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## **Language and Legislation: How Radical Feminists of the 1970's Have Impacted the Sociopolitical Climate of the 21st Century**

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Language and Legislation: How Radical Feminists of the 1970's Have Impacted the  
Sociopolitical Climate of the 21st Century

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State legislatures have been gradually increasing the number of trans-exclusionary bills that are introduced annually over the course of the past five years, with a record-breaking 117 bills in 2021 set to in some way isolate and alienate transgender individuals.<sup>1</sup> 58 of these bills are specifically bathroom/locker room or youth sports team bans, the rest being medical bans or miscellaneous bills.<sup>2</sup> Sports bills ostracize transgender youth by prioritizing their assigned gender at birth over their skill and wellbeing. Young transgender and gender non-conforming people are being threatened with social isolation in over 30 states, even with a lack of evidence that their participation is actually actively detrimental to the success of their cisgendered peers. The instating of sports bans, bathroom bans, and further restrictions on access to medical treatments lead to 1 of every 4 trans adolescents potentially being affected negatively.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis placed on biological determinism and sex separatism by these bills is largely a result of the efforts of conservative politicians and Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists (T.E.R.Fs.). However, it is critical to mention that, while T.E.R.F. is specifically referring to radical feminists, not all radical feminists are trans-exclusionary. The trans-exclusionary derivative of radical feminist ideology is an extreme take on the anatomical and political claims of power of patriarchy as put forth by radical feminists.

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy's (SEP) entry for "Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Gender" states that, while many have viewed sex and gender as coextensive, feminist movements have intended to reshape the way sex and gender are perceived to influence an individual or a community.<sup>4</sup> It says, "provisionally: 'sex' denotes human females and males

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/15/politics/anti-transgender-legislation-2021/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/15/politics/anti-transgender-legislation-2021/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Age-Trans-Individuals-Jan-2017.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy-Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Gender.

depending on biological features (chromosomes, sex organs, hormones and other physical features); ‘gender’ denotes women and men depending on social factors (social role, position, behaviour or identity). The main feminist motivation for making this distinction was to counter biological determinism or the view that biology is destiny.”<sup>5</sup>

The Stanford Encyclopedia’s description of feminist perspectives on sex and gender reflects the social constructionist beliefs of sociologists Candace West and Don Zimmerman. In their article “Doing Gender”, West and Zimmerman describe an “ethnomethodologically informed, and therefore distinctively sociological, understanding of gender as a routine, methodological, and recurring accomplishment.”<sup>6</sup> West and Zimmerman’s description of gender disrupts the normative understanding of gender as concrete by depicting a more fluid and malleable conception of identity. In direct contradiction to this framing of feminist ideology, radical feminists who depend on biological determinism to guide their understanding of gender subscribe to the belief that assigned gender at birth is final.<sup>7</sup>

Understanding how radical feminism came to exist is critical in understanding how trans-exclusion has been expedited and expanded. Radical feminism establishes an anatomical and political position of power in maleness, which reiterates a binary perspective, therefore having the proclivity to enable trans-exclusivity. Radical feminists developed a politics surrounding binary divisions of anatomy that established a platform for trans exclusionary ideology to blossom. Trans exclusionary radical feminists are creating coalitions of trans exclusive ideologues that collaborate with conservative politicians to restrict the expansion of gender inclusive spaces and subsequently limit gender variability. The Mississippi Fairness Act of 2021

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<sup>5</sup> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy-Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Gender.

<sup>6</sup> West, C. and D. Zimmerman. “Doing Gender.” *Gender & Society* 1 (1987): 126.

<sup>7</sup> Koyama, 735.

is an apt example of how Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists promote their ideologies through political forces. Radical feminism, though purported to have been an attempt to move away from biological deterministic attitudes, refortifies the gender binary in a way that allows trans-exclusion to become a part of the ideology. This paper investigates the ideological connection between radical feminism and trans exclusionary politics by analyzing radical feminist writings from the 1970s in concert with modern legislation. I argue that radical feminism established a biological deterministic framework upon which trans-exclusionary politics could be built off of by reifying the gender binary through static anatomical terms.

### **Tenets of Radical Feminism**

Radical feminism is rooted in the belief that the imposition of the patriarchy is paramount in terms of issues of oppression that face women. While all feminism is in some sense rejecting the presence of the patriarchy, radical feminism identifies patriarchal powers as the primary source of oppression, as opposed to race, sexuality, religious identification, or capitalism.<sup>8</sup> There are variances in the definition of radical feminism due to broadness of phrase and changes of epoch, but after reviewing literature from feminist thinkers, it appears to be marked by a few values and characteristics that remain consistent. Radical feminism that developed in the 1960's and 70's focused on the goals of feminism at that time, which placed an emphasis on sexual and reproductive freedoms, workplace rights, and domestic violence.<sup>9</sup> That era of radical feminism is characterized by two tenets: a political claim that men are inherently dangerous because they possess social and political power, and an anatomical claim that male-assigned genitalia is

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<sup>8</sup> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy-Feminist Perspectives on Sex and Gender.

<sup>9</sup> Stryker, 3.

violent. These two claims are consistently represented in radical feminist writings portraying how power dynamics between men and women operate. Valerie Solanas, Janice Raymond, and Susan Brownmiller are all examples of thinkers from the period of second wave feminism that fortify these claims.<sup>10</sup> Valerie Solanas's *S.C.U.M. Manifesto* depicts an anatomical binary, which is then reinforced by Raymond's proclamations of deception and perception, and Brownmiller's arguments surrounding danger enforced by male figures all work together to establish a foundation upon which trans-exclusivity is built.

Valerie Solanas's *S.C.U.M. Manifesto*,<sup>11</sup> a self-published piece from 1967, distinctly diminishes the value of men to sexual pleasure and self-aggrandizement.<sup>12</sup> Her argument for the elimination of the male species is interspersed with pseudoscience and graphic depictions of sexual violence. Solanas is determined to show the reader that, while the patriarchy has tried for so long to convince women of their inherent penis envy, men have actually been experiencing what she calls "pussy envy."<sup>13</sup> The implication here is that all men secretly have an innate desire to experience womanhood, and as a result they are subconsciously aware of their biological and chromosomal lackings. She writes, "When the male accepts his passivity, defines himself as a woman (males as well as females think men are women and women are men), and becomes a transvestite, he loses his desire to screw (or to do anything else, for that matter; he fulfills himself as a drag queen) and gets his dick chopped off. He then achieves a continuous diffuse sexual feeling from "being a woman."<sup>14</sup> While this might read as rather absurdist to the modern

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<sup>10</sup> Author's Note: All three women are cisgendered, meaning their gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth, and all condemn masculine anatomy and identity.

<sup>11</sup> Author's Note: S.C.U.M is the acronym for "Society for Cutting Up Men"

<sup>12</sup> Solanas, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Solanas, 40.

<sup>14</sup> Solanas, 40.

feminist, the concept Solanas is discussing has been perpetrated throughout history, and was coined autogynephilia by Ray Blanchard in the 1980s. This conceptualization of self-perception and then subsequent transformation posits that transgender women are merely straight, cisgender men who become so sexually frustrated with their romantic pursuits they take on the visage of a woman.<sup>15</sup>

Solanas's bold claims of transvestism being attractive to men is deeply associated with a sense of shame in one's masculinity. She believes that men should feel uncomfortable with their existence, and continues to degrade the potential expansion of gender identity and presentation. She explains the male need to center himself around women as a need to be as close to the female as possible, as if to live vicariously through them; saying, "Wanting to become a woman, he strives to be constantly around females, which is the closest he can get to becoming one, so he created a "society" based upon the family- a male-female couple and their kids (the excuse for the family's existence), who live virtually on top of one another, unscrupulously violating the female's rights, privacy, and sanity."<sup>16</sup> Solanas determines that the male creation of familial spaces is an excuse to co-opt feminine identity, thus she reinforces normative gender performance. The family, according to Solanas, is just one site that enables men to wield their political power over women. Her association of maleness with different forms of control is complicated in the context of modern analysis as it is evident that Solanas equates masculinity with anatomy.

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<sup>15</sup> Serano, 765. Blanchard asserts that a sense of gender dysphoria is intrinsically connected to sexual preference, which in turn is a symptom of illness. He is not alone in this; the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual that is the psychological industry standard of mental health had a longstanding entry of both transsexuality and homosexuality as designated mental illnesses. Blanchard's concept of autogynephilia is one of both taxonomy and etiology.

<sup>16</sup> Solanas, 49.

Solanas is one of a handful of radical feminists who assign blame to male anatomy for violence, subsequently determining that any actions taken by individuals assigned male at birth are inherently violent.<sup>17</sup> The connection that Solanas and others draw between maleness and transvestism is demeaning to the validity of gender variability because it prioritizes anatomical factors and external perception over individual identification. These thinkers paved the way for transmisogyny through their diminutive and derivative approach to the gender binary. Solanas demeans gender variability by pushing a binary narrative. Her syntactic choices reinforce assumptions of biological sex by emphasizing genitalia as a primary marker of gender. By juxtaposing her critiques of men alongside her commentary problematizing penises specifically reinforces biological determinism. Solanas's claims of biological determinism as a result of prioritizing genital appearance over self-identification has the potential to invoke transmisogyny. Aligning an individual's gender with their genitalia diminishes their identity to an arbitrary category, and Solanas's assessment of gender does just that.

The rhetoric of Solanas's work parallels that of other radical feminists. By maintaining the biological sex binary, these women perpetuate violence against transgender individuals, as the biological sex binary discourages exploration of gender variability. It is interesting how Solanas wants to promote the elimination of men from their position of power, and yet she centers their stories in her narrative. By centering male genitalia, Solanas is giving power to the same hierarchy she is opposing. Solanas's reliance on biological determinism aligns with the tenets of radical feminism and the assertion of gendered power dynamics. Their claims of identity are intricately intertwined with what they consider to be 'natural,' which typically ends

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<sup>17</sup> Author's Note: I have chosen to utilize the phrasing of assigning gender at birth throughout this paper to indicate where my own beliefs differ from the biological deterministic framework I am critiquing.



up relying on the presence of genitalia in accordance with biological deterministic standards. While these radical feminists purportedly aimed to protect the sanctity of womanhood, their thinly veiled attacks on transsexual and transgender individuals perpetuate transmisogyny and bigotry more than they dismantle the patriarchy.

Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* and Susan Brownmiller's *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* also depict male-associated genitalia as the originator and maintainer of violence.<sup>18</sup> In *The Transsexual Empire*, Raymond includes a chapter entitled "The Transsexually-Constructed Lesbian-Feminist."<sup>19</sup> This chapter, which is prefaced in the *Transgender Studies Reader* with commentary from Susan Stryker, is cited by Stryker herself as dangerous due to the nature of the content. She writes, "Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire* did not invent anti-transsexual prejudice, but it did more to justify and perpetuate it than perhaps any other book ever written."<sup>20</sup> Raymond polices the legitimacy of trans people by labeling certain identities as deceptions. Raymond's form of radical feminism relies heavily on gender essentialism; she is determined to assert her cisgenderedness as legitimacy for her femininity, and excludes trans women from this narrative. She inserts her biological deterministic misandry into the definition of a 'real' woman; attempting to minimize the already narrow category of womanhood, saying, "rape, of course, is a masculinist violation of bodily integrity. All transsexuals rape women's bodies by reducing the real female form to an artifact, appropriating this body for themselves. However, the transsexually constructed lesbian-feminist violates women's sexuality and spirit, as well. Rape, although it is usually done by

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<sup>18</sup> Raymond, 134. Brownmiller, 14.

<sup>19</sup> Stryker and Whittle, 131.

<sup>20</sup> Stryker and Whittle, 131.

force, can also be accomplished by deception.”<sup>21</sup> Raymond’s decision to associate rape with transgenderism indicates a deep misunderstanding of transitioning in addition to reifying constructions of gender that establish patriarchal hierarchy.

Susan Brownmiller’s magnum opus, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*, depicts all of the ways in which rape permeates the political sphere. Her argument hinges on an assumption that social and biological factors create a proclivity for sexual violence in men that does not exist in women. She writes, “By anatomical fiat - the inescapable construction of their genital organs - the human male was a natural predator and the human female served as his natural prey.”<sup>22</sup> Brownmiller, similar to Solanas before her, depicts genitalia as being the driving force behind violence towards women and subsequent structures of power. She attributes the conceptualization to ownership and any other form of hierarchy to the formulation of the patriarchy.<sup>23</sup> Brownmiller goes on to depict cases of rape culture infiltrating different communities throughout history, periodically returning to the dangers of specifically male-assigned genitalia.

Solanas, Raymond, and Brownmiller all defend to some extent the diametric opposition of women and men. The defense of the gender binary in the context of radical feminism is proclaimed to be an attempt to defend womanhood. Authenticity is determined by a set of seemingly arbitrary factors that shift with cultural definitions of femininity. The sanctity of womanhood that is considered legitimate is paramount, and language plays a major role in delineating who is considered to be a “real” woman.

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<sup>21</sup> Raymond, 134.

<sup>22</sup> Brownmiller, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Brownmiller, 17.

## Modern T.E.R.F. Ideology

Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist (T.E.R.F.) is a neological initialism that describes an individual who weaponizes their ideology to exclude transgender individuals.<sup>24</sup> Unlike radical feminism, which is perhaps utilized as a self-proclaimed title, T.E.R.F. is not an explicit identity or clear ideology. T.E.R.F. is a contentious term, “used to describe a sub-group of self-identifying feminists who claim that transgender people are ‘not really’ the gender that they identify as. While not technically a pejorative term, those who use it are generally critical by the trans-exclusionary component of these individuals’ concept of feminism and womanhood.”<sup>25</sup> T.E.R.F. is widely criticized as an identifier due to the perceived pejorative nature of the phrase.<sup>26</sup>

The biological determinism that is perpetuated through radical feminism created a foundation upon which trans exclusionary politics could be built. The insular and restrictive nature of gender essentialism forced radical feminists to establish a clear and exclusive definition of womanhood, which in turn has led to exclusionary policies. Thinkers such as Solanas, Brownmiller, and Raymond all assisted in creating the narrative that certain anatomical and biological characteristics were inherently dangerous and pose a sexual threat to cisgender women. While the logic of radical feminists such as Raymond and Brownmiller suggests corporeal violence through physical assault, Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists extend this concern of violence to the sanctity of womanhood. Physical characteristics have been villainized by the modern T.E.R.F. under the guise of protecting the arbitrary and arduous category of “woman.” What has now come to be known as T.E.R.F. ideology is a relatively new

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<sup>24</sup> Pearce, 882.

<sup>25</sup> <http://neologisms.blogs.wm.edu/2016/04/18/terftwerf/>

<sup>26</sup> Allen et al, 4.

conceptualization in gender discourse. ‘T.E.R.F.’ as a term is typically credited to two bloggers in 2008 named lauredhel and tigtog on the site “Hoyden About Town”; a blog space created by tigtog in 2005.<sup>27</sup> When asked about the creation of this phrase, Viv Smythe, who runs the account tigtog, says that it “was not meant to be insulting. It was meant to be a deliberately technically neutral description of an activist grouping. I notice that since T.E.R.F. has gone out into the wild, many people seem to use trans-exclusive rather than trans-exclusionary or trans-excluding, and I think that leads to some exploitable ambiguity... trans-exclusionary is more specific that their exclusion of trans\* voices and bodies from being considered women/feminists is the point.”<sup>28</sup>

Since the creation of ‘T.E.R.F.’, Smythe’s intention to communicate a political ideology that she perceived to be detrimental to the wellbeing of trans people has been vastly misunderstood in feminist circles.<sup>29</sup> The modern T.E.R.F. is offended by this moniker; it is typically assigned to them rather than utilized as a self-identifier. While the concept of trans exclusion did not begin with Smythe’s coining of the phrase T.E.R.F., the series of blog posts that named this particular brand of transmisogyny marks a turning point in trans critical discourse.

## **Camp Trans**

Feminist movements focusing on sexual protections in the 1970’s produced an influx of gender separatist spaces divided by sexuality. The formation of these highly politicized gendered

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<sup>27</sup> <https://hoydenabouttown.com/about-hoyden/the-hoydens/tigtog/>

<sup>28</sup> Cristan Williams, The Trans Advocate. [https://www.transadvocate.com/terf-what-it-means-and-where-it-came-from\\_n\\_13066.htm](https://www.transadvocate.com/terf-what-it-means-and-where-it-came-from_n_13066.htm)

<sup>29</sup> Allen et al.

spaces reinforced narratives of biological determinism when it came time to delineate who exactly was allowed access. Formally, there are few explicitly gendered spaces; they are typically applied to a few select spaces, such as bathrooms, athletic spaces, and carceral institutions. However, the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (MWMF) is an example of a setting that was specifically focused on providing a women-only safe space. The idea that women-only spaces are inherently safer due to the absence of the pressures of the patriarchy is a byproduct of radical feminism, and the application of anatomical biologically deterministic ideals to trans women led MWMF to become inherently trans-exclusionary. The contentious debates of who was legitimized by this delineation of women-only resulted in the formation of Camp Trans in 1994; a group gathered on the outskirts of the festival to protest the restriction of trans women. The organizers of the event claimed to include trans women, but exclusively those that had already gone through the process of getting gender affirming surgeries. Riki Wilchins, a pre-operative trans woman involved in the creation of Camp Trans, wrote "In the first Camp Trans, the argument wasn't just between us and the festival telling us we weren't really women. It was also between the post-ops in camp telling the pre-ops they weren't real women!"<sup>30</sup> The polarization of post and pre operative women in Camp Trans comes from a deep compulsive heteronormativity and internalized transphobia perpetuated by both the organizers of MWMF and Camp Trans. The distinction between pre and post-op trans women reiterates the priorities of the radical feminists administering the Festival and parallels more recent developments in trans exclusionary ideology.

While radical feminists focus on the patriarchy and recognize it as a system of control, Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists are preemptively concerned with the imagined villain that

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<sup>30</sup> Koyama, 736.

is a trans woman. The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival was not the first or last event to deny trans individuals entrance, but it did produce some particularly aggressive perspectives on gender separatism. Lesbian separatist Robin Morgan, who was involved in the administrative processes for MWMF and spearheaded the movement to exclude specific trans women from the festival was once quoted saying “No. I will not call a male ‘she’: thirty-two years of suffering in the androcentric society, and of surviving, have earned me the name ‘woman’; one walk down the street by a male transvestite, five minutes of his being hassled (which he may enjoy), and then he dares, he dares to think he understands our pain? No. In our mothers’ names and in our own, we must not call him sister.”<sup>31</sup> Morgan gave this speech after the expulsion of trans artist Beth Elliot from the MWMF due to her assigned gender at birth and her decision to not surgically transition. The emphasis on medical intervention to transgender existence presents barriers to access that impact the physical and mental health of trans individuals, in addition to potentially threatening their safety. Legislative action occurring across America is actively exposing and ostracizing transgender individuals. Gendered spaces are becoming increasingly dangerous for trans individuals at the hands of conservative legislation, and have been becoming more restrictive specifically in the last five years.

### **Women’s Liberation Front**

The Women’s Liberation Front (WOLF) is a radical feminist group that can be looked to as an example of the ways in which that ideology can be manipulated to fit a trans-exclusionary agenda today.<sup>32</sup> WOLF self-identifies as a radical feminist organization, ardently defending a

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<sup>31</sup> Williams, 725.

<sup>32</sup> Author’s note: WOLF is an interesting case study for a radical feminist group due to their internal understanding of partisanship; they believe themselves to be ostracized by the left because

woman's right to exist as “ from the right, the patriarchy is systematically chipping away Roe v. Wade. On the left, the patriarchy is using the notion of “gender identity” to eliminate protections for women and girls at nearly every level of public life.”<sup>33</sup> WOLF upholds the tenets of radical feminism outlined above; they are very focused on biologically determined sex and consistently affirm the patriarchal hierarchy they want to dismantle.

Following President Biden's executive orders surrounding Title IX in February 2021, WOLF petitioned to the U.S. Department of Education to establish rules for Title IX and express their dissatisfaction with the outlined changes. This petition was intended to initiate guidelines to protect women and girls by stating that humans are anisogamous, asking for a statement defining gender identity, and “Title IX statutory and regulatory provisions that permit or require distinctions based on sex, such distinctions must be made based on sex rather than on characteristics or beliefs that are intertwined with sex (such as “gender identity”), such that single-sex spaces authorized by the Title IX statute and regulations remain valid. (Again, “sex” is understood, per Provision (1) above, to mean biological sex.)”<sup>34</sup> These provisions encourage biological determinism as a method of preserving the category of “women-born-women.” WOLF applies the foundational tenets of radical feminism to their work in this sense, as they prioritize anatomical and biological factors when considering what issues to advocate for or against. Recently, they have joined forces with conservative politicians and Christian nationalist groups in the pursuit of banning trans girls from participating in athletic events, using biological sex as the determining factor for access.<sup>35</sup>

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of their quest to defend womanhood as a static category.

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.womensliberationfront.org/news/faq-wolf-theory-of-change>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.womensliberationfront.org/news/wolf-petition-ed-dept-save-title-ix> Page 4 of Petition

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.womensliberationfront.org/news/tag/Sports>

## Mississippi Fairness Act

The Mississippi Fairness Act (SB 2536) is a bill that requires public schools, institutions, and members of upper division athletic associations to divide their sports team by gender assigned at birth, with the liberty to insist upon documentation or medical inspection at the institution's discretion.<sup>36</sup> The development of this bill, along with the dozens of others that share the same purpose, are explicitly trans exclusionary. Mississippi SB 2536 reads as such:

“An act to create the "Mississippi Fairness Act"; to require any public school, public institution of higher learning or institution of higher learning that is a member of the NCAA, NAIA or NJCCA to designate its athletic teams or sports according to biological sex; to provide protection for any school or institution of higher education that maintains separate athletic teams or sport for students of the female sex; to create private causes of action; and for related purposes.”<sup>37</sup>

This bill was supported by conservative radical feminists such as WOLF to further isolate and alienate transgender youth, and the subsequent sections of the bill detail the economic and physiological advantage that men have that necessitates such legislation. Using sex-centered language aligns with the ideology that is perpetuated by TERFS; there is no need to utilize gender-inclusive language as that is syntactically counterproductive to the mission of radical feminism. The sports bills WOLF has been questioned generally about their collaborative efforts with conservative politicians, to which they have responded, “Other groups on the left, including other women's organizations, simply refuse to work with us or our members (even on issues on

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<sup>36</sup> Mississippi Senate Bill 2536

<sup>37</sup> SB 2536



which we agree) when they realize we support sex-based rights and protections for women.”<sup>38</sup>

The emphasis on sex-based rights is also the emphasis of anatomy-based rights, and the prioritization of biological determinism in sports teams devalues the athletic, social, and academic prowess of transgender students. WOLF in particular has been vocal about their active support for sex-divided athletic teams, making statements in support of the proposed bills in Louisiana, Connecticut, New Mexico, and other jurisdictions.<sup>39</sup>

The Mississippi Fairness Act, much like the previously mentioned bills supported by WOLF, is inherently and explicitly transmisogynist. Section 3.3 of the bill describes the course of action if there is dispute over an individual’s assigned gender, saying that if disputed, “a student may establish his or her sex by presenting a signed physician's statement which shall indicate the student's sex based solely upon: (a) The student's internal and external reproductive anatomy; (b) The student's normal endogenously produced levels of testosterone; and (c) An analysis of the student's genetic makeup.”<sup>40</sup> The state utilizes explicitly sex-centered terms in the structure of this bill, which is indicative of an ideological pattern that evolved from radical feminism surrounding biological determinism.

The Mississippi Fairness Act, along with the plethora of legislation that came out in the past year relating to protections in sports for cisgender women and girls reinforces the values of radical feminism by affirming the significance of biological and anatomical markers. Prioritizing assigned gender diminishes the capacity of trans youth to feel safe and valued in extracurricular contexts. The debate over what exactly makes an individual a woman, and furthermore how they will be legitimized is largely arbitrary and malleable so as to most acutely discourage claims of

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<sup>38</sup> <https://www.womensliberationfront.org/news/faq-wolf-work-with-conservatives>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.womensliberationfront.org/news/tag/Sports>

<sup>40</sup> SB 2356

gender variance. The Mississippi Fairness Act reflects the tenets of radical feminism. By advocating for sex separatism in sports, the MS Fairness Act reiterates the binary understanding that anatomical differences cause hierarchical power imbalances.

## **Conclusion**

Radical feminism is an inadequate framework for gender analysis as it fails to take into account experiences that fall outside of the established gender binary. The development of radical feminist theory from which trans-exclusionary politics are derived implicated experimentation in gender presentation as negative and potentially dangerous. The primary tenet of misandrist radical feminist ideology being hierarchical power at the hands of the patriarchy's anatomical and biological advantage does not consider non-binary experiences or the ways in which intersectional identities impact power and oppression.

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy establishes that the harm done by sexism and misogyny is in no way limited in scope to women, and every person is affected by the gendered hierarchy of power. Moving forward, taking a closer look at how an intersectional approach to gender critical studies might be a more appropriate framework to understanding how different gender identities experience oppression. I am interested in the subtleties of trans-exclusion, especially the plethora of ways organizations and institutions prevent inclusion of trans individuals. An intersectional approach to legislation would involve a malleable approach to defining gender. The codification of biological sex through Title IX authorized the development of binary approaches to athletic and medical, which in turn present barriers to entrance for non-binary and transgender individuals. A trans-inclusive approach to feminism would involve

dismantling the existing gender binary and severing political connections between anatomy and identity.

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