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# Transphobia and the weaponization of womanhood



Rejserin · Following

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Throughout most of human history people assigned female at birth have been treated as chattel, property used to further dynasties, brood mares, and disposable in times of struggle. Even into the 21st century globally women are lesser citizens of most countries, their rights curtailed to conform to various ideologies. Yet, even within societies that valorise and equalise women's rights, to be a woman, to be assigned female at birth, is still seen as an inherently lesser thing. Feminism has long struggled for parity of citizenship, for the ability to vote, to get credit in her own name, even to get martial rape classified as a legal concept. Womanhood, being female, is a battle against historic forces. In short, why would anyone ever want to *become* a woman?



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anything that might be seen as feminine, female, womanly, and on the receiving end of sexual penetration. To be a bottom, to be feminine in any way, is seen as measurably lesser than those who take and enjoy societally prescribed masculine things. Women face this in the job market, where female dominated jobs are paid less and perceived as something lesser. Feminine clothing is treated as delicate and restricted no matter which gender wears it, made from less rugged materials and sold as fripperies to be adorned. Same for make-up. To enjoy feminine things is to be indulgent, a taker rather than a provider, a peacock amongst masculine types whose rugged attire attests to their work and provision.

Of course, this is marketing and an out pouring of patriarchal power, and many women in “women’s jobs” wear rugged and hard wearing clothing. Yet, the inherent message sold to women is that to be feminine is to be a show pony, to attract the masc gaze, and that you are always lesser in yourself unless you have a rugged masculine type on your arm. Trans women are considered traps because they subvert this, the perception being that they seek to turn heteronormative masculine folk into queer people. Trans women are beaten to death because their very existence is a challenge to society, their womanhood is viewed as a corrupting weapon to seduce and deviate men. Womanhood, femininity, goes from being something lesser to being the ultimate betrayal of everything society deems men to be. Why become a woman other than to trap men?

Transphobia's roots spring just as much from within the queer community as it does the cisnormative. While the happy court gender deviants were given their spectacle and space to exist, for trans women of lesser classes it was a struggle from lash to lash. From the last 19th Century onwards being gay and being gender variant were conflated, to the point that by the time science caught up to the needs of trans folk the gate keeping required to get hormones and surgery meant that trans women had to disavow and reject anything homosexual. These women had to be hyper femme, trapped in petticoats to the degree that the *only* solution to their adjudged psychosis was to go under the knife. Since the 1960s the popular media have gone out of their way to weaponize womanhood against trans women, to make them facsimiles and corruptors of feminine virtue. In turn, gay and lesbian groups pushing for normative existences have rejected trans folk to achieve their goals. Same with many feminist groups.

Trans women are demonised for being too femme, pastiches of what a woman really is, something lesser than "real" women actually are, indeed no matter where a trans woman sits within her womanhood there will always be transphobia aimed at her from whatever group has an axe to grind. Some feminists see trans women as men invading women's spaces and rights to undermine the cause, some men act so violently at even the implied slight on their sexuality when they find trans women attractive that they carry out mass killings. Not all men, and certainly not all women are transphobic, but the weaponization of womanhood against trans women harms all women because it places a hedge around what a woman can and cannot be.

Women holistically suffer from the revocation of abortion rights, restricted access to birth control, demonisation of trans masc because it corrupts young girls, purity pacts, enforced hijab wearing, and many other forms of coercion. The backlash against trans women, especially the hounding of trans feminine folk of all shades, by society is a wider symptom of the radicalisation of gender. If womanhood was on parity with masculinity, then why do men fear gay men and trans women? The answer lies in the historic trend, the need to control and treat people they see as lesser as property and chattel. One does not become chattel willingly, let alone set of galloping towards it with all the power on can muster. Transphobia and homophobia are rooted in the fear of being seen as weak, as chattel, as owner, and those who perpetrate it do so out of conscious or unconscious need to reassert their power.

The greatest lesson we can take from queer and feminist histories is that nothing is assured. At many times rights have been granted to women and queer folk only for them to be snatched away when the radical tide turns. Transphobia is rampant because those who use it seek to roll back rights for all women and feminine people. The gender binary exists to exert control of those perceived as weaker than the masculine. Rights cannot be taken for granted, they need a new generation to fight for them. Fear is beaten by hope, courage, and education. It is up to weaponize womanhood not as a tool of oppression and fear, but as hope and pride in our existence as women and femme folk of all stripes.

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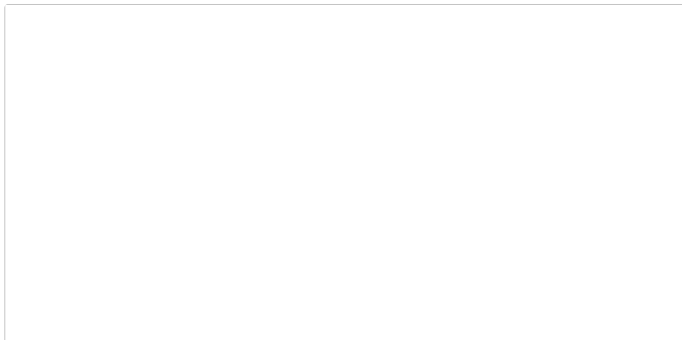
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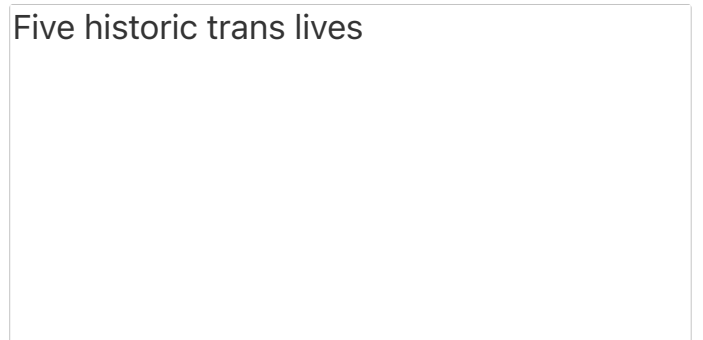


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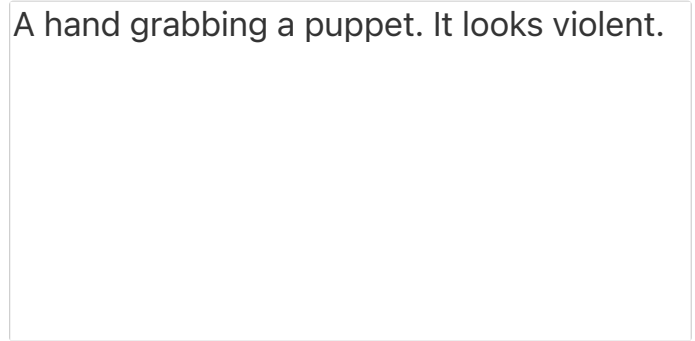
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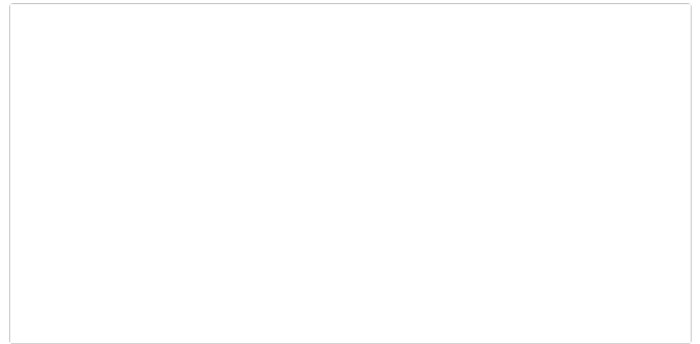
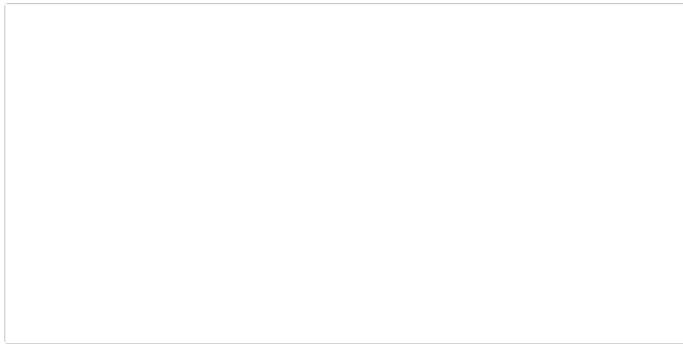
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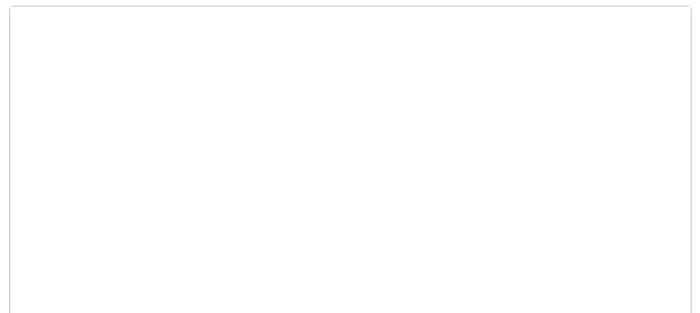
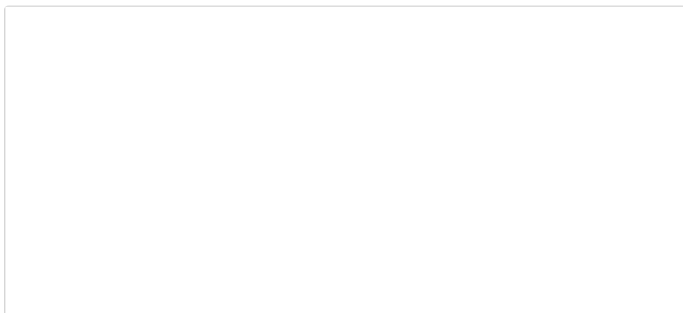
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