

**“Guilt by Association” as a Tool of Reaction:**  
**ME’s Hit Piece against Radical Feminists**

Imagine reading an article in the progressive press:

**Green Party reveals its right-wing and Russian ties.** The surprising nexus between Greens and the Republican white supremacist far Right revealed its ugly head when Greens shamelessly joined racists in opposing the Voting Rights Bill, HR 1, the most important voting rights bill that aims to ensure voting access in a generation. This action can only encourage the suppression of the Black vote as well as the vicious murders of Black people by racist police. Unfortunately, this isn’t the first time that the Green Party has aligned with the extreme Right, receiving help – financial and otherwise - from Republicans in gaining ballot access, to aligning with far Right libertarian Rand Paul on a number of bills in Congress and working with Russia to throw the election to Trump in 2016. Jill Stein even sat at a dinner in Russia with Putin.

We have all seen articles like this targeting the Green Party - full of lies, half-truths, distortions, and guilt by association – meant to close minds, silence dissent and ensure that the merits of a political position (in the above fictional example, the need for independence from the corporate duopoly and the poison pill in the voting rights bill) are never discussed.

How distressing then to read Margaret Elizabeth’s piece, “WoLF, TERFS and the Religious Right, oh my,”, and learn that such despicable and yes, *reactionary* methods -reminiscence of Joseph McCarthy’s anti-communist hysteria of the 1950’s - are being used by the Lavender Caucus and its supporters against all those expressing gender critical feminist views within the Green Party. Indeed, “guilt by association” has gone so far here that several degrees of removal from the original “guilty” party are enough to paint someone with the same brush.

Life-long socialists and long-time members of the Party have been accused by the Lavender Caucus and their supporters of aligning with the Proud Boys!

The smears against those who question a particular version of transgender politics have no basis in fact. There is no “symbiotic relationship” between gender critical feminists and the Christian Right. GC feminists and their allies have politics generally ranging from mainstream Democrat, to progressive Democrat, to independent to socialist to Green. Overwhelmingly, GC feminists unequivocally support lesbian and gay rights, birth control, the Equal Rights Amendment, abortion rights and the right of everyone to dress, express themselves, and pursue their interests as they chose, which many people refer to as “gender.” These are hardly Christian fundamentalist Right wing positions.

The truth is that GC feminist and LGB groups are notoriously poor. They usually lack paid staff and have budgets that are tiny to non-existent. Yes, WoLF took a relatively small amount of money from the Right on one occasion, a move that, by the way, was widely condemned by GC radical feminists.

But transgender organizations have likewise taken money from unsavory right wing sources, and unlike radical feminist groups, are usually awash in corporate donations. One prominent such donor to transgender causes is billionaire Jennifer Pritzker, lifelong Republican, and major donor to candidates and organizations such as the NRA, John McCain, and Mitt Romney. Not a progressive by any stretch of the imagination. Please see the Feminist Greens statement for more information about the corporate funding behind much of the transgender movement. <http://www.dialoguenotexpulsion.org/documents/Green-Feminists-Response-to-LC-Complaint>.

In fact, religious fundamentalists can far more easily accept transgenderism than they can accept feminism or lesbian and gay rights. Christian fundamentalist right wing politician Rick Santorum was quoted in 2015 with reference to Caitlyn Jenner, while attending the Republican convention, “If he says he’s a woman, then he’s a woman.” Santorum was far less accepting of gay people, saying that he would not attend a same-sex wedding because it “would be a violation of my

faith” and even opposed civil unions for same sex couples.

<https://time.com/3844757/rick-santorum-bruce-jenner-lgbt-transgender/>

Another example is fundamentalist Iran where gays and lesbians face execution while transsexuality has been legalized since 1987, with the government paying for medical transition. Reportedly, many thousands of gay people are having gender reassignment surgery in order to avoid execution.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10998169/iran-gay-people-gender-reassignment-surgery/>

It should be noted that WoLF is no longer the center of gravity of radical feminist organizing in the U.S. Rather, the U.S. movement has shifted to newer formations such as the international Women’s Human Rights Campaign (author of the Declaration on Women’s Sex-Based Rights), two separate LGB Alliances born in the last several months led primarily by lesbians, and Feminists in Struggle (FIST), a multi-issue radical feminist organization only two years old. FIST has a strong and comprehensive progressive agenda, including as one of its principles opposition to alliances with the Right. <https://feministstruggle.org/principles/> FIST authored the Feminist Amendments to the Equality Act which while adding protections for the sex-based rights of persons born female, continue to protect lesbians, gays and bisexuals, as well as transgender and all gender non-conforming individuals from discrimination.

<https://feministstruggle.org/feminist-amendments/faea/> Though FIST is strongly gender critical, the organization takes a multi-issue approach to rebuilding a feminist movement. FIST has held public forums on a range of feminist topics including the ERA, abortion rights, and the murder of indigenous women.

Notably, one of the provisions in the Equality Act that the Feminist Amendments maintains is the closing of religious exemption loopholes to civil rights laws. FIST agrees with the closing of those loopholes. Anyone who is knowledgeable about the Christian Right knows that religious exemptions are their primary strategy right now for pushing back the gains of the last few decades. So how is FIST’s position “symbiotic” with the right-wing?

Moreover, contrary to ME's claims, there is nothing Right wing about allowing those born female (with female reproductive organs) and oppressed based on their sex, and lesbians who are doubly oppressed based on their sex and sexual orientation, the right to self-organize through female only and lesbian only groups and spaces. All of our identity caucuses are "exclusionary" in that they exclude those that don't share their demographic. The right of oppressed groups to self-organize is the very basis for the identity caucuses. That females as a sex are one of these oppressed and subordinated groups is implied by the extensive parts of our platform devoted to female oppression.

By the way, Michigan Women's Music Festival ("MichFest") was a lesbian-centered female-only feminist political and cultural space that was destroyed by a misogynistic boycott campaign to shut it down. Transgender activists who participated in that misguided campaign forgot who their real enemies were. That is nothing to gloat about.

In light of the LC campaign to purge Georgia and anyone else questioning their gender orthodoxy from the Party, one can only conclude that many Greens no longer believe that those born female are oppressed based on their sex. (When were members of the female sex liberated? Do we now enjoy equal pay and opportunities as compared to males, unimpeded control over our reproductive capacities, equal representation in Congress?) And are lesbians no longer oppressed too? Our commitment to feminism as a Party has little meaning if we don't recognize half the human race born female as an oppressed class of persons. If there is no sex-based oppression, there is no need for feminism.

Recognizing that transgender individuals born with a male reproductive system are *not the same* as biological females, and that such females are entitled to rights based on sex, is not about hate, it is not about biological essentialism (we have female bodies but that is not all that we are), and it has nothing to do with right wing politics. *Such lies have to stop.*

These "guilt by association" smear tactics and the silencing and expelling of dissident voices within the Party for "thought crimes" not only violate our Green values but can only do the dirty work of the corporate duopoly by weakening and

splitting the Green Party. That is, if we allow ourselves to be intimidated or lulled into complacency and let them.

- Ann Menasche

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