

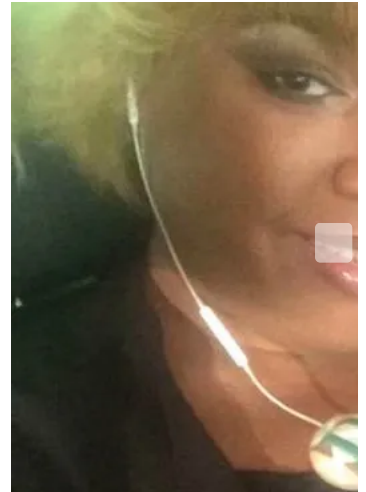
Trans murders rising alongside anti-trans rhetoric



by [Gretchen Rachel Hammond](#)
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The 1938 illustration by Nazi propagandist Julius Streicher for the children's book *Der Giftpilz* (left) features two children confronted by a deliberately fearsome caricature of a Jew. The image above is captured from a 2015 anti-transgender ad in Houston featuring a deliberately fearsome man confronting a child in a restroom.



Dee Whigham

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An illustration used as part of a 1938 children's book *Der Giftpilz* (*The Poisoned Mushroom*) by Nazi propagandist Julius Streicher features a menacing-looking, burly caricature of a Jewish man confronting two young children, Else and Hans, who stare up at him in wonder as he uses a bag of caramels to entice them to come with him.

In the story, recognizing the man as a Jew, Hans runs to find a policeman who "Soon overtakes the strange man. He handcuffs him and takes him to prison."

At home, Hans is rewarded by his mother who tells him: "A devil goes through the land. The Jew he is known to us all as [a] murderer of the peoples. The terror of children in every country, he wants to ruin the youth."

Kelley H. Szany, director of education for the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center based in Skokie, explained the significance of the image.

"[Streicher] was trying to perpetuate the stereotypes that were being put out by the Nazis at the time that the Jews were a danger, evil, someone who could trick your children, that they had no boundaries in what they were trying to do," she told *Windy City Times*. "These were all ideas that they were trying to plant particularly in children. When you create a social system in which governments, cultural, economic and educational organizations are buying into this ideology, this propaganda can be received by all ages."

In November 2015, a referendum was held in Houston on the city's Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO), which banned discrimination based on a host of classifications including gender identity.

One month prior to the referendum, an organization called Campaign for Houston, which claims to be made up of "Citizens of Houston of all races, creeds and political beliefs who believe there should be NO MEN IN WOMEN'S BATHROOMS," released a 30-second television commercial.

Produced in black and white, the sinister soundtrack, images of flickering lights, a slowly dripping faucet and a large-framed, faceless man entering a restroom are all designed to evoke a sense of terror.

“Any man at any time could enter a woman’s bathroom simply by claiming to be a woman that day,” the female narrator says. “Even registered sex offenders could follow women or young girls into the bathroom.”

The advertisement’s call-to-action included the words “Prevent danger!”

A young girl is confronted by the man in one of the restroom stalls. The video cuts to black as she stares up at him in wonder and the man closes the stall doors behind him.

HERO was ultimately defeated by over 57,000 votes; 2015 campaign finance reports listed by Houston’s Office of the City Secretary showed that Campaign for Houston spent just under \$600,000.

Meanwhile, the pro-HERO organization Houston Unites Against Discrimination spent more than \$1.3 million.

By the time the Campaign for Houston advertisement aired, 19 transgender women had been murdered in the United States. By the end of 2015, the number was 22—at the time, it was considered an unprecedented high that was double the 11 victims reported in 2014.

The price of progress

A 2014 report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) noted that “2013 was a monumental year for LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities, with a number of high-profile legislative victories and unprecedented visibility of several LGBTQ and HIV-affected issues on a national level. However, 2013 was also a year where the rights of many marginalized communities came under direct attack by lawmakers, and violence against the most marginalized LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities continued unabated.”

In August 2015, a Time magazine examination of the high rate of violence against transgender individuals suggested that, “Heightened visibility has also put more people at risk of being harassed or hurt. While images of Caitlyn Jenner receiving a standing ovation accepting an award in a Versace dress might seem to herald a sunny time for transgender Americans, most of them are still greatly disadvantaged socially and economically.”

However, long before Jenner publicly announced her transition, conservative legislators, right-wing and religious organizations had begun to target the transgender community.

In February 2013, the Phoenix Arizona City Council voted to prohibit discrimination in public accommodations on the basis of gender identity or expression.

In its opposition to the city council’s vote, the national Christian-founded organization Alliance Defending Freedom claimed: “It’s open season on young girls and grown women now forced to risk their privacy—and their safety—for our society’s increasingly warped sense of tolerance.”

Responding to Time magazine’s May 2014 Transgender Tipping Point article featuring Laverne Cox, an OpEd in the Christian media organization Charisma News stated, “It’s about seducing people into a lifestyle of perversion that ultimately separates them from God. It’s about mainstreaming a way of life that leaves people in bondage. And, ultimately, it’s about demonizing anyone who won’t tip toward the transgender point and embrace this new ‘civil rights’ issue.”

In February 2015, HB 583 was filed in the Florida House of Representatives, “Requiring that use of single-sex public facilities be restricted to persons of the sex for which the facility is designated; prohibiting knowingly and willfully entering a single-sex public facility designated for or restricted to persons of the other biological sex providing criminal penalties; providing exemptions; providing private cause of action against violators; providing for preemption; providing an effective date.”

In filing the bill, State Rep. Frank Artiles told the Miami Herald that, “My No. 1 concern is public safety.”

Writing in their support of the bill, the Christian Family Coalition Florida (CFC) claimed to have documented over a dozen cases “where men have entered women’s bathrooms, locker rooms and dressing rooms and have committed numerous horrible crimes such as: rape, sexual assaults and voyeurism.”

“When we look at the history that we know for the 20th and 21st centuries, we see that propaganda can be a powerful tool but I think history has also shown us that propaganda can be used as a weapon to facilitate hatred, prejudice and exclusion of a particular group,” Szany of the Holocaust Museum noted. “The effectiveness of propaganda depends on the openness of the audience to the message and, in particular a favorable social context and environment that exists in which this propaganda can feed upon, infiltrate and succeed.”

By the beginning of 2016 anti-transgender messaging had increased exponentially. Meanwhile, the murder-rate of transgender individuals was showing no signs of decline.

2016: The murders continue

On Jan. 11, 2016 Right Wing Watch posted a video of an interview given to the global Catholic television network EWTN by then-presidential candidate Dr. Ben Carson.

In response to the question of how he would ensure that “federal funding will not be used to force school districts to require girls to shower with boys,” Carson replied: “It’s beyond ridiculous that you take the most abnormal situation and you make everybody else conform to it. And when we start trying to impose the extra rights based on a few people who perhaps are abnormal, where does that lead?”

That same month, NBC News reported that, during a campaign stop in Spirit Lake, Iowa, Carson’s fellow Republican candidate Ted Cruz addressed the Department of Education’s Title IX protection of the rights of a transgender student in Palatine, Illinois District 211 to use the locker room in accordance with her gender identity.

When it was suggested that a transgender girl should instead use the restroom in the teacher’s lounge, Cruz said “Look, I don’t know the facts of that, but I’ll say that inflicting—inflicting him [sic] on the teachers is probably better than sticking him [sic] in the shower with the teenage girls.”

On Jan. 22, journalist Monica Roberts reported on her blog TransGriot that Monica Loera—a trans Latina woman—had been shot to death in front of her home in Austin, Texas. NBC affiliate KXAN television used Loera’s birth name and male pronouns when describing the events leading up to her death.

Citing court documents following the arrest of the man charged with Loera’s murder, KXAN concluded that, “During the investigation, the roommate indicated to police Loera was a ‘prostitute from time to time’ and sometimes would steal things from his [sic] clients.”

Also on Jan. 22, a 52-year-old transgender woman of color named Jasmine Sierra was found murdered in Bakersfield, California. According to a report by local television station KBAK which misgendered Sierra, Bakersfield police found “signs of trauma” on her body.

How authority figures dealt with a transgender individual “inflicted” upon them sparked a public outcry when, on Feb. 4, police in Mesa, Arizona shot a transgender man, Kayden Clarke, to death in his home. The Arizona Republic published police reports of the incident which identified Clarke with a female name. Officers claimed that he was suicidal.

On Feb. 9, Franklin Graham, evangelist and son of Rev. Billy Graham, made a stop in Atlanta as part of a prayer rally tour of all 50 states. The Atlanta Journal Constitution reported that Graham spoke in front of “thousands outside the state Capitol.”

During his remarks, Graham decried the December 2015 election of Charlotte, North Carolina Mayor Jennifer Roberts and attacked her for what he called her goal of “trying to get transgenders into the bathrooms.”

“If a person wakes up in the morning and they feel like they’re a woman (that’s a man) and he wants to go into a ladies’ restroom then they can do that,” Graham continued. “And I can tell you right now that that’s wicked and that’s evil. Men belong in men’s bathrooms and women belong in women’s bathrooms and we don’t need men and predators going into women’s bathrooms.”

Ten days later on Feb. 19, police in San Antonio, Texas found the body of Veronica Banks Cano in a motel bathroom.

Within 24 hours, a 25-year-old transgender woman of color, Maya Young, was stabbed to death on the streets of a Philadelphia suburb. Initial press reports misgendered her.

Two people were charged with Young’s murder. According to the Philadelphia Inquirer, one of the alleged killers gave the knife to her accomplice and said, “You got to finish it. You got to kill him.”

More pushback

A non-discrimination ordinance passed in Charlotte’s City Council Feb. 22. It allowed transgender individuals the right to use the bathroom with which they identified. While North Carolina House Republicans announced that immediate action would be taken to eliminate the ordinance, Rev. Graham went on a social media tirade.

“Are people just not thinking clearly?” he wrote. “This law would allow pedophiles, perverts, and predators into women’s bathrooms. This is wicked and it’s filthy. To think that my granddaughters could go into a restroom and a man be in there exposing himself ... what are we setting our children and grandchildren up for? There’s not a public restroom in Charlotte that would be safe!”

One comment on Graham's post stated that liberals were "indulging pedophiles."

Another read, "We are in for a bloody summer my friends. You mark my words."

On Feb. 27, a 30-year-old transgender male of color, Demarkis Stansberry, was shot through the head in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The following day, KSLA reported that a 24-year-old man had turned himself in to the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's office. He was charged with negligent homicide.

Five days later, Kedarie/Kandicee Johnson was shot multiple times in Burlington, Iowa. The gender-fluid teenager was just 16. The Des Moines Register reported police assertions that "it was not a random act."

According to the Los Angeles Times, on March 22 transgender woman Quartney Davia Dawson-Yochum was waking her dogs in the city's infamous Skid Row when "a gunman approached and shot her in the head." A 39-year-old male was charged with her murder.

The same day the Los Angeles Times published its report about Yochum's murder, North Carolina legislators made good on their promise to take action against the Charlotte City Council vote when on March 23, they passed HB 2 and North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory signed it into law. In doing so, he nullified the nondiscrimination ordinance, instituted unprecedented restrictions on transgender bathroom use and ignited a national firestorm.

Applauding the bill, American Family Association (AFA) radio host Dr. Frank Turek wrote "How could this possibly be controversial? Are we to risk the safety of millions of women and children in public restrooms because an extremely small number of people are experiencing a mismatch between their psychology and biology? Good public policy does not risk the physical safety of women and children for the benefit of a few men who want to use their bathroom."

Responding to the nationwide denouncements and boycotts of North Carolina from businesses, sports organizations, political leaders and celebrities, the conservative website Red State warned that a war was being waged. "We are very much in the days where good is called evil and evil is called good," Red State journalist Susan Wright asserted.

On April 10, according to CBS, transgender woman of color Shante Thompson and her friend Willie Sims were attacked by "a group of up to eight people armed with several weapons" at a Houston intersection. The Houston Press reported that Thompson had been receiving threats for weeks before her death. A 23-year-old man was charged with her murder.

Less than a week later, the body of a 22-year-old transgender woman of color, Keyonna Blakeney, was found at a Red Roof Inn in Rockville, Maryland. NBC 4 in Washington stated that she "may have been working as a prostitute." Two men were arrested and charged with her murder.

Then, on April 19, Target announced that their stores would "welcome transgender team members and guests to use the restroom or fitting room facility that corresponds with their gender identity."

The AFA began a campaign to boycott the company. "Target's policy is exactly how sexual predators get access to their victims," The AFA stated. "And with Target publicly boasting that men can enter women's bathrooms, where do you think predators are going to go?"

On April 22, the Dallas Observer reported that GOP candidate for Denton County sheriff Tracy Murphree posted on Facebook, "If my little girl is in a public women's restroom and a man, regardless of how he may identify, goes into the bathroom, he will then identify as a John Doe until he wakes up in whatever hospital he may be taken to."

Media Research Center President Brent Bozell III and director Tim Graham wrote, "Gender isn't simply wished away. Surgeons can amputate body parts, but even then, gender assigned at birth remains a biological fact that can't be overruled by psychological-wishful thinking or political intimidation."

In reporting the May 1 stabbing death of transgender woman of color Reecey Walker in Wichita, Kansas, KWCH 12 used male pronouns. A 16-year-old boy was arrested for the crime.

On May 15, Black trans performer Mercedes Successful was shot to death in a Haines City, Florida parking lot. On TransGriot, Roberts wrote, "I'm beyond sick and tired of being sick and tired of this crap happening. The conservative movement's facts-free anti-trans rhetoric and transphobic hatred has real world costs."

A week later in Milton, Vermont, a transgender man, Amos Beede, was beaten to death in a homeless encampment. The Burlington Free Press stated that Beede had informed the police of threats made against him prior to his death. The newspaper also cited court documents describing the attack "as lasting two to three minutes. 'Stop! Stop!' Beede yelled at his attackers, according to the documents. 'Shut up,' one of them responded."

Beede died from his injuries on May 25. Four people were charged with his murder.

Five days later, in a World Net Daily opinion piece, Focus on the Family Founder Dr. James Dobson said President Barack Obama's May 13 directive to public schools instructing them to allow transgender students to use facilities in accordance with their gender identity "made me furious, and then sick to my stomach!"

"I pray you will protect your little girls from men who walk in unannounced, unzip their pants and urinate in front of them," Dobson wrote. "If this had happened 100 years ago, someone might have been shot. Where is today's manhood? God help us!"

In reporting the June 5 discovery of 20-year-old transgender woman of color Goddess Diamond in the passenger seat of a burning vehicle, the New Orleans Advocate stated that the Coroner's Office "described Diamond as male." She had died from blunt force trauma. Her mother believed she might have been the victim of a hate crime.

On July 4, transgender woman of color Deeniquia Dodds was shot in the neck and left for dead in Washington, D.C., according to NBC 4. The report included a statement from LGBT civil-rights activist Earline Budd who said, "Her murder reminds us all of how often the transgender community is targeted for violence in our society."

Dodds died of her injuries on July 13.

Politics of paranoia

Five days later at the GOP Convention in Cleveland, the party's platform was adopted by delegates. Including input from Family Research Council President Tony Perkins, the platform declared that "bureaucrats and the current President of the United States are determined to reshape our schools—and our entire society—to fit the mold of an ideology alien to America's history and traditions."

On July 23, transgender woman of color Dee Whigham was discovered stabbed to death in a Best Western hotel room in St. Martin, Mississippi. A 20-year-old Navy seaman was arrested for her murder. The Sun Herald reported that local law enforcement were investigating whether or not it was a hate crime.

A 26-year-old transgender woman of color, Skye Mockabee, was found dead on the morning of July 30 in the same city which hosted the GOP convention.

With 17 transgender individuals now dead, national news began to pay some albeit brief attention.

Speaking to NBC news, transgender activist Cherno Biko stated, "We need love, we need freedom, we need protection."

On Aug. 2, the Vatican released the transcript of a conversation between Pope Francis and bishops at a private meeting in Krakow, Poland. In the same speech during which he said that "what is absolute is a welcoming heart," Pope Francis went on to describe a moment he called "the annihilation of man as the image of God."

"Today children—children!—are taught in school that everyone can choose his or her sex," he said. "These forms of ideological colonization are also supported by influential countries. And this is terrible!"

On Aug. 8, the body of a trans Latina woman, Erykah Tijerina, was discovered by neighbors in an El Paso, Texas apartment complex. A statement from El Paso Police Public Affairs, which used her birth name, said that there were "obvious signs of foul play."

Only two days later a transgender woman of color, Rae'Lynn Thomas, was shot to death in Columbus, Ohio. Local station 10TV reported that her mother saw Thomas gunned down.

"Mom, I love you. Tell my sisters and my brother I love them," Thomas was reported to have said. "Tell my family I love them. Mom, I'm dying, I'm dying, please don't leave me."

On Sept. 11, Windy City Times reported the death of transgender woman of color T.T. Saffore in Chicago's Garfield Park neighborhood. Misgendered by the Chicago Police Department and some media in their reports of her death, Saffore had been stabbed in the neck. Her close friend Jaliyah Armstrong told Windy City Times that she had been threatened by another transgender woman days earlier. The CPD said they are investigating.

On September 16 in Baltimore, Maryland transgender woman of color Crystal Edmonds became the 21st murder victim this year. She had been shot through the head.

Do the dots connect?

While it is difficult to make a direct correlation between the dramatic increase in anti-transgender rhetoric over the past two years to any one of the 43 documented U.S. murders in 2015 and 2016, the question remains as to whether the verbal or written attacks against the community by politicians, commentators and on social media along with clear threats of violence have dehumanized transgender individuals to a point where they have become easy targets in an increasingly antagonistic political and religious climate.

For Channyn Lynn Parker, project manager of the TransLife Center at Chicago House, there is no doubt about the connection.

“It is a major, if not the major contributing factor to the dehumanization and the stripping of personhood that trans people are experiencing that is ultimately causing them to lose their lives both physically and in the sense of being able to navigate society,” she said.

Emily Waters is the senior manager of national research and policy at the New York City Anti-Violence Project (of which the NCAVP is a program.)

“The [anti-transgender] rhetoric oftentimes is a form of violence itself,” she told Windy City Times. “We have a pretty broad definition of violence. It doesn’t just include physical forms but also slurs and transphobic language. The rhetoric incites a fear of transgender people, that they are the problem and that they need to be contained. It creates an environment where people think that violence against trans people is justified in some way.”

“That could very well be leading to this increase in violence,” she added. “Although I can’t say that it is directly related. We don’t have the statistics or the data to support that at this point.”

Waters noted that anti-transgender legislation that has been or is currently proposed in state capitols across the country could also be a contributing factor.

“The bills are rolling back protections in the places where we find queer and trans people are experiencing violence in places like schools, work and housing,” she said. “Those are the places where we should be increasing protections, not decreasing them.”

In order to promote these bills, or defeat those which offer civil rights protection for transgender individuals, anti-trans advertising campaigns such as those utilized by the Campaign for Houston in 2015 have proven to be effective.

“They are essentially using fear,” Waters said. “It’s an unfortunate but incredibly smart strategy and it’s not the first time that it has been used.”

Historian and retired University of Illinois at Chicago professor John D’Emilio recalled the 1977 anti-gay Save Our Children campaign launched by Anita Bryant in Florida.

“The rhetoric was grotesque,” he said. “But three weeks after the vote in Dade County, gay pride marches around the county were larger than they had ever been before.”

“The Supreme Court decision in 1986 in the Bowers v. Hardwick case is a second example,” he added. “The language used in the majority decision and opinions upholding sodomy laws was so gratuitously homophobic, it was designed to provoke. But you can argue that the Hardwick case helped make the March on Washington the following year, the largest that had ever occurred.”

The march drew more than a half million people.

Despite these positive effects, D’Emilio said that “inflammatory language from public officials can provoke individuals to take truly hateful and, perhaps in some of these cases, violent action. No one can excuse that.”

“With any propaganda, particularly if you are looking for it to facilitate a hateful, exclusionary message and really use it as a weapon (and I mean it that strongly), you tend to direct your propaganda to those audiences that you know will be the most receptive to either the image, phrasing or message,” Szany said. “So children, for instance, are considered to be innocent and able to be influenced. It preys upon the fears of parents that this could happen to their children.”

Dr. Jeff Temple, Ph.D. is an associate professor and psychologist at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB).

“From a psychological standpoint, people like to have shortcuts to be able to understand something,” he told Windy City Times. “If they have no understanding or appreciation of what it means to be transgender or if they are suspicious of transgender folks, when they hear rhetoric on the news that dehumanizes trans folks or

makes them look like predators, they start to quickly fill in the blanks and begin to think of them of predators or perverts out to get their wives and children.”

“Unfortunately, humans haven’t evolved as much they like to believe that they have,” Parker said. “Humans are pack creatures in search of a leader. When you have an individual on a major platform and they are dehumanizing any group of people, of course other individuals are going to follow suit.”

“It legitimizes this type of fear and suspicion [people] have of the transgender community,” Temple noted. “I would say that it probably does relate to the increase in violence.”

“Here at the museum, we always talk about how you are not born to hate, you are taught to hate,” Szany said. “If that hatred is being facilitated at home and, on top of that, facilitated by messages in the media, you are filled with this echo chamber of hateful propaganda.”

It is an echo chamber that has also resounded within the transgender community itself.

Internalized hate

“The anti-transgender rhetoric is profound,” said Shannon Minter, legal director at the National Center for Lesbian Rights. “It has a terribly negative impact directly on the transgender people who hear it and see those images, particularly younger people. There is no way that a transgender person can hear that rhetoric or see those kind of images and not feel diminished as a human being.”

“For some of us, the impact is much more serious,” Minter added. “Some people are damaged to the core of their being by hearing rhetoric like that. For a young person who may be just coming to terms with being transgender and struggling to understand and accept themselves, that kind of depiction of transgender people as dangerous, deviant, sick and outside the boundaries of social acceptability can be devastating. That really can just go right to the heart of a young person and forever affect the way they see themselves and do a kind of damage that is never fully undone.”

Regardless of the damage it does, such rhetoric is protected under the First Amendment.

But what about threats that have been made against the transgender community by figures like Dobson, Murphree and in comments made on a Facebook post April 26, 2016 by conservative commentator Glenn Beck (“If an obvious man, even if he claims to self identify as a woman, walks into the ladies room after my wife or daughter, I will self-identify as the tooth fairy and hand him all his teeth”)?

“Threats of violence are not protected by free speech,” John Paul Stevens Professor of Law and Professor of Political Science at Northwestern University Andrew Koppelman told Windy City Times. “For a law enforcement officer [like Murphree] to threaten violence against a citizen for conduct that is not unlawful, is unprofessional, reprehensible and, quite possibly criminal.”

On the other hand Koppelman pointed out that, “There is no category of unprotected hate speech. There are some countries where hate speech is prohibited. The United States is not one of them. It is possible in general to say all kinds of hateful things and they are constitutionally protected. You can say the nastiest things about transgender people. What you are not allowed to do is threaten them with violence.”

Parker has witnessed both violence against and the criminalization of transgender people of color first hand.

“We live in a climate right now where every threat is being looked at with the potential of terrorism” she said. “If I am in an airport, I can’t make a joke like ‘if this plane doesn’t start moving soon, I am going to blow it up.’ If I am in a space and I even say something about a government official that potentially sounds like I am a threat, I’m going to be detained. So why is it that we have people who can spew rhetoric that threatens transgender people and not be investigated? That doesn’t make sense to me.”

Making a threat against the President of the United States is considered a felony. Those who post online sympathies for terrorist groups like ISIS or warnings of attacks in their name are immediately investigated.

Windy City Times reached out to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as to whether they investigate threats toward the transgender community.

A spokesman responded: “Whether language is considered a threat is not a FBI decision alone, but made in coordination with prosecutors. Anytime we investigate, we do so thoroughly.”

“The FBI has forged partnerships nationally and locally with many civil rights organizations and community groups to share information, address concerns, and cooperate in solving problems,” he added. “The FBI conducts hundreds of seminars, workshops, and training sessions for local law enforcement, minority and

religious organizations, and community groups to promote cooperation, reduce civil rights abuses, and provide education about civil right statutes.”

“Making a threat specifically targeting groups of people by saying that you are going to use violence against them as a form of protecting others definitely crosses the line,” Waters said. “The whole online narrative around any type of violence is something we are starting to have real conversations about—recognizing the consequences of the spaces we have created online for folks to be able to anonymously share their violent biases.”

These biases are presently focused against a tiny minority of the American population.

The new bogeyman

A June 2016 study from the UCLA think tank the Williams Institute estimated that 1.4 million adults or 0.6 percent of the U.S. adult population identify as transgender. How is it that political and religious leaders believe such a minority to be a ubiquitous threat to society?

“In a sense, [transgender people] have become the new bogeyman,” Temple said. “For a while it was African Americans and, when people started to realize that interracial couples weren’t a bad thing, they moved away from that. Then it was the LGB population. Now that people can see that friends and family members who are gay are not predators, we’ve moved away from that. Trans people may be the new acceptable target.”

There is historical precedent.

It occurred in Germany following the Wall Street Crash of 1929.

“There was a complete economic, social and political depression,” Szany said. “Within that, you saw a number of different political parties begin to vie for having the solution to help address fears that people had about finding a job, the Communists or the Jews. They need someone to scapegoat for all their ills. What’s surprising for people to know is that less than a half percent of the German population were Jews.”

The 1938 Streicher illustration is therefore not so far removed from the caricatures currently presented about the transgender community.

Organizations like the Transgender Law Center and the National Center for Transgender Equality along with film-based projects such as the Emmy-nominated Her Story and Emmy-winning Transparent are trying to counter that image.

Co-founded by the Transgender Law Center and Equality California, Transform California is on a mission to “promote respect, understanding and safety for the transgender and gender nonconforming community.”

“They are using media campaigns to challenge the fear-based rhetoric by humanizing transgender people,” Waters said. “We have more visibility than ever around transgender and gender nonconforming issues. My sense is that, while there is this terrible violence being perpetrated against transgender people, we are having more conversations about what it means to be trans in our society and how we can support trans people.”

“I think history always wins,” Temple said. “Even looking at Germany today. I would like it to happen sooner than later. From an intervention perspective, I would really like to see education starting when people are younger, before they can get inundated with negative rhetoric about trans folks. Healthy relationship programming should include information on the trans community.”

“I think we need more public education and messaging,” Minter agreed. “We had so much public education around marriage equality and that’s exactly what we need now—an all-hands-on-deck, mass movement and mobilization around public messaging around transgender people. For those of us who are transgender, when we can, we must tell our family members, employers and neighbors how we are affected by negative messages. It’s scary, demeaning and it hurts.”