Defending Transgender People from Gender Binary Extremism and Restoring Psychological and Biological Truth to the People of the United States (DTPFGBEARPABTTTPOTUS)

Hi, hello, I'm your token trans* person on your feed. I want to talk about the executive order "Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government," or DWFGIEARBTTTFG as I like to call it for short. So catchy. I'm just going to let my thoughts run wild. I'll write them down here, and you can extract any meaning you like from them. Here we go.

Last year in anticipation of the election, I updated my passport. It hadn't been updated since 2008, and had my old name and gender on there. I suspected that Trump would pull something like this and I figured there were reasons to keep a passport on hand. In the worst case scenario, I could flee very quickly to Canada. More likely, but still unlikely I thought, I could use my passport in conjunction with my masters in social work that I'm earning to potentially find a job overseas if things get worse here for trans people. In the most likely scenario, I was worried that Trump would make it impossible to change one's gender on federal IDs and documents, and I just wanted to get that done in case I feel like vacationing in the Caribbean sometime in the future (when I'm a high earning social worker of course). I was hoping that I was just paranoid, and it would simply be a waste of $150. It looks like that's not the case. I was right to feel paranoid. My mildest scenario came true not even a day after the election. Should I be thinking about the more extreme scenarios now? How likely am I to really need that passport? Will the passport even be the safety I want it to be? Maybe they will revoke all gender marker changes retroactively, I don't know. That might have seemed extreme last year, but it would be consistent with the wording of the executive order.

I feel angry. But I'm not as angry at Trump as I am at Biden, and Harris, and Democrats. Democrats treated the election like a big game. Biden was asked how he'd feel if he lost, and he just said he'd feel good that he tried his best. To him, it's just a bit more or less prestige, while to all of us down here, it's our mental health, our well-being, and sometimes, our lives.

I struggle daily with dysphoria. I've been through a lot of medical changes, but my voice isn't as feminine as I'd like. And I still have facial hair that needs to be shaved. And I'm not too tall, but I'm taller than most women at 5'9". Usually no one even knows that I'm trans unless I tell them, but I get misgendered occasionally, probably primarily because of my voice, but there's lots of little things that probably add up to "masculine" in some strangers' automatic gendering brain process. My dysphoria and anxiety have been manageable so far, but now they're turning into something more sinister: plausible fear.

I would convince myself that it wasn't a big deal, that almost everyone sees me as a woman, and I'm pretty much safe here in...mostly blue Bend, OR. I don't think that's true anymore. I think I need to be careful when I use the women's bathroom. I should make sure I'm using my most femme voice, or better yet, don't talk at all. I need to be aware of where I am and who is around me. I can't tell the trans people I work with that they can relax either. We all need to be on alert. This isn't good for the progress I've made on my dysphoria. How can I meditate my way out of anxiety in the face of real danger?

Let me be clear here: I don't think Trump gives a shit about trans people. Way back in 2016 he was actually pro trans. Like it wasn't a big deal. Trans people are just pawns in a game of power. Sometimes people have an initial emotional reaction of disgust when they think about transgender issues, and conservatives take that, amplify it, and use it for their own gains. Interestingly, if you read the executive order, it doesn't mention trans men at all, it is only concerned with trans women. It focuses on protecting women from the threat of men invading women's spaces. It's funny. I believe that the threat women face from men comes from the current structure of power that privileges men over women, making it easier for men to commit violence against women without proportional social consequences. It's almost like men in power want to divert attention away from the structure that keeps them in power while enabling this violence and give people a target that's easy to hate because, look, isn't that trans woman (conventionally) ugly, strange and scary?

I'm not sure what the solution is here. I may not be able to even do that much, because I am going to be busy making sure I survive Trump with my mental and physical health intact. I do know that even if Trump voters are a danger to me, and I'm not going to put up with any of their shit, Trump voters are not the true enemy. The power structure is the enemy. The power structure must be dismantled, somehow. I'm up for suggestions. I was going to say that the people in power are the enemy, but I don't think that's correct either. If Trump weren't in power, then J.D. Vance would be. Or someone else who can stir up the disgust and hatred of people who are scared and who have their own very serious needs in this Neo-liberal capitalist dystopia.

I've been through a lot to get to the place where I'm at now. It was a lot of struggling, a ton of self doubt, depression, anxiety, embarrassment, and hard work, just to get to here, where I can say I feel more comfortable with who I am now than who I thought I was ten years ago. I would not have gone through this journey if I didn't have to. This was a matter of life or death for me, literally. I would not be here if I didn't have the ability to transition.

No one fully understands gender, or gender dysphoria. People used to say it's like being trapped in the wrong body, there have been well meaning mantras that trans people are "born like this," I

used to get excited about studies that show that trans people have brains that more closely resemble brains of cisgender people that match their gender identity than cisgender people that match their gender assigned at birth. But the truth is more complicated than just biological factors. It's probably a mix of biological, psychological, social, cultural, and environmental factors. The truth is that regardless of why people are trans or gender diverse, all people deserve autonomy over their bodies and identities. Everyone knows themselves better than anyone else, and everyone deserves the basic respect of being allowed to direct their own life. I got the chance to direct my own life. It made all the difference. I'm here today. I'm not sure I would have made it if I wasn't given the opportunity to live in a state that allows me my autonomy.

America is supposed to value freedom. I don't know what conservatives are doing, but I value freedom, and that's why I'm a leftist. It just shows how all the talk about freedom is just that; talk. Propaganda. Taking away my ability to identify how I feel comfortable is the opposite of freedom. And blaming trans people for violence against women is not safety for women. Watch how quickly cisgender women will be accused of being transgender just because they don't have every single "feminine" trait that they are supposed to have as women. Protecting trans women is not antithetical to protecting cis women, instead we can only protect cis women when we protect trans women.

Okay, that's it. I don't think I have an ending, because there's an infinite amount of things I could say about all this. Go educate yourself, get political, the political is personal, remember that government derives its legitimacy from its monopoly on violence and not from any moral objectivity, take care of yourself so that you can take care of the vulnerable people in your life, question everything, in life there will always be suffering, awareness of the present is the first step to changing your relationship with suffering, trans rights are human rights, borders are made up, colonialism is ongoing, anyone who didn't mean to do a Nazi salute would immediately and vehemently renounce white supremacy, this too shall pass, etc, etc.

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