

# The Real “Zoey Zephyr”—the Radical Transgender Activist Who Held the Montana Legislature Hostage

*-Guest Column by Jeremy Carl, a Senior Fellow at The Claremont Institute*

It takes a lot to make national news out here in Montana. We don't have any big cities, and we are far from America's population centers and even further from the corridors of power.

Yet in the past week, transgender-identified Montana State House Member “Zoey Zephyr,” who attracted some notice upon his initial election in 2022, has exploded to national prominence after accusing members of the Montana State House GOP supermajority, who passed legislation to block genital mutilation and cross-sex hormonal treatment of children, of “having blood on their hands” when they were praying. It was a clear and obvious breach of House rules during a floor debate and Zephyr refused to apologize for violating them.

After the House Speaker refused to call on him again until he apologized, dozens of radical activists, spurred in part by Zephyr, then disrupted the Montana legislature (which has an enormous workload and meets for just three months every two years). Almost overnight, Zephyr was interviewed by numerous national media outlets and became a political celebrity, with far more Twitter followers than either of Montana's Congressmen.

Yesterday, the Montana House expelled him from the floor for the rest of the legislative session, ensuring his star will continue to rise. Rep. Zephyr claims that when he came out as transgender, his mother told him that he “always wanted to be a martyr.”

## **He is now getting his wish.**

Montana, despite being the fourth largest state in America, is actually a small town, as residents often say. Everyone knows everyone. We also have, in my experience, a completely leftist media that has acted as a stenographer for Zephyr--uncritically repeating his claims and treating him as a hero, rather than critically examining his behavior and his personal story in an evenhanded manner.

Of note in this context is that in contrast to Zephyr's dramatics, non-binary-identified State Representative S.J. Howell has been serving in the same legislature as Zephyr without incident this term—because Montana Republicans are objecting not to Zephyr's professed gender identity but to his behavior. (For those who may wonder how a conservative state like Montana with a Republican supermajority legislature could elect two trans/non-binary representatives, each house district in Montana represents just 11,000 people and Zephyr and Howell, were elected from liberal parts of Missoula, by far the most liberal city in the state.)

## **But who really is “Zoey Zephyr”?**

Both Montana and national media seem incurious, and even a fairly thorough Internet search revealed only snippets of his earlier life (residences in Washington and Montana a background in wrestling and competitive video games). But a more exhaustive search revealed a more disquieting story, one that shows a disturbed young man with a troubled past and a series of relationships with dubious characters.

Much of this information about Zephyr was pieced together from posts on Kiwi Farms, a trollish but at times sophisticated online message board that is strongly opposed to gender ideology and delights in both juvenile insults and what we once would have been recognized as investigative journalism.

Zephyr was born Zachary Raasch in Billings, MT and grew up there and in Washington State where he was a champion high school wrestler. The media has been so negligent in their vetting of Zephyr that as far as I am aware this is the first time his birth name has been publicly revealed in an article. “Zooey Zephyr,” currently in the state and national headlines, did not even exist until 2019, when, after several months of taking female hormones, Raasch publicly transitioned. He had surgical vaginoplasty in 2022 (indeed he was not in Missoula on election night when he was elected to the Montana House, but flying to New York for post-operative care of the permanent wound where his natural genitals used to be) He seems to have had a number of marketing jobs in Seattle before moving to Missoula, getting involved in the activist community and working at the University of Montana.

According to Raasch, his parents (who were conservative Christians) “disowned” him when he decided to transition. Raasch was originally motivated to run for the state legislature in response to the attempts to ban “Transgender girls” from girls and women’s sports. This enraged Raasch who claims, contrary to both common sense and scientific evidence, that men who transition to female do not have an advantage in sports, a proposition increasingly rejected even by politically correct athletic bodies.

Raasch is intelligent and extremely interested in transhumanism (the melding of man and machine through “technological enhancement” of the human body)—the subject of an abandoned master’s thesis at the University of Montana, a subject that seems relevant to his decision to radically modify his own body.

He was also a video gaming champion in a game called Super Smash Brothers-- some pre-transition performances of his tournament videogaming can be seen online. In 2020, a huge scandal erupted in the Super Smash Brothers community involving mass sexual harassment and abuse of minors during in-person gaming meetups. Raasch publicly expressed regret that he may have put children at risk in taking them to these events. It may be just a coincidence that serious child sexual abuse broke out in a community with which Raasch was heavily involved, or it is possible that he been a perpetrator or a victim of such abuse, but we don’t know, as none of the puff piece legacy media has bothered to investigate Raasch’s background. What can be said is that childhood experiences of abuse, such as those that were going on around him, are often precursors to those involved developing non-standard sexual identities.

Raasch is also a noted fan of Manga and anime, a hobby enjoyed by many perfectly healthy people, but also a favorite of transgender individuals, such as Chris Tyson, an important member of Mr. Beast, the world’s most popular YouTube channel, who announced a love of anime involving sexualized children in the years before he came out as trans. Raasch has posted disturbing sexualized anime images such as the one below that as of this writing—still on his official Twitter account.

He shows all the classic signs of an autogynephilic—a man who (often spurred by pornography or fetish) becomes sexually aroused by the idea of themselves as a woman. This existence of this condition and its popularity among certain kinds of transgender-identifying men was first observed by Dr. Ray Blanchard and then popularized by Northwestern University psychologist and transgender scholar J. Michael Bailey in his pathbreaking 2003 book *The Man who Would Be Queen*.

For the last year or so, Raasch has been dating Anthony “Erin” Reed, one of the most prominent transgender activists in America. Reed has a disturbing background himself, and one again that has been almost completely ignored by the national media in which he has frequently appeared.—Once

married with a child, he got divorced and came out as transgender, eventually, like Raasch, opting for hormones and surgery.

*(Editor's note: the author also included a post on Reddit from user Supernavosky from around 10 years ago as citation for the above portion. Originally published post described Reed as a convicted felon. Reed has disputed that description and says they are not a convicted felon. [Click here for Reed's response via Twitter](#). Reed also says [there was never an order to stop wearing an ex-wife's clothes](#). We have offered for Reed to join us on the radio and write up a full response.)*

Reed's family was (unsurprisingly) unhappy about his decision to transition complaining that his family would not use his "pronouns" or his fake name. He is divorced enough from reality that he expressed anger that his ex-wife "Told me that I can't have the name 'mom' because she gave birth." He later expressed frustration because his ex-wife was fighting him for custody after he came out as trans.



Screenshot of Tweet

In his spare time Reed maintains an "informed consent" map of the many clinics in America where you can get cross-sex hormones just on your own say-so without any previous therapy or confirmed gender dysphoria required. Sadly, four such clinics exist even in Montana.

Prior to Reed, Raasch's previous "girlfriend" @stardustdog was a trans-identified man and a "furry"-- someone who enjoys dressing up as anthropomorphic animal characters, often with an explicit sexual component. Needless to say, the picture I have painted above is not a picture of a healthy man with values that most Montanans share. Nor is it the picture of a healthy woman.

Neither Raasch nor his boyfriend Anthony believe that parents should have any right to know if a child is transitioning at school and Anthony is on record saying that those dating a trans person do not have the right to know that the trans person is trans because "Trans women are women." Most heterosexual men, I daresay, would beg to differ.

Finally, it is notable that Raasch's own tantrum on the Montana House floor directly contradicts the

professional advice of a host of organizations that Raasch supports including GLAAD, the National LGBTQ Task Force, the Trevor Project, and the Transgender Law Center. These organizations stress that you should not “Say that a specific anti-LGBT law or policy will “cause” suicide. . . Linking suicide directly to external factors like. . . Anti-LGBT laws can normalize suicide by suggesting that it is a natural reaction to such experiences or laws.”

### **Just so.**

If there is anyone with blood on his hands, it is Raasch, not those legislators who are attempting to protect Montana’s kids.

Montana Republicans don’t want transgender-identified Montanans (especially children) to die—we want them to live!—not to be seduced by gender ideology and social contagion into sterilizing themselves, mutilating their bodies with permanent wounds, and stuffing themselves with hormones entirely foreign to their natural condition. And we know this doesn’t just happen to bad people or the children of bad parents. As with any social contagion, good young people and people from caring families can fall prey to it. That’s why we’re spending so much time and energy fighting back against radical gender ideology.

Raasch himself--and the rest of the transgender-identified Montanans are the victims of this ideology. But through the false media martyrdom that he always desired, the victim has also become a perpetrator.

**Jeremy Carl (@jeremycarl4) is a senior fellow at the Claremont Institute. He lives with his family in the foothills of the Bridger Mountains near Bozeman, Montana.**