



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

New York trans community defies police repression, shuts down hate rally

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 19, 2022

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

More than a hundred trans people and supporters came out to New York City Hall on Nov. 14 to protest a hate rally featuring British TERF Kellie-Jay Keen. It was the final stop on her 11-city U.S. speaking tour. At every stop, fighters for trans liberation and equality mobilized to counter Keen and her home-grown far-right allies.

Only about 20 TERF supporters turned out here, many traveling from other cities, like Jenna Hoch of Denver, who attacked a 14-year-old counter-protester with bear mace at an earlier Keen event in Tacoma, Washington. Their numbers also included several paid security guards.

TERF stands for “Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist.” This is a deliberately misleading description, as TERFs are neither radical nor feminist. Rather, they adopt the trappings of women’s rights protests to attack transgender, nonbinary and other

gender-nonconforming people and advocate for their elimination.

Keen's real agenda is shown by her cozy relationship with the white supremacist Proud Boys and by the massive outpouring of New York Police Department protection for her supporters.

The TERFs' hate speech infuriated those who came out to oppose them. Their venom is especially directed at trans women while claiming they want to "save" trans men from being themselves. These statements are deeply painful and dehumanizing for all trans and nonbinary people living under a hostile capitalist system.

But this rhetoric also fuels the anti-trans panic currently being used to incite right-wing violence against queer people and ram through measures like Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis's recent order to detransition all trans youth in the state - despite plentiful evidence that this will lead to more suicides and abuse.

WarmUp NY called New York's counter-protest. Participating groups included New York Antifa, the Young Communist League, Women in Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha, and Socialist Unity Party.

Trans New Yorkers were determined to drown out and disrupt the TERFs' hate speech. Opposing them was a small army of New York City cops. At least a hundred NYPD officers formed a wall protecting the fascists from the righteous anger of the LGBTQ2S community. They declared the counter-protest an "unlawful assembly" and arrested nine people.

This reporter witnessed four of these targeted arrests. Police picked out individuals in the crowd, surrounded them, dragged them to the ground, and cuffed them.

Trans people and allies held their ground against the violent police. They kept up loud chants of "TERFS go home," "Protect trans kids," "Trans women are women, trans men are men," and "How do you spell racist? NYPD." They held banners, signs

and flags.

Keen stayed away after cops advised her that they were unable to suppress the counter-protest. Instead, she posted a whiny YouTube video from a nearby Starbucks. The bigots ended the failed hate rally, and their opponents declared victory.

Afterward, many people went to One Police Plaza to conduct jail solidarity for the arrested comrades. They took shifts in the bitter cold until everyone was released.

TERFs and Nazis say get back; trans people say fight back!

SLL photos: Melinda Butterfield

