

We are living in a time in which it is becoming unmistakably clear that the capitalist system is stumbling from crisis to crisis. The resulting social upheavals, catalyzed by liberalism's inability to solve the problems it creates, provide fertile ground for a range of reactionary, extremist, and violent fascist movements. The ongoing class struggle of the ruling classes deepens the fragmentation of society with its arsenal of gendered violence, structural racism, colonial and imperial borders, misogyny, antisemitism, ableism, and trans*phobia.

We are witnessing a global wave of right-wing politics, which particularly instrumentalizes trans*misogyny as the ideological glue between fascism, religious fundamentalism, gender essentialism, and the global alt-right. Countless examples can be listed from this year alone.

The coalition of TERF grifter Posie Parker and the local offshoot of the National Socialist Movement in Melbourne,

the ongoing trans genocide in the U.S. in the wake of which Micheal Knowles quoted trans*phobic feminist Janice Raymond almost literally when he spoke of the "eradication of transgenderism",

the anti-LGBT bill in Ghana, funded by US American evangelicals,

imperialist interventions by the British government in the national politics of the Scottish Parliament with the help of the anti-trans moral panic,

the murder of 15-year-old Brianna Ghey,

and last but not least, the reform of personal status law through the so-called

self-identification law, which joins the canon of demonizing trans*feminine people and opens the floodgates to organized, political trans*phobia in Germany.

It is precisely this law that is being sold as a historic chance by German queer institutions and talked up by green politicians. The approach to the self-id law is shaped by helplessness and the paradoxical hope of achieving queer liberation incrementally with minimal solutions and reforms – opportunism in the best Marx-Engelsian sense. Queer institutions, afraid of upsetting their "parliamentary allies", readily agree to be used as a rainbow-coating of the class struggle from above.

We are in a struggle for queer lives that is being waged against us with the toolbox of fascism and the disarming strategies of recuperation by neoliberal capitalism. And currently we are losing this very struggle.

We need to ask ourselves how queer resistance can become dangerous again. I say "again" because that is what it used to be. We can build on a rich tradition of radical queer politics, such as the gay communism of the work-shy Tuntten of the Forellenhof in 1990 or the feminist materialism of

Monique Wittig, which had as its goal the end of political heterosexuality. Today, when we quote lesbian icon Angela Davis, who cannot imagine a non-antiracist feminism, do we recall that she was an active member of the Marxist-Leninist Black Panther Party? When the decals of Marsha P. Johnson and Silvia Rivera adorn corporate-funded pride trucks, does it have anything to do with the fact that they were trying to tear down racialized class boundaries that oppress street queens, homeless queer youth and migrant trans*femininity(s) to this day? Do we want to be taken into service for an imperialist rainbow-coated euro-homo-nationalism, or do we strive for the perverse, transsexual revolution that will bring about a liberated society and Mario Mieli's Gay Communism?

British author Shon Faye says, "I see trans liberation as a class issue [...] Trans people are deliberately kept in poverty by stigma and healthcare inequality." I say: we have nothing to lose but our liberal, bourgeois chains that heterosexual domination has put on us to protect its gendered relations of production. Let's throw them off!

We demand an end to queerphobic violence, while the violence of the highly militarized European external border kills people seeking protection, among them hundreds and hundreds of displaced queer people, daily; while commodities and monetary assets have more freedom of movement than living people – let us rather demand an end to the colonial continuity of these borders! Let us be the sand in the gears of the imperial organized world market!

We demand rights and reforms that are not universally valid based merely on place of birth, citizenship, property, or family history – Let us rather demand the end of the nation, the socialization of the means of production, the recognition and just reorganization of reproductive labor, and the expropriation of generationally accumulated, stolen private property! Housing and a good life for all, instead of homelessness and precarity for queers rejected by their birth families!

We demand visibility, we demand places in committees and on the top floors of institutions, that only very few of us, who manage to break through glass ceilings, have access to – Let us no longer demand only representation within existing, steep hierarchies, but revolution against the entire system of inequality!

We demand action by the police against hate crimes that results in ridiculously increasing police budgets for racial profiling, the criminalization of poverty, and deportations.

Let us rather demand the abolition of prisons instead of quotas, solitary confinement and exemptions for queer prisoners! Diversity and inclusion in the executive floors go hand in hand with tear gas, deportation jails, and police batons for the most vulnerable of our communities. Stop it!

Resistance against queer oppression, understood as part of the global, imperial, racialized, gendered, ableized class domination must be part of the mobilization of the radical masses – whether in Lützerath or in the Wuhlheide, whether in the struggle against Cop City in Atlanta or for the self-determination of the indigenous Marma in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh, who are directly threatened by the climate impacts of our economic activities, in solidarity with the defenders of Kurdish autonomy, the revolutionaries in Iran and Sudan, the Zapatistas, Tamils, Sahrawi...

Liberal politics recuperates emancipatory movements through the granting of particular rights, addresses them in progressive single-issue rhetoric and finds state solutions, or shifts responsibility to institutionalized, fossilized "community" structures. Radical liberation of all queers remains an illusion if political solutions fail to holistically comprehend global contexts. How free are trans* people, if they are reprimanded, according to the coalition government proposed self-id law, by house rules, waiting periods and biological classifications in prisons? How helpful are regulations on the use of gendered language really for the migrant, precariously working, trans*people, who are worn out by temp agencies in Amazon logistics centers? Queer resistance does not belong in party offices, lobbying associations and parliamentary deal-making, but on the streets, in the trade unions, the strikes of the hospital movement, and on the protests against Deutsche Wohnen! Uninvite political parties from your CSDs, collect money for underfinanced social structures, like drug counseling centers, women's shelters, and homeless shelters, arrest cops, evict landlords, lay off the bosses – everything to everyone!

To escape the bourgeois enclosure through liberal assimilation, according to the manifesto of the revolutionary group Rojo del Arcoiris: "We question the bourgeoisie's strategies of faux-inclusion of sexual dissidents. ... [T]his inclusion in the capitalist order ... makes us acceptable consumers. We do not want liberal equality so that some of us can climb the social ladder; we fight for revolutionary politics that will tear the ladder down."

Dear all, here you can hear Judith's words, because unfortunately Judith can't be here today, but send us queerfeminist and especially fat activist greetings.

Fat Liberation is a topic that belongs at every Pride. Fat Liberation is the liberation of fat bodies from discrimination. And that liberation is and must be queer liberation. As many other fat activists have said, fat is a feminist and queer issue, and fighting against a society that only sees thin bodies as valuable is an important part of feminist and queer history and resistance. This is because: the oppressive "fear" of fat bodies has its roots in patriarchy, neoliberal self-control, white supremacy, ableism, heteronormativity, and capitalism, among other things.

We need to look more critically at the concepts of beauty, desire, and by extension queer concepts and manifestations of attractiveness, and health as they are more and more appropriated by capitalism. Normative society is telling everyone what kind of body we should all have on a daily basis through sexist, racist, and overall problematic advertisements, media portrayals, and policies. It becomes the individual's responsibility to appropriate an ideal body defined along oppressive norms.

The perceived fear of fat bodies harms us and ultimately kills us. The stigma that society, and unfortunately many queer spaces, have towards fat bodies thus harms all of us. Fat people exist less in queer spaces because fat hatred also exists there and is reinforced by queer norm and ideal of the thin, androgynous, and fit body. Fat queer people have less and more difficult or no access to gender affirming clothing, binders, and surgery. Yet this usually goes completely unnoticed.

It is the stigma of fat hatred that makes so many spaces unsafe. It is the stigma that makes us hate our bodies. It's the stigma that makes us go to extremes to lose weight. It's the stigma that makes us stressed. It's the stigma that makes us sick. It's the stigma that makes us go on harmful diets. It's the stigma that makes us develop harmful relationships with food. It's the stigma that often makes doctor visits unbearable. It is the stigma that causes fat people and fat issues to remain invisible in queer spaces.

Fat people do not get the same medical care as thin people! The medical sector needs to work on its harmful and deadly bias against larger bodies and how it reinforces discrimination. Physicians* still use BMI as a primary measure, despite its ineffectiveness, vagueness, and non-medical and racist history.

The perceived fear of being fat structures all of our lives in restrictive and destructive ways, no matter what our own body shape. When we fight fatphobia, we also fight racism, sexism, queerphobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, and other areas of social injustice! For feminist, fat activist, and queer struggles must be thought together.

Fat Liberation, or as in German more commonly Fat Acceptance, is and must not be a niche topic! Fat Liberation must not be a topic that is sometimes thought about and last on the list. Fat Liberation is a queer topic that we all have to talk about and act upon. If we're going to break norms, let's break them all. Thanks for listening!

Redebeitrag von Catcalls of Leipzig am 08.März.2023

We are Catcalls of Leipzig, an intersectional, queer-feminist group active in Leipzig. Via Instagram or by mail, people can write to us who experience border transgressions, sexual harassment, gender-specific violence and/or discrimination based on their identity, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation. We then chalk up the experience to the person affected and post it on Instagram. If you would like your experience to be chalked back, please write to us on Instagram at @catcallsofLpz or by email at CatcallsofLpz@gmail.com. You can pick up our flyers, including translations, from the front of the stage following this speech.

Before we begin, I would like to give a brief trigger warning and then wait a few seconds for people to leave the space. This speech will cover the following potentially triggering topics: Patriarchy, sexism, misogyny, transphobia, transmisogyny, TERF ideology, racism, colonialism, violence, and hate speech.

We held large parts of this speech on 8th of march this year, the feminist day of struggle. Our aim was to deconstruct TERF narratives and speak out about the political currents here in Leipzig, Germany and the USA. In the "original" speech we criticized some groups here in Leipzig. Most of this criticism has fallen on fertile ground, and is in the process of being worked through, some has not. We've changed and adapted small parts, but our grounding stays the same: Real feminism is intersectional!

Again, briefly for your understanding: TERF is an external designation and stands for "Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist". It is a term for self proclaimed "feminist" activists* or groups that reject the existence of transgender people and their rights and identities. TERFs often argue that gender is a biological reality and thus deny trans people their right to exist. This ideology hides behind many different arguments and political expressions. Here in Leipzig there were three demonstrations on the feminist day of struggle, 8th of march, this year because of this split. One took place not far from us at Augustusplatz and was called women's strike. Another rally, seen critically even if they have more ideals in common with us, took place on the Sachsenbrücke. Today, however, we do not want to differentiate each TERF-Movement. Instead, we want to talk about the threat that TERF narratives are enforcing upon trans and gender nonconforming individuals.

The danger that comes from Terfs is more current than ever.

It is clear: Being trans is not in fashion, but the transphobia that has penetrated even our feminist circles seems to be.

It is certain that they're not fighting for people of color. It is certain that they have more in common with fascists, than with real feminist activism.

Today we are here to be angry with you about how terfs unite different discriminations in their argumentation.

We are standing here because it is more important than ever to speak of intersectional feminism! Because we all suffer under the patriarchy. It cannot be shattered if we focus on the problems of white cis women again and again and overlook how often they themselves are the perpetrators of violence.

One instance that shows this is the cultural positioning of trans women as dangerous for cis women. This belief is based on gendered conceptualisations of cis, implicitly white, women as necessarily fragile in relation to cis men, who in turn are portrayed as having superior physical and sexual abilities. By positioning cis, white 'females' as a category uniquely vulnerable to the threat of 'male' violence (and especially as 'biological' male sexual violence), trans-exclusionary arguments lend support to gendered and misogynistic discourses. These discourses have long positioned (white) women as the 'weaker sex' needing protection (by men, from men). This can be seen in discussions about toilet access. The racist undertones of these arguments imply a worldview in which racialised and especially Black women and non-binary people are more likely to be considered dangerously masculine. Racialized women (cis and trans alike) are especially likely to be rendered 'gender suspect' due to discourses that position bodies of Color as gender deviant in relation to white body and gender norms.

To quote Emi Koyama: "Even the argument that 'the presence of a penis would trigger the women' is flawed because it neglects the fact that white skin is just as much a reminder of violence as a penis."

The interrelation of racism, misogyny and transphobia goes back as far as the early days of colonialism. Coloniality, the long-standing power dynamics that emerged from colonialism, seep through every social relation that constitutes our society: gendered and racial differences and even labor-relations.

Since these days, the gender binary has been used as a tool by white supremacy.

And since then, colonizers have tried to exterminate the alternative gender structures that have existed for centuries; in over a hundred Native American tribes, pre-colonial South America and India, just to name a few. Through painful, forced cultural assimilation for

example in Residential Schools, Indigenous people were forced to give into eurocentric knowledge systems, often through violence and death.

Sexual differentiation was also used as a means to position European standards as more evolved than others. Many of you may know the measuring of the skull as a method to demonstrate racial purity, but it was also commonly used by white women subscribing to eugenic feminism, to differentiate themselves from women of other races and classes. Scientists of the 19th century even argued that other cultures were not civilized enough to conceptualize the gender binary.

THIS is the heritage that TERF groups subscribe to. It's these power and political relations that TERFs want to uphold and reproduce.

That is why I implore all my fellow Women of Color: Do not fall for their false promises of sisterhood and unity! When TERFs say they are fighting for ALL WOMEN, what they actually mean is that they are fighting for WHITE WOMEN.

TERFs display a shocking amount of unquestioned islamophobia. During their so-called „Women's day of struggle" a white woman held a speech on "the dangers of Islam for women". The Artemis group in Halle even calls Islam the „greatest danger for women".

Another instance that clearly demonstrated TERF's racist tendencies in Leipzig's left scene, was the protest in memorial of the horrifying attack in Hanau. While POCs and migrants were grieving the lives that were lost, TERF groups and their allied „communist" groups, used this day of mourning to further their own political and transphobic agenda. Waving their flags, spewing their pseudo-communist ideology in their speeches and instrumentalizing the death of the nine victims for their own political gain.

Even going so far as to collect donations for their own groups, instead of standing in solidarity with the educational initiative Ferhat Unvar, which was founded by his mother after his untimely death or even the victims of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. Their organization of the protest showed us once again, that they do not truly care about lived experiences outside of themselves.

Terfism comes in many different forms, we need to expose and stop all of them.

An example of the extent to which terf ideology equates and ignores non-white and non-cis identities and experiences is the marxist argument of materialism. It is used to argue that once equality between men and women is achieved in this society, the problematic situations of

people of color and queer people will magically disappear. In this way they ignore the complex historic interrelations of race, gender and class and the racialized nature of labor-relations.

This theory has been overhauled many times and adapted to today's society and is not sufficient to justify exclusion and discrimination. Based on materialism, they insist on the concept of women that ignores intersections once again.

Thereby we forget, as well as in the heated debate about gendering and about the FLINTA (ger. umbrella term for women, lesbians, inter, non-binary, trans and agender individuals) term, that language is not only a superficial effort, but expresses how we conceive this society. Because language is not the beginning but the end product of a change towards the visibility of all identities.

Terfs are fortunately not the only anti-capitalists or even feminists, even if they like to present themselves that way. It is reductive to insist on the critique on capitalism as the main problem again and again. There must be events that deal with individual crises and that give space and power to marginalized identities.

TERFs never get tired of boasting about their fight against fascism and the patriarchy. And yet: when you use the same tools of the system you're saying you want to fight, you inevitably become part of its structures.

It is fascist to flatten all identities into reductionist social classes that don't reflect our actual struggles and lived experiences.

And it is fascist to subscribe to patriarchal ideas of sex, gender and race. The parallels of fascism and TERFism are there, in their political movements and in individual actors: Sahra Wagenknecht, Alice Schwarzer, J.K. Rowling, Gruppe Artemis Halle, Frauenkampftag-Leipzig, Frauenkollektiv and their Bündnis 'feministisch kämpfen' and many more.

Earlier this year the state of Indiana has become the 14th state to sign and implement laws banning all therapy and medication for trans minors. This is not only an attack on the right to self-determination, it erases entire identities and ultimately results in genocide. In no way is this an isolated incident, however. There have been a myriad of recent laws which target trans and queer lives. For example, teachers will also be forced to inform parents when their children are perceived to be "queer". This can increase the pressure of suffering in conservative homes and lead to even more violence against these children.

The origin of this law can be seen as a list developed by the Trump administration. This list was issued to the patrons of state institutions such as homeless shelters to discern individuals

as trans, while consisting almost entirely of a string of western white and binary norms. This demonization ultimately denies a right to exist to all those who do not fit into this norm. It is the cornerstone of a fascist society that tries to eradicate everything that is not white, cis or hetero. This list does not even make sense in its generalization. The only effect that the "development" of such a list will have is that it may enable more discrimination and violence (for example by the police) against trans people and people of color.

However, let us not only point the finger at the USA, when European and especially German conservative or right-wing politicians are all too happy to write it off. For example, a Bavarian delegation of the CDU just visited the Republican politician Ron DeSantis, who is one of the leading faces of the anti-trans Campaign in America. After that, the first smear campaigns started, especially against drag shows for children. Following the current american model, drag shows are demonized, they would be "dangerous" for children, they sexualize them at an early age.

To portray queer safe spaces and queer people as a danger, especially for children, is a threatening approach. Once again, anything that deviates from the stereotypical, binary gender norm or performance is portrayed as perverse and hypersexual.

Laws that are supposed to be (and in some cases already are in America) established on such a representation ultimately not only ban drag shows, but illegalize the existence of trans, inter, and non-binary people. But instead of a feminist left standing up collectively against such scary and fascist tendencies, it is deeply divided on this very issue. The Terfs and related groups are turning to those same right-wing, conservative ideologies in our midst, agreeing with them and denying identity and existence to trans people alike.

So, we are tired. We have bigger problems than discussing our existence with terfs.

TERFism kills. Real feminism is always intersectional.

We're not asking you to acknowledge and respect our existence.

We will be here anyway.

We're not asking you for spaces to celebrate our existence.

Because we're taking them.

When every aspect of your life leaves you questioning whether the walk to the park will be your last one. Or whether the conversation you just had with them would be the last time you heard their voice, or they yours. These dark weights that hang over us eclipse the trivial values

and integrity of your pseudo-feminism. We are fighting for inclusion, yes. But equally we are fighting for our lives.

We have lifted and moved mountains to get here.

We have passed through death to get to where, and who we are. And because of that, our bodies are planted firmly to the ground. The only question is, are you going to be standing right there besides us?

I say this not only charged by the grief of my fallen siblings, but to the grief reserved to those still among the living. To those whose lives and true forms are dying every minute of every day due to the oppression of the structures that reject, and deny us our livelihood.

I say this as a reminder, as a broadcast sent out into the farthest reaches of the heart.

In this crisis we all face and intrinsically take part in, we must not be tempted to divide ourselves in the shadows. For they are cast by the light we are all fighting to brighten in the end.

**TERF'ISM KILLS!
REAL FEMINISM
IS ALWAYS INTERSECTIONAL!**

Speech on the “self-determination” law -

Written by a staff member of RosaLinde Leipzig e.V., read by Kamo:

Summer of two thousand and eighteen: a doctor puts a blood pressure cuff on me and starts pumping. Normally I have low blood pressure, but this person, a stranger to me, who has been asking me intimate questions about my body, my private life and my libido for about three quarters of an hour, as if it were the most natural thing in the world ... this person drives my blood pressure up. I wonder if, according to her logic, there is a critical value that marks a limit. Along the lines of: blood pressure 120 to 60 equals woman. Blood pressure 180 to 90 equals man. In between and outside there is nothing. These are just people in a phase who don't really know what they want. Perhaps, from their point of view, they can be treated with medication or, even better, simply be ignored.

Now she leads me into a neighboring room, closes the blinds and meanwhile gives me an instruction: Please strip down to your underwear.

Fast forward. Summer twenty-three. I yet again type "When is the self-determination law coming?" into the search engine. 1st result: the website of the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency with a text by the Federal Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Ferda Ataman: it says, among other things:

Quote:

"It is good that the Self-Determination Act is now coming and replacing the unconstitutional Transsexual Act. This was long overdue. The fact that people will be able

to have their gender registration and first names adjusted in a self-determined way in the future is an important step for gender diversity in a democracy." End of quote

According to Ferda Ataman, the self-determination law is supposed to give trans, non-binary and intersex people in Germany the protection and rights they have long had in other countries.

Protected and entitled I feel not, as I stand twenty-eight in the psychiatric-neurological doctor's office and consider whether I should comply with the request of the doctor and present myself to her in my surely washed-out underwear, so that I can finally change the name on my passport, for heaven's sake, and have not thrown 1500,00€ out of the window; OR whether I bet on risk.

She looks at me with anticipation when I say, "What's the point of me taking my clothes off?"

That is part of the assessment, is the answer. This is not a substantive reason and I start again and explain that it does not make sense to me.

She wants to see if I have self-injuries on my thighs. I tell her an easier way to find out would be to just ask me about it (thinking though: it's honestly none of her business). But she doesn't seem to trust the statements of trans* people anyway.

The implied mistrust in the new draft law on self-ID is also criticized by Ferda Ataman: From her point of view, the current draft law of the Minister of Justice Marco Buschmann has to be improved [...].

Quote

"For example, the self-determination law must not give the impression that one must not always take the gender identity of trans people so precisely, for example when they use services [...] The reference to the domiciliary rights in the draft law is therefore superfluous. The example of women's saunas was particularly often used in public discourse. [...] To portray trans women as a danger instead of as worthy of protection is wrong and infamous."* End of quote

Summer Twenty Eighteen: I keep my clothes on. Briefly and succinctly, I explain the doctor the landscape of the scars on my body and wonder what she will conclude from this and whether she will give me a hard time in the assessment due to this. After the conversation, I feel stirred up and call my therapist who fortunately answers the phone and manages to calm me down.

Today: my ID has been changed long ago. Despite everything, the assessment was in my favor. I.e., the doctor confirmed to the court that I have been under the compulsion to live according to transsexual ideas for at least three years and that this will most likely not change.

I do not understand this world: some want that us trans* people undress in order to examine who we are. Yet, in the sauna we should keep our clothes on or best of all, not go in the first place.

Perhaps, cis people envy us about the adventurous and exciting journey of life which being trans* or being non-binary can be. Therefore, they might fill our way with smaller and larger humiliations.

I cannot find a concrete date when the new law can finally be expected. Delays, again and again.

We have enough, Mister Buschmann!!!

We take off our clothes when we want it!!!

We keep our clothes on when we want it!!!

Stop forced assessments!!!

Bring on the self-determination!!!

Pride 2023

Massive trigger warning for this Speech



Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in Afghanistan, and others who do not conform to rigid gender norms, have faced an increasingly desperate situation and grave threats to their safety and lives since the Taliban took full control of the country on August 15, 2021.[1]

Afghanistan was a dangerous place for LGBT people well before the Taliban recaptured Kabul in 2021. In 2018, the government of President Ashraf Ghani passed a law that explicitly criminalized same-sex sexual relations, and the previous penal code included vague language widely interpreted as making same-sex relations a criminal offense.[2] LGBT people experienced many abuses because of their sexual orientation or gender identity prior to the Taliban's return to power, including sexual violence, child and forced marriage, physical violence from their families and others, expulsion from schools, blackmail, and being outed. Many were forced to conceal key aspects of their identity from society and from family, friends, and colleagues. However, when the Taliban, which had been in power from 1996 to late 2001, regained control of the country in August 2021, the situation dramatically worsened.

The evacuation of people at extreme risk in Afghanistan is nowhere near over. All governments have an obligation to promptly and fairly process asylum claims, including those from LGBT Afghans who fear persecution under the Taliban. Whether LGBT people are seeking to flee directly from Afghanistan or from a nearby country, nations supporting the human rights of LGBT people should create safe and legal pathways for entry and assist in resettlement. Nations that sent military forces to Afghanistan over the last 20 years have a particular responsibility to prevent people who face the risk of persecution from becoming stranded.

But evacuation will not be an option for most LGBT Afghans: it is challenging for Afghans who face persecution on any grounds to obtain the documentation and financial resources needed to leave the country, and LGBT people face additional barriers. For those who cannot or choose not to leave the country, it is urgent that their rights be protected within Afghanistan. The Taliban should end abuses against LGBT people and revise laws and regulations to ensure their equal rights. United Nations bodies and concerned governments should use whatever diplomatic leverage they have with the Taliban to do so. Social media platforms should urgently assist LGBT Afghans who are being targeted via their platforms. International donors and aid agencies should make delivering services that assist and protect LGBT people a priority, even when Taliban abuses complicate doing so.

Speech by Arezoo for Queering Defaults' Pride 2023

Queer-hostile and racist violence are not an isolated case in Germany. Again and again, we have to hide and protect ourselves, look for spaces that allow us to forget and forgive - spaces where we are allowed to be angry for a moment.

In the following, I would like to share a few excerpts of messages from a friend of mine from Iran with you. I have translated them for you.

"Here, for people from the LGBT+ community, life really is like as if you are in hell. (...) Who you are is like a crime and a secret that you have to carry with you until you leave this country. (...) They will consider you a bad and dirty person here. I have seen it myself in my family. Nobody can deal with it. Their minds were formed in such a way that there is no possibility they could accept us. They see us as really bad and dirty people. They cannot imagine that we are also just people. That is so cruel. (...) Many of us are sent to therapy, especially at a young age. They talk to us for so long that we begin to disregard ourselves. They kill our identity. It is as if you then murder a part of yourself. You will do things that your heart does not want to, you will behave in a way that you normally would not. The worst part about this is that people in the LGBT+ community do not have the opportunity to just leave this country. (...) We all live here like in a bubble until we have the opportunity to leave. And if we leave, we have to rebuild our lives from scratch. When I talk about this bubble, I mean that everything is fake and everything can be destroyed quickly. (...) Usually, families are ready for their child to die instead of their child staying like that. Why is that? Only for the child not to embarrass them. Their child should die so that the family does not lose its honor. (...)

There are very few who have left and have been able to have a somewhat normal life. Here, there is no normal life possible. Everybody - even those who do not feel like they belong to the LGBT+ community - feel like criminals. They feel like they have done something wrong. Nobody is a normal person here. We all live in fear and we are not ascribed the normal value of a human being. All the moments that were meant to be spent with our loved ones are filled with fear - fear of society, fear of family, fear that others will notice, fear of showing oneself and destroying one's future (...) and many have sacrificed themselves. They sacrificed themselves and then could not even be themselves. They became isolated, depressed, many killed themselves, many were rejected, they experienced the worst things - just because they could never be themselves."

From the beginning, I asked people from the LGBTQIA+ community in Iran what they would like to see us do here in Germany. Frequent feedback was that now is not the time. It is good that attention has been drawn to women, but to also question the binary system would be too much. All these people took to the streets not even for their own freedom, but mainly for the freedom of their fellows. WHEN should be the time? Everywhere, we hear that it is NOT YET time for our bodies! But exactly now we have to stand up for ourselves!!!!!!!

We all shouted "Woman*, Life, Freedom" but there also arose the call "Queer, Trans, Freedom" and I have carried that with me for a long time. I am a firm believer that it is our responsibility to stand up for all people, and especially for those who do not have the opportunity to speak up and bring their concerns to the world. Here, it is important to know that it is significantly more difficult for queer and non-binary people in Iran. There is a very different level of complexity. Their identity threatens not only themselves, but also family members and friends. People who do not fit into the binary and the heteronormative image run risk of honor killings and political persecution and violence. This means that we cannot simply mention their names, because in doing so we endanger them and their fellow human beings. We MUST all stand up for them.

This also applies in the case of Sareh Hamadani and Elham Choubdar, who have been imprisoned since 2021 and have been charged the highest sentence of death penalty on the grounds of "depravity on earth". This sentence or even "corruption on earth" is very typical in Iran for when people speak their truth or for freedom. Due to international attention and activists, the verdict was overturned but that does not change that they are still in prison. We must also not forget the conditions and treatment in prisons in Iran cannot be compared to the circumstances here. We must continue to be vocal and raise awareness about these cases because in the past we have seen that prisoners can be released or at least experience less violence. Therefore: let us be loud today not only for the grievances in Germany. Let us also be loud against global gender injustice.

I am disappointed that queerfeminist discourses here almost exclusively include white perspectives. If you are still not interested in us by now, then I don't know what else you need. If our future is to be intersectional, then we need to look at all people. I say it over and over again, your white and mainstream feminism does not do anything for us. You rejoice a little bit, you have brief moments of connection with each other, and then it might feel like the earth is a safer and more beautiful place. If you do not look beyond and see that we POC and people outside of Germany are part of it, then the earth will never be a better place.

Our human right is freedom without the fear of condemnation and harassment. Human rights should not be privileges and should not be an option. I never want to vote on human rights to exist. Human rights are mandatory and apply to all bodies, period!

All I would like to see, and in fact that is almost all we can do, is to raise, maintain and increase international attention. Here, I would like to briefly mention that in the month of May alone 142 people were executed by the Iranian regime – that means one person every five to six hours. This cannot continue. We and our government must shout out loudly! How could we be so silent? If we are not all freed, no one is free. We must stick together.

Mersi,
Arezoo

Cis-gays, where are you?

When we talk about queer movements, we also talk about questions of organizing. What are we organizing for or against, which perspectives are represented, which group structure and which forms of action are chosen. No less interesting is *who* is organizing and *how*. I have been active in queer-radical groups for several years now. For me, queer-radical in this context means not to strive for assimilation into the state and capitalist system. No rainbow capitalism, no diversity management. Instead, wanting to overcome patriarchal, cis-heteronormative and racist power structures. Mostly DIY, somewhat chaotic and radical soft. These groups are sometimes long-term structures like Queering Defaults; sometimes loose, temporary associations for specific occasions. They can differ greatly in their forms of action. Radical does not mean militant.

In recent years, I have repeatedly noticed the extremely low percentage of cis-gay and cis-bisexual men in queer-radical groups. Often there are only one or two, or none at all. In my experience, these groups are instead disproportionately carried by FLINTA*. I have often shared this observation with those around me and have always received much confirmation. The question that inevitably arises: Why is this so? Why do so few cis-gay and cis-bisexual men participate in queer-radical struggles? Cis-gays, where are you?

Is it because cis-gay and cis-bisexual men often occupy a more privileged position within the LGBTQIA+ community? Since the decriminalization of homosexuality and marriage and adoption equality in many countries, especially in the West, it has become possible for cis-gay and cis-bisexual men to lead a civil life with a spouse, children, dog and SUV. This is not to say that cis-gay and cis-bisexual men all live in prosperity or do not experience discrimination, violence, or trauma for being queer. Gayness as supposed effeminate masculinity continues to be socially sanctioned. Lately, we have been experiencing more of a backlash than an improvement. Moreover, marriage is also equal for trans* people or cis lesbians, for example. Nevertheless, cis-gay and cis-bisexual men are simply less affected, or not affected at all, by certain struggles that are commonplace for FLINTA*. For example, struggles against pathologization to be recognized in one's gender identity, against the constant questioning of one's very existence, against the criminalization of abortion, against the sexist and trans*phobic bullshit that is evident through remarks, assaults, fetishization, and not being taken seriously every day or against the also disproportionate burden of care

work. At first glance FLINTA* simply have more reasons to want to abolish the cis-heteronormative patriarchy and therefore to organize themselves more *radically*. Because it is not as if cis-gay and -bisexual men are not organized at all. It's just that when they are, it's often in reformist groups, organizations, and CSDs that are geared towards social assimilation, rather than in queer-radical contexts. At least that's my observation. This is nothing new, by the way. Many will be familiar with Sylvia Rivera's speech at NYC Pride in 1973, where she was booed by the cis-queer crowd. She wasn't about marriage and adoption; she was a radical, revolutionary anti-prison campaigner who, with Marsha P. Johnson, cared for outcast and homeless trans* people. The disconnect between LGBTQIA+ striving for assimilation or actual liberation quickly became clear.

However, I also believe that a blanket distinction between cis-male and FLINTA* falls short. It's too crude, unhelpful. Because although our own bubbles may sometimes make it feel a little different, it's not possible to infer a political stance based on a person's sexuality and/or gender identity. Or how radical a person is. Especially in trans* studies there are some voices that reject exactly this assumed connection. Not every trans* person strives for social revolution or is politically organized. Many simply want to exist in peace - and that is damn legitimate. And it's just as wrong to assume that cis-gays would automatically be especially privileged compared to trans* queers and would all have retreated into the private sphere after the so-called "marriage for all". Sure, there will be those, but there are also bourgeois FLINTA*. Generalizations do not help to forge the alliances that are so important and to understand organizing differences or intersectional experiences of discrimination that go beyond gender identity.

Mutual organizing also needs shared goals. Is it possible that these are not always present? Especially when it comes to fighting trans*phobia, cis-gay and cis-bisexual men are not directly affected themselves. The common goal and thus the reason to participate is missing. But isn't solidarity about not having to be directly affected in order to participate in struggles and support them? To be honest, I still demand that cis-gay and cis-bisexual men stand up for trans* people in the same way as trans* people have contributed significantly to the legal equality of cis-gays. There is no LGB without the T!

Besides, the overall capitalist, patriarchal and cis-heteronormative bullshit concerns us all. No matter if cis or trans, gay or straight. The struggle for queer liberation is not over just because some LGBTQIA+ have the opportunity to make themselves comfortable in the established system. Struggles are interconnected. Not only within the queer community, but beyond it, queer liberation is not possible without anti-capitalist, anti-racist, anti-semitic, anti-sexist, anti-ableist, and many more struggles. This conviction has shaped Queering Defaults for four years now. One struggle, one fight!

So should cis-gay and cis-bisexual men feel morally obligated to participate in queer radical groups and trans* struggles? I am torn. On the one hand, I would like to see more solidarity and criticism of the system on the part of cis-gay and cis-bisexual men, and I even demand it. On the other hand, the feeling of moral obligation is not a sustainable drive. It rather leads to the fact that people participate who are actually not behind the issue.

Is the participation of cis-gay and cis-bisexual men in queer radical struggles even desirable? We had a panel just last week critiquing the FLINTA* acronym and its inclusions and exclusions. While many queer radical groups are not explicitly FLINTA* only -- Queering Defaults is not -- there are certain places and spaces where queers gather which are. These are thus not accessible to cis-gay and cis-bisexual men. Separatist spaces can be important and even necessary. I can see why sometimes we as FLINTA* just don't feel like sharing our spaces with cis dudes. At the same time, I guess that for many of us, our comrades with whom we do politics and are organized in groups are also our friends. We often find the people we want to organize with through parties, bars, and hangouts, or strengthen our social relationships with each other there. But if these spaces don't include certain groups, we may not meet again in plenum. So the fact that there are so few cis-gay and cis-bisexual men in queer radical groups may in part be a reflection of the separation of social spaces.

As you can tell, this speech is more about thinking out loud and reflects the conversations I've had on the topic. For I do not have a satisfactory answer. When I first thought about writing this speech, it was meant to be much angrier. A rant about how lacking in solidarity it is that many cis-gay and cis-bisexual men don't get involved in queer-radical groups, or how much they'd already conformed. Although I still feel this anger now and still feel it from time to time, in the end the speech remained rather mild. The question is more complicated than a rant. At best, the points I listed are all somewhat true. At the same time, the backlash

against queer emancipation is felt everywhere. We can look in horror at the US and the queerphobic legislations in some states. But also in Germany, queerphobic attacks and assaults have increased significantly in recent years. This violence can affect us all. This violence requires alliances. In addition, there is the racist normality, rise in cost and gentrification, more and more governments with fascist traits in all corners of the world, the climate catastrophe, cops who besiege cities and declare them control zones for days, and courts that send antifascists to jail for years for the necessary fight against neo-Nazis. Free Lina and all antifascists!

And that's why on the one hand I'm like: Hey, cis-gays and cis-bis, get active! Show solidarity! Stop making yourselves comfortable in this shitty system! Where are you? But on the other side I want to stretch out a hand. Because the air will become thinner for you, too. And if you feel that the place is closing in on you - you know where to find us.

Thank you very much.

Hi, I'm Tyra and I use my initial t, they/them or she/her as pronouns. Unlike at almost every CSD, there is space for the A-spectrum at Queering Defaults Pride. Unfortunately, that is not a given Thank you very much for that.

But what are the A-spectrums? They are spectrums such as aromanticism, asexuality, agenderism, aplatonicism or asensuality. In other words, spectra in which forms of attraction such as romantic, sexual, sensual or platonic attraction, or gender, are not present at all, a little, temporarily or only under certain circumstances. People who are not, for example, asexual, aromantic or agender are allosexual, alloromantic and allogenic. Often, we also speak of A-spec people. This comes from the short form of the English variant, i.e. A-Spectrum. I will also use this formulation.

Unfortunately, even many queer communities do not have A-Spec people on their radar and A-Spec people are made invisible, forgotten or even denied being queer. There is even a misconception that the A in LGBTQAI+ stands for Ally. In fact, the A stands for A-Spec. Moreover, it is often said that A-Spec people are not discriminated against.

Yes, okay, the likelihood of being insulted or physically attacked on the street is relatively low. Fascists don't think "oh, that person looks asexual, we'll show them now". The discrimination we experience is more subtle.

In our society there is a prevailing image of what a relationship should ideally look like. The romantic-sexual long-term relationship, if possible with the aim of living together and starting a family. If people are not interested in this, it is considered abnormal, weird or even sick. And that implies that A-Spec people are curable. But we aren't. We are incurably queer. So stop imposing your norms on us. How we have relationships and what we do with them is between us and our partners. We don't have to live exactly the way you think is right to be happy. There are people who simply have no interest in sex, physical closeness, friendship, or romantic relationships, and there are people who have no gender. Deal with it! And in the same way, there are asexuals, for example, who like to have sex. Stop gatekeeping labels!

And cis-hetero is not the opposite of queer. Inter and A-spec people can be cis-straight!

And finally stop this talk of "the right person." For some people there is no right person. And for others, there are several right persons.

Of course, a short speech at a demonstration does not do justice to the topic. Probably not even 5 hours would be enough. But I hope I could at least give you a little insight and arouse your interest.

Hi my lovelies! My name is James, I am 22 and I am trans, queer, chronically ill and disabled. I have thus experienced a lot of ableism and transphobia in my life. And I have been forced to realize just how similar the two are.

Being trans and chronically ill are extremely similar, especially when it comes to how people react to it. Both make many people very uncomfortable, they don't know if or how they should react to it. Many then choose to not think about these things at all. They operate under the motto of "If I don't talk or think about it, then it'll go away on its own." I have been told in conversations about both my transness and chronic illness that I'm just imagining these things, that I want attention, that they cannot see the causes for these things and thus, they do not exist. And so me and my needs are invisible. The people around me see a young man and assume that I have to be healthy, because young men are healthy people. Because of this, I have been asked to get up from my seat on the tram so an elderly person could sit down, all while I was holding my cane. Our society still has very clear ideas about how people have to look and act. And because of that, I often get to hear that I am not sick because I'm not bedridden, I am not disabled because I can walk and I am not trans because I do not present stereotypically masculine. So everything about me are things that no one wants to talk about because they challenge their world view.

Even in the medical field, which I am closely tied to because of both my transness and illnesses, I am often forced to hide the fact that I am trans and on hormone replacement therapy, even if it might be medically relevant, because I have to fear that I will not receive proper and treatment for my actual ailments simply because I am trans. When I was in hospital after surgery, the nurses and doctors were more concerned with which room I should be placed in than my actual recovery. I am forced to explain and defend myself to doctors and insurance companies over and over again. People often explain my own body to me even though I know that they are not right. I have gone to doctors with many ailments before just to be told "it's because of your other illnesses, it's a side effect" even though I know that my existing diseases feel different. I no longer want to have to explain myself in every single interaction I have. I no longer want to fight with people who are supposed to help me. I no longer want to have people who don't know what they're talking about explain my reality to me.

When I as a trans person cannot find doctors that I am comfortable around, and would rather endure weeks of pain and trying to get by on non-prescription pain meds than go see a doctor that will not take me seriously, then that is a structural problem. I need doctors that see me as a human, that know what it means that I am trans, and that I do not have to be scared of. I deserve it just as much as any other person to have my health taken seriously and treated well.

Even as a child, my situation quickly became clear to me. As a child, I was never a person. I was never an individual. For everyone, my family, in school, everywhere, I was just the sick kid. Before my coming of age party (*Jugendweihe*), my mother said to me: "If your skin does not get better, you won't be allowed to wear that dress. Everyone can see you skin disease! I don't want the other parents to pity me." That was what I was to my mother. Something pitiful. That was what was important. Hide your diseases. Don't embarrass us. You are not worth being seen because you are sick. And when I came out as trans, it was the same thing. Now, I was the trans person. Not a person. Not an individual. Just the trans guy. And I wasn't allowed to show or live that fact either. I was not allowed to out myself because my parents were afraid that it would reflect badly on them. We live in a society that sees the diversion from norms as something shameful. It's a society in which our voices are not heard. It's a society that is used to us feeling ashamed and hiding.

A society that does not acknowledge the needs of queer, chronically ill and disabled people, that does not take them seriously, mocks them and belittles them, is a society that wants to silence and oppress those people. But we will not back down, we will not let them take our voices, we are loud, we are proud and we deserve respect and freedom!

Speech by Act up Sud-Ouest for the Queering Defaults Pride in Germany

Act up Sud-Ouest celebrated its 30th anniversary in November 2022. The organisation had once set itself the goal of being founded in order to disappear at some point. Just as AIDS should have disappeared. Just as the discrimination faced by HIV-positive people, drug users, sex workers¹ and queer people² should have disappeared. Act up Sud-Ouest celebrated and looks back today on 30 years of struggles, anger, direct actions, expertise, learning, occupations and demonstrations. For over 30 years, Act up Sud-Ouest has worked to defend the rights and living conditions of HIV-positive people, LGBTI persons, detainees, migrants and the sick - wherever they are and wherever they come from - and to fight for access to healthcare and for the rights of all. Because even today, anti-LGBTI, HIV-positive stigmatising³ and racist violence is on the rise instead of having stopped. The backward-looking and reactionary policies and ideologies pursued by the French state and its institutions continue to reproduce and reinforce this violence, as they do all over the world.

In 2020, Act up Sud-Ouest had already drawn attention to these repressive practices when the Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France was dissolved [by the state]. It is obvious that dissolving and threatening political associations that could criticise and disrupt the ruling order has become a regular practice of the government, especially on the part of the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Police Violence: Darmanin. This police violence is all the more intolerable because in 2013 the government allowed entire marches of anti-LGBTI and fascist collectives to march with impunity, rallying against the right to open marriage to same-sex couples. In Toulouse, Act Up Sud-Ouest resisted this far-right wave, while Jean-Luc Moudenc - mayor of Toulouse since his re-election the following year - marched in the front block of demonstrators against "marriage for all".

During the Covid crisis, Act Up Sud-Ouest called for the lifting of patents on vaccines that privately benefit the pharmaceutical industry, improved access to health care and free (HIV) testing. Government policies have had exactly the opposite effect, and worse, the lack of human and financial resources has contributed to a decrease in the number of HIV tests. What will the numbers of new infections be as a result of this decline in HIV testing?

¹ Literally: putes = sluts (as a term used by sex workers themselves).

² Literally: trans pédés bi-es gouines = people who are trans* gay bi or lesbian (term used similarly to " LGBT ", but also sometimes used as a self-identification and political term. "Queer" is not the exact translation).

³ Literally: sérophobes = hostility towards HIV-positive people (similar to " homophobia ", sérophobie describes a form of discrimination based on HIV status).

One of the lessons that the community collectives, including AUSO, learned from the AIDS years was the fundamental change in the relationship between patients and doctors, where the expertise of the diseased prevailed over that of the medical profession. The Denver Principles, the "nothing for us without us"⁴, are at the heart of Act Up Sud-Ouest's struggle. Today, with the neoliberal dismantling of public health, the exact opposite can be observed. Namely, decisions are being made with complete disregard for the actors of the collectives for community health and the patients/(drug) users.

Today, Macron and his world are putting forward a backward-looking pension reform that will make life even more precarious for the general population and is particularly dangerous for HIV-positive people. Because by 2020, the average age of death for people living with HIV will be 62. We LGBTI+ people, who are more likely to be affected by precarity, are fearfully concerned that our social rights will be rolled back with every reform. The only response the state sends now and in the future is nothing but its armed police again and again, hurting and maiming those who dare to question the existing order.

So, from the south-west of France, Act Up Sud-Ouest wishes you a wonderful Pride. May it be festive and rebellious, political and radical, on guard against the violent reprisals of the state. May it be solidary and communal! Nothing for you without you!

⁴ Literally: "rien pour nous sans nous" ; the Denver Principles were articulated in 1983 by the advisory committee of the People with AIDS