

“Everybody Counts or Nobody Counts” – Harry Bosch, famous detective

Anti-trans messaging works for Republicans for two reasons: many otherwise sympathetic people are uncomfortable with gender issues, and ***Democrats don't know how to respond effectively***. The standard Democratic response—defending specific policies on medical care, sports eligibility, bathroom access—plays directly into the wedge by keeping the debate on uncomfortable terrain.

Every specific debate is a trap because it implicitly accepts the premise that some people's rights are up for discussion.

The effective counter isn't policy defense. It's principle: ***Everybody counts or nobody counts.***

The Republican strategy isn't really about trans people—it's about establishing that government gets to decide which categories of citizens deserve full participation. Once you accept that framework for any group, you've conceded the tool that can be turned on anyone.

The Harry Bosch principal that **“Everybody Counts or Nobody Counts”** is also just better politics. Universal principles poll better than specific identity defenses, and they don't require voters to first overcome their discomfort with a particular group before they can agree with you. But up until now, Democrats are arguing policy when they should be arguing principle.