

The Fight For Transgender Rights Is A Class Struggle Fight For Equality



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12-29-2024 ~ Working class politics must embrace trans rights as the fight for trans rights, women's rights, and LGBTQ rights are not separate from the fight of the working class.

President-elect [Donald Trump](#) said at a conference for young conservatives in Arizona this past Sunday that the official policy of his upcoming administration would be the recognition that there are only two genders, male and female, and pledged to stop "[transgender lunacy](#)" from day one of his presidency.

Transgender issues have become a hot topic in U.S. politics, with Democrats and Republicans adopting opposing policies on matters such as healthcare provision and the types of books allowed in public schools and libraries. Republicans have been pushing against LGBTQ rights for many years now, and [Republican-led state legislatures](#) have passed legislation restricting medical care to transgender youth. As such, there is little doubt that the incoming Trump administration will seek to make good on its promise to punish transgender people and the LGBTQ community in general.

There are an estimated [1.6 million](#) transgender people in the United States, facing severe discrimination and constant denial of their fundamental rights and, in many cases, even [rejection](#) by their own families. Their only crime is that they do not conform to societal expectations of gender identity, meaning that they do not fit the confines of male and female binaries. Yet, transgender people have

existed for as long as humans have been around. There is ample [documentation](#) of transgender people from ancient Mesopotamia to the Greek and Roman empires. Indeed, the ancient Greeks did not have the same concepts of gender and sexuality that eventually became crystalized in the [modern Western world](#), from around the start of the 16th century. In Greek mythology, [Hermaphroditus](#), the god of hermaphrodites and effeminates, was partly male, partly female.

Records from U.S. hospitals and clinics of [trans kids](#) seeking medical care date back to the early 20th century. Therefore, arguments denying transgender realities are simply outrageous while policies restricting the rights of transgender people (such as receiving basic healthcare, education, and legal recognition) should be treated as nothing short of conscious attempts to cause direct harm to individuals identifying themselves as transgender and assessed as nothing less than criminal.

There are many reasons why people wish to deny transgender realities and why so many states want to limit transgender rights, ranging from cultural and religious reasons to psychological ones. Transphobia however is also a product of a particular type of society, one built around class divisions where maximization of profit and the reproduction of labor power are essential features. In class divided societies, gender stereotypes and thus sexual dimorphism go hand in hand with the desire to maintain the existing status quo and the specific form of labor relations built into such systems. Indeed, under capitalism, beliefs and assumptions about biological essentialism and gender binarism are convenient ways to keep reproducing a mode of production and a social order in which people need to be divided and boxed into neat categories. Transness disrupts capitalist social relations as masculinity and femininity are built into the economy as a binary relation. In this context, transphobia kicks in to enforce the division of labor by sex and gender as roles in the workforce in capitalist societies have mainly defined and formed our gender.

Under capitalism, transgender people are affected by the same structures that oppress the working class. Aside from the treatment of transgender people by the private healthcare industry, whereby discrimination is quite prevalent, some [50%](#) of trans people also report employment discrimination while their level of unemployment is [double the natural average](#). Transgender workers tend to have [much lower income](#) than the general population and are twice as likely to be living in [poverty](#).

Transgender rights are therefore a working-class issue and “[the fight for trans equality must be recognized as class struggle.](#)” Of course, this is not to deny the fact that there are very rich queer people inside the system that do what capitalists basically do, which is to exploit other people. There is even a proportion of the capitalist class that supports transness and LGBTQ people, but we should bear in mind that the [relationship between capitalism and oppression](#) has always been dynamic and contradictory rather than mechanical and linear.

That said, working class politics must embrace trans rights as the fight for trans rights, women’s rights, and LGBTQ rights are not separate from the fight of the working class. A working-class program must address the needs and wants of trans people as most of them are indeed disproportionately poor and working-class. Unions, for instance, should follow the example of [United Steelworkers](#) who got rid of exclusions of gender-affirming healthcare. Unions should mobilize their members to fight back against anti-trans legislation at every level. And we must not forget that most of our citizens are *not* on the side of Trump and the Republicans when it comes to transgender people. Polling shows that two-thirds of U.S. citizens oppose [transphobic bills](#), even though more than half of the states have introduced pieces of legislation seeking to curb the rights of transgender people.

Trumpism as a political strategy has always been about polarization, division, and bigotry. The fight against the upcoming administration requires class solidarity among all oppressed and marginalized group in U.S. society. The fight for transgender rights is a fight whose outcome will undoubtedly prove pivotal in the overall struggle to resist Trump’s extreme agenda (which includes mass deportations) in the next four years, starting January 20, 2025.

At the conservative conference in Phoenix, Arizona, Trump simple reiterated his plans to pass a federal ban on gender-affirming care for youth and to redefine gender at the federal level whereby the recognized genders are as assigned at birth. These policies would be an extension of what took place during the first four years of Trump in office, a [relentless onslaught of attacks](#) toward queer people. And Trump has already announced a host of extreme anti-trans appointees to key administration positions, which include former professional wrestling executive and anti-transgender advocate [Linda McMahon](#) as education secretary; [Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.](#), who opposes gender-affirming care, as secretary of health and human services; and white supremacist and anti-LGBQ

[Stephen Miller](#) as White House deputy chief of staff for policy.

The challenges that lie ahead for progressive communities across the United States for the next four years are many and severe. The fight for trans rights will be a long, arduous one, but winning it will be a huge victory for equality. There should be no mistake about that, which is why it must be recognized as class struggle.

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