

#LetHerSpeak: Rep. Zooey Zephyr and supporters defy anti-trans bigots

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023



Rep. Zooey Zephyr

On April 26, the far-right-dominated Montana state legislature in Helena [censured the state's first elected trans representative](#), Zooey Zephyr, after silencing her for several days and threatening her with expulsion.

Zephyr will not be allowed to enter the chamber or speak for the remainder of the

legislative session, disenfranchising her 11,000 constituents from Missoula.

The unconstitutional, transphobic, and misogynist silencing of an elected representative by the Republican majority follows in the footsteps of the Tennessee legislature's recent [expulsion of two young Black representatives](#), and the censure of [Oklahoma Rep. Mauree Turner](#), who is Black, Muslim, and nonbinary, after they defended a trans rights protester from police abuse.

Zephyr was attacked because she dared to condemn state legislation restricting gender-affirming care for trans youth. "You will have blood on your hands," she said, referring to the greatly increased suicide risk for trans people who don't have access to care and the stoking of anti-trans violence by similar bills across the U.S.

Zephyr's stand was in stark contrast to national Democratic Party leaders like Joe Biden, who have refused to condemn, much less take action against, increasingly Draconian anti-trans measures.

House Speaker Matt Regier first silenced Zephyr, refusing to acknowledge the representative or turn on her microphone during discussions. Republicans threatened and misgendered her in official documents.



Police arrest trans rights protesters in the Montana Capitol, April 24.

Days later, on April 24, when protesters responded by chanting “Let her speak!” from the gallery, Zephyr symbolically raised her silent microphone. Montana State Troopers in riot gear marched onto the floor of the legislature in front of Zephyr, then arrested seven people in the gallery. The Republican majority canceled the next day’s session.

When they resumed on April 26, the right-wing majority voted to punish Zephyr (and those she represents) with censure for the show of people power in their “hallowed hall.” The charge was “breaching decorum.”

Among those who spoke in support of Zephyr was Indigenous Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy: “The community that I represent does have trans. Some tribes, we call them two-spirit people. My late uncle, one of my teachers in my way of life ... told me no matter who you are, we are all equal under the eyes of the almighty.”

The ACLU and other groups plan to challenge the censure in the courts.

Right to representation under attack

The attacks on Zooey Zephyr in Montana, Justin Jones and Justin Pearson in Tennessee, and Mauree Turner in Oklahoma go far beyond the scope of electoral politics. They are attacks on the right of oppressed people to be represented or even speak on matters that directly affect their lives.

It's vital to see these anti-democratic measures in the larger context of the capitalist anti-trans panic. Missouri's attorney general ordered a ban on all gender-affirming care, including for adults. Texas, Florida, and other states are poised to enact similar bans.

At the direction of presidential hopeful Gov. Ron DeSantis, Florida's legislature has passed bills allowing the state to kidnap trans children from their parents and the children of trans parents and threatening to ban Pride parades and celebrations.

Meanwhile, on Elon Musk's Twitter app, the billionaire's fanbase is openly calling for public executions of trans people, their families, and their health care providers.

People are organizing and fighting back from Montana to Nebraska, from Ohio to Tennessee. Women in Struggle-Mujeres en Lucha has announced plans for a [National March on Florida to Protect Trans Youth and Trans Lives](#). It's a fight for the whole working class and progressive movement.

The fascist right and its capitalist backers are already expanding the attack to include the entire LGBTQ community, Black and Brown communities, women, and all workers - even pushing to roll back child labor laws from Iowa to Alabama.

If you haven't spoken up, if you haven't joined a protest, if you haven't paid attention - the time to change that is now.



Christynne Lilly Wood: Trans women are a threat to no one

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023



The March 21 Santee School Board meeting was my first time seeing Christynne Lilly Wood in action. Wood — mother, grandmother, auntie, retired health care worker, and community activist — was on the list to speak to the Santee school board members along with many others, including parents, students, teachers, and

community activists. The subject centered on adding a children's book, "[I Am Jazz](#)" — number 2 on the list of banned books in all Santee public schools and libraries.

As the room filled, Wood greeted and directed people to sit and went to the staff, asking for more chairs, reminding people who wanted to speak to sign in to get on the list. She seemed to know most of the people, which was comforting knowing that this meeting was not filled with haters. Banned Books was going to be first on the agenda.

Christynne Wood, pronounced Kris-tin, is the African American trans woman who was the most recent target of the racist, anti-trans panic that continues to sweep through the country. I am sure most people have heard about this incident or rather some version of it because it made national news.

Showered with lies

On December 29, last year, Wood showered after her weekly water aerobics class at a Santee YMCA, where she has been a member for quite some time. But this day, a 17-year-old white girl reported to the YMCA staff that she was traumatized when she saw a naked man in the women's changing area. The staff explained that the person she saw was a trans woman and she had every right to use the women's bathroom and dressing area.

The 17-year-old did not like that answer. She repeated her made-up, well-rehearsed, descriptive, and emotionally dramatic story to the Santee City Council and news broadcasters like Tucker Carlson. Carlson and other fascist mouthpieces rebroadcast the lie until the truth came out.

Wood initially did not know about the incident until a friend from her aqua class called her, expressing how sorry she was about what had happened in the dressing room, and sent a video of the 17-year-old on Instagram. After viewing the video,

Christynne started crying and shaking.

The YMCA was forced to close when a hate rally was staged outside the facility. Wood listened to the lies as she stood with the counter-protesters and supporters. Many were patrons of the Santee YMCA.

'We Love Chrissy'

After weeks of being demonized by right-wing media and listening to repeated lies, Wood spoke at the January 25 Santee City Council meeting, where she explained what happened. She showered and dressed in a private stall after her water aerobics class. Wood said, "I am a mom and Grandma. I am a threat to no one." Her supporters filled the Council chambers, many holding signs with a heart that read, "We Love Chrissy." Her statement was recorded and posted on [YouTube](#).

The 17-year-old girl then slightly changed her story, saying she saw the backside of a man and hid in a nearby shower stall until he left.

Christynne and I met for breakfast at her favorite restaurant in Santee a week before the school board meeting. When I arrived, I walked in and told the woman at the counter that I was there to meet up with someone, and instantly she pointed me in the direction of the table where Christynne sat, waving me over. She commented how much she appreciated people who pay attention to time. Then, she told me to look over the menu, order what you want, "everything is good," and insisted on paying the bill.

She knew most of the waitresses by first name and ordered her "usual" breakfast. After breakfast, she was scheduled for a photo shoot at the San Diego Union-Tribune, so we were on the clock. I introduced myself and told her that I and a few friends from Los Angeles came to the Santee City Council to show our support earlier this month. I thanked her for making time in her busy schedule to speak with

me.

She said you and your group must attend the Santee School Board meeting next week. “We are going to demand that ‘I Am Jazz,’ a book on the list of Banned Books, is added to all Santee public schools and libraries.”

The story of Jazz Jennings

“I Am Jazz” is the story of a transgender child based on the real-life experience of a transgender activist, Jazz Jennings.

According to PEN America, a national advocacy group for literacy and free expression, this children’s book is one of [several banned picture books](#) in the United States in the school year 2021-2022.

At breakfast, I spoke about the 17-year-old who reported to the Santee YMCA staff that she was terrified when she saw a naked male in the women’s changing room.

Christynne said she was shocked by the teen’s complaint and that the most graphic part of the story could not be true because she has had gender reassignment surgery. The whole incident was a manufactured lie.

I asked if she could talk about her childhood and journey to become a community activist and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights.

Wood, a Black woman born in 1956, grew up in Ohio during the ’60s and ’70s and originally moved to California in 1975 during her first Navy enlistment. She returned to San Diego County to stay in 1980, which Woods said “was the best decision I ever made.”

SLL: When did you realize that “I have a girl brain but a boy body,” a quote from the book “I Am Jazz”?

CLW: Oh, I knew when I was four years old. My kindergarten teacher told my Grand Auntie, who raised me, that I identified with the girls. She would let me lie down with the girls for nap time.

My Auntie told me not to share this with everybody; People can be cruel, and it could be dangerous. We would play “dress-up” inside the house; it was our secret.

In the 8th grade, I checked out “Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography” from the library. I would keep it and just renew it over and over. Jorgensen, a celebrity, entertainer, and memoirist, was the first internationally known transexual personality of the 20th century to become widely known in the United States for having sex reassignment surgery in the early 1950s and provided an unprecedented example for thousands of gender dysphoric individuals who followed in her footsteps.

SLL: You had some support from your auntie; what about your parents and other relatives?

CLW: My mother didn’t raise me. She was rarely around, visiting on rare occasions. I am a self-reliant woman. I’ve been on my own for over 36 years. I began medical transition in July of 2016 when I started estradiol and HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy). I legally changed my name and gender in San Diego Superior Court in February 2017. My first surgery, breast augmentation, was in May of 2019 at Sharp Grossmont Hospital. My final surgery was at Sutter Mills-Peninsula Hospital in San Francisco with Dr. Marci Bowers on Wednesday, January 29, 2020.

I visited my mother with my daughter, granddaughter, and niece. I hadn’t seen her for over 30 years. My mother did not recognize me at first. When she did, her response was, “You finally became the person you wished to be.” She never got it. It was not a choice. It is all about who I am. My daughter and granddaughter are happy that I am fully transitioned.

After my mother died, I had no reason to go to the state of Ohio, and I don't plan to go there ever again.

SLL: Do you have times when you think back on who you were before?

CLW: Everything from my life in Ohio is dead, including the person I was. I have moved on. It's dead and buried. I feel liberated — free to be who I am.

SLL: Were you working when you transitioned? If so, how did your job react when you completed the surgery and changed your name?

CLW: I was employed by the San Diego County Health and Human Services Association (HHSA) for 29 years, retiring on June 30, 2018.

I chose to actively report to my supervisor, who was supportive. When it came to using the bathroom, there was resistance from some of my co-workers as to which bathroom I was to use. My supervisor told me that it is company policy that it is my right to use the female bathroom, but she did offer a suggestion. She could arrange for me to speak to all my co-workers about my gender identity and name change if I chose to do so. I agreed to talk to my co-workers, and even though there was still some resistance, I *gained a lot of support*.

SLL: What about the cost of your transition? Was it difficult getting a doctor using your health insurance plan?

CLW: My PCP doctor referred me to have a psychological examination, which confirmed that there is no doubt that I was a candidate for and should get the hormone medications, and I was cleared to prepare for full transition surgery if that was my choice.

Not every transgender person wants to get bottom surgery. It is up to the individual. In my case, I knew I had to have a full-depth vaginoplasty, and it had to be with Dr.

Bowers.

Everything was covered through my insurance, and my co-pay was within my budget.

When it was time for my name change, a lawyer at the San Diego LGBT center took my case pro-bono, and I got my name changed along with all my papers. So, I am fully transitioned and ready to move forward with my life.

SLL: I've seen the word women with an X or Y replacing the E. What do you think about that spelling when it comes to trans or gender-neutral women?

CLW: I can understand this generation's usage of the spelling as a means of expanding the word "women" to be more inclusive, but as for me, I don't want to be characterized or given a category. I am a woman.

Christynne Wood praises the compassion, courage, and love of the Cameron Family YMCA in Santee, her Aqua Sisters, and the faith leaders who openly support her.

Wood was named Transperson of the Year at the Transgender Empowerment Day at the SD LGBTQ Center in San Diego - April 7, 2023.

She received the Bayard Rustin Award in February 2023.

She is actively speaking out against banning books, especially those that teach about love, acceptance, and understanding.



Fascists threaten, Biden concedes: Organize and fight for trans rights!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023

The Trans Day of Vengeance was a long-planned protest in Washington, D.C., scheduled for April 1. People were coming to D.C. from across the country to participate. It was called in response to the growing legal and extralegal violence against the transgender community, egged on by far-right politicians and corporate media.

In the words of event initiator Tsukuru Fors, as [reported by Struggle-La Lucha](#): “Vengeance means fighting back with vehemence. It is our battle cry to declare to the world that we the transgender/non-binary communities will neither be silenced nor eradicated. And we are calling to our allies, members of other marginalized communities to make themselves known and to fight with us.”

On March 30, organizers were forced to cancel two days before the event because of

“a credible threat to life and safety.” The reason: fascist mouthpieces like [Tucker Carlson and other social-media bottom feeders](#) whipped up a hate campaign targeting the event, falsely claiming it had caused a mass shooting at a Christian school in Nashville, Tennessee, on March 27, where three students and three staff members were killed.

The alleged shooter was Aiden Hale, a former student of the school who happened to be a trans man. Hale was shot dead by police. He was consistently misgendered and deadnamed for the first 24-48 hours after the tragedy, and some right-wing social media used this to claim that Hale was a trans woman.

[According to the Gun Violence Archive](#), by the end of March 2023 – that is, in just three months – there have been at least 130 mass shootings in the United States this year. The Nashville shooting is the only one reported to have been carried out by a trans person.

And yet, according to the right-wing, from Fox News and the New York Post to internet-famous white supremacists, Hale’s acts represented the “dangerous” nature of the whole trans community, and particularly the planned April 1 civil rights protest.

At least two specific threats to the Trans Day of Vengeance march took the form of mass shootings. According to independent anti-fascist researchers working with the John Brown Gun Club DMV, a [Minnesota-based white supremacist](#) named Adam Murray made credible threats to the event. After this was reported to the FBI, Murray was briefly detained in Baltimore and then released.

Another white supremacist said to be one Benjamin Ryder of Pennsylvania, was detained by police when [he pulled out a gun](#) outside the Supreme Court on April 1, where the Trans Day of Vengeance march had been scheduled to gather.

The right-wing tried to turn the Nashville tragedy into a Reichstag fire moment to frame up the entire trans community and justify the acts of violence it encouraged from stooges like Murray and Ryder – who much more fit the profile of the typical U.S. mass shooter.

Biden's concession fuels attacks

On March 25, a member of the “White Lives Matter” neo-Nazi group [attempted to firebomb](#) the Community Church of Chesterland, Ohio, for hosting a drag story hour. Just a week before, the [Nazis staged](#) an anti-trans, anti-drag demonstration in the Ohio town of Wadsworth, chanting, “There will be blood.”

So far this year, 450 anti-trans bills have been introduced in state legislatures across the U.S. Some 14 states have banned life-saving gender-affirming care for trans youth, with more expected to join them. In addition, bans on trans youth participation in school sports and use of school restrooms have been enacted.

On April 5, Kansas passed a law explicitly aimed at trans girls and young women that [could require genital inspections](#) for participation in sports programs. Florida and other states are expected to follow suit. Tennessee, where the March 27 shooting took place, is one of the worst offenders, even enacting a so-called “drag ban” that places the public existence of trans people in jeopardy.

On March 31, International Trans Day of Visibility, President Joe Biden repeated his occasional claim to support “love, dignity and respect” for trans people. Yet less than a week later, the Washington Post reported: “The Biden administration on Thursday proposed new regulations that would [allow schools to bar transgender athletes](#) from participating in competitive high school and college sports but disallow blanket bans on the athletes that have been approved across the country.”

A few state legislators like Nebraska State Senators Machaela Cavanaugh and

Megan Hunt, both parents of trans children, and Montana State Representative Zooey Zephyr, who is trans herself, have used their platforms to fight for trans rights relentlessly.

But Biden and the national Democratic Party leadership have done nothing to counter the onslaught of anti-trans hate that has engulfed the country since he entered office. Instead, the first significant act of the administration on this issue concedes trans rights.

This shouldn't come as a surprise. Biden rode to victory in 2020 on the back of the Black Lives Matter movement and the fight for reproductive freedom - then immediately oversaw a huge shift of funds to police while refusing to take the necessary action to codify abortion rights in law before the Supreme Court struck down Roe v. Wade.

Now, as Democrats gear up for the 2024 elections, where Biden's likely Republican opponents are notorious bigots Donald Trump and Ron DeSantis, Biden is preparing to throw trans people - and the whole LGBTQ+ community - under the bus.

Whatever the good intentions of some individual Democrats, the Democratic Party ultimately answers to the same capitalist class that has decided to double down on anti-trans hate as a divide-and-conquer strategy to protect their system as people's suffering grows.

Biden's lack of action to protect trans lives, now exacerbated by his concession on sports participation, will encourage more legal attacks and more violence like the attempted church firebombing in Ohio and the armed threats to civil rights protesters in Washington.

When I spoke to participants in the March 31 march for Queer and Trans Youth Autonomy in the capital, I found enthusiasm and desire for bold action to protect

trans youth and fight for trans liberation.

I heard young and older people eager to link the struggle for trans rights with the fight for Black and Indigenous lives, solidarity with migrants, defense of reproductive rights, union organizing, and climate justice.

It's time for bold, independent action, like the [National March to Protect Trans Youth](#) proposed by Women in Struggle-Mujeres en Lucha. It's time to organize for self-defense and take to the streets to push back the violent anti-trans attacks.

It's time to change the political climate of the U.S. from one where oppressed peoples live in fear to one where politicians and the super-rich behind them fear the people.



Trans youth and families flood Washington streets to demand

rights

written by Struggle - La Lucha

April 28, 2023

More than a thousand trans youth, family members, and allies joined the Queer and Trans Youth Autonomy March in Washington, D.C., on March 31, Trans Day of Visibility. The march was called by Queer Youth Assemble, which [presented a list of demands](#) supported by many organizations.

The D.C. action was one of dozens held in cities across the U.S. to rebuke and resist hundreds of bills targeting trans youth in nearly every state and the growing campaign of anti-trans hate and violence promoted by media from Fox News to the New York Times.

The multinational crowd gathered outside busy Union Station, then marched to the Capitol, where a rally was held in Grant Park. The protest drew people not only from the capital and surrounding states but from as far as California, Florida, Massachusetts, and New York.

Official Washington's sheltered, well-manicured streets rang with chants of "Protect trans youth" and "No justice, no peace!" A colorful banner from Women in Struggle - Mujeres en Lucha declared: "Trans people won't be erased. Bigots say get back, we say fight back!"

Protesters were outraged by the far-right Republican campaign to outlaw gender-affirming health care, prevent students from playing sports or using school restrooms, and ban trans people from public life - measures that will increase suicide and transphobic violence.

Several speakers also called out Democrats for claiming to support trans rights but

doing nothing to stop the growing onslaught that has already robbed youth in at least 14 states of gender-affirming care and imposed many other Draconian laws aimed at causing harm to the entire trans community.

“These last few months have been hard for all of us. One side likes to act like we are not real, just products of a social trend, not every bit as real, as valuable, as deserving of freedom as everyone else,” said Samira Burnside, a trans youth activist. “Some even suggest that we be eradicated, shunned, pushed into a quiet corner, and silenced.

“Look at SB 264 in Florida, where I’m from, which would take us from our parents and make those who give us the care we need felons. They cloak their disdain for us in phrases like ‘save the children’ and moral grandstanding. But they truly only seek to save their positions of power.

“And the other side? Democrats say things like ‘pass the Equality Act immediately,’ but don’t put their words into action when they have the power to do so. They say, ‘I support my trans family,’ yet sit idly by while we are legislatively attacked,” Burnside said.

Struggle-La Lucha spoke with trans activist Melinda Butterfield of Women in Struggle - Mujeres en Lucha, who was distributing leaflets and talking to people in the crowd about her group’s proposal for a National March to Protect Trans Youth to be held in Florida in Autumn 2023.

“It was heartening to see so many parents and families supporting their trans kids,” Butterfield said. “The media and politicians try to make it seem like parents are only interested in protecting their ‘right’ to treat their children like property, to be whipped into line with conservative expectations. But today there are many, many families that accept their trans and queer children and are determined to do everything they can to help them lead happy, healthy lives.”

Butterfield said that a Black trans woman who came all the way from Missouri, another state where trans rights are under fierce attack, made a big impression. “She said she’s been waiting for a national protest and was determined to be here no matter what. It’s not an exaggeration to say that she and pretty much everyone I spoke to – young and old, queer and allies, union organizers – were excited at the prospect of a national march for trans youth in Florida.

“People are eager for bold action. There is a huge vacuum that will be filled with the same old lesser-evil voting politics that led to the end of Roe v. Wade unless independent forces take action soon. But if we do act boldly, I think we will be surprised by the response.”

For more information, visit [WomenInStruggle.org](https://www.womeninstruggle.org).



Trans rights protest shuts down

Hollywood traffic

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023

March 31 - Members of the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice and the Socialist Unity Party joined activities on March 31 in Los Angeles demanding an end to the genocidal attacks against the trans community.

Stating “we want more than visibility,” Tsukuru Fors of Trans Radical Action Network (TRAN) initiated the Trans Day of Vengeance demonstration in Washington on the weekend of Trans Day of Visibility. That call inspired local Trans Day of Vengeance rallies in other cities.

Los Angeles was no exception. Hundreds of people gathered on the corners of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue, a very busy shopping and traffic intersection - and shut it down.

The Los Angeles action was organized by @queerxact. Their announcement for the event said: “@queerxact has put together a safe and intentional protest to celebrate Transgender Day of Visibility and to remind the world that we do not accept the way the now-47 states proposing unconstitutional legislation are attempting to silence the transgender community. See you in the streets.”

The lively demonstration, with signs of different colors, shapes and sizes, expressed determination to not live in fear, and demanded an end to bigotry, transphobia and homophobia, and the cessation and reversal of anti-trans legislation.

As the crowd swelled at Hollywood and Highland, protesters marched into the intersection, allowing only ambulances and city buses through. Surprisingly, the police - feeling the intensity and determination of the protesters - decided to not

interfere with this unpermitted demonstration.

After about a half hour blocking traffic, the procession remained in the streets and marched east towards downtown Los Angeles, where a die-in was staged at the Hollywood Police Department.

Afterward, one of the organizers said on TikTok: There was “no cop interference or injuries. We put on a completely peaceful protest where we shut down Hollywood with our signs. ... Republicans were spreading false information that we were calling for violence. But we weren’t – we were calling for vengeance, and we got it.”



Transgender Day of Visibility: NOLA high school students walk out, leading hundreds in the streets

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023

March 31 — On International Transgender Day of Visibility, hundreds of students at New Orleans' Benjamin Franklin High School [walked out of class](#). Benjamin Franklin students [did the same last year](#) in March as the fascist attack on trans people escalated.

Now the attacks have reached a fevered pitch nationally, with Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry, an oil-and-gas-investment millionaire, leading the charge in this state. Landry is running for governor, using a playbook similar to that of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis.

The students rallied outside of class. NOLA.com reported some of their powerful statements:

“‘People who will never ever understand how it feels to live my life are attempting to control it in ways that will leave not only me, but many other transgender people devastated, depressed or even at risk of physical harm,’ said Vincent Jarand, a 16-year-old trans student. ‘This is the beginnings of a genocide.’

“Jackie Kimbrough, a Black trans 17-year-old, wiped away tears talking about the impact the bills could have on LGBTQ youth in the state. ‘I’m 17 years old, and I’m fighting for my life,’ Kimbrough said.”

These students are serious leaders inspiring the broader progressive movement. Starting at 5:30 p.m., they led a 500-person-strong march from Washington Square Park, through the French Quarter, to Jackson Square. This square itself has been a site of intense struggle, as Take ‘Em Down NOLA has fought to have the name changed from that of the genocidal U.S. President Andrew Jackson.

Marchers took over the streets and then the amphitheater across from Jackson Square, shouting militant chants like, “If they don’t see us, if they don’t hear us, you’d best believe they’re going to fear us!” High school students and others gave

speeches.

The students were joined by groups including Real Name Campaign NOLA, Freedom Road Socialist Organization – New Orleans, ACLU of Louisiana, college branches of Students for a Democratic Society, and others. This was an example of working class and oppressed people from multiple generations working together to take a stand against the far right's assaults.



Women in Struggle proposes National March to Protect Trans Youth

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023

***TRANS PEOPLE
WON'T BE ERASED***

**BIGOTS SAY GET BACK
WE SAY FIGHT BACK!**

***Women in Struggle /
Mujeres en Lucha***



Proposal to the movement from Women in Struggle – Mujeres en Lucha:

**NATIONAL MARCH TO PROTECT TRANS YOUTH
Florida, Autumn 2023**

& SPEAKOUT FOR TRANS RIGHTS

Build a People's Tribunal to put anti-trans bigots on trial

Transgender, nonbinary, gender-nonconforming, and intersex people are under siege. So far this year, more than 400 anti-trans bills have been introduced at the state and national levels. Fourteen states have banned or severely restricted life-saving gender-affirming care for trans youth. Attacks, both legislative and violent, are growing by the day, while national elected officials who claim to support LGBTQ+ community remain silent and do nothing.

We can't wait for the next election in hopes that things might improve. Measures are being enacted NOW that will do irreparable harm to trans youth and all trans

people. The thousands of youth around the country walking out of schools and rallying at state capitols have shown us the way. Now we need to take the movement national.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who wants to be president, is one of the most vicious abusers of trans youth and the rights of all people. Behind politicians like DeSantis are rich bosses who profit from divide-and-rule tactics.

Join us to build a broad national coalition in partnership with organizations and communities on the ground in Florida and with allies in the Black Lives and immigrant rights struggles, the women's movement, educators, labor, the unemployed, and antiwar movements.

GET READY for the first planning meeting on Zoom in April.

SPREAD THE WORD. Think about what you can do!

ADD YOUR NAME & ORGANIZATION to the list of initiators and endorsers.

REACH OUT to info@womeninstruggle.org for updates and to get involved.

Bigots say get back - we say fight back!

WomeninStruggle.org

[Facebook.com/womenmujeresinstruggle](https://www.facebook.com/womenmujeresinstruggle)



San Diego March for Black Womxn-2023 was Live!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023

San Diego — Sunday morning, March 12, started a little overcast, but that didn't keep people from coming out for the 10 a.m. kick-off rally for the March for Black Womxn (M4BW) 2023.

The rally was held on University Avenue outside Fatuma's, an African restaurant in City Heights, a culturally rich neighborhood in San Diego.

Rally co-chair Nyisha Geedoubleu welcomed everyone present in person and those watching live on [Facebook](#) before introducing the march security team leader, who welcomed representatives from the Kumeyaay Nation to deliver a message of support and solidarity.

It was important to organizers to acknowledge, recognize, and show respect to the Indigenous people who have lived on this "land we are standing on" since the

beginning of time.

This will be the fourth annual M4BW in San Diego. The organizers — Nyisha and Christina Griffin — spoke about the challenges encountered in making the final decision to have the women's march in the midst of the ongoing pandemic that continues to plague our communities. It's been three years since the last M4BW march, and we mourn those who are not physically with us and are grateful for everyone who came out to join us in person and those joining virtually.

Nyisha reminded us that the march was originally held on March 10, Harriet Tubman day. The 2018 and 2019 marches were held on March 10, Saturday, and Sunday, respectively. This year March 10 was on a Friday, which was not a good day to have a march, but then again, this march, as with previous marches, continues to honor the legacy of Harriet Tubman.

The rally speakers addressed a multitude of issues related to racism, women and incarceration, medical neglect, police brutality, and domestic violence, with an emphasis on Trans Womxn and racist migrant detention centers that house Womxn and separate children from their families.

The family of Muma Kuri, a Somali woman found dead in her City Heights apartment on March 7, 2019, reported that justice was served. After three years of fighting, the killer, her husband, was convicted of first-degree murder in November of 2022 and sentenced to 26 years to life in prison.

On the issue of migrant detention, Christina spoke of CCA San Diego Detention Facility. This privately owned corporation works under contract with ICE to house immigrant detainees in downtown San Diego. ICE officers decide the bond amounts for the release of detainees who are fighting their cases in immigration court. Bails for Black migrants are excessively higher than for non-Black migrants. The non-profits that raise money will bail out migrants with lower bonds, which means that

many Black migrants could be detained indefinitely and then deported. The conditions in these detention centers are unbearably inhumane.

Why we march without a permit

Christina explained why we are marching in the streets without a permit or police escorts: “Our first M4BW was in March of 2018. The city of San Diego approached the 2018 San Diego Women’s March organizers and gave them a permit and protection for free. When Nyisha went downtown to apply for a permit for our M4BW, they told her it would be \$5,000. The \$5,000 was to pay for police who would protect us.” The San Diego Women’s march was predominately white, so essentially white women were given a permit and protection by the police. Black Womxn were not given permission and must pay for police protection.

The M4BW is an anti-police march. We do not need or want police protection, nor do we need permission to march in our streets. The San Diego Black Panther Party and the Brown Berets provided security and safety, monitored and directed traffic during the 1.5-mile march down University Avenue, a major street in City Heights. There were also medics available to assist during the rally and march. It was a vibrant, high-energy march.

After the rally, the March for Black Womxn, organized by and led by Black Womxn, began. Christina explained the significance of the M4BW chant: “Say Her Name.” Black Womxn, especially Black Trans Womxm murdered by state sanction, intimate partner, and inter-communal violence, were ignored in spaces where people lifted up those killed by state-sanctioned violence. The call and response chant began with saying the name of a Black Womxn killed by police, and marchers responded with “SAY HER NAME.”

Close to a hundred people were marching down University Avenue, chanting “Say Her Name” as the names of Black Womxn killed by state-sanctioned murder were

shouted, stopping briefly as intersections were cleared by security for safe passage. The names of Black women included Cashay Henderson, and Jasmine Mack, both transgender women in Milwaukee and Washington, respectively.

Everyone made it to City Heights park to meet up with other M4BW organizers already preparing for an afternoon of entertainment and a closing rally.

The entire march and rally was [live-streamed](#) on [Facebook](#) - “March For Black Womxn SD. Protect, Respect, & Listen to Black Womxn!”

This writer covered the [2018](#) and [2019](#) Black Women’s March.









Trans Day of Vengeance: Fight back against far-right attacks!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023

I have a book coming out soon: “U.S. Proxy War in Ukraine and Donbass.” If anti-war activists in Nashville, Tennessee, invited me to come and do a book reading, I would be at risk of arrest – not for the contents of the book, but as a trans person speaking and existing in public.

On March 2, Tennessee became the first state in the country to [ban drag performances](#). At least 14 other state legislatures have introduced similar measures. The law was cobbled together with numerous amendments in an attempt to withstand legal challenges on free speech grounds by claiming to ban only “adult-oriented performances where minors could be exposed.”

But state officials have made clear they consider drag performers and trans people to be inherently guilty of “lewd behavior.” No distinction is made between the

millennia-old art form of drag and transgender people going about their daily lives, though they are different things.

Under a bill currently being considered in the Texas legislature, if I gave a speech at a protest in Houston, Texas – the fourth-largest city in the U.S. – I could be sued by anyone for [“performing drag” in a place where a minor might see](#). This measure is based on a similar law enacted last year to encourage bounty hunting of anyone suspected of having or helping someone get an abortion.

A growing number of political activists, workers, and struggling communities understand the danger represented by these measures aimed at the trans community, and other LGBTQ+ people. Many more, however, have not yet understood how far-reaching they are or how they threaten everyone if allowed to advance without fierce, united resistance.

LGBTQ+ organizers are sounding the alarm, not only in Texas and Tennessee but in the many other states where similar laws are likely to be enacted soon. What will this mean for Pride marches in June? Could there be mass arrests? Will threats and lawsuits force smaller Pride celebrations to be canceled?

These are just some of the urgent issues driving a call by the Trans Radical Activist Network and other groups for a “Trans Day of Vengeance” weekend of actions in Washington, D.C., on March 31-April 1.

Internal refugee crisis

Since the beginning of this year, several states have enacted bans on gender-affirming health care for trans youth, including forced detransition of those already receiving care. Numerous other laws have been passed or likely soon will be that force teachers and other school staff to ignore students’ names and pronouns and to report any suspected “gender deviance” to parents and state authorities.

Among the worst offenders is Florida. Gov. Ron DeSantis forced through a ban on gender-affirming care for youth and Medicaid recipients of all ages late last year through the authority of an appointed medical board.

Now state legislators are preparing to codify these executive measures into law, along with a bill that would allow parents to kidnap trans children who are receiving care or even suspected of doing so under another parent's custody, even if they live in another state. The language would also permit children of trans parents to be seized.

Nor is it only youths and parents who are threatened. The bans on gender-affirming care are being "aged up" to include young adults, and measures are being pushed to forbid insurance companies, Medicare and Medicaid from covering any gender-affirming care for anyone at any age.

These anti-trans laws have no basis in medical science - all major medical associations oppose them. Gender-affirming care has been shown time and again to be vital to improving the health and well-being of trans people and curbing suicide among trans youth, too.

The cruel measures to rob people of their health care and their very ability to live as themselves are accompanied by growing fascist violence and harassment on the streets, fueled by far-right media and social media campaigns that threaten trans people and others who stand up for them.

This was epitomized when [Daily Wire host Michael Knowles](#) declared to cheers at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) that "transgenderism must be eradicated from public life entirely."

At the federal level, Republicans in the House of Representatives have begun to present similar bills that would ban trans lives throughout the whole country. While

they are unlikely to pass now, the ultra-right is laying the groundwork for anti-trans laws if they are successful in the 2024 presidential and congressional elections.

A refugee crisis is taking shape within the borders of the U.S. as increasing numbers of families and individuals flee the crackdown on queer lives. Like people in Latin America and the Caribbean who are forced to flee north, trans people are being uprooted from their homes, jobs, and communities.

So far, Connecticut, Massachusetts, California, Illinois, Washington, D.C., and most recently, Minnesota have enacted laws declaring themselves sanctuary states for trans people.

‘Fight with us’

Struggle-La Lucha spoke with Tsukuru Fors, co-founder of the Trans Radical Activist Network (TRAN), who explained that this year “we are calling for Trans Day of Vengeance, instead of Trans Day of Visibility, because ‘visibility’ alone is no longer enough.

“The right-wing fascists have unleashed a misinformation campaign upon our community by creating narratives that we are a danger to society. They like to say that we are sexual predators and violent radicals, when, in fact, the only thing that’s dangerous about us is the fact that we are a threat to the binary systems that uphold the patriarchal, white-supremacist and capitalist power structure,” Fors said.

“In the face of urgent issues such as poverty, housing, health care, education, police brutality, and hate crimes against the marginalized communities, the fact that the trans/non-binary communities and the war concerning gender identity are being singled out as ‘the number one problem’ by right-wing politicians demonstrates to us that we are being used to distract people from the most important issues at hand.

“That is why we are calling for Trans Day of Vengeance. Vengeance means fighting

back with vehemence. It is our battle cry to declare to the world that we the transgender/non-binary communities will neither be silenced nor eradicated. And we are calling to our allies, members of other marginalized communities to make themselves known and to fight with us.”

On Friday, March 31, in Washington, D.C., Queer Youth Assemble is hosting a [March for Queer and Trans Youth Autonomy](#) from Union Station to the U.S. Capitol, starting at 3 p.m.

Youth-led actions are being held across the country on March 31, including in Florida, where a call has gone out for protests on [every school and college campus in the state](#).

Then on Saturday, April 1, the [Trans Day of Vengeance march](#) will begin at 11 a.m. in Washington, D.C., hosted by TRAN and Our Rights D.C. The gathering site and march route will be announced closer to the date. Follow Struggle-La Lucha and sign up with TRAN for updates.

We say fight back! We won't go back!

WE WANT MORE THAN VISIBILITY.

TRANS DAY OF VENGEANCE

STOP TRANS GENOCIDE

TRANS DAY OF VENGEANCE

SAVE THE DATE:

APRIL 1ST - 11:00 AM / MARCH 31ST - TBA



CONTACT:



@OURRIGHTSDC



OURRIGHTSDC@PROTON.ME



@TSUKURU_NONBINARY



TSUKURUFORS@TRANSRADICALACTIVISTNETWORK.ORG



IMPORTANT UPDATE: Organizers of the Washington D.C. march scheduled for April 1 have called off the action due to credible threats of fascist violence. The Trans Day of Vengeance protest became a flashpoint for far-right threats in recent days.

Our statement: “ This action will not be taking place Saturday due to a credible threat to life and safety. The safety of our trans community is first priority. This threat is the direct result of the flood of raw hatred directed toward the trans community after the Tennessee shooting. Individuals who had nothing to with that heinous act have been subjected to highly serious threats and blamed only because of their gender identity. This is one of the steps in genocide, and we will continue our efforts to protect trans lives. While we wholeheartedly believe in the mission and message we put forth for trans day of vengeance, we must prioritize the safety of our community and the people that make it up. In an ideal world we would have continued on in defiance of the attempt to silence our right to free expression. However, we lack the resources to ensure the safety of the protest and cannot in good conscience move forward with it. In our continued efforts to preserve trans and non binary life we have notified the appropriate agencies.”



International Women’s Day founder

Clara Zetkin on fascism, a lesson for today

written by Struggle - La Lucha
April 28, 2023



On many holidays recognizing people's struggles and their leaders — for example, the civil rights movement and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. — the present-day celebrations are both sweet and sour.

The only reason for formal recognition is that protests and struggle made it so — and this is a victory. But the other, “give it the side-eye” part is that the actual history of how they originated is covered up in pink ribbons.

The blood, sweat and tears that were shed have been washed away.

International Women's Day is like that. So much has been done to sterilize it, package it, market it, capitalism-it (my made up word) — foremost in the capitalist West, of which the U.S. is the capital.

But the beating heart behind all of the fancy images and representations is still strong, red and has the potential to change the world. Its red tail pokes out from under all of the corporate debris.

The courage of the Black women workers at Amazon's Bessemer, Ala., warehouse standing up to Jeff Bezos, one of the richest men in the world — Indigenous women resisting gender violence, murder and plunderous oil pipelines — immigrant/migrant women fighting for their survival — teachers and nurses resisting COVID-19 — are the continuing heartbeat of International Women's Day.

So too are the women in Haiti taking to the streets despite rightwing violence; the women in India resisting Modi and fighting for the rights of poor farmers; and the women of Brazil, Argentina, Ireland and Poland fighting for control of their bodies — they are its heartbeat.

And no amount of praise can be spared for the women of Cuba, China, Zimbabwe, Iran, North Korea, Yemen and so many countries' women who are resisting sanctions and U.S. imperialism.

After all, International Women's Day was founded on the idea of international solidarity of working and poor women around the globe, and recognized first by the world socialist movement on March 19, 1911.

International Women's Day is 112 years old

[Clara Zetkin](#) was its original heartbeat, and she definitely had a red heart.

While advances in human history are never the product of one person or leader, but

rather the result of social and material conditions that compel the intervention of masses of people, leaders and their organizations are an indispensable product of that process.

They can't be separated from these earthquakes, placed above or below it, but rather play an indispensable role in guaranteeing its success. Intense struggle, in the form of huge strikes, protests in the streets, sit-downs at the workplace, occupations and ultimately insurrections and uprisings, are the engine of change.

In the case of International Women's Day, you could call Clara Zetkin the tireless driver of that engine.

During this period, women in Europe and other parts of the world were emerging from feudalism and slave-like conditions, where they were subjugated to sexual abuse, isolated in their homes and villages as serfs and peasants; only to be forced into a new kind of slavery, toiling alongside their children in the brutal sweatshops of capitalism.

In these new conditions, revolutionary socialist and communist women agitated and organized women workers to resist even when this meant doing so under illegal conditions, subjecting them to jail and exile.

The First World War compounded suffering in unimaginable ways. It brought death and starvation, but it also brought resistance, especially by women.

While the declaration of International Women's Day was made in Europe, Zetkin's aim as a revolutionary socialist and communist was that it would be international in scope, uniting women across all boundaries.

Inspiration from New York City

One of the earliest of women's protests that helped fuel the movement took place in

the United States on March 8, 1908. Thousands of women garment workers, mainly immigrants, took to the streets demanding their rights.

This was followed a year later with the 1909 “Uprising of the 20,000,” also called the New York shirtwaist strike, a three-month garment workers’ strike.

Women kick off a revolution

But the unforgettable turning point that sealed the deal was when the women of Russia touched off a revolution.

On March 8, 1917, striking women textile workers joined other women attacking bakeries over high bread prices in Petrograd, Russia. They implored soldiers to put down their rifles.

Some 90,000 protesters took to the streets demanding “peace, land and bread.”

This was the opening salvo that toppled Russia’s hated czar and in less than a year, the workers, peasants and the poor led by the Bolshevik Party took power in November 1917.

While encircled and under attack by the imperialist powers, they formed the first socialist workers’ state. One of the very first things the new Soviet revolution did was codify women’s equality.

Zetkin the theoretician, organizer and doer

While Clara Zetkin dedicated much of her time and effort to the cause of working class women, she was simultaneously [a thinker and writer](#), what we call a theoretician, and as a revolutionary, a doer, organizer and participant.

Sometimes there were painful splits and conflict. Zetkin left the Socialist Party of Germany in 1916 because of its imperialist pro-war position and, along with Rosa

Luxemburg, helped pave the way for the founding of the Communist Party of Germany.

She was jailed repeatedly for opposing World War I. Remarkably, [Lenin met with her](#) to strategize on the question of women.

Another part of Clara Zetkin's story — fighting racism

Zetkin was fiercely opposed to Jim Crow and lynching in the U.S. South.

She played a major role in building international support for the Scottsboro Case (1932) of nine Black teenagers falsely accused of raping two white women. They were found guilty and Alabama sought the death penalty for 8 members (the ninth member was only 12 years old). While they were eventually freed, it took years before the teenagers were released.

You can find Zetkin's call, "Save the Scottsboro Black Youth," in ["Clara Zetkin: Selected Writings"](#) edited by Philip Foner with a foreword by Angela Davis.

Zetkin and right-wing putsch at U.S. Capitol

As we continue to discuss the January 6, 2021, events at the U.S. Capitol, we can evaluate and learn from Clara Zetkin.

Zetkin understood the causes of fascism, connecting it to the decay of capitalism, urging socialist and working class unity. Rather than poorly summarize it for you, you should read and study Zetkin's report given on June 20, 1923, to the Communist International: ["The Struggle Against Fascism."](#)

Zetkin's writings, presentations and polemics were not abstract. She did not have the luxury of looking back but rather had to write in the middle of the maelstrom. This makes her contributions sharp and even more remarkable.

At the age of 75, gravely ill and nearly blind, she spoke for an hour in the German Parliament (Reichstag) on August 30, 1932, as Nazis yelled death threats at her.

When Hitler came to power, Zetkin was forced into exile and lived her last days in the Soviet Union. She was 76 when she died on June 20, 1933.

Clara Zetkin lived an amazing life, filled with hardship and struggle. She endured the murder of her close friends and comrades Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, but she also witnessed the birth of the Soviet Union and saw genuine advancements for women.

This real history cannot be shoveled underground.

Zetkin's red heart will remain with us.

