

TRANSADVOCATE

The Politics of Transphobia

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Abstract

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Article



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By Cristan Williams
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While Republican delegates dutifully cheered their presidential nominee for promising to keep queer citizens of the US safe from ideological marauders and GOP convention speaker Peter Thiel was booed by North Carolina delegates for calling the “great [transgender bathroom] debate” a distraction from

America's real problems, a trans schoolboy had to sue his school because he was being forced to wear a green wristband, publicly identifying him as transgender for bathroom purposes. Just after the trans boy's plight made the news, North Carolina's Governor Pat McCrory took to the press to decry the oppression he, his supporters, and his state face just because he and like-minded politicians made it the law of the land to force trans children to use the wrong restroom at school. McCrory bemoaned:

Twenty-one other states have joined North Carolina QFCQuick Fact CheckThese states have all knowingly signed federal Title IX contracts swearing to not discriminate against trans and intersex kids in school, but are now suing for the special right to break these federal contracts while trying to force the federal government into pretending that these Title IX contracts aren't being broken. to challenge the federal overreach by the Obama administration mandating their bathroom policies in all businesses and schools instead of allowing accommodations for unique circumstances. Left-wing special interest groups QFCQuick Fact CheckIt was an actual hate group that helped NC politicians design HB2, the anti-LGBT law that disproportionately targets trans and intersex school children. who have no moral authority to try and intimidate the large majority of American parents who agree in common-sense bathroom and shower privacy QFCQuick Fact CheckTitle IX seeks to ensure that ALL children are afforded private showering areas. In other words, under Title IX, if private shower and changing areas are made available to trans and intersex children, they MUST also be available to cis children. It's discrimination to force cis children to shower as a group while providing trans and intersex children their own special single-stall or curtained private shower or changing area. All school children must be treated equally. for our children. American families should be on notice that the selective corporate elite are imposing their political will on communities in which they do business, thus bypassing the democratic and legal process.

In Illinois, one of the states that have joined North Carolina in suing the federal government for the special right to target trans school children for segregation from cis students, held a rally for anti-trans activists who call themselves "Citizens for Child Safety"(CCS) was held on Saturday, July 23. There, the CCS distributed fliers warning that unless trans and cis students are segregated (cis) children would be put in danger. The flier asserted:

- "They could be... forcibly exposed!"
- "They could be... sexually harassed!"
- "They could be... traumatized!"
- "They could be... sexually molested!"

During the rally, CCS co-founder Danny Holliday told the crowd that the "leaders" of the trans rights movement were pedophiles who enjoyed having sexual intercourse with animals.

Political discourse situated around the minority use of bathrooms has featured significantly in numerous social equality struggles, from the fight to preserve racist Jim Crow laws to the sexist battle to keep the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) from being ratified. Rhetorical themes featuring bathrooms, privacy, and safety concerns are integral aspects of a specific and identifiable political dialectic used to incite, promote, and sustain the fear that an oppressed group may well rape, molest, harass or infect the majority group should equality between the two groups come to pass. In contemporary times, this political dialectic features prominently in narratives supporting North Carolina's recently passed law

mandating that transgender people who've not been able to amend their birth certificate use the restroom assigned to them at birth rather than the restroom that matches their transitioned status, irrespective of legal identification or phenotype. Proponents of laws like North Carolina's so-called "bathroom bill" assert that these laws are needed to ensure that A.) the privacy of cisgender people is respected[1]; B.) without these laws, rapists will dress in drag in order to molest little girls in the restroom[2]; and, C.) transgender people are actually perverts and pedophiles who need to be prevented from accessing women's restrooms[3].

I first wrote about the ways in which contemporary anti-equality discourse situated around trans issues closely resembled the sexist discourse used against the Equal Rights Amendment in a 2013 Autostraddle article. In doing my research for the article you are now reading, I came across the work of Gillian Frank, Ph.D., a visiting fellow at Princeton. I reached out to Frank to help me better understand the ways in which the very discourse currently focused upon the trans community was used against other marginalized groups throughout American history. What follows is my interview with Frank and a review of the ways anti-equality groups have historically cast oppressed groups as voyeurs and/or perverts, warning the public that should an oppressed group have equality, bad things may happen in public bathrooms.

When one considers the political discourse of dominate-subordinate group integration, one cannot ignore the ways in which the bathroom is dialectically constructed as the symbol of integration. For instance, the Mississippi Ku Klux Klan (KKK) activist, U.S. Senator Theodore G. Bilbo said that the most disgusting thing about life in Washington, DC was "to see nice sweet girls from North Dakota being forced to use the same stools and toilets used by the Negroes who come from the slums of Washington, a large percentage of them affected by Negro diseases." [4]. In 1964, the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee reported that, "Many homosexuals... take their sex where they find it, be it in a restroom of a park or other public place" and that "Homosexuality is, as a total picture, a dread disease." In a more contemporary time, similar rhetoric was deployed against the ratification of the ERA. A 1980s-era political pamphlet titled *The ERA-GAY-AIDS CONNECTION* asserted that the ERA would allow gay people to, "use public restrooms and parks to solicit sex with strangers". The pamphlet went on to suggest that "If the E.R.A. puts 'sex equality' into the Constitution, we are asked: Would police, paramedics, dentists, health personnel and morticians be permitted to take adequate precautions to defend themselves against AIDS and other homosexual diseases?" Almost a decade before the publication of *The ERA-GAY-AIDS CONNECTION* pamphlet, the public was warned that should the ERA become ratified, men would be able to use the women's restroom and gym locker rooms[5] and that women would lose their privacy in public accommodations[6]. In fact, after the ERA's apparent defeat, a 1977 newspaper wrote:

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 rest room 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. (Merritt, 1977)

*[Figure] Making ALL facilities coed? (Lockman, 1976)**

Such political arguments are common among those who support discrimination against transgender

people. A political radio advertisement used to defeat the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO) asserted that protecting transgender women in public accommodations was “filthy, disgusting and unsafe”. Decades before HERO was defeated, the Houston gay community experienced this political dialectic as central to their inequality:

Coming from [Houston,] Texas, the city of the January 19, 1985, anti-gay rights referendum which went 4 to 1 against gay rights, I live in a city of intolerance where political groups spread misinformation about AIDS -- information that gay men get AIDS because they have sewer sex and deserve it and heterosexuals get AIDS because gay men rape children in the park. AIDS is spread by towels in public restrooms, by flushing toilets, and by hairdressers.[7]

While the construction of bathrooms as the political fulcrum on which fears of safety and privacy are leveraged, central to this dialectic is a political narrative of “saving” women and children from an implied or expressed threat an oppressed group is made to represent.

*[Figure] “Anti-Black Zealots” (Foster, 1977)**

The political argument that supporting the discrimination of a minority group equates to saving children from harm traces its rhetorical roots back to Jim Crow laws. While Anita Bryant made the slogan “save our children” infamous for using it against the equal rights of gay Americans in 1977, the slogan was initially popularized by the KKK[8]. The “save our children” slogan gained some social currency when a 1956 nationally syndicated story reported: “Scores of segregation supporters converged on Nashville Monday in motorcades from Memphis, Chattanooga and other points to demand that [Governor Frank] Clement call in the legislators to take action on schools. They carried signs such as ‘save our children from the black plague.’”[9]. The KKK’s political rhetoric of “saving” women and children from an asserted threat that oppressed groups pose is the precise political discourse featured in arguments favoring restricting transgender citizen’s ability to function within society in the way that cisgender citizens do. Political historian Gillian Frank noted:

[Figure] Newspaper clipping of KKK march in Houston (Harley, 1985)

Analyzing the racial origins of [Save Our Children’s (SOC)] activism and the gay rights response to it in the 1970s reveals a migration of conservative ideas and activists from race-based conflicts to gender- and sexual-based conflicts. SOC’s discourse of child protection embodied a protean logic of family privacy against queer sexuality. That strategy was, in part, learned from southern US resistance to desegregation, dating back to the Civil War, which used the language of privacy and family protection to address issues of race. [10]



Figure 1. Houston Klan March, 1985. Signs read: “Frag A Fag” & “Save Our Children Vote No”.

When in 1985 the Klan marched through Houston, Texas warning that should gay equality happen, children would be put at risk, they carried signs that read, “Save Our Children”[11].

The use of mass media to aid in the construction of oppressed groups as sexual threats can be traced back to a specific political narrative initially used against Black Americans. The KKK was perhaps the first to enjoy the use of mass multimedia to inspire the dominate population to view members of an oppressed group as a potential sexual threat. In 1915 the KKK was featured in the movie blockbuster, *Birth of a Nation*. The movie, originally titled *The Clansman*, features a White man portrayed as a Black man who tries to rape a White woman. The movie earned more than 10 million dollars (more than 235 million in 2016 dollars) and helped popularize the Black rapist trope within the public consciousness.

[Figure] Black man portrayed as a rapist in Birth of a Nation, 1915

The Republican Party centered their political dialectic upon this trope in the 1988 presidential race between George Bush and Michael Dukakis. The media was quick to propagate this narrative to a “hysterical pitch”[12]. Bush portrayed Dukakis’ support of racial equality as an endorsement of the rape of White women by Black men through attack ads featuring Willy Horton. Horton, a Black man who raped and killed a White woman, was constructed to be a central figure in the Dukakis political team. Bush’s aid, Lee Atwater said, “By the time we’re finished, they’re going to wonder whether Willie Horton is Dukakis’ running mate.”

Imagery used to support anti-transgender politics likewise draws upon the construction of transgender women as sexual threats. Political advertisements against Houston’s equality ordinance consistently featured the message that should trans women be protected from harassment and discrimination, little girls would be raped. The Houston Chronicle reported, “Opponents of the ordinance... have flooded radio and TV with ads saying the law gives men dressed in women’s clothing, including sexual predators, the ability to enter a woman’s restroom. On Tuesday, the group released a TV spot that closes with a man bursting into a stall occupied by a young girl.”

[Figure] Christian Family Coalition’s press relations material used against a 2013 vote by the Miami-Dade County Commission to ban anti-transgender discrimination.

This political dialectic functions to erode the oppressed group's humanity to the point wherein their mere existence in society is enough to warrant calls for violence. In 1985, a veteran politician and Houston mayoral candidate, Louie Welch responded to a question about how Houston should respond to the AIDS epidemic saying, "shoot the queers." A 1985 syndicated story reported:

A mayoral candidate who said during a live, televised interview that the way to control AIDS was to "to shoot the queers" raised \$69,105 in one day after making the comment, financial records indicate. [...] Welch campaign treasurer James Franklin said the faux pas had provided a "burst of energy and activity" to fund-raising efforts... "The truth is getting out to people," Franklin said. According to campaign finance reports filed Tuesday, Welch has raised about \$1.5 million since he entered the race, including \$678,000 in the 30-day period that ended Friday. Contributions totaled \$69,105 last Friday alone, the day after Welch made the remark.

While transgender equality ordinances have existed since Minneapolis Republicans introduced and helped pass the first one in America in 1975[13], former Texas Ranger and Denton County Sheriff told a crowd of political supporters that he would beat trans women unconscious if he caught one using the women's restroom, "If my little girl is in a public women's restroom and a man, regardless of how he may identify, goes into the bathroom, he will then identify as a John Doe until he wakes up in whatever hospital he may be taken to. Your identity does not trump my little girl's safety." The Denton County Sheriff seemed to echo earlier political rhetoric that sought to suppress the equality of gay citizens. In 1964, the Florida Legislature published a report that quoted a "veteran investigator of homosexual activities" asserting, "We must do everything in our power to create one thing in the mind of every homosexual, and that is 'Keep your hands off our children! The consequences will be terrible if you do not.' " In 2012, after filing a state bill targeting the bathrooms transgender people use, Tennessee Republican Richard Floyd said that should he spot a transgender woman using the women's changing area, "I'd just try to stomp a mudhole in him and then stomp him dry." Two days after Houston mayor Annise Parker signed off on the city's transgender-inclusive equal rights ordinance, armed guards were posted outside her home due to death threats.

[Figure] Press clipping of The Atlantic's coverage of the defeat of HERO

Cristan Williams: I ran across your work while doing research for an article that I'm writing that examines the ways in which political discourse situated around the end of desegregation, the adoption of the Equal Rights Amendment, and equality for people who are HIV+ and LGBT often sound strikingly similar. In fact, the discourse sounds so similar that it sometimes sounds as if these anti-equality movements are somehow using the same political playbook. Your work examines this discursive phenomenon. Would you please talk about how you came to research the tendency of diverse anti-equality groups to often use strikingly similar political discourse?

Gillian Frank: When I was casting around for dissertation topics in grad-school, I began looking at the ways in which conservatives sought to express sexual norms during and after the so-called "sexual revolution" of the 1960s and 70s. I kept bumping up against how conservatives used child protection language to repudiate what they viewed as 'sexually deviant' practices whether it was within gay liberation or second wave feminism. And so, I thought, "Okay, that's interesting. Why are they always talking about some sort of sexual threat to children?"

As I began digging into Anita Bryant's 1977 anti-gay crusade, I noticed that her anti-gay activism coincided with anti-feminist and anti-integration social movements. I thought to myself, "Why are they talking about race in the exact same way as they're talking about gay rights, feminism, and the ERA?" These movements, I quickly realized, were not compartmentalized. Conservatives moved between these movements and deployed similar child protection language. It was something of a revelation for me that a lot of the anti-gay and anti-feminist activists had deep roots in the anti-integration movement. So, that led me to look backwards in history. I found that the child protection rhetoric had been an effective tool in neutralizing the equality claims for a number of marginalized groups. I learned that conservative rhetoric that invites Americans to "protect our children from sexual violence" is often a smokescreen used to obscure discussions of social inequality.

Williams: What is your take on the recent rally in Illinois wherein anti-trans equality activists claimed that trans school children pose a sexual threat to cis school children? Do you find that the way anti-trans activists talk about trans children is somewhat similar the political rhetoric used against other marginalized groups?

Frank: The way sexuality is used to demarcate the difference of the other and to marginalize the other is a widespread phenomenon with deep historical roots. In terms of the recent rally against transgender children, the language of these anti-trans activists is incredibly stock. They depict trans school children as pedophiles, as likely to engage in bestiality, as likely to participate in group sex. It's the overblown moral panic language of, "it's not only this, but it's that". It's the argument that one thing leads to the other that sexual or gender variance is a slippery slope. For these anti-trans people, it's not only that trans children are bad, it's that they're going to try to have sex with your children; it's not only that, but then they're going to molest your barnyard animals and domestic pets and, not only will they engage in these solo acts of sexual perversion, then they'll engage in group sex!

As I said, they're shifting the conversation away from the inequality trans school children face. Instead, they're rendering any recognition of this inequality as a sexual threat to cis children. These are paranoid fantasies. It's that somehow these children will invade the intimate spaces cis people inhabit; it's the argument that these intimate spaces will be invaded if other groups -in this case, trans school children- are dignified.

The basic message is that the existence of trans school children represents a general lack of morality. The bestiality language has been part of anti-gay discourse for decades and the pedophilia rhetoric dates back at least to the 1920s and 1930s for gay men, if not earlier. These are long-standing anti-gay tropes. Now, the really strange thing going on in the quotes from that rally is that there is the assumption that because the child is trans -that is, the child is aware of their gender dysphoria- that awareness somehow sexualizes them for these anti-trans activists. I find that to be a really strange and interesting leap they're making. While, in actuality, a child having an awareness of their gender dysphoria isn't about sexuality, for these anti-trans children activists, there's somehow a coupling of gender identity and sexual desire so that, if a child is aware of their gender identity, they must somehow be hypersexualized and therefore dangerous.

The logical leaps that these anti-trans activists are making within the political spear are so long and convoluted, it's worth noting. For them, a desire to be honest about one's gender identity is to mark oneself as being over-sexualized. They believe these children are wolves in sheep's clothing. It's quite

strange when you parse out the twisted way they're viewing trans children.

Williams: In your paper, you wrote about the historicity of the "Save Our Children" narrative. Would you talk more about that?

Frank: Stigmatizing people by labeling them as sexually dangerous is a practice that goes back hundreds and hundreds of years. In the United States, marginalized and despised groups were regularly depicted as sexual threats. Communists, gays and lesbians, African Americans, Mexicans all were stigmatized in this way.

Whites resisting Reconstruction in the southern United States deployed a powerful trope that black men were sexually predacious. They did so in order to rationalize controlling and marginalizing newly freed and enfranchised African American men. The idea that black men were rapists who desired white women undergirded lynching, which was a form of domestic terrorism used to control and disempower the African American population.

By the time we got to the Civil Rights era, the argument was this: if we get rid of Jim Crow laws and allow blacks to use the same public facilities as whites, miscegenation will take place. "Their" boys will want to marry "our" daughters. "Their" boys will want to have sex with "our" daughters. "Their" boys will want to rape "our" daughters.

This narrative, which states that disempowered minorities deserve to be disempowered because they are sexually violent, has become a template for conservative activists. Again, the function that this narrative performs is that it's a pivot away from having to address basic questions of dignity, equality, and enfranchisement by describing a certain group as sexually dangerous, violent, in need of regulation and policing. To call a group sexually threatening is to justify the any regulation and violence inflicted upon them. That's the template: social equality for marginal groups leads to sexual violence against the dominant group. Therefore, the marginal group must remain marginalized.

This became a basic architecture -a basic political language- that was transposed onto other anti-equality efforts, from the opposition to the ERA to gay rights. These anti-equality movements were oftentimes comprised of the same people, modeling the same rhetoric off each other.

Williams: Why, in your opinion, do anti-equality political groups find these arguments so useful?

Frank: They use these arguments because it's incredibly effective rhetoric. I mean, who's going to speak against, as they would frame it, the best interests of the children? Who's going to choose dangerous minority groups over their own children? For marginalized groups seeking equality, responding to this rhetoric has been a challenge. Not only do you have to make your case for equality, you have to spend time telling people that you're not a threat to their children. A triangulation takes place so that you have to assert your normalcy and respectability while also trying to prove that you're not a sexual threat.

Williams: Would you talk about the ways in which anti-equality groups politically construct themselves to be victims of marginalized groups?

Frank: Anti-equality movements position themselves in that way because it's a powerful narrative: "We're the victims here! What about our rights? What about our ability to live how we want?" This

offers an inverted image of actual power relationships. Here, the majority presents themselves as vulnerable to the whims of the minority. Some anti-equality activists really believe this rhetoric while others are just using it as a political strategy. Conservatives have been very good at portraying themselves as the victims of social reform. When conservative politicians and opportunistic religious and social movement leaders frame their social groups as endangered by the empowerment of minorities, they're able to rally supporters and raise funds. By demonizing minorities as sexually violent, these same dominant groups are able to renounce any moral obligation to protect minority groups' equality and dignity. It's a mechanism that allows you to dismiss the marginalized in our society and to inoculate yourself from humanizing them.

While the political narrative of "saving" women and children from the asserted danger an oppressed group's equality posed was popularized by groups like the KKK, it was the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)-designated hate group, the Liberty Council that recently revealed itself as being the force behind the recent national spread of so-called "bathroom bills". In 2015, the Liberty Council took their fight to Virginia to target a transgender boy who, until that point, had been integrated as a male student in a Gloucester County school district. The Liberty Council helped challenge the transgender boy's right to use the bathroom that cisgender boys use, precipitating the school board's commitment to a policy of segregating transgender students from cisgender students in public accommodations. The policy asserted that, "the use of said facilities shall be limited to the corresponding biological genders, and students with gender identity issues shall be provided an alternative appropriate private facility." This policy resulted in the student having to withdraw from school and take his case to court, resulting in the policy being overturned by the fourth circuit court of appeals. As of writing this, the Gloucester County school district is fighting to keep the Liberty Council-derived policy in place, appealing the ruling to the Supreme Court.

It's clear that bills derived from the Liberty Council's advocacy are part of a long and painful political tradition of promoting minority oppression. The United States Commission of Civil Rights issued a statement regarding the Liberty Council's so-called "bathroom bills" writing, "The United States Commission on Civil Rights strongly condemns recent state laws passed, and proposals being considered, under the guise of so-called 'religious liberty' which target members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender ('LGBT') community for discrimination." Concerning the North Carolina "bathroom bill", the Commission asserted:

Critically, [HB2] forces transgender people to utilize public bathrooms and changing facilities based on the sex issued on their birth certificates, and not according to their gender identities. This jeopardizes not only the dignity, but also the actual physical safety, of transgender people whose appearances may not match societal expectations of the sex specified on their identification documents.[14]

The Commission seemed to echo the Department of Education (DOE) which stated in its 2015 Title IX compliance manual that, "Title IX protects students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and other persons from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity." Moreover, the DOE's policy seemed to echo legal standards passed by a Republican Congress. In 2013, Congress passed a reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) which not only defined "gender

identity”, it set forth the very “gender identity” non-discrimination standards under which North Carolina is being sued by the Department of Justice (DOJ) due to non-discrimination noncompliance:

(A) NONDISCRIMINATION -- No person in the United States shall, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity (as defined in paragraph 249(c)(4) of title 18, United States Code), sexual orientation, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available under the Violence Against Women Act...

Moreover, the Act explicitly states that the U.S. Attorney General is empowered by Congress to define which groups may be covered by the VAWA as an “Underserved Population”.

Because North Carolina signed contracts with the federal government promising to not discriminate on the basis of “gender identity” with their Title IX and VAWA funded programs, the DOJ announced that it would sue North Carolina when the state announced that it would discriminate on the basis of gender identity. On May 9, 2016, US Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced that the DOJ had filed suit against North Carolina because the VAWA “specifically targets gender identity. The law and the case law around Title VII, Title IX, and the Violence Against Women Act clearly indicates HB2 is in violation of federal law.” Lead Counsel in the DOJ’s suit, Vanita Gupta stated:

We also bring a claim in the Violence Against Women Act, a more recent statute specifically designed to prevent discrimination against transgender people by entities that accept certain federal funds. As with Title IX, entities that accept federal funds under VAWA, including UNS and the NCDPS, pledged that they would not discriminate against sex or gender identity. Our complaint seeks to enforce that pledge and hold those entities accountable for the kind of discrimination required by HB2.

Although the Liberty Counsel asserted that the effort to overturn North Carolina’s HB2 was “actively promoting pedophilia”, the law is nonetheless clear about what constitutes discrimination. While the President of the Liberty Counsel announced that she would be taking her “Glock .45 to the ladies room” because, “[i]t identifies as my bodyguard”, the hate group announced that it will help defend HB2 -the very bill the hate group helped draft- in court at no cost.

Unsurprisingly, those who support the Liberty Counsel’s political agenda are uncomfortable with the idea that the political dialectic they are using is part of an anti-equality tradition rooted in Jim Crow laws. When Attorney General Lynch said that the Liberty Counsel’s bills are, in the same way, Jim Crow laws were, a reaction to “historic moments of progress”, the Texas Governor, Greg Abbott said that such comparisons were both “offensive” and “ignorant”. When Lynch visited her home state of North Carolina, a group of Black evangelicals protested the Attorney General, claiming offense over linking HB2 to the civil rights struggles of the past, “Whatever it is that you want to call it, do not call it civil rights!” said the Black civil rights activist, Clarence Henderson. When asked about the protest, Lynch responded, “While the civil rights movement, certainly in this state, focused on racial discrimination, civil rights and human rights are not limited to any one particular issue or any one group of people.” She continued:

So, certainly I respect the experience of those who have, in fact, toiled in the vineyards of the civil right movement focusing on particular groups, but when you look at the nature and purpose of the movement, and the nature and purpose of those who led it, the message is about civil rights, human

rights, and equality for all. And that is not limited to any one particular group.

Discriminatory narratives centered upon a political dialectic pioneered by hate-groups like the KKK can and should be exposed on the basis of its historical pedigree. While this may be an uncomfortable truth for some, nevertheless, the arguments made by those supporting “bathroom bills” and “religious freedom bills” are not new; the historical record shows that the political rhetoric used against transgender equality employs a traditionally Southern political dialectic popularized by hate groups and deployed against numerous oppressed groups in the past.

Watch the Video Version of this Essay

*These images are featured in Gillian Frank’s research

1. “Gov. McCrory agreed in a statement he wrote after signing the bill. ‘The basic expectation of privacy in the most personal of settings, a restroom or locker room, for each gender was violated by government overreach and intrusion by the mayor and city council of Charlotte,’ he said. ‘As a result, I have signed legislation passed by a bipartisan majority to stop this breach of basic privacy and etiquette which was to go into effect April 1.’ - ABC News, 3/24/16
2. How many fathers are now going to be forced to go to the ladies’ room to make sure their little girls aren’t molested” Charlotte Observer, 4/3/16
3. “A transgender student, in tears, described the beatings and harassment he faced from classmates at Fannin County High School. But that didn’t stop a crowd of hundreds from cheering on other speakers who called LGBT people ‘perverts’ and ‘pedophiles’ that threaten the safety of students.” Project Q Atlanta, 5/13/16
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