

the health care agenda and the displacement of queers in gentrifying cities as our lives become even more global and influenced by technology.

SOME VIEW LESBIAN IDENTITY AS EXCLUSIONARY AND NON-INTERSECTIONAL. WHAT IS YOUR VIEW?

I can understand why a millennial queer activist would critically question why a lesbian would exclude a trans or intersex individual under the gender identity umbrella of women. How can a lesbian not feel a deep, natural solidarity and alliance with another who is pushing at the narrow confines of gender, of the social roles ascribed to the binary notions of male and female? It's a really legitimate question. It's also such a profound irony, since it's old-school lesbians who fought to define what we all know is a social construction of the notion of the feminine and masculine. It's almost odd to find lesbians, who profoundly embrace their sexuality, to grasp biological essentialism now to frame that identity and limit what is a woman. The rejection of others who self-identify as women and want to be in the company of women is fundamentally anti-feminist to me. You'd also think lesbians, like old school feminists, would embrace anyone who rejects the patriarchy and male privilege, which many transwomen do as they claim their

inner woman or sense of femininity or whatever they associate with those labels. ... Some of the lesbians I know who grappled with embracing transwomen as 100 percent women were women who are incredibly sensitized to male violence, and specifically male sexual violence. They associate a penis with rape, a la Andrea Dworkin who really made that theoretical argument. There are a lot of women and lesbians who are survivors of sexual violence, and all women suffer from this in a general sense in every society. But to equate a transwoman with a would-be rapist, which I feel some do, deep down, is to reveal the deepest place of these received physical fears of assault that women have for men in general. That shit has got to go. Yes men rape, and rape is the embodiment of ultimate male power. But lesbians who feel this totally miss the complex view of the penis that trans individuals may have, just as they fail to understand why breasts are so oppressive to a coming-out transman. Again, there's this very dangerous conflation and reductivist thinking and at the core of this response is fear. The fear of rape by a man is legitimate. It's also true that transwomen are major victims and survivors of male rape, and they often feel negative and complex feelings about their sexual parts. As a feminist, as a lesbian-in-soli-

darity with my trans sisters and brothers, I wish, like many do, that we can get to the point in our societies where we can just simply love and celebrate our bodies. That is the oldest women's and feminist issue. Lesbians should claim it in their solidarity with other-gender naming and framing folks.

WHAT LIGHT DOES YOUR BOOK SHED ON TODAY'S POLITICAL SITUATION?

I think many of the issues and battles we encountered in the '90s are resurfacing now, with Trump, with the resurgence of a populist far right in Europe and globally, with the front-line challenges of immigration and religious fundamentalism embodied by ISIS, and here in the U.S., by the evangelical extreme right. We learned a lot in the '90s; we won a lot of fights. We have tools and we have, collectively, the memory of how we fought. I'm using my book tour to host conversations with other activists and authors about that decade and its lessons for us, both personally and as participants in overlapping social movements. I'm also inviting younger queers to be in this conversation, to compare and share, so I get to learn from younger activists and artists now too, and see what remains of what I consider a living history and legacy of the '90s. (thepoxlover.com) ■

