised a set of attacks that they use to obfuscate the reality of their true purpose. In practically every anti-equality moment, the plays are the same:

1. The one-two punch: appeal to authority while demonizing the oppressed
2. The Klan Fallacy: cherry pick data to make sweeping generalizations about the oppressed (often used as "proof" that demonizing is warranted)
3. Violence: the threat of violence is made known and/or carried out

The Bigot's Playbook

For the remainder of this article, I'll refer to the foes of equality - the racists, homo/transphobes, anti-Semites, etc - simply as bigots. They - in one way or another - want to privilege their group(s) at the expense of another precisely because, to them, equality is a resented loss of superiority within society. Equality feels oppressive to the privileged because instead of being superior to those they once oppressed, they're now no better than the group they hate and that's unacceptable to them.

For instance, bigots came out of the woodwork the last time Houston passed a non-discrimination ordinance in 1985:

[Figure] "Save Our Children" - The KKK marching against the 1985 Houston equality ordinance that protected LGBT city employees against employment discrimination.

In 1985, Houston voted to use government to strip the gay (ie, LGBT) community of employment equality because, the bigots said, employment discrimination was a matter of religious faith and traditional culture. Back then, the Klan was part of a "Moral Majority" led contingency that stood

against the ordinance because equality meant that a queer person was just as deserving of employment as a cis/hetero person. This group of bigots viewed equality as an attack to their superiority and appealed to tradition and religious standards to validate using government to support their oppression of LGBT people.

This privileged view of the world seems to be the hubris soul of bigotry in practically all its forms:

We hold as undeniable truths that the governments of the various States... [t]hat in this free government all white men are and of right ought to be entitled to equal civil and political rights; that the servitude of the African race, as existing in these States, is mutually beneficial to both bond and free, and is abundantly authorized and justified by the experience of mankind, and the revealed will of the Almighty Creator, as recognized by all Christian nations; while the destruction of the existing relations between the two races...

In all the non-slave-holding States, in violation of that good faith and comity which should exist between entirely distinct nations, the people have formed themselves into a great sectional party, now strong enough in numbers to control the affairs of each of those States, based upon the unnatural feeling of hostility to these Southern States and their beneficent and patriarchal system of African slavery, proclaiming the debasing doctrine of the equality of all men, irrespective of race or color- a doctrine at war with nature, in opposition to the experience of mankind, and in violation of the plainest revelations of the Divine Law. - The Texas Ordinance of Secession, 1861

Even in the horrific moral depravity displayed in The Texas Ordinance of Secession, the bigot's playbook for attacking was the same: appeal to tradition, religion and/or ideology while appealing to the fictitious inferior character of the group they wished to oppress. In practically every anti-equality movement, bigots use this same one-two punch tactic.

"Angry white CIO steelworkers today sought a national union order ending racial segregation on union property... CIO officials several days ago issued instructions to all local unions to do away with separate toilet, fountain and locker room facilities for whites and negroes. Some... told him they would not stand for "Southern traditions being torn down." - The Tuscaloosa News - May 26, 1950

Even in the 1915 Klan film, Birth of a Nation the narrative directly appealed to both tradition and religion:

[Figure] Appeal to tradition and religion, Birth of a Nation

Second Punch Revised: Birth of the Oppressed Rapist

Bigots, appealing to their privileged place, as commanded by god and validated by tradition, birthed the myth of the black rapist to further the impact of their one-two punch. This oppressed rapist meme was likely first popularized in mass media by the Klan propaganda film, Birth of a Nation. The narrative message of this Klan propaganda was that the embedded risk of equality was the virtue of white women.

[Figure] Black man as rapist meme, Birth of a Nation

Within the first year, Birth of a Nation grossed more than 10 million in 1915 dollars (or around 231 million in 2014 dollars). Using mass media to portray oppressed people as the perverted sexual aggressor was widely embraced within white society. Even though the NAACP fought the Klan propaganda

promoted by Birth of a Nation, the meme gained significant social currency. Thus anti-equality groups began to employ the Oppressed as Rapist meme in a variety of anti-equality efforts.

Oppressors were cast as the defenders of tradition, faith and the virtue of women, while the oppressed became the harbingers of rape and the destruction of the fabric of society.

Historical uses of the “Oppressed as Rapist” meme

Some might recall how the Oppressed as Rapist meme was used to great effect during the 1988 Bush/Dukakis presidential race. During an event at the First African Methodist Episcopal Church, Dukakis claimed that while Bush was on the side of the privileged, “I’m on your side... And that’s why I’m here today!”

[Figure] From Jet Magazine, Nov 7, 1988

Bush, being the “Moral Majority” candidate, portrayed Dukakis’ support of racial equality as an endorsement of rape with attack ads featuring Willy Horton. Horton was a black man who raped and killed a white woman and the Bush campaign seized on it to inspire privileged whites to feel that should Dukakis win, white women might find their virtue at risk.

[Lee] Atwater’s Horton ad played on the narrative of the menacing black man who rapes white women, of which rumors often led to race riots and the lynching of black men under the Jim Crow era. This ad represented the ultimate in the Southern Strategy, that is, the Republican Party’s raw, unabashed appeals to white Southerners through the invocation of white-skin solidarity and fear of people of color. - theGrio

Atwater, Bush’s campaign manager said, “By the time we’re finished, they’re going to wonder whether Willie Horton is Dukakis’ running mate.”

Some might remember when this meme was rolled out (quite effectively) against the women’s movement. When women across America were fighting for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), care to guess what the go-to argument against equality was?

[Figure] 3/25/1973, The Anniston Star: Black men in the women’s restrooms

In these two paragraphs, we see the one-two punch strategy again deployed. The first paragraph infers - in an appeal to tradition - that should the ERA pass, husbands would have to take the last names of their wives. The second paragraph, appealing to the bathroom-rape meme, notes that black men might be able to hang out in the women’s restroom should the ERA pass.

Consider this postmortem of the ERA after it was defeated:

“Listening to the opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment, you would think it was designed to... integrate public toilets, legalize rape, outlaw heterosexual marriage... Law professor Paul Freund objected in 1973 to being ‘quoted erroneously and out of context by certain opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment’ and commented flatly, ‘I have not stated, and I do not believe, that the Amendment would require the sharing of restroom and prison cells by both sexes.’ Yet in 1975 a huge anti-ERA advertisement in Baton Rouge papers credited him with the allegation that the ERA would integrate bathrooms.” - Ruston Daily Leader, Thursday, June 16, 1977

Even when bigots were fighting against the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, can you guess what argument they used to demonize gay people?

"Most concerns we heard about showers and bathrooms were based on stereotype-- that gay men and lesbians will behave as predators in these situations, or that permitting homosexual and heterosexual people of the same sex to shower together is tantamount to allowing men and women to shower together."
- Pentagon's report on 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell', page 13

The Klan Fallacy

The Klan is well known for pushing the 'someone in your group is an asshole; therefore, everyone in your group is a potential asshole' argument. In other words, if someone connected with the black community is a criminal, then all black people are potential criminals. It's like asserting that since the notorious racist, William Pierce - the guy who inspired hate crimes and bombings across the globe - graduated from Rice University, Rice graduates might very well be racists. The fallacy is insidious in that it does two things very well: it uses cherry-picked data to inspire you to make sweeping generalizations about an entire population and provides political cover for groups demonizing the oppressed.

TERFs are well known for using the Klan Fallacy. In the style of Gender Identity Watch's social media, consider the following hyperbole:

[VERY STRONG TW: RAPE]

Take a good look at all of these cisgender women because they're rapists. Some of these cis women stalked their prey and raped them at knifepoint. This should serve as undeniable proof that cis women can be violent sexual predators. Also, you should be aware that the above examples are just a small sample of the long, long list of cis women perverts.

Here are more cisgender women who are rapists:

Lives were ruined by these cis women and they shouldn't be allowed anywhere where they can get their hands on your children. How are we expected to tell the cis women rapists apart from the non-rapist cis women? What would YOU do if one of your kids found themselves alone with a cis woman? Are you willing to risk your child?

[Figure] A small clip from court documents

There's no denying that making our children available to cisgender women is dangerous, these real-life cases prove it. We know that it is cis people who generally rape trans people:

In fact, cis women can't even stop raping each other! I'm not saying that every cisgender woman is a rapist, I'm just saying that it is only reasonable to be concerned about your family. This isn't about hate; all I'm doing is educating people about the problem of rape by cisgender women.

Also, you need to know that there is a potential bathroom risk in having cisgender women in the women's restroom. Apparently, for some cisgender women, rape isn't enough. There's the problem of cis women violence and perversion:

I want you to look at your beautiful children and ask yourself this simple question: am I willing to gamble

my child's safety around cisgender women? Knowing the truth about cisgender women, do you really want to make your children available to them? Of course not!

Vote for your child's safety by voting NO on the equality ordinance! Save our children!

The above bullshit argument is the Klan Fallacy in action. It is often used as political cover when the Oppressed As Rapist meme is used. The Klan Fallacy is particularly disturbing because it seeks to debase the pain and suffering of very real trauma by pimping it out as a trigger that will bypass your critical thinking while providing political cover for overt bigotry. It seeks to redirect the natural revulsion the human heart feels when confronted with cruelty and trick you into associating that revulsion with an entire group of human beings.

When the Klan racist, David Duke claimed, "The truth is there are two hundred white women raped in America by a black man for every one black woman raped by whites." he was attempting to trick people into instinctively feeling that any African-American might be a rapist. When people fall for this disgusting trick, they've taken the first step in dehumanizing an entire class of human beings. Bigots want you to fall for this trick because discriminating against a group of human beings is hard; however, discriminating against a group of perverts is easy.

The Violence Behind the Playbook

Bigots - whatever their stripe - seem to use the same playbook. They appeal to the authority of religion, ideology or tradition, demonize the object of their hate, use the Klan Fallacy for political cover and then fall back on the threat of violence (psychological or physical). Back in 1985, the "Moral Majority" mayoral candidate Louie Welch was running against Kathy Whitmire, a friend of Houston's queer community. Welch joked that the best way to handle the HIV epidemic would be to "shoot the queers." The quip immediately translated into \$69,105 worth of campaign donations (around \$153k in 2014 dollars) within 24 hours.

Currently, the Mayor of Houston is under 24-hour protection due to death threats she received after she managed to pass a Houston nondiscrimination ordinance that protects LGBT people.

Recall what State Rep. Richard Floyd (R) said he'd do to trans people who dared buy clothes like anyone else might:

"I believe if I was standing at a dressing room and my wife or one of my daughters was in the dressing room and a man tried to go in there -- I don't care if he thinks he's a woman and tries on clothes with them in there -- I'd just try to stomp a mudhole in him and then stomp him dry."

To be clear about the reality trans folk face, consider the public beating and humiliation trans people faced because they dared think they had the right to access the same transit systems as cis people [TW]. Consider the price this trans person paid for thinking that she had the right to use the same restroom as cis people [TW]. Consider the fact that an officer of the law actually jailed this trans woman for daring to think that she had a right to use the same restroom as cis people [TW].

There's a reason that the trans community's one international event is a memorial to remember those trans people who were murdered during the past year. There's a reason why around half of the trans community is raped and around a third experience beatings.

The violence perpetrated by bigots also include the deaths of the oppressed who take their own life to escape the pain of oppression. Ovidio “Herbie” Ramo took his own life in reaction to the hate inspired by the Save Our Children campaign Anita Bryant pushed. Who can forget the rash of LGBT suicides resulting from bullying and messages of hate pushed in the media? How many trans people have we lost due to the unresponsive medical system TERFs inspired?

Just as we can’t excuse the suicides oppression produced, neither can we excuse the casual cruelty bigots show when confronted with the deadly results of their hate:

“It made me sad and shocked me that anyone would think I had anything to do with it, but my conscience is clear. I can’t be responsible for how people react to what happened in Dade County. My stand was not taken out of homophobia, but of love for them.” - Anita Bryant, commenting on the queer suicides resulting from her Save Our Children campaign

They expect we’ll be shocked to see statistics about them being killed, and don’t realize, some of us wish they would ALL be dead. - Bev Von Dohre, TERF pioneer

Houston: The Playbook in Action

In a perverse twist of irony, the group that stood against the most recent Houston equality ordinance recruited may black Christian pastors to be voice of their bigotry. While waving their bibles in the air, these bigots asserted this fight for equality was in no way reminiscent of traditional civil rights efforts. However, PoC leaders like past City Council Member, Jolanda Jones, the TransAdvocate Editor, Monica Roberts, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, the NAACP, the Urban League and LULAC didn’t see it that way.

This is a human rights issue. It is a civil rights issue and if people haven’t noticed, I happen to be black since people seem to think there is a distinction between being black and being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. It is the same. You are who you are; you are born like that. I am hurt [begins to weep] that I hear people using religion to figure out ways to discriminate... I hope that those who vote do it for the right reasons because god forbid you have a GLBT person in your family; I’ve had 2 friend’s kids commit suicide over discrimination against that community. So, I urge you to vote for it because it’s a human rights issue! - City Council Member, Jolanda Jones

I’m one of the people folks on the other side was demonizing earlier this afternoon. I’m part of the transgender community. I’m also a proud African-American. What I heard over the last couple of hours from ministers in my community really sickened me. That they didn’t believe that it’s possible to be part of the transgender community and be a proud African America [turns to face the bigots seated]. Hello, I’m here! - Monica Roberts

After appealing to religion, tradition and ideological morality out came the Oppressed as Rapists meme. The meme was used against both gay and trans people:

[Figure] “Stay out of our bathrooms & businesses!”

[Figure] Bigots assert they shouldn’t have to use the same bathroom as a gay person.

Note the Oppressed as Rapist meme promoted in the below talking-points handout given to equality foes. These talking points were referenced time and again by bigots addressing the Houston City Council:

[Figure] Appeals to religion and tradition while demonizing LGBT people as rapists and perverts

The handout claims that “If men are allowed easy access to public bathrooms, shower rooms and/or locker rooms, then this can also promote sexual intercourse in a public setting. This can expose children to behavior that should not be so. This can lead them to start experimenting [with] different acts or things in which they normally would have never done.” It claims that if the equality ordinance is defeated, “people’s morality, ethics and/or beliefs” would be respected and goes on to warn that “physical, verbal, and sexual abuse can intensify” should the equality ordinance pass.

Republican State Representative Dwayne Bohac claimed that the Houston equality ordinance is a “threat to religious liberty” because it would force people to treat LGBT people equally. Furthermore, he claimed that equal rights would mean that children may be molested. Bohac, invoking the Klan Fallacy, cited a letter by the anti-abortion group, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). ADF is the selfsame group that gave rise to the Evergreen College hoax. The letter falsely asserted that video recording women using the restroom will become a supported activity should equality happen:

[The Houston Equal Rights Ordinance will support] the presence of men in women’s bathrooms, shower rooms, and locker rooms, placing women and children at risk of voyeurism, photographing and video recording, and sexual assault.

The “Texas Values Coalition” asserted that our civil rights are subject to the personal whims of whatever religious standard someone might hold because that’s traditionally moral:

Houston Mayor Annise Parker, who is an open lesbian, has announced a proposed wide-reaching LGBT ordinance that she plans to fast-track into law within the next two weeks. This special rights ordinance is a direct threat to people of faith and traditional morality in the City of Houston. The ordinance would give government new power to force private individuals and businesses to affirm homosexual conduct and actual or perceived “gender identity” or face serious criminal penalties.

Knowing the bigot’s playbook, it shouldn’t surprise anyone that just prior to the Houston City Council’s vote approving the equality ordinance, Council Member Michael Kubosh - fretting over the fact that trans people would be able to use the restroom under the ordinance - said, “I don’t want a Willie Horton situation... I will be voting no.”

The above photo captures a powerful moment when activists supported a mother as her transgender son spoke before the Houston City Council, thanking his mother for her continued support. What makes this photo all the more powerful is that while they were attempting to enter City Hall to speak before the City Council, they were forcibly separated by a swarm of bigots. One group of bigots began shouting at the mother while the second group began laying hands on the child in an effort to cast out demons. The mother and son were saved by a group of equality activists who answered the mother’s call for help. After this assault, riot police were present at the next hearing to ensure the safety of those wishing to speak before the city council.

In their fight against equity, bigots held true to their playbook. They began with the one-two punch by appealing to the authority of religion, ideology, and tradition while deploying the Oppressed As Rapist meme. They followed it up by deploying the Klan Fallacy and punctuated their rhetoric with the threat of violence.

When I spoke to the Houston City Council, I implored them to not fall for the tactics of bigotry:

I'm really surprised that a lot of the adults here today believe that we Houstonians are not as mature as our children. Many of you know that in HISD, kids are protected on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. They manage it; they've managed it for two years now. How many of these horror stories have you heard? None. And yet here - today - we've had adults come in and swear up and down that we are about to experience a pandemic of sexual predators, sneaking into the bathrooms to carry out their nefarious purpose. I'm sorry but I think that we are at least as mature as our children.

When we stand on the equivocation that discrimination against discrimination is discrimination, we stand with the Klan member whose deep religious belief in the so-called "Curse of Ham" should give him the religious right to discriminate against black people. I hear the bathroom meme - this bigot's one-trick pony - and I ask you to not fall for it. It was used against the Jews, against black people, against the ERA fight in the 1970s, against gay people in the 80s and 90s, against people with HIV, against gay service members and here we find it rolled out - yet again - against trans people.

I ask that we not fall for it again.

The Houston Equal Rights Ordinance protects 15 separate classes. They are:

- Sex
- Race
- Color
- Ethnicity
- National Origin
- Age
- Familial Status
- Marital Status
- Military Status
- Religion
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Genetic Information
- Gender Identity
- Pregnancy

Houston, following in the footsteps of El Paso, Austin, San Antonio, Dallas, Ft. Worth and around 190 other cities and counties with gender identity protections, passed the equality ordinance, 11 to 6.

Those voting against equality were:

- Brenda Stardig
- Dave Martin
- Dwight Boykins

- Jack Christie
- Michael Kubosh
- Oliver Pennington

Those voting in support of equality were:

Jerry Davis

Many of you, when I stepped into the chambers this morning noticed that I didn't have my goatee. I was gearing up for Malcolm X's birthday; I wrote my thesis on him in college and one of the quotes he had was, "If you aren't careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing." I think we've had a lot of that over the last two months. When he came back from his pilgrimage in African, he talked about going to the UN because the human rights of people were being oppressed here in the US. This is very dear to me; we talked about what happened 30 years ago [the 1985 Houston equality ordinance] in Council and being on the right side of history, but one of the things is that WE allowed the misinformation to get out; they just took the ball and ran with it. And so, if this ordinance passes today, we need to get out there and tell people what this ordinance is about. It's not the 'Mayor's Bathroom Ordinance' that a pastor put on his website today and I wish we could have a come to Jesus meeting with him about that.

CO "Brad" Bradford

We don't get to judge. So, in my choices and activities of life, I get to choose between what some say poses a risk to children in bathrooms against denying access services to transgender beings who god made. Transgender beings are human beings that need access to services just like others do.

Richard Nguyen

Ed Gonzalez

We're not taking the lead on this necessarily, corporate America has already beat us to this, many other cities have beat us to this. And guess what? The sky didn't fall. Communities are still thriving and ours will continue to thrive as well. All of the individuals are citizens, we collect their taxes equally and we don't distinguish between some being more valuable than others.

Robert Gallegos

Thousands of Americans have lost their lives defending the basic principles of our country in regards to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and I'm asking my colleagues as elected officials to please support HERO. Many individuals have come up to the microphone and have voiced their concerns that they do not have those basic rights.

Larry Green

Sometimes in your life you will have votes that are bigger than yourself. To support an equal rights ordinance is something bigger than myself. As Dr. King stated, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in a moment of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at the time of challenge and controversy." I too have been threatened. I too have had misinformation disseminated in my district. I stand for equal rights for everybody in this city!

Mike Laster

The only opposition we have been presented with regarding this ordinance has been those who seek to exclude people from the protections of this ordinance and those, in particular, are members of the LGBT community, and that is greatly troublesome. Can you imagine any constituency advocating that we exclude race, color or ethnicity, sex or the religious protection? Of course not! But I'm grateful for the voices of opposition for two reasons: 1.) it's important that their voices be heard in this process, but more so, I'm grateful for those voices and the concerns expressed because they uniquely present the best evidence and the most articulate argument for including the LGBT community in this ordinance.

Ellen Cohen

I would like to use my time to quote from someone I admire greatly. Her name is Jill Ruckelshaus. She might not be familiar to you but she was the Chair of the National Women's Political Caucus Convention held in 1977. It was held here in Houston. Jill and I are very good friends; I've taken the liberty of changing a couple of words as I complete my remarks: "We are in for a very, very long haul. I'm asking for everything you have to give. We will never give up. You will lose your youth, your sleep, your patience, your sense of humor and occasionally, the understanding and support of people who love you very much. In return I have nothing to offer you but your pride in being a human being and all the dreams you have ever had for your daughters, sons, nieces, nephews and grandchildren, your future and the certain knowledge that at the end of your days, you'll be able to look back and say that once in your life you gave everything you had for justice.

The remaining yes votes were: Annise Parker, Stephen Costello, and David Robinson.

HT: Mark E.

UPDATE: Leaked documents show bigot minister and anti-equality leader fired for sexual harassment

It turns out Kendall Baker, a leader in Houston's anti-equality movement, was fired last year for sexually harassing women. Barker made a point of claiming that equality would mean that trans people would sexually harass women and children in the restroom. When speaking against equality, Baker asked, "I say to you, what if I came into the bathroom while you were sitting on the toilet? Wouldn't you feel uncomfortable?"

Kendall Baker - City of Houston Interoffice Memos

As it turns out, the leader of the entire anti-equality movement, Dave Welch and his organization (Houston Area Pastors Council, AKA Texas Pastors Council, AKA US Pastors Council) raised funds to help Baker escape the consequences of harassing women.

Dave Welch has been ducking another public debate with me since 2010.

HT: Adela U.

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