

## SEX DENIALISM IS INHERENTLY NOT JUST SEXIST BUT HOMOPHOBIC

Some Green NC members seem to no longer believe that half of humanity born female is oppressed based on sex under the system of patriarchy or male supremacy. These Greens now insist that we all embrace without question what I will refer to as “sex denialism” –a literal interpretation of the mantra that “transwomen are women” (TWAW) for all purposes despite their male biology – in order to avoid being labelled “transphobic” and accused of far Right politics that is the moral equivalent of white supremacy. This change represents a giant step back for the politics of the Green Party, pushing us back to the early 1960’s, before Second Wave feminism arose and began to raise the consciousness of the broader Left.

With sex denialism fully and unquestionably embraced, what possible meaning is there then to our commitment to feminism as part of our platform and the Ten Key Values? And how do we explain scientific facts like evolution when we no longer recognize the existence of sexual dimorphism in virtually all animals? No one will say.

Sex denialism - the idea that sex doesn’t exist and/or has no social significance – fundamentally means that female sex-based oppression can no longer be named, recognized, measured, organized around or struggled against. \*You know, things like the wage gap between males and females, the disproportionately female face of poverty, the underrepresentation of females in positions of power, the epidemic of male violence against us, the burden of the double day and society’s imposition of childcare, elder care and other caretaking labor placed largely on females, the infringement on our right to control our reproductive capacity through access to birth control and abortion—a singularly female issue – are no longer even speakable as such. Just like race blindness is harmful to Black people (can you imagine not being able to name the fact that Black people are the group being brutalized and murdered disproportionately at the hands of violent police?), sex denialism is extremely harmful and discriminatory to those of us born female.

But sex denialism also means that neither can lesbian and gay oppression be named and fought against. To put it simply, if biological sex is no longer deemed to exist, /neither does homosexuality/. Thus, to deny the existence of sex is inherently homophobic, undermining and rendering invisible lesbian and gay lives. Do Greens in the NC care about that?

As a lesbian and a political activist for half a century, I have deep roots in what was referred to at that time as the movement for lesbian and gay rights. I was active in that cause going back to the mid-to-late 1970's in San Francisco, during the time of Harvey Milk, up through playing a leadership role in San Diego's marriage equality movement of a decade ago. That early radical movement for lesbian and gay liberation, which was grassroots and non-corporate to its core, fought for the rights of people to love people of the SAME SEX, that is, to engage in homoSEXuality. Most of us were overtly gender non-conforming as well (and would now be considered part of the "trans umbrella") and embraced freedom to dress and express ourselves as we liked. We were gay and proud "masculine" or "androgynous" females; and "feminine" or androgynous males. Many of us rejected straight sex roles entirely. But the fundamental purpose of our movement was to achieve our right to SAME SEX love and intimate relationships without discrimination or stigma.

For females in this young lesbian and gay liberation movement, establishing our right to organize our lives independent of intimate relationships with males was particularly challenging. This is because patriarchy has for many millennia defined female value solely in terms of our relationships to males, as wives and mothers. So we lesbians (same sex attracted females), in order to survive in a hostile sexist and homophobic culture that rejected us, worked in conjunction with other feminists to create our own vibrant independent source of community support. That lesbian-centered female-only organizing resulted in the creation of female only, collectively run, alternative institutions like bookstores, women's centers, coffee houses, newspapers, publishing houses, music companies, and music festivals, as well as support groups and organizations.

But in the last couple of decades that vibrant culture has been effectively destroyed by the combined forces of the corporatization of what became the LGBTQIA+ movement (led by corporate-funded non-profits), the increased impoverishment of the female sex under neoliberalism, and a transgender movement's increasing embrace (despite many dissenting trans voices) of sex denialism. Rather than uniting with lesbians to fight the patriarchy and the scourge of male violence that causes harm to lesbians, all females, gay men, and all gender non-conforming individuals including males who are transgender, and rather than focusing on securing traditional civil rights protections against discrimination in employment and housing, that movement took a different path. In the name of "trans rights" the corporatized leadership of the LGBTQIA+ movement decided to embrace sex

denialism. They loudly proclaimed “TAWW”, and chose the female-only institutions that lesbians had created as primary targets for attack.

Female-only or lesbian meetings were soon no longer allowed in the LGBT Centers (though trans-only meetings were welcome) and our female-only lesbian-centered gatherings and cultural communal institutions, such as the Michigan Women’s Music Festival, that attempted to define itself as a place for “women-born-women”, was the subject of protests and boycotts that ultimately resulted in its being forced to close. Economic factors had previously forced almost all lesbian bars also to close and now the rare women’s dances that still exist are called “WOMXN” dances, no longer female only, but open to transgender and non-binary males, indeed according to its name, anyone with an X chromosome. Almost all LGBT organizations put the large majority of their funding into transgender advocacy with lesbians receiving the least funding. LGBT conferences held virtually no lesbian workshops. Lesbians, usually older lesbians with established social networks, returned to gathering in private homes. The complete isolation of younger lesbians began to set in until being a young lesbian, despite the legality of same sex marriage, became far harder than it has been in many decades. While transgender individuals are being celebrated by CNN, Time Magazine, and other corporate media outlets, lesbians and to a lesser extent, gay men, virtually disappeared from view.

And it didn’t stop there. Certain transgender persons born male, the large majority with intact male genitalia, defined themselves as “lesbians” and began pressuring and coercing young lesbians to accept them as potential dating and sex partners. Males that are transgender began flooding lesbian dating sites. Lesbians who refused were and still are labelled “transphobic” and “vagina fetishists.” See, e.g., <https://www.theblaze.com/news/2017/03/23/transgender-feminist-lays-down-the-law-some-women-have-penises>. This is a mirror image of the misogynist rape culture of the 1960’s where women who rejected male advances were labelled “hung up prudes” and condemned for failing to do their political duty as anti-Vietnam war activists, under the slogan, “Girls say yes to boys who say no.”

A study of lesbians called “Lesbians at Ground Zero” conducted in the UK found that 56% of respondents reported being pressured or coerced to accept a transwoman as a sexual partner.

<http://www.gettheloutuk.com/blog/category/research.html>

[<http://www.gettheloutuk.com/blog/category/research.html>](http://www.gettheloutuk.com/blog/category/research.html). Though gay men and even heterosexual men can sometimes be coerced through a literal interpretation of

TWAW (and its corollary, TMAM), not surprisingly, the primary victims of this form of coercion have been lesbians.

This untenable environment for lesbians has also ended up influencing many young same-sex-attracted girls and young women to escape an untenable future as a lesbian in a sexist and homophobic society with virtually no social support or role models, by pursuing “medical transition,” including by ingesting cross-sex hormones, obtaining double mastectomies, and genital surgeries, with serious long-term consequences to their health. While it was mostly males who engaged in “transitioning” in the recent past, the number of females, including many minor girls pursuing these interventions have multiplied several thousand fold in the last several years. If Greens doubt that sexism and homophobia can and does motivate lesbians and other same sex attracted females to adopt transgender identities, please read the stories of Scott Nugent

<https://www.trevoices.com/post/scottnewgentstory> and Keira Bell  
<https://www.persuasion.community/p/keira-bell-my-story..>

Sex denialism is homophobia on steroids. It has already done great harm to lesbians and ultimately is likely to do harm to gay men as well. It’s really very simple--no sex, no homosexuality. For this reason, and because the mainstream LGBTQIA+ movement no longer is a champion for the rights and concerns of same sex attracted people, LGB alliances, led by lesbians, (but with many gay men joining them, and with the support of a number of transgender allies), have formed in the UK, the U.S. and a number of other countries. LGB activists in these new organizations understand that sex denialism--the conflation of sex and gender identity and the overriding of the former by the latter--is not in their interests.

Moreover, sex denialism is neither progressive nor Green. It has divided the LGBTQIA+ movement and is about to do the same to the Green Party. It is time for a course correction before it is too late.

-Ann Menasche