



Standing in
SOLIDARITY
with
WOMEN
and
QUEER
People

CPUSA WOMENS' COMMISSION



STOP THE
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Introduction

We are at a tipping point for oppression faced by women and the LGBTQIA+ community, and these struggles are particularly acute for working class people. Under the Trump administration, queer women and women of color face intensified violence that degrades basic human rights and bodily autonomy for all. Bans on abortion and birth control serve a racist agenda based in eugenics. Restrictions on hormone therapy and bathroom use for transgender people shrinks universal access to shared public amenities we all deserve. Attacks on queer sexuality as a legal right erodes guarantees for basic civil rights. Everyone loses from a rise in misogyny and homophobia.

One's gender expression and sexuality should not be a straightjacket dictated from above. We love through care, empathy and vulnerability, not as a rigid code of behavior that polices our survival. Many of us have learned that when we break conventions, we gain deeper connections with our neighbors, friends and loved ones. Loneliness is a condition of capitalism.

When we live according to socialist values of common struggles to renew ourselves and thrive, we build our communities from the ground up. Together, we make possible the freedom to develop one's own kin networks, to express gender in an open and unpunished way, and to enact a wide range of cultural strengths of when, how and whether to bear and raise children. We, the working class, have the creativity, strength and resources to build the world we need.

The truth is that misogyny is a powerful tool to divide our multi-racial, multi-generational, multi-gender, multi-sexuality working class. Capitalists profit from the superexploitation

of women and LGBTQIA+ workers, paying them below the prevailing minimum wage. The oppressive rhetoric around women's traditional roles, around heterosexuality as the only permissible sexuality and around transgender identities as threatening of children are all attempts to bind the working class to the interests of wealthy individuals and corporations.

By understanding the anti-women, anti-LGBTQIA+ movements and their tactics, we can develop stronger strategies to unify all working class people through our fight for women and queer people. Our vision for socialism depends upon the civil, political, cultural and economic rights that support the well-being of everyone.

The Struggles of Women

These attacks on basic rights for women and queer people aren't new to Trump and the Project 2025 rightwing agenda, but have been in the works for many years. Texas passed a law in 2022, the so-called "Heartbeat Act" that made it illegal to receive an abortion after the detection of a fetal heartbeat. This often happens before a woman even knows she is pregnant, and even though there are carve-outs to protect the life of a mother, in reality doctors are so afraid of legal repercussions that they will refuse to perform abortions at all.

Many other states have passed similar laws, and the Trump administration shares this goal on the federal level, as shown when Trump's Supreme Court nominees overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022. All the talk about traditional values masks the truth: recreating old-fashioned gender roles will not improve society. Instead, it will further exploit all women under capitalism, especially women of color, as unpaid and under-paid workers are granted no control over their bodies.

Women have never been silent in the face of these attacks. Early movements for women's basic rights to decide their own health choices regardless of their race or class status, to work for equal pay, to open a bank account and to divorce at will provide a powerful example of what we can win when we unite together with the entire working class.

There are well-funded people and organizations all around us that spout anti-women talking points. Trad-wife influencers create an illusion of how good "traditional" life was, in order to make money. Andrew Tate and Nick Fuentes and so many other right-wing influencers wish for women to be submissive, obediently have and raise men's children, and be primped and dressed for the male gaze. These influencers carry on their own money-making activities with the support of rich right-wing capitalists. Capitalists of this alignment are responsible for other conservative platforms too, such as Prager "University", Turning Point USA and a wide network of anti-women, anti-worker media.

But we can never forget: while they control access to capital and the means of production, we are the workers in all of our multiplicity who generate wealth. All women, trans or cis, Black, Brown, or white, suffer together from this rise in misogyny. In fact, the attacks on trans women influence and are influenced by the attempts to limit the rights of women in general. The fear and disapproval of a masculine woman is similar to what a trans woman may face in parts of her life, and trans women feel the same pressure to conform to traditional feminine qualities as cisgender women. "Old-fashioned" ideas about women only hold them back and keep them from being themselves.

These backwards views and policies, if we think them through, leave no role for women in society or the economy except

serving men and having children. Likewise, capital consistently relegates women to lower-paying jobs. Women of color in particular face attacks on their employment and are faced with precarious work prospects. This is especially true for work overwhelmingly done by immigrant women and women of color, like domestic work - an occupation which is explicitly excluded from union provisions in labor laws. This coincides with rising attacks on Black women's employment through attacks on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. When we refuse the ongoing attacks to fire Black women who hold decision making positions, particularly those in union leadership, government and in the law, everyone shares the victory.

The Struggles of the Queer Community

When we talk about the 'queer' community, we mean anyone whose experience with gender, sex, sexuality, romantic relationships, or anything else related to these things, lies outside the traditional norms. Likewise, when we say LGBTQIA+ we mean all those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual. This community, which has made strides toward equality, is now seeing much of that acceptance disappear. We are in the middle of a terrible surge of misogyny, anti-communism, and anti-queer propaganda, backed up by the billionaire class. The precarity of these rights under our present anti-democratic backlash shows the limitation of these reforms in our current system, and why we need a socialist solution to these struggles.

The same capitalist groups that have funded the attack on women have a hand in the assault on queer people. Online moderation that protected queer people being called by slurs

is gone on many prominent websites, including those owned by Meta like Facebook and Instagram, and algorithms are being trained to favor right-wing viewpoints. This is intentional. The top capitalist leaders of the tech industry, the Zuckerbergs and Bezos's of the world, have made a conscious decision to withdraw the already-inadequate protection ceded to queer people in the most important online spaces in our society.

Also, some prominent members of the Democratic Party have taken a similar line on trans rights. They try to find accommodation with the fascist media influencers who have been waging this war on the queer community. We roundly condemn this blatant opportunism, which tries to blame transgender people for the Democrats' 2024 election loss.

Groups such as the American Family Association channel the wealth of these and other capitalists into organized



campaigns, write legislation to pass in state legislatures, and much more. The state and federal governments, under fascist control, wield state power to abolish and illegalize the legal provisions made for the queer community, even as inadequate as they were. This includes DEI, non-profits, medical providers, rainbows painted on streets, queer affiliate groups, birth certificate amendments, HIV-AIDS prevention programs, and subject matter at universities and public schools. All are up for elimination, under a concentrated, well-funded legal attack. As usual, the working class parts of these groups bear the brunt of this assault.

Michigan State Representative Josh Schriver recently introduced H.B. 4938, the “Anticorruption of Public Morals Act”. The act bans VPNs and encrypted tunneling methods to maintain online privacy, but worse it specifically bans anything that is “...a depiction, description, or simulation...that includes a disconnection between biology and gender by an individual of 1 biological sex imitating, depicting, or representing himself or herself to be of the other biological sex by means of a combination of attire, cosmetology, or prosthetics, or as having a reproductive nature contrary to the individual’s biological sex.” This act does not just ban “pornography”, but transgender people from even existing on the Internet or sharing content online. In fact, any crossdressing or gender variance at all would result in criminal penalties, no matter the person’s identity. This law would establish a special taskforce to enforce this, putting transgender people on the same level as child pornographers in the eyes of law enforcement.

On the whole, this wide-ranging campaign does not aim to make queer people serve men in the same way as it does cisgender women. Rather, it wants nothing less than to take away their ability to exist openly in public and live an authentic life.

The Common Threads

What unifies the women's and queer struggle? It is essential for us to see what they have in common, their real-life basis, and how they both fit into the bigger fight of the working class. First, we need to consider what gender has to do with work and society. When we look at how people live, we can say that there are reproductive roles, based on sex and childbirth, and gender or social roles, which may or may not match up exactly with those reproductive roles. Often, conservatives argue that people should be divided on their reproductive roles and this should decide everything else about how they live their life. Women face this kind of thinking when they are told they must wear dresses and otherwise be 'pretty' even when they don't want to, when they feel peer-pressured to go into certain careers or have no career at all, or when they look for a romantic partner.

Queer people face these kinds of expectations too, especially because they live very differently from our society's stereotypes based on reproductive roles. When someone loves someone from the same gender, or transitions to socially live in a different gender, they make us question the assumption that your life should be decided by your anatomy.

But what exactly is gender? We could just say it is that experience of social roles, related but not necessarily exactly corresponding to reproductive roles, and leave it at that, but that doesn't really provide a very clear picture of its material origins or why it doesn't necessarily correspond exactly to reproductive roles. However, if we examine the historical development of gender itself, not only could we develop a much clearer picture of exactly what gender is, we would also

be able to see just how closely related and intertwined these two struggles really are, maybe even to the point that they are one struggle.

Capitalism relies on the nuclear family to make sure that there are still workers (children) and that capitalists can minimize their costs by placing the burden of care and responsibility on the people who live in that home. One person in this concept, often a man, is a breadwinner, and the woman cleans the home, nourishes workers and raises children. To replenish capitalism, the nuclear family with its gendered roles carries the labor and costs of reproducing workers.

Queer people and women, once again, contradict this way of thinking in our day to day lives. We all know working single moms, women who choose to not have children, transgender people, or gay couples. Working single moms often take on the “man’s” role, childless women don’t produce new workers for society, and gay or trans people can’t have kids in the “traditional” way. Trans people take this further by totally rejecting their role in society being based on their biology at birth. As a result, they are often victims of violence at the hands of domestic partners, vigilantes, and state surveillance. For example, several state governments and federal agencies have begun compiling lists of transgender residents. Others are persecuting people who seek reproductive care, one of the immediate consequences of the recent overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. The same forces are responsible for the wholesale attack on women and queer people’s rights.

Our class—the working class—is at the forefront of the ongoing resistance.

Call to Action

We denounce limiting women’s freedom, the singling out of queer people, the focus of the right wing’s repression and rhetoric on women and trans people, especially trans women, and the whole racist, sexist, capitalist system that provided an opening for it.

We must fight for the right to bodily autonomy and identity for all women and queer people. This must be in addition to our work in building unions and fighting racism in all of its forms, since these issues are all connected. Capitalism subjects our lives and minds to constant discipline that limits our ability to grow. The struggle for working LGBTQIA+ people and women helps us see the path to a better, more free future, to the “all-round development of the individual” that Karl Marx wanted to bring about through Communism. We must act to make it real.





WE ARE FIGHTING FOR OUR FUTURE: DEMOCRACY, EQUALITY, SOCIALISM

We fight for systemic transformation that empowers working people, protects civil rights and civil liberties, dismantles dismantling structural racism and sexism and makes real the promise of liberty and justice for all. It's us against the billionaires. Let's join together. We've nothing to lose but our chains. Join us, join with us in the fight for working-class power and a socialist USA!

