

Cutting through transgender debate

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Friday, 03 June 2016 09:11



Why do I find the transgender bathroom debate so irritating? While Obama daily launches drones, killing dozens of innocent foreigners (or militants, it doesn't matter - both drone deaths are crimes against humanity), we are fed self-righteous nostrums, showing what a great liberal he is (soon to be joined, no doubt, by the supreme court).

Dress is mostly unisex now -- women wear pants, so what's the problem? If you must wear make-up and act like a woman, just dress down if you are out in public. In the interests of public courtesy, bite the bullet and use 'the men's' if your body is male, and 'the women's' if your body is female. Or if you can't abide that compromise with social norms, arrange your day to use individual washrooms (most gas stations, restaurants, hospitals, probably most schools).

In the 19th century there were no separate washrooms, because people mostly lived in the countryside, and the 'facility' (even in urban public places) was an outhouse in the back. Not very ladylike, but people made do with what was, and didn't whine. They had more important things to think about, like survival. Separate washrooms were created to serve a growing female labour force in large factories/ corporations.

LGBTQIA

The explosion of various "sexualities" since the advent of gaylib in the 1970s, which are now trying to achieve legal recognition, cannot be expected to be met with open arms by the 95+% of the population that do not and cannot relate to them. What do LGBTQQIP and LGBTQIA* mean anyway? And should it matter to 98% of the population?

The trouble is mostly with terminology, and mostly concerns men-to-women (transgender women). Originally a sex-change operation (new genitalia and sex-hormone medication -- for life) meant you were clearly the other sex -- a *transsexual*. A *transgender* is one who take hormones, or who simply identifies with the opposite gender, *or with both or with neither*.

Radical feminists see trans women as just

[another form of male dominance](#)

and argue they should stop pretending they are women or else have the castration operation.

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This is disputed by those transgender women who don't want to forfeit their genitals. After all, maybe [s/he will have second thoughts](#) some day. Without the genitals, the man is no longer a man (formerly called "eunuch"), and reversing the operation is very messy, if not impossible. Hence the rise of "transgenderism" in a neoliberal age of identity politics.

McRory vs Rosa Parks

It is hardly surprising that this latest twist in the identity politics saga--creating a kind-of new species, a man-who-thinks-he's-woman-but-with-balls--is being resisted. The governor of North Carolina, Pat McCrory, entered history when he decided 'enough is enough', and signed the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, requiring physical males to use male washrooms. Sounds like a no-brainer, but it raised liberal hackles throughout the US, and put modest North Carolina on the political map.

The law, passed in March, led to a flurry of boycott activity. Cirque du Soleil, Bruce Springsteen, Beyonce and Ringo Starr all announced they would refuse to tour there. Elton John fired a broadside in The Hill. "It's dangerous, and it goes beyond bathrooms. As the father of two children, I would hope their world is free of discriminatory, hateful legislation like North Carolina's." (Elton John is gay, married and has two children, one adopted, one born to a surrogate mother.)

Sports associations like the NBA and NCAA protested, and companies such as PayPal and Deutsche Bank have nixed investment plans. Even the porn site XHamster proudly announced it has banned the state's residents from accessing its content.

The current boycott is compared to Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the 1950s against segregation in Alabama, the epic struggle of South African blacks led by Nelson Mandela, and the mid-1960s boycott of California grapes, led by Cesar Chavez, in support of unionizing workers.

This puts the personal whims of a tiny group of middle class gays on a pedestal with great heroes fighting for the rights of all blacks and all Americans. What a great way to trivialize fundamental, hard-earned rights in an age when they are being eroded daily as a result of neoliberalism.

It has definitely had some economic impact, and Governor McCrory, a Republican in a traditionally Democrat state, is surely concerned about how voters will judge him as he runs

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[American Herald Tribune](#)