

Bookhousegal @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 1 hour ago · 0 replies · 0 points

The funny thing *there* is that a lot of the 'Womyn born womyn' set are actually being quite reactionary about this sort of thing *precisely because* so many non-separatist Pagan... and feminist... groups actually don't follow their definitions of 'femininity.'

I came of age as both right during that 'generation gap' between the model of the 'old guard' feminists still used as caricatures by the Right, who could abide neither the very fuzzy line between 'sexless' 'Stone Butch' and 'FtM' nor the fact that a lot of the next wave of gals were wearing *platforms that'd put Dee-Lite to shame.*

In that time, the old guard were doing a lot of histrionics about insisting women are strong and independent but for some reason therefore needed to be protected from shoes with red paint, and the only non-corporate record stores in town vandalized. Forget that it was *over* in a year or two, but the Right *still* claims that caricature of feminism (and often associated women's spirituality,) is still operative, and some 'feminists' still act as though acting like there's some 'Transsexual Empire' is helping them somehow.

We're Pagans. No one said we had to play by someone else's expectations.

They focused a lot of the frustration

Elfwreck @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 1 hour ago · 0 replies · 0 points

Pantheacon is not "grown ups-only." Children are allowed to attend. There's just little for them to do, and so they wind up being bored and sometimes troublesome. Their parents often feel excluded from a community founded around--heh--many fertility religions, that don't seem to want to acknowledge the results of that fertility.

Several rituals and workshops are adults-only, which seems appropriate. Child- and parent-friendly programming, however, is lacking, even though parents and children are a substantial portion of the Pagan communities P'con was created for.

Elfwreck @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 2 hours ago · 0 replies · 0 points

I don't think that all limitation in ritual attendees is discrimination. I'd like Pantheacon to continue to offer women-only events, and to allow men-only events, genderqueer-only events, adults-only events (if there's a "nondiscrimination" policy, does that mean the Pomba becomes open to everyone? Or will it be "sex and race discrimination not allowed, but ageism is fine?"), parent-only events, and various other rituals and workshops that foster intimacy and connection among people who share an identity. I like having safe-space rituals & workshops.

I'd just like them to be clearly labeled, and the organizer(s) can deal with flak if their shared-identity-focused event is perceived as discriminatory or bigoted. If they mean cis women only, just say so on the description. If they mean people with vaginas, say that. If they only want post-puberty people, say that. And so on.

Bookhousegal @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 2 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

Cause I think it's what we do, anyway, however much we argue about it. Transwomen are women, not from saying so, but from being so. Transguys are... Definitely guys, again, not by insistence. Everyone in varying degrees of 'in between or other' are definitely *that.*

Each variation to all these has not just existence, but *absosmurfly important* magical and spiritual realities. Which I think wait for or answer to no politics, for, against, or indifferent. It's part of the *meaning of our difference and diversity.* It should neither be scorned nor dismissed: the point of both ritual and community is to *connect with what is.* Not enforce politics. Of either sort.

If one personally doesn't belong in a particular specialized ritual space, one shouldn't have to *say* why or why not, everyone should *know* why or why not, and that shouldn't be about this kind of vitriol. And it sure shouldn't shove

anyone 'out in the cold.'

It's not like when Lady made me, she wasn't like, 'Hrm, got some extra sugar and spice and puppy dog tails around, you looking for something to do?' ;)

You know. Nothing I couldn't push around a little. ;)

So, you know here we are. We're *going* to work this out, ready or not.

And if I know this Goddess we all hold dear, it won't be quite what we expect, so let's start from what's simple.

I suggest some exercise in Namaste, *then* talk about who booked the reception hall. :)

Bookhousegal @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 2 hours ago · 1 reply · +1 points

All certainly true. Though I'm not sure just what about the 'wording,' there. I do think *some* mysteries are specific to any given sort of person... This doesn't mean *all* are, and I certainly wasn't meaning to 'word' it so, if by 'wording' you mean I was proclaiming some absolute to apply to all situations.

The general point of my post, I think, is about how we negotiate 'boundaries' and 'definitions,' (The words actually mean the same thing, etymologically, really, and that's not by accident, though not always for the better: a 'definition' is considered to be an 'absolute' and a 'boundary' something to be negotiated, or that can be 'violated.'

I do think trans women have some fairly unique experiences, and some of them *do* differ from those of (most) ciswomen in some ways. Ideally, I'd think, that fact wouldn't mean the Pagan community had to try and obliterate all recognition of the differences, just to recognize transwomen as women.

In some ways there are certainly a lot of double-standards out there: those considered ciswomen who were never fertile are hardly screened out at 'women-born-women' rituals on premise of 'blood mysteries,' but at the same time, maybe by some of the logic, they should.

Maybe that should be possible without meaning 'You're not a woman' any more than being trans, or whatever, should. Maybe there should be more for everyone, even, instead of fighting over stuff like this.

'Treated differently by category' is something we generally don't like. Honoring what's actually going on in our lives, bodies, identities, and sexualities, *is.*

This shouldn't mean, 'You can't have your religion/practices.' and it shouldn't mean, 'You have to go off and found your *own* religion, freaks,' ...it should mean we have a diverse community that is secure enough in all of us not to make *everything* a battle over defining each other as people.

If someone thinks their 'religion' depends on denying the identity and experience of another, then, perhaps they need to re-examine that, but on the other hand, perhaps that doesn't mean that everything's a fight over *everyone's* identity.

And maybe that's the best way forward, really.

No, 'third-sexing' someone against their will just to 'defend the traditional Moon-lodge' or some such is uncool, but maybe conflict about that is only something that causes more defensive gender-policing.

One also sometimes sees people who are gay and cis kind of claiming to be the all of 'third gender' stuff and kind of appropriate what sure looks like a heritage of ancient *trans* people to me.... and no wonder transsexuals feel pretty squeezed out when some kind of definition-identity-boundary-conflict comes up.

I think diversity and pluralism in our community are really that which will resolve these issues, over time, between people, and not on a model of 'Agree/conform/ignore all variations, or go schism.'

What I want to see there is a community that accepts all manner of diversity of people and practices, and leaves *no* one behind cause of who they are or what their body's like or was like.

In many ways, this goes for trads, too. If people want to do something 'specific,' they should neither be claiming they're 'really the only right definition,' nor *have to.*

Kenaz Filan @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 2 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

And requiring a group have open boundaries that are not part of its self-definition is a matter of limiting the free exercise of religion by that group

Conventions regularly limit the free exercise of religions by attendees. I have participated in Free Spirit Gathering rituals for years as a Vodou initiate. Let us suppose I proposed a ritual which culminated with me slitting the throat of several goats. This would be completely legitimate within the framework of a Vodou ceremony, but I doubt very much that FSA (or Camp Ramblewood administration) would give me a green light. That does not mean that they are bigots. On the contrary, they have been more than supportive of Vodou ceremonies and workshops. But they have valid and legitimate concerns about the ramifications of animal sacrifice: they understand it might open them up to legal liability, and would certainly cause a great deal of ill will and social drama. And so, in the interest of the event, my rights to practice one of the most important and holy sacrifices of my religion are curtailed.

(Let me hasten to add that I have never proposed an animal sacrifice at a Pagan event, nor would I do so. I'd rather expose attendees to my beliefs in a way which promotes mutual understanding and interest. I do not see where any interests would benefit from stirring up that particular hornet's nest, my own included).

Would it be fair to ask that Dianics attending Pantheacon not exclude transwomen **from rituals and workshops which are part of the official Pantheacon roster**? This would not stop them from having private rituals and workshops in their own space, like the OSOGD and many other groups do. Nor would it stop them from setting their own requirements for entry to those events.

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

I didn't say I thought it was a mistake. I asked another why they believed that nature made mistakes, because it appears to me that they do.

A transgendered "female" is functionally quite different from a "cis" woman. The transgendered female does not command the power of life from the womb that a cis woman can or may. That's a big functional difference. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. I do not believe that anyone can just choose their sex. I believe that people can choose to live as a certain sex, or mimic a certain sex, and even feel that they are a certain sex, but that's about it.

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

And if you have questions for Mother Nature, ask her, not me.

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

You are misinterpreting me. Your questions are fine questions, but they assume that to be "man" or "woman" is simply to evidence a particular genital configuration, have a certain brain chemistry spread, or some combination of such factors. I don't think that male or female is reducible to just these things. All the same, I don't think it can be separated from them, either.

Cathryn Bauer @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 1 reply · +1 points

Kenaz, thank you for stating my last point a lot more clearly than I did. The bottom line for me is that if there's discrimination, it ceases to be an open event. Pantheacon is not the place for exclusionary rituals.

I do have to concede that small, private groups have that right. But I don't have to like it and won't be there. And I cannot accept that those who promote discrimination in any form have anything to teach me.

Kenaz Filan @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +8 points

I see two issues here. One is the right of CAYA and other Dianics to hold ceremonies which are only open to "women born women" and which exclude Transwomen. I uphold without reservation their right to association, even if I disagree with their political stance and their justifications. I agree that there are reasons why people might want to have a "safe space" -- be it People of Color Space, Womynspace, Queerspace, or even Christian Conservative Space.

I do question whether it is appropriate to hold an exclusionary ritual at an open event like Pantheacon. There are more than a few Heathen groups who believe that the European Gods should only be worshipped by Europeans and their descendants. If I were to hold a Rite to Odin and deny admittance to those who did not look European enough, I doubt that many people would defend my choice. Nor do I suspect they would be sympathetic to my claims that People of Color have a different life/family experience and different socialization than those who look European, or to my claims that you were discriminating against me and my culture by forcing me to open my rituals to non-Europeans.

Cathryn Bauer @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · 0 points

I can't join in that call when it comes to large gatherings such as Pantheacon that purport to embrace a variety of traditions.

Cat C B @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

I wish more people understood the biology here. There are actually a lot more choices than XX and XY out there in nature, and neither XX nor XY tells the whole story even of the biological development of gender.

cigfran @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

And this is why I tend to keep my distance, not only from women-born-women-defined spaces (useful arguments aside, I actually don't go where I am not welcome, and do not stand outside waving fists about it), but from most trans spaces. I dislike the idea of definition-by-oppression. I am not the product of what people hold against me, but of my own agency.

Elfweck @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

Description of the event, from the [program guide](#):

The Rite of Lilith

Amazon Priestess Tribe; Ritual - Monitored

Dark Queen, known to all as the One Who Would Not Be Conquered. Matron Goddess of fierce women who know their power. Sacred whore of antiquity, whose lust purifies and cleanses. Join the Amazon Priestess Tribe for an ecstatic, undulating, life-affirming ritual in honor of Lilith. This ritual will be skyclad to the degree you are comfortable, so please come prepared with a light wrap or blanket as needed.

Compare to a different ritual in the program book:

The Sacred Body of Woman

Z Budapest; Monitored

Ritual & Self-Blessing (women-only and has brief nudity) This briefly skyclad rite honors the body of each and every woman present, the beauty and grace of the feminine form in all of her infinite variety. Allow yourself to be embraced by the glorious love of your sisters, with voices raised in sacred song in this central ritual of the Dianic Tradition. This ritual is one of the most beautiful and most touching rituals within the Dianic Tradition, and should not be missed.

The Rite of Lilith ritual doesn't even indicate that men aren't welcome, much less that only some women will be allowed to participate.

[Cat C B @ The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 3 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

Right. And I would not use surgery or hormone treatments as a defining characteristic for just that reason.

What would I use? Well, I myself am not much drawn to women's mystery rituals. But I have been a gatekeeper on occasion in the world of feminist therapy, and I've decided on a case-by-case basis, according to the needs of group participants... I've tended toward inclusivity myself, and at least once been frustrated at being overruled by the administration of the program I was contributing to.

What I object to in this thread, however, is the way many of us are caricaturing those we disagree with, and simplifying the issues that may be relevant. Gender, as a concept that is at once socially and biologically constructed, is actually anything but simple, and at times, neither are the considerations around it for those of us with embodied spirituality.

[Cat C B @ The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 4 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

There are other ways to frame the issue than a "quick factor." I wish that were more commonly acknowledged.

[Cat C B @ The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 4 hours ago · 1 reply · +1 points

Don't forget that a lived experience in a female body with things like institutionalized discrimination against women might also be a useful part of a definition of what is essential to being a woman--at least in our culture and at this time. Trans women very probably lack that, which may be more significant in the eyes of some than the physical aspects of life in a female body.

And though they may well bring with them a different narrative, of surviving discrimination based on their trans identity, that may or may not be enough in common with a group to make the entry reasonable to other women present. Just as experiences of discrimination based on being female or being Pagan may not be sufficient to gain me entry into a group that is exploring commonalities derived from a shared history of racial discrimination.

For myself, I prefer gender-inclusive groups rather than women-only groups however defined. But I do not like to see one side of this discussion given such short shrift. The least we can do is be honest about what is at stake on all sides, no matter who we may happen to agree with, or what form of ritual we may prefer.

[Elfweck @ The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 4 hours ago · 3 replies · +2 points

Recent research shows that brain chemistry does indeed have a "male gender" and "female gender," set during gestation for reasons not yet understood, and that [brain gender](#) may not match the outward genitalia. Nature makes people without genitalia, with two sets of genitalia, with various shapes and sizes of genitalia, with genitalia that doesn't match the expected result from the chromosomes ([AIS](#))--why wouldn't it make people with genitalia that doesn't match their brain chemistry?

[Cat C B @ The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 4 hours ago · 1 reply · +2 points

Does being a cissexual feminist who has participated in Dianic rites give you authority to speak of the legitimate boundaries of Dianic Craft for all of its branches and all of its groups? I don't follow your logic, I'm afraid.

And requiring a group have open boundaries that are not part of its self-definition *is* a matter of limiting the free exercise of religion by that group, whether it is for a good reason--presuming that we are able to judge that for another group--or not. There is, at least, a conflict of important values in question, and shouting that those who

point this out are bigots or "unfeminist" does not change that, whether their definition of what makes someone a woman is a logical or agreeable one to you or not.

Eran Rathan @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 4 hours ago · 2 replies · +1 points
Why do you consider it a mistake, Robin?

As you yourself said, it is powerful magic that is in that sort of shape-shifting. Having several friends who are transgendered in various forms, including several whom are functionally no different than any other cis-person (such ridiculous terminology!), the only thing I see that the Dianics have against trans women is their own squick factor, which is the Dianics' issue, not the trans person.

Apuleius @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 4 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points
"I support Sarah Thompson's call for Pantheaon to be safe space for all and to adopt a nondiscrimination policy."

But what about Sarah Thompson's call to "support the Will of all witches and magicians to choose with whom they practice their Art"?

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 4 hours ago · 7 replies · +1 points
Why would nature create a woman with a man's body? I'm not suggesting anything too complicated here. I'm simply seeing an organic connection between form and spirit. Do you believe I am wrong to do so? Do you believe that nature makes mistakes of this magnitude, to create women with men's bodies, or men with women's?

Cathryn Bauer @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 5 hours ago · 0 replies · 0 points
Terra, transgender people are and always will be a part of the world for me. Please see my response below. If you are not welcome with open arms, I won't be there, either.

Rhoanna @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 5 hours ago · 8 replies · 0 points
Is there some reason your uncreatable "man-ness" or "woman-ness" can only be made by Nature for bodies that society assigns as male or female at birth? Could not a trans woman be such because she was born with that "woman-ness", despite being born with a 'male' body? Likewise for intersex people, whose bodies don't match what society considers 'male' or 'female' (in various different ways, depending on the individual or condition), what does Nature assign to them, in your framework?

Cathryn Bauer @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 5 hours ago · 1 reply · +2 points
I support Sarah Thompson's call for Pantheaon to be safe space for all and to adopt a nondiscrimination policy. I am disappointed in the lack of compassion shown by the Dianic leadership toward transgendered people. I have difficulty with a spirituality that discriminates in this way, and I cannot share in it at any level. I cannot believe that anyone would choose to endure that level of medical treatment unless they were in tremendous psychic pain over the disconnect between their spirit, mind, and body. I think transgender individuals have made a brave and difficult journey. I would in fact like to see this honored, but I know that's a long time coming. Dianic practice and belief in any form will not be an option for me unless and until this policy changes.

As to children at cons, I am fundamentally sympathetic to Josephine who would like to see an adults-only event. I often feel the same way, and I have had the experience of out-of-control children at rituals. So while I'm not crazy about having people under the age of 14 there, well, they're there, they're young, and we need to get used to it. Having a particular track or accommodation for them is, however, more of an undertaking than many realize. How will we screen the adults who take charge of young people's space, address legalities, involve parents? This is a huge undertaking, but one which must be done if only to minimize disruption for adult attendees.

Eran Rathan @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)7 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points
Califried wrote:

All reports that I've heard indicate that this exclusion was due to nudity in the ritual, which means that it had nothing to do with blood mysteries and everything to do with lack of comfort with trans bodies.

Sounds like it was the organizer's personal issues more than anything else.

Apuleius @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)8 hours ago · 0 replies · +3 points

I note that Sarah Thompspon, author of "[An open letter to all pagans, and particularly the Pantheacon organizers](#)" (on the subject of "[Addressing Dianic Exclusion of Transgendered Women](#)"), doesn't capitalize Pagan. What's up with that?

Cigfran @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)8 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

Oh come, now. There is a world of difference between "pillory" and robust critique.

No one has questioned the Dianics' "right" to do anything. What has been questioned is how their exercise of their boundaries summarily re-defines the bodies and experiences of other people, and how consistent that is with various sets of values.

Trans people have to justify their epistemology at nearly every turn of their lives, even from people they would under any other circumstance consider natural allies. Surely the "poor Amazons" (what a strange oxymoron) can withstand a little probing.

harmonyfb @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)9 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

Please don't tar Wiccans with that brush. I know several covens with trans members (including one whose high priestess is a trans woman). Dianics have their own issues; please don't assume that they speak for any other group (I'm quite sure they don't intend to speak for anyone but themselves, in any case).

catkisser @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)10 hours ago · 0 replies · +4 points

Ok, I am going to address this about Cybele. Yes, many of the priestesses of Cybele were transsexual women, women who corrected their bodies to the maximum amount possible (and it was a lot more than most realize) that much is true, but what Nestis is ignoring or unaware of, EVERY Mother Goddess tradition of the ancient world also had transsexual priestesses, every single one. Cybele was associated with transsexual priestesses because of the rants of second century Christian apologists and it was the primary Mother Goddess tradition in Rome. Ignored is that most of the prominent matrons of Rome were also Cybeline priestesses and proud enough of that to display it on their memorial markers.

I am the founder of the Cybeline revival, the Maetrem of Cybele. We have been called a trans religion which has harmed us in the beginning because we are not. We are open to all sexual orientations and gender identities. Our only restriction is regarding joining our priestesshood, that requires a female body. Personally, I was born a hermaphrodite, a true one (tetragametic chimera). That said, I have no problem with Dianic groups setting the parameters of who takes part in their rituals because, believe me, this "trans" issue is anything but clear cut in either direction. For the record, our priestesshood has more non-trans women than women born transsexed and is not the goal of our theological practice to be a priestess, a position of lifelong commitment to charitable works, spiritual healing and awakening the Goddess part in others. If the Dianic groups view their membership the same as we do our priestesshood, it is a sisterhood that requires the other sisters to fully embrace new priestesses. Demanding they change that is unreasonable and bigoted by itself. It is not "transphobic".

Even being trans affirming we have had our share of trans drama directed at us, some quite destructive in nature. Personally, I have never understood how someone randomly questioning my womanhood actually had any affect on it at all. Lot's of my butch lesbian friends have had the same happen to them without internal damage to their own womanhood.

Estará @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 13 hours ago · 1 reply · +4 points

This is what has repeatedly frustrated me about the whole conversation (which I've been having multiple times across the Web). I'm NOT a Dianic myself, but it seems obvious to me that each group has the right to define itself. (And yes, I WOULD extend that to the Catholic stance on gays and women even though I am a bi woman - if it were not the case that they had such a history of leveraging their religious power over their own into political power over everyone else.) The fact is that if the poor Amazon Tribe, like all the women-only groups that have gone unremarked through Pantheacon in the years I've attended, had only thought to make the exclusion explicit in their description, nobody would have batted an eye - and yet now they're being pilloried. Which is doubly sad, since their mother group is actually open to all genders and sexualities and an ally to other queer groups at Pantheacon.

josephine @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 14 hours ago · 1 reply · +5 points

Is having one grown ups-only event really too much to ask?? There are so few "unrestricted/uncensored" adults-only events left in the world (especially those NOT of a purely sexual nature like Hedonism etc.) I feel it's crucial we maintain Con as is, for balance if nothing else.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 14 hours ago · 2 replies · +5 points

The nice thing about Paganism last time I checked is that our traditions did not have to tailor themselves to the most generalized, abstract concepts of the human condition to have spiritual validity.

I've said this before but all paths exclude somebody. Some do it honestly, many do it covertly, and most do it without even being self-aware of the fact. Instead they rest on their laurels thinking they're universal and that if only everybody else saw the light...

I think Dianics continually are brought to task for exclusivity simple because it's easy for people to do so. We're totally open and honest about our limited appeal, instead of pretending that everyone has a place in our tradition when our ritual practices do not support it.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 15 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

And neither am I!

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 15 hours ago · 0 replies · +4 points

I can only speak for myself, but I want to assure you that I do not want to hurt anybody when I defend my religion. I may have found my spiritual home as a Dianic, but I know that it isn't for everyone, and that it was never meant to be.

I hate it that trans women are being hurt by all the rhetoric flying around on this issue. I hope we can find better, less hurtful words to express ourselves about this in the future. That's the thing about mysteries though, that "they could never understand" feeling you mention that is beyond words. That's why mysteries aren't secrets, and all that. All the talking about them in the world can't reveal them.

I just want to thank you for being so understanding, and I wish you all the best in your own spiritual journey. :)

Caroline Farrow @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

Win

Terra Dusold @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 1 reply · +3 points

I can understand. I am part of a non-spiritual trans group. When we meet it can be a bit awkward when a cis person is sharing the room with us. It is just a feeling of "they could never understand". These must be the trans mysteries we keep between us.

I know that Dianic and even Wicca are not right for me. I have no ill-will towards either, I am just looking for something that focuses above my waist. I have to think about gender roles, rules, and all that jazz all day long. I don't want to deal with all of that when I am in my sacred space.

I think it is unfortunate that the rhetoric to defend a Dianic path seems to cut down trans folks. I can't imagine that is the intent. A failure of language perhaps. Inclusive or not, I wish the best to anyone on a spiritual path.

Caroline Farrow @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

Yes! This!

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 0 replies · 0 points

Yikes! I apologize for all the repetition! >_<

There was a delay and I thought my posts hadn't worked.

Caroline Farrow @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 3 replies · +3 points

Women who are born women sometimes have no blood, even no womb, and therefore have no blood mysteries to speak of. Are they then not able to be Dianic? I think this is extremely shaky and spurious logic used to justify the bigotry that Lillitu pointed out. If this is feminism of any wave, you can keep it. Apparently Dianic Witchcraft no longer speaks to any reasonable 21st century Pagans.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 1 reply · +1 points

I'm sick of Pagans saying our traditions are "embodied" only to turn around and say that those traditions whose mysteries center around particular embodiments are wrong to do so.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

I'm sick of hearing Pagans claim that our traditions are embodied spiritualities, and then turn around and say that the traditions that center themselves around the mysteries of particular embodiments are wrong to do so.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 16 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

If you will look at my other posts I've never denied that trans women are women. I have however differentiated trans women from cis women, and claimed that their experiences of womanhood are different, and that is the crux of the issue here, obviously.

I used "women-identified" in that sentence because I do not know if the Minoan Brotherhood is open to trans men or not.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 17 hours ago · 2 replies · +3 points

sigh I'm sick of hearing Pagans claiming that our religions are "of the body" and then turning around and saying that those of us practicing intensely body-centered traditions are wrong for doing it.

Like it or not, Dianic tradition is centered around the blood mysteries, it doesn't speak to the experiences of trans women, or all cis women. But there is nothing wrong with that!

I am happy to, and do, circle with trans women and trans men and cis men when I'm participating in the ritual of another tradition. But that is not what Dianic tradition is about. It's not about ghetto-izing anybody, but it's not about the blood mysteries anymore if trans women are included, and that is effectively saying that our religion should not exist at all for the women it does serve, and I think that is wrong.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 17 hours ago · 4 replies · +3 points

If you will kindly look at my other posts in this thread you will see that I do call trans women, women. I only used "women-identified" in regard to the Minoan Brotherhood because I do not know their stance on including trans men in the tradition. I do know that women-identified persons are not included.

I am not setting parameters on what it means to be a woman. I do not know if "women-born women" is the best wording the Dianic trad could be using, but it is meant by many Dianics to indicate that yes, trans women exist and that they are women, but that Dianic mysteries and magic are not applicable to them.

When I say blood mysteries I speak also of womb-space. The blood mysteries are not just about physical bleeding, the cessation of bloods is equally magical. And again, Dianic tradition while inclusive of all cis women, does not necessarily speak to all of them. That doesn't invalidate it's place for the women it does speak to.

Trans women define their womanhood by their own set of characteristics. Cis women have just as much right to define their own womanhood.

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 1 reply · +4 points

Well, if the ritual was not advertised as cis women only, that definitely was a serious oversight.

It is not about saying that someone is not "woman enough" it is about saying "We work magic from our womb-space". This is the reality of how we work our magic. I do not understand how it is appropriate to claim that this is not a meaningful and authentic experience (it is obviously hugely meaningful and authentic to me and many other cis women), simply because it is not a meaningful or authentic experience for a trans woman, or even all cis women.

I think the Dianic elders who deny the womanhood of trans women do so because they bristle the way I do when you tell me that the blood mysteries are not meaningful or authentic, when I feel that they are. Why is a trans woman allowed to define the parameters of her womanhood around her chosen characteristics, but a cis woman not allowed to define her womanhood around her blood and womb-space?

I strongly believe that trans women should not have the authenticity of her experiences denied. But frankly, I expect the authenticity of my own experience to be honored in the same fashion.

Be well yourself. :)

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 9 replies · +3 points

Lillitu- don't think I don't hear you or understand what you are saying. I can see how this looks. But I'm not (obviously) Dianic, nor even that interested in them. Their politics and rules belong to them, completely. My outside opinion means nothing, but since you asked, let me state what I feel. I do feel like there is some sort of "woman-ness" that is natural, un-creatable, and irreducible. When I call it "uncreatable", I mean it has to be made by Nature; a surgery, a regimen of hormones, and unique mental and social conditioning cannot make it.

That's just what I feel. I feel the same way about the essence of masculinity. I know that there are some people out there who straddle the boundaries between male and female, or even cross them in many, many ways- except, in my way of thinking, there is a final boundary that cannot be "crossed". That final boundary may be, all things considered, invisible or even very small, but it is, to me, "the difference that makes a difference."

I know that this is just setting me up for scornful attacks from the transgender community, but they are just as entitled to their opinions as I am. I consider "transgender" people to be totally natural and normal people, living out a fate specific to them, and not one that I think (if they are legitimate transgenders) that they chose. Fate is not chosen, ever.

But they are crossing the boundaries of gender- and this is important- not the boundaries of manhood and womanhood, which I believe is reserved to another level, a deeper, more fateful level. It may be that, such that things are, a man can assume a woman's role, and even mimic the shape of her body. He may live a woman's life in all appearances, and even emotionally experience himself as a woman. He can lose any and all language referents to himself as male, and be called "she" and "her" and that's that. This is a powerful shamanic kind of "shape-shifting", and I must say, I respect that about it. Everything I've said above about a man can apply to a woman assuming a man's role and life.

But it doesn't alter what I've said about the final boundary that, being inscribed by Fate, cannot be truly crossed.

Now, back to your Dianics- I don't know them well enough to know what their rationale may be versus transgenders. From the surface, it does seem obvious why you consider them to be discriminatory. Of course, as others have pointed out, the power and privilege of *being discriminatory* belongs to them, as the creators and promulgators of a tradition that never claimed to be universal, and which has the right to reserve itself to whom it will, however unfair that seems.

I'm not trying to sound like a hard ass here; I just don't have any other thoughts or feelings on this, except a general sense of wanting you and everyone to feel as though they've been fairly treated, which you clearly don't feel. I think transgenders need to stop looking to others- like the Dianics- for empowerment, and embrace their own uniqueness.

Lillitu Shahar Kunning @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

Thank you! I enjoyed reading your account. I wrote my own, as a fellow priestess of Lilith and attendee of P'Con here:<http://parentingbythelightofthemoon.blogspot.com/...>

Lillitu Shahar Kunning @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 6 replies · +4 points

I am so sick of hearing trans exclusionists saying "form your own religion" or "start your own music festival" BAH!

Lillitu Shahar Kunning @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 10 replies · +2 points

Robin- riddle me this: They consider it essential, yet are willing to allow any woman who do not bleed in the circle- as long as they are not trans women. When confronted with exceptions, every Dianic I have ever met is willing to make them based on socialization or biology- except in the case of trans women.

Lillitu Shahar Kunning @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 2 replies · +1 points

Yes! Thank you! No one is trying to limit Dianics practicing their religion. What the attendees at the meeting I attended do want is to include ALL women in the rituals, period.

I personally do not think that it means any substantial changes to the religion allowing trans women entrance, I say this as a cissexual feminist who has participated in Dianic rites.

Lillitu Shahar Kunning @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 6 replies · +4 points

Because Dianic witches are not to be put in the position of what makes a woman and what does not. It is UNFEMINIST to patrol the borders of woman and make decisions for others based on their biology or life experience. Feminists have fucked up this issue before- excluding lesbians and women of color. So we do make mistakes, sister. As feminists, we are making a huge mistake here, too.

I see that you are using the term "woman identified persons" rather than just "women" that speaks volumes to me. Dianic witches tend not to see trans women as women at all- and that is the heart of this matter. I urge you to look at your bigotry.

If they were welcomed as women, there wouldn't be any issue. But they are the one set of women not welcomed to Dianic circles.

I am a cissexual women who bleeds and has borne children. The blood mysteries are important, but they are not everything that defines me as a woman. Many women do not bleed, not just trans women. But I do not see Dianics excluding them- just trans women. This is bigotry, plain and simple.

Lillitu Shahar Kunning @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 0 replies · +3 points

Yes- while there are some trans folks who do not fully identify with either commonly accepted gender, transsexuals do- and to "third sex them" without their consent is offensive. Trans women are WOMEN.

cigfran @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 7 replies · +6 points

> I think you -should- form a new tradition!

Of course. By all means, trans people should have their own little corner, their own pagan ghetto, in effect, wghere they won't muddy the waters for everyone else.

So much easier on everyone that way, isn't it?

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 9 replies · +6 points

In Dianic tradition all people are considered to be a part of the Goddess. Not just women! I think this is one of the biggest misconceptions out there. We don't allow men into our circles not because they are somehow not a part of the Mother, but because their embodied mysteries are not the same as ours. This is the same reason our circles are not open to trans women, not because they aren't sacred daughters of the Goddess in their own right, but again, because their embodied experiences are not what we focus on in our magical and ritual work.

From what I recall many of the priestesses of Cybele were trans. I think you -should- form a new tradition! Neopaganism always has room for more, and personally I think it is a beautiful thing! :)

anyakless @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 18 hours ago · 1 reply · +2 points

I'm a Priestess of Lilith, as well as the author of the devotional "Lilith: Queen of the Desert," which included pieces from transgendered devotees of Lilith. I've written my thoughts on this incident on my blog here:

<http://fruitofpain.wordpress.com/2011/02/27/in-re...>

-Anya

Vermillion @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

The discussion about whether or not Transgendered/sexual people should be invited to Womens/Mens mysteries is fascinating to me. I will admit to being ignorant about these sorts of matters until about a year ago when my old roommate told me he was transitioning from F to M. Now to be supportive of him (I must admit that still seems to weird to me considering I knew him for so long as a her) I'm trying to become more aware of the issues he'll have to

deal with, so seeing this playing out on a religious scale is sort of mind blowing to me. I honestly don't know how I feel about it but both sides have given me plenty to chew on and for that I thank you.

cigfran @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 1 reply · +8 points
> Many Dianics are amazon women with no interest in being mommies themselves.

Of course, so are many transwomen. But in their case it's generally held against them as failure of womanhood.

[Robin Artisson](#) @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points
Well said! Flawless defense! Be well.

[Nestis](#) @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 2 replies · +2 points
Many Dianics are amazon women with no interest in being mommies themselves. The Blood Mysteries encompass the ability of most cis women to make and birth a child from their bodies, but they are not limited to it.

[Nestis](#) @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 1 reply · +5 points
I think the difference between Dianic tradition and the Catholic Church is that the former is a pagan and polytheistic tradition that openly acknowledges that it is not there to serve the needs of all people, and that the latter is a universal monotheism that claims to be for everyone. It's comparing apples and oranges, in my opinion.

The Dianic tradition is centered around the Blood Mysteries. This is what Ruth Barrett was conveying as she raised her blood red initiation cord. Dianic Tradition is not all things to all people, and it has never claimed or wanted to be. No religion serves the needs of all the people living on this planet, some are honest about it, some are not. That doesn't invalidate a religion's right to exist as long as it can play nice among a plethora of diverse paths. Universalizing monotheisms stamp others out. Dianics just want to maintain their right to self-definition the same way a trans woman wants to self-define her womanhood. Dianics don't go around saying bad things about trans women, they just maintain that their mysteries and magic are for cis women only. Just like the Minoan Brotherhood is only for men, and Heathenry is only for those who hear the call of the Nothern Gods.

[Califried](#) @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 3 replies · +4 points
Nestis,

To clarify, the discussion at PantheaCon wasn't about transwomen demanding that Dianic witches who choose to exclude transwomen include them in Dianic circles in all contexts. The broader context for the conversation was a ritual at a public convention that 1) did not specify that it was a women-only ritual (cisgendered or otherwise) and 2) reportedly did not involve any of the blood mysteries at all. The organizers chose to exclude transwomen AT THE DOOR, in person. All reports that I've heard indicate that this exclusion was due to nudity in the ritual, which means that it had nothing to do with blood mysteries and everything to do with lack of comfort with trans bodies.

So much for the specific instance at PantheaCon. Addressing the general case (i.e. what does it mean to define transwomen as "men" [as many Dianic elders do], non-women [as many second-wave feminists do], or not-woman-enough [as you evidently would] and therefore exclude them from woman-only ritual space) is the next step in this conversation. Unfortunately, I'm sure that Jason isn't interested in hosting this discussion in his space - I take issue with the blood mystery division that you propose as meaningful and authentic, but this isn't the place for it. I hope someone else will provide a neutral location for the conversation to take place. Be well!

[Cigfran](#) @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 3 replies · +5 points
Filed under "why I am not a Wiccan."

Terra Dusold @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 19 hours ago · 11 replies · +6 points

I have been seeking a spiritual path that would not fear my gender identity. After reading about pagan history and the neo-pagan movement, I thought I had found a place for me. However I have been disillusioned with this path lately. Clearly I can be judged and labeled in paganism just as many other religious paths. I can't believe that paganism, with its deep roots, still cannot recognize that trans folks are part of this world. If I am not part of the Goddess, then what am I?

I realize that I am generalizing. I understand that I won't be accepted with open arms in a number of pagan paths. I also know that many others would be welcoming, and with any luck blind to my gender. I guess I am just disappointed that I have to expect conflict even in the company of pagans.

As for continuing as a pagan seeker? I don't know. It may just be time for me to make a up a brand new god and have a funky tea party of my own ;)

Don't worry cis folks, my god won't exclude you. I know how that feels.

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 20 hours ago · 0 replies · +7 points

The only concern I have for your statement is the extent to which "patriarchy" appears to be your devil. Has nothing else wounded you or us? Is "patriarchy" truly the demon at whose feet all evil must be laid? What roles have we all played in our own misery, outside of what "patriarchy" has done, or any of the other bad guys?

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 20 hours ago · 2 replies · +3 points

"I think trans women and like-minded cis women should get together and form their own tradition based in their common definitions of womanhood, instead of demanding that another tradition change its definitions to suit them."

I agree with you Nestis, but, feeling as you do, do you then extend this same defense to the Catholic Church, which will not ordain women? Do you extend this right of tradition to the Catholic hierarchy who won't loosen their language against gays?

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 20 hours ago · 11 replies · +2 points

You may not consider it essential to being a woman, but I think the Dianics do. "To be a woman" is of course a completely subjective notion, depending on who you're asking or what measure you're using at the time, but for me, the natural presence of eggs and a womb- working or no- would seem to be the guaranteed physiological difference- which absolutely reflects a spiritual difference, too- that makes women women, and not men. And this is before we even have the psychological discussion. This isn't even off the ground floor of physiology and spiritual physiology.

I don't think looking to the power of birth to find something unique about womanhood is limiting women to reproductive roles. That womb represents something deeper than just its incidental use to shape new life. It represents the great Mother power that stands behind all things, a cauldron as it were, naturally formed inside a human being. From the space of that comes imperium, comes sovereignty, comes life.

Lori Dake @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 20 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

I've worked with lots of Pagan kids, including running the kids' room at a hotel convention. Here's an article about what I did in detail, rather than rehash the same ole same ole:

<http://pagan-camping.livejournal.com/5897.html>

I don't know how much it helps, but I thought I'd throw in my 2c

Nestis @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)20 hours ago · 11 replies · +5 points

As a young radical feminist (and Dianic Witch) influenced by the third-wave without feeling the need to spit on my second-wave foremothers, I guess for me this issue comes back to questions of what it means to practice an embodied and experiential religion. That's why there are so many little groups within the Neopagan movement, because we're comfortable acknowledging that not everyone's experiences are our own, nor should they be.

Why must Dianic tradition serve the needs of all women-identified persons, anymore than Heathenry should serve the needs of those who are not called to the Norse Gods, or the Minoan Brotherhood serve the needs of women-identified people? I think trans women and like-minded cis women should get together and form their own tradition based in their common definitions of womanhood, instead of demanding that another tradition change its definitions to suit them. I understand that saying that trans women should form their own group is considered offensive because many trans women just want to be accepted as women, without question, but it is denying the embodied experiences of many cis women who define womanhood differently to claim that the blood mysteries are insignificant.

Califried @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)20 hours ago · 3 replies · +4 points

Ms. Griffin,

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this post! I just wanted to point out that the gentleman to whom I assume you are referring actually said that he "feared that Dianics were on the wrong side of history" and that (paraphrased) symbols that seemed powerful in the '70s may need to be revisited. I didn't find his contribution to the discussion particularly helpful, but I'm not sure I would summarize his comments as "telling you you need to change your religion" so much as pointing out that Dianic Wicca is effectively limiting its audience and its relevance by excluding transwomen.

Separately, it seems to me one reason for objecting to your preferred framing ("religious freedom") is that no one is trying to limit the practice of your religion in any substantive manner. The question at hand was as follows: in a setting such as PantheaCon, should events which effectively define transwomen as non-women (or transmen as non-men) be permitted? Your initial contribution to the discussion (in which you mostly referenced significantly outdated scholarship on the topic of gender construction) didn't actually provide a particularly strong basis for a division between transwomen and cisgendered women in ritual spaces. It did, however, serve as a reminder (for any who needed it) that you, Ruth and other Dianic elders continue to subscribe to a problematic version of second wave feminism that reserves authentic femininity (and spiritual communion with other "authentic" women) as a "privilege" of having been assigned female at birth.

I would encourage everyone to read the link provided by Jason for more context and the rationale for holding the discussion as described by the organizers themselves.

Hecate @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)21 hours ago · 1 reply · +7 points

I am, and have always been, a completely Dianic Witch.

I will hold both groups in my heart and at my altar.

Patriarchy has wounded so many of us in so many different ways.

May the web be repaired.

Lupa @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)21 hours ago · 0 replies · +1 points

Excuse me--a quick edit: SOME of the feeling and thoughts that I have seen among my trans friends are along those lines. There are also feelings and thoughts that are specifically geared toward the experience of being trans. However, they seem to stem from needing a safe space from the experience of marginalization in many cases.

Also, FWIW, take what I say with an extra grain of salt given that I am cis myself, and speaking from that perspective.

Lupa @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 21 hours ago · 4 replies · +1 points

"I think it's clear that transpeople have specific trans mysteries, just as do cis people of both sexes and each orientation. ":

I disagree with this wording, though I agree with the rest of your reply. People assume that trans women HAVE to be treated differently from cis women--instead of it just being "women". The feelings and thoughts that I have seen over and over among both my male and female trans friends and acquaintances is that they DON'T want to be marginalized and treated differently based on being trans. This whole "women-born women" thing just emphasizes the marginalization.

Lupa @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 21 hours ago · 1 reply · +2 points

"It seems to me that if someone is so driven by their inner female nature, despite the body they were born into, that they would go through hormonal treatments and surgery to change their body shape, then maybe they really are a woman in every way that counts. "

There are SO many reasons why this doesn't happen all the time, though. Closeting, discrimination , lack of funding, lack of support from medical providers, health issues preventing surgery--these are just the reasons that I thought of in about five seconds as to why a trans person may not have surgery or go on hormones.

Lupa @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 21 hours ago · 17 replies · +7 points

Which, speaking as a (but not every) genetically female-bodied person, is not something I consider to be essential to being a woman. The concept of what ultimately makes one female being reproductive in nature is incredibly limiting, in part because it excludes women who either won't or can't physically procreate.

Bookhousegal @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 21 hours ago · 0 replies · +2 points

I think this is a great idea on the census issues: it does seem Pagans are perennially-undercounted, and that probably has a great deal to do with the many different names we can be split up into, as well as I think, a still common tendency to dismiss/define 'Pagan' as 'Another word for 'No Religion.'

Robin Artisson @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 21 hours ago · 18 replies · +2 points

Except for the way that allows them to have the power to shape a new life in their bodies. Which is what I think the Dianic women are probably on about.

Ursyl @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#) 21 hours ago · 21 replies · +2 points

I wish that there had been some awareness of the needs of Pagans with children back some 20 years ago, when I was not going to allowed to bring my young son to a drum circle. A DRUM CIRCLE, not a full blown ritual circle including Great Rite or any other such formal event, a Drum Circle. Thank goodness our UU has an active, and open, eclectic Pagan group. We all bring our ideas, and work them together into lovely ceremony. Children are pointedly welcome.

If our religions are not worthy of being shared with our children, not forced-shared, what is the point?

I remember the gender issue discussion from decades ago at Darkover Grand Council, where only XX females were welcome in the "Renunciates" circle. It seems to me that if someone is so driven by their inner female nature,

despite the body they were born into, that they would go through hormonal treatments and surgery to change their body shape, then maybe they really are a woman in every way that counts.

Bookhousegal @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)21 hours ago · 17 replies · +2 points

It's unclear here so far what actually transpired, but it seems like the old issues about transwomen at 'women's only' spaces in general: at issue are various old prejudices regarding certain old guard feminist ideas of gender determinism, (essentially claiming transwomen aren't 'real women' and thus supporting all kinds of transphobic rhetoric,) and perhaps a tendency for trans activists to push the matter in ways that aren't productive.

From seeing a number of other such controversies, all I can say right now is that there's probably no answers in trying to force each other's boundaries, either in terms of old-guard feminists trying to deny transwomen's identities, nor in transwomen trying to get in on ritual spaces that apparently aren't ready for them, (Or perhaps those who don't hold with the notion that gender is defined by birth in that way.) What we have here are two historically-oppressed groups who are pretty used to having to fight for every inch of rights and consideration, who may have some conflicting absolutes at personal stake. Certain stripes of feminism have even taught that transwomen were *made* by the patriarchy for the explicit purpose of subverting feminist groups. (Crazy, but there's a history there.)

I think it's clear that transpeople have specific trans mysteries, just as do cis people of both sexes and each orientation. Perhaps the important part is that everyone can circle up *together,* regardless of the more specific places people go. I think for their part, Dianics need to understand that while perhaps they have the right to define 'men and women' for their own religion, they needn't, shouldn't, and can't expect to impose a transphobic definition on the wider society or the broader Pagan community or even a whole conference.

It *sounds* rather as if an opportunity for dialogue may have jumped directly to a contest over boundaries and identities, and that's bound to be pretty contentious. (even descending to absurdities in the case of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, which at some point I heard was getting down to crotch-searching of anyone that seemed too butch or something.

It seems to me that quite a few groups and events see fit to make a point of being trans/genderqueer inclusive, and perhaps what should happen is some of these Dianics should turn up to *those.* Meet a few people when it's not about *their* boundaries and all.

For the part of transpeople, when it comes to those sorts of things, perhaps it's better to be invited. Whatever someone's definition of sex and gender, if the trust ain't there, it ain't there.

Ed Hubbard @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)23 hours ago · 0 replies · 0 points

This is a great update and thank you for keeping us informed.

Wendy Griffin @ [The Wild Hunt - Pagan Community Notes:...](#)1 day ago · 22 replies · +4 points

Actually, what I said was that the language we use frames and shapes the discussion. Calling the discussion one on gender discrimination, as the organizers did, framed it from a limited, biased point of view. If we want to communicate with each other, we have to use language people who may not agree with us can hear. What if we called the discussion one on religious freedom vs. gender discrimination? People objected to my using the framework of religious freedom, and one man even told me we needed to change our religion! That is when I insisted that from our perspective it was an issue of religious freedom.

Incidentally, the people who had organized the woman-only ritual that was the cause of the hurt feelings and resulting discussion were never informed there was going to be a discussion. Ruth Barrett and I found out by accident at almost the last minute and felt obliged to be there as Dianic elders.