

What is Trans liberation?

A panel discussion by Resisting Transphobia in Edinburgh.

20th Oct 2023

proud I love this you're so
ready are we ready are we I'm
gonna Shuffle Just Around this way so I
can see you all just in terms of
health and safety you can get out to
the lose either through that door or the
one at the back the fire exits are where
you came in and out this way this is
like my air hostess training and
the other we do have firsters in the
room so if you are struggling for
whatever reason and need a hand you can
head out to this corner and at that door
or again make yourself known heading out
the back and then just in terms of
general rules of discussion we are
here tonight to have a discussion we've
got our panelists this is also an
opportunity to hear from you and to
ask questions we do have a safer spaces

policy

that boils down to be kind and be
conscious of who else is in the room
and if we find or if I find basically
that someone is being
needlessly cruel or Petty or
disrespectful then the mic will be
swiftly removed so I think that's
the main housekeeping we are going to
have a wee bit of discussion and then
I'm going to bring the mic out to you
and then we're also going to hear from
some people who are doing some
organizing who are going to tell us a
little bit about what they're going to
do so I'm going to start with just
a a brief reading for anyone who doesn't
know who resisting transphobia in
Edinburgh is who were the real
organizers for this and Lighthouse
was merely facilitating so resisting
transphobia in Edinburgh is a Grassroots
umbrella group containing people from
many organizations and none
taking action through different member
instigated projects that include

education protests art and more to bring
about societal change and to show
solidarity and support to other
marginalized groups I'd encourage
everyone here to find the soul join
us find a way of getting stuck in and
now I'm just going to run through
quickly some bios for our panel and then
I'm going to go through the questions
that we have already introduced you so
first start we have Leslie on the end
he is a trans Man based in Edinburgh a
member of unite Scotland's LGBT
committee and a national organizer for
rs21 which is revolutionary socialism in
the 21st century rs21 recently
published the pamphlet fighting
transphobia which you can find on pet at
the back next up we have Nat Nat
is a poet and activist scholar involved
in queer and transactivism for over a a
decade now organized with Edinburgh
action for Trans Health Mutual Aid trans
Edinburgh and queer resistant she is the
author of four books of poetry and then
we've got Tilly she is an illustrator

musician and local transwoman about town

she is an active organizer with the

international workers of the world in

the bar industry Tilly is is passionate

about the power of intersectional

organizing and overcoming barriers to

unionizing you can read some of her work

through the link on the website and

finally the wonderful Gina she is an

interdisciplinary researcher tutor and

lecturer in trans studies queer studies

and English literature at the University

of Edinburgh as well as being an

academic and manager of ss she lectures

and publishes on trans issues relating

to trans cultural production media

studies and digital Humanities will you

all join me in putting your hands

together for tonight's

panel

so just to keep it nice and simple to

start off we've got the big old question

what is trans Liberation what's the

difference between trans rights and

trans Liberation and I think maybe just

to sort of set things up there if you

can talk each a little bit about what
trans Liberation means to you personally
and what you think trans Liberation
means in terms of the bigger politics
shall we I'm going to kick it to the
end and then we can work our way down so
Leslie

first just ack up to the green sorry
thank you very much Mari and thank you
very much indeed to lighthous books for
so kindly hosting this event well
what does trans liberation mean to me
personally I suppose it just means the
right to be
myself and I think the thing is that
while we all recognize it's very
important to defend and fight for Trans
rights thinking obviously of the gender
recognition of form both Scotland which
the Tories nuked at the beginning of
this year I mean obviously it's
important to try and campaign for these
sort of Rights but rights are something
that can be taken away as well as given
so for me it's very important to look
beyond the rights thing and think about

what real Liberation means and I think
it's basically addressing issues that
don't just affect trans and nonbinary
people but when we look at the the
patriarchy that we have in the
capitalist system that we have now women
are oppressed we want to deal with that
we want to smash patriarchy we want to
have real Liberation for women and we
also want to stop the fact that children
at the moment are regarded as the
property of the family and ultimately of
the state children have rights trans
trans kids have rights but trans kids
like all of us need
liberation thank
you I'm going to try and jump into what
Les's just put into the room for me I
think Liberation is about it I've
been echoing some words from my
collaborator make Vander drift with
co-writing a book and make it's always
like it's about total Liberation for
everyone right which is from Robin Kelly
who's a really great black black studies
scholar total Liberation for everyone so

we're also talking about it's already
it's already about an intersectional
form of Liberation because it's about
oppression from gendered forms of
violence like generally in a broader
sense it's about Liberation from forms
of structural violence it's from about
Liberation from the state it's also
about you know thinking through how
trans Liberation is already rooted in
histories of disability Justice it's
rooted in anticolonial histories which
I'm going to talk about in a minute but
not in this point and really also
thinking about yeah I mean okay also you
know just for a minute
there's a genocide going on in Gaza
right the Palestinian Liberation is
about trans Liberation trans Liberation
should be about Palestinian
Liberation this is about Liberation
from forms of colonial oppression and
violence that are ongoing throughout the
world
and what do I want to say in terms of
Rights I think we really have to be have

to have a think about what I I am quite
frustrated about a general consensus of
like or a general thing I see which is
like you know we all want trans rights
sure but there's something about what
we're actually asking for and thinking
through the implications of that like
sure legal gender recognition is great
there's a question of like how far
that's going to take us rights are
really not necessarily going to liberate
us from the state if the state is a form
of violence if the state is racist if
the state is capitalist colonialist NE
Li AI incarcerating people you know
trans Liberation is about all of those
things as well it's also trans
Liberation is abolitionist in this sense
so like I'm not I'm yeah I'm not
convinced that the state are going to
liberate us and if we're going to wait
around for the state to do
that it's only going to liberate the
most privileged of us it's only going to
make sure that white middle class people
end up comfortable at the end of this

and we've seen that with what's happened
with gay marriage you know and that's
not to dis gay marriage but is to say
like it's interesting to see how it's
what has happened to our aquarium trans
movement politically and in terms of
like you know where it's got us like
it's got strategic uses but yeah so I'm
I'm a bit cautious in that question
around like what kind of rights are we
asking for I think there's much more to
say if we're talking about Healthcare if
we're talking about these things that
really have like how how do rights
seriously materially affect
us

I think yeah I think I I think I want
to like really just dovetail what with
what that and and and Leslie have been
saying I think for me the thing about
trans rights is when we get equality
with the S gender people what's next you
know the fact of the matter is is is can
s gender people really be said to be
liberated can anyone really said be said
to be liberated when we spend most of

our day is doing wage labor for a
dictator in the workplace when we
spend a a good amount of our money
paying off a landlord in our homes uh
Liberation for Trans people I believe
means Liberation from those things
means and means Liberation from like
racial injustices and from colonialism I
think as long
as as long as oppression exists we can
never really be said to be liberated and
I think there is a real danger in
focusing solely
on an individual group's rights because
if we if we do that we're we're missing
out on the bigger picture that like you
know with the gr reforms for instance
what we've basically fought for is the
and what we are fighting for is the
government to have a big special list of
trans people and personally I don't
I'm not going to go for a GRC because I
don't really want the government to have
a big list with me on it
and but the fact of the matter is is
it's very unlikely that say homeless

trans people or immigrant trans
people Asylum Seeker trans people are
going to be able to get on those lists
and are going to be able to get those
system systemic benefits because the
way that neoliberal Society works is it
punishes people who do not fit in a mold
in a in a form of Society wide
eugenics
so I think to to kind of circle back
I'm getting a little offbeat yeah I
think trans Liberation for me means the
liberation of all mankind and that is
simultaneously a big thing but I think
something that's
very something that we can fight for in
our everyday lives and that's
something that we'll get to soon I'm
sure
okay it's very difficult to add anything
because Tilly Leslie and not have talked
so well so what I would like to say
is before this this evening it was
actually quite troubling for me because
I realized I didn't know what trans
Liberation means I knew what trans

rights meant I've lived in a kind of
political
Silo the these past five or six years
during the transoral panic and to be
honest the word Liberation was never
part of my vocabulary it was survival
and maybe a lot of trans people out
there can kind of identify with that as
it progressively has got worse and we've
seen the social attitude survey
increasingly showed that larger numbers
of the British public are now turning
hostile against trans
people and so my politics has been based
almost around George Square it is
literally it's almost geographical it's
in Edinburgh University it's dealing
with the anti activism there it's going
it's creating protrans events it's it's
just about trying to preserve what we
have protect react defend it's not
anything inspiring and the agenda has in
some ways been set by anti-trans people
this past 5 years and I've been as
guilty as anybody in just thinking about
that so trans

Liberation is this whole new thing and I've been trying to study and do my homework for for today and thinking what does that even mean mean and off the bat I think it means asking some very difficult questions because I'm kind of protected in a kind of Silo of very protrans activism with allies people who know the right vocabulary who know my pronoun Sorry by the way Gina she her right there we go so but mass movements solidarity movements that means working with the larger British public which increasingly is becoming transphobic so there are some really difficult questions to ask about Liberation and Liberation movements that I'm sure we'll talk about this evening on which socialists and people on the left are having these conversations all the time now because I think there's a realization just talking about identity in itself it's really important to look after and protect minorities but in itself it's not enough we need something bigger than just rights as the three of

the speakers have have talked about so
cap and I'm sure we'll talk about that
this evening so trans Liberation for
me is a scary topic which means coming
out of The Silo and thinking about how
do we engage publicly with the really
big structural questions of who do we
deal with and who do we work with in a
politics of of

[Applause]

solidarity thank you all for such
brilliant scene setting and I think I
wanted to lead on from that into this
question of History both a history of
trans
Liberation but a a history that is
both recent and goes back generations
and hundreds of years of our very
understanding of what it is to be free
and what it is to be human that has
brought us into a room together
collecting all these struggles and
finding those common threads so that we
can have for people who are committed to
trans Liberation talking about people
being bombed in Gaza and about people

being evicted from their homes and about
all of those very deliberate cruelties
of the world that we exist in so just
sort of looking back at that history and
placing this moment of trans Liberation
in that history whether personally or
on on the bigger picture I'll bump down
the line but I'm going to start
with you to take us a little bit
back through the
history yeah so I guess for me it's
always this question around on like what
does liberation mean where where does
the grammar or the idea of Liberation
come from and like historically speaking
like the the language of Liberation this
dialogue this discourse of Liberation
this idea of what Liberation
involves comes from anticolonial
movements it comes from Anti-Imperialist
movements you know it comes from like
the the idea of a Liberation Front you
know like the Gay Liberation Front the
language of that is directly lifted from
the Vietnamese Liberation Front when you
know there was a resistance movement

against the US's Imperial imperialist
war in
Vietnam and in the in the 60s and there
was a whole Global movement around that
right and that's where the grammar of
Liberation came from in the sense of
women's Liberation Gay
Liberation and it's also coming out
of black and third world Liberation so
black and brown Liberation movements
that are all emerging at the same time
and within all of those contexts right
like the seeds of trans Liberation are
in there like trans Liberation and gay
liberations were never two separate
things you know we're talking about
Mar B Johnson Sylvia Rivera's work in
star in the late 60s early 70s after
Stonewall or in the moment of
Stonewall and you know their their fight
their like the language their whole
understanding of what Liberation means
is it's against this like racist sexist
white supremacist homophobic
transphobic form of of capitalism and of
governments so for me like Liberation is

about how do we destroy those things how
do we get rid of how do we make sure
those things no longer have power over
our lives and our
bodies and so then that's and that's
like okay so that's like the 60s and
into the 70s so yeah so that's I always
think about like we can always go back
to these things in the forms of like
strategies and ideas that
you know these Liberation movements
were say and there's and there's there's
so much in this moment of history as
well right there's also like mental
patients liberation of people who are
like fighting psychiatric incarceration
including LGBT people right who were
being routinely psychiatric routinely
incarcerated in hospitals and
simultaneously there was a movement for
for youth Liberation by miners you know
basically trying to liberate themselves
from parents and again like all and this
H Liberation all of these elements and
so like so within that there's a
struggle around gender and like how

trans like trans people like we bought
that that grammar of like okay so gender
is a key element of what's like of all
these forms of Oppression you know the
state somehow for some reason continues
to need gender in order for it to
function
so what do I want to then say I want to
say that this is then unfolding over the
last 50 years although it's also more
than that this like really interesting
links in the 19th century as well around
what's happening with colonialism and
the oppression of trans people and you
know and it all goes back to the the
project of the British Empire and you
know the laws against homophobia and and
trans expression that we exported like
Britain exported across the world I
guess I'm also thinking about one of the
key people who also stands out for me
when thinking about histories of trans
Liberation is Leslie Feinberg who I
think passed away like this week right
like in 20 2016 2015 and lesie
fineberg was like was you know was like

remembered me as a revolutionary
communist trade unionist
organizer who was working within often
very gendered but often very queer very
trans workplaces trying to fight again
exactly these kinds of Union oppression
that til is talking about tonight and so
within all of this it's like trans
liberation's always been these it's like
always been about disability Justice
it's always been about AB it's always
been about working class Liberation and
so that's for me that's that's really
what the history is about and I think
like if we can't think about how we
maybe are reproducing those forms of uh
oppression in the kinds of organizing we
do that's a real also a real problem and
like we're all involved in this you know
we all benefit from this this capitalist
nation state that we find ourselves
within
tonight thanks Matt right
[Applause]
to to on a little bit about what
what Nat said at the end there I do

think that it's it's very easy to
forget that history and and even the
more recent history the one issue
that we in the union have been have
dealt with historically and have been
dealing with about you know have been
have been making better progress on
recently

is very often you see this sort of
turnover and and this this can be in
any liberationist or or anti- capitalist
movement you see this thing where people
come along they get very engaged and
some circumstance changes in their life
and they leave leaving all the
experience that they had along with them
and I believe that you know this is
it's really really important to hold on
to that knowledge and and to share it
down and that's one of the reasons why I
very much believe that like you know we
need to older activists and stuff we
need like folks who have experience and
and they have to talk about pass that
experience on

but yeah I had another thing I

totally forgot I think that's such an important point to make just that those traditions of and that go down and generation after generation that knowledge that should get passed down how do we make sure that we're keeping those links alive that we're creating cross-generational networks that are inviting in that knowledge and giving it the right to be seen of as you know Specialists or bringing something to the table and not just this idea of well you were there back then but there's a whole new age you reminded me what I was going to say great sorry in the union one thing that we do to address this is basically we kind of do these monthly meetups where we invite like activists organizers and and even activists from other unions who haven't who who have been going for a long time and then some folks who who have like are relatively new to all this with the idea that like and you know we set a theme and we just kind of have a conversation around a table around it and even

something as simple as that is actually really really good because every time I Come Away Learning something whether it's an interesting we piece of history about Leslie's backstory or whether it's like you know an organizing technique I hadn't thought of for instance a good friend of mine has been and they've been thinking of writing it up has been really talking about this like a going along kind of method of organizing which really involves just like showing up to things and being from an organization but like also like trying really hard to build social bonds and and then you know using those social bonds as a way to re to like organize into revolutionary action I love that go ahead lesie very quickly I mean how could I follow these excellent speakers but just something occurred to me uh when Nat was talking at the end about you know capitalism wantan to keep you know the gender roles and the family going I mean I think it's not just the

case I mean people talk a lot quite
rightly about the Tories picking on
trans and nonbinary people as a using us
as a political football but I think
there's actually material reason
why this is happening I think it was
in the pamphlet here I read that
capitalist class is actually really
worried and at least in countries
like Britain and the US OFA about the
fact that so many young people are
identifying as trans non-binary LGBT
plus queer in some way or other and this
is obviously a massive threat from their
point of view to the reproduction of
Labor because if we don't have the
current kind of family setup in which
basically women are doing an awful lot
of unpaid work I mean it's not always
women but it's generally women that are
doing a lot of unpaid work in the home
and also often you know
just doing four or five jobs most what
not getting any money for and if they
didn't have that unpaid work if women
weren't you know made to

be subordinate in many cases to men in the family setup and that's not to say that all men are sexist by the way but you know the way they're like it to be it's like the man's there the woman does what the man tells them and the kidss are right doing there they do what the parents tell them particularly the father and that is very convenient because basically they go on get they got they get the next generation of Labor power and if they didn't get a next generation of Labor power if people start setting up alternative ways of living alternative family setups chosen families if you like getting away from this capitalist family setup which is actually quite recent I mean really just goes back to the mid 19th century if I remember rightly they would really be struggling so they do actually we are actually a threat and that I think is one of the reasons why they hate us not just the fact that you know they can say nasty things about us to distract from the cost of living crisis and the fact

that planets going up in flames and
drowning in floods anyway thank you

Leslie

Gina thank

you yeah so I'm kind of splitting two

different places with this idea of

history and the

Contemporary yeah there's loads of great

history and when you look into it like

for example there was an anti-trans

screening of a film an anti-trans film

in Edinburgh in April and in December

and I was doing some research about

other places where screenings have been

and one of the classic examples is birth

for nation around

1915 very very racist film which had

huge resonance it boosted the

membership of the KKK basically it

allowed it became like a recruiting tool

so this this public screening was was a

very powerful tool for for basically

intimidating black and brown people

in the US and they

protested they worked a lot of the most

effective protests it seemed was when

they got in Coalition with Catholics
and Jews because the the KKK hated all
of them and a lot of the more more
successful protests were those
coalitional types and that's when you
look at those kinds of historical
examples of when there was something
gratuitously offensive and racist for
example that the mainstream media was
totally supportive of and the
majority of white people of course was
were supportive of but there were
coalitions that came together to protest
you look at that kind of history and you
realize you see this sense of mutuality
of we're all human beings and these
different minority groups although I'm
Not For a Moment comparing trans people
to
post reconstruction USA the black
community but there are all these
different Liberation movements that have
have had to find tactics to find
Liberation and it's interesting it's
always beneficial to look into the past
for ideas in the present another

really good example the Black Panthers
in the this I think this was in the
1960s so it was a socialist Black
Liberation movement and they they went
to the Appalachians in eastern US
very kind of white workingclass area
there's a lot of racism they worked
with people from the appalachi it
was a patriot movement or they had the
Confederate flag as that symbol that
wouldn't have been easy for the Black
Panthers and again it's it's about this
idea of difficult conversations
difficult coalitions but by the end
this this white group that the Black
Panthers were working with in terms of
solidarity politics they decided to
get rid of the the Confederate flag as
their symbol out of respect for the
Black Panthers after working with them
so you have these historical moments
that we can learn a lot from and be
inspired by in terms of the
Contemporary I have such a shallow
kind of embarrassing set of tastes that
I I just want to briefly share because

where where I learned about Liberation
was not these examples to begin with it
was Contra points which is a
YouTube video essayist some of you might
watch Contra points I love Contra points
but I I know not everybody does but
she's this well for me she's this
amazing trans video essayist and she I
know in 2021 she said let's adopt this
new slogan of trans Liberation now and I
did notice on Twitter it started a trend
so I don't know if Contra points
started this new wave but it was
different so I just want to say that
because it is kind of confusing this
idea that there's only one meaning of
trans Liberation I got my first Taste of
trans Liberation through Contra points
and it is a different slightly different
way basically for her it was about trans
politics she was Fed Up of the trans
women our women slogan because it
turns equality battles into basically
battles about validation and the
response of well what is a woman trans
women are not women that becomes the

discussion rather than for contrapoints
equality which is why she wanted to
adopt this slogan from the 1970s from
the Gay Liberation Front and so forth
of trans trans Liberation now so this is
something there are new cycles of this
happening on on Trans in these trans
counter publics Shan Fay her latest
book the trans transgender issue talks a
lot about this Liberation politics so
these new Cycles I I mean yeah I'm kind
of embarrassed that this is where I
learned about them first but basically
what it shows is as well there's a
dissatisfaction with some of the
strategy that maybe trans people have
been sucked into in terms of kind of
validation politics although I totally
understand it and given that the
anti-trans movement is all about saying
horrific things about for example trans
women or or about trans masculine
people as well
so yeah it's I think there is there
trans people have reached a point where
we need we need something new not

just new slogans New Concepts new new
forms of coalitional politics in
different ways because the status quo
hasn't really been working and so
yeah so basically trying to join up the
dots there are a lots of inspiring
examples in history that trans people
can turn to in terms of understanding
how we can we can broaden things and
yeah and Contra points this point as
well maybe we we should all always be
rethinking and thinking about what trans
people are doing right now what we can
do better what we can abandon what what
we can yeah new ideas so yeah just
wanted to say that thank
you

I go for it yeah pass to you okay I
so I did quite like so of what you
said about like coalitional organizing
obviously as a union organizer in the
bar industry there's going to be a
lot of lads homophobia is one of the
things that we do have to deal with when
we're organizing and I read this
really lovely article by an American

organizer in the iww named Colt
Thundercat the article has a swear word
in the title is it okay if I say that
yeah it's beyond you it's called
and basically the case that they made
in this article which I found very
Salient was when you're when you need
someone on your side there's the
Instinct almost when they say something
homophobic where they say something
transphobic
to just say right off and and just
get rid of them but in the long run
sometimes we actually need them on their
our side especially in a workplace and
one of the things that they
encouraged was this modes of organizing
it especially works better when you have
other folks that'll back you up but
trying to reach a connection for
instance
col who the author of the article
when they were talking about this
mentioned so the they they're gay
and they're Jewish so there was one
worker in particular who was also Jewish

but had was quite homophobic and they
kind of reached a mutual Accord through
you know their shared ancestry and then
said how would you like it if somebody
said that about that you know
and I think I I'm a a big proponent
of that kind of of that method of
organizing because I feel that the
majority of folks
when they have like some anti-tr view
it'll be something they've picked up but
they've not probably talked to a trans
person and then when you actually talk
to them like I don't the number of times
as a bartender I've had some be
transform to me is vastly dwarfed by the
number of times some extremely drunk but
well-meaning guy has been like oh you
know I think
everyone should just be able to live how
they want to live you know the East
Way t like one of the pubs that I
sometimes pop into I don't actually
drink and there only get orange juice
cuz their drinks are too expensive but
one of the guys there eating he I

remember once came in like wearing all these jewels and all these all this bling and that and I'm like I'm talking to him I'm like here Ian why are you wearing all these Jewels he's like oh well you come in here looking like an idiot all the time so I figured I might as well too and like I think I think sometimes like doing that sort of thing doing that sort of like reaching out to folks as if they're normal folk when you're actually talking to them well you realize everyone just has a story you know and everyone's their own person and by and large most people want to be nice and even if they have some objectionable views if you can find a way around that something that you've got in common with them like often you can actually build some kind of Coalition like often like you know like folks that you wouldn't he think oh you know he's a big hard man you know he's not going to be on my side but then actually you never know maybe he's got like a trans daughter or something you know but I

brilliant I'm going to jump in building
Coalition building the commonality
there's something I I also really hate
the trans women or women slogan like
when this started like coming up as a as
a slogan again in like 2017 2018 it's
like oh oh this is going to get boring
fast and like because actually what the
cuz and I I keep ripping off my
collaborator so it's fine but we were
together and my making my collaborator
is always like no but a much better
slogan is trans misogyny is
misogyny which is like oh yeah because
like we have we're all involved in
fighting misogyny like trans misogyny is
a really specific form of of misogyny
within a broader understanding what
misogyny is right and it's
like don't even get me started on the
like micro the micro dealing with
transmisogyny but like we're all
involved in fighting misogyny you know
even those of us even those of us who
are trans I'm a I don't TransAm like we
we can still reproduce misogyny you know

we're all any any individual on this planet can be misogynist at one moment and not misogynist at another so it's like okay so then it becomes like we all do have this broad common struggle to fight this form of gender depression right which is what the politics Liberation is about again right so yeah I don't know that's my that's my thoughts yeah go for it very quickly yeah just in terms he actually finding common ground with people that where he might apparently not have any I can't resist telling the story I was actually at an exhibition opening a rather por art gathery in New Town who very B of me ha and I I was wearing all my Badges and stickers and a Gentleman came up having had a few gnts I think and said he actually took exception the one badge that said refugees welcome he told me for about 15 minutes why he didn't he thought my badges were a barrier to communication when I eventually got W in edgeways I said that well you know basically I gave him a few things about

stats about refugees he listened I said
well K you know the only person I really
wouldn't have a conversation with is a
homophobic racist who votes Tory and he
said well you're speaking to me and I
said well I don't think from a
conversation you're homophobic I don't
think you're racist he says oh but I'm a
Tory voter I said well my mother's a
Tory voter but I ph her every evening
anyway to cut a long story short by the
end of the night we were best mate so
now I've got a best mate who's called
Gordon who's a
Tor and and just finally I mean I
totally agree I mean despite all the
rubbish you see in the media transphobic
stuff Ken the stickers not I've never
had a nasty look let alone a nasty word
I'm absolutely convinced that there's
only a small unfortunately vocal
minority of bamb pots in Egypt's the vast
majority of people are really
[Applause]
nice be a truth universally accepted
that the wisdom of bartenders and bus

drivers knows no comparison
I I I love a lot of what's coming up
here and just to
Echo and round out that idea of meeting
people where they are being a really
important place of beginning dialogue
where wherever we can and that we're
all on a journey wherever that might be
and we've all had a place where maybe
the thing that got us to understand a
struggle may have been
something we're now embarrassed to talk
about or a singer that we were a fan of
that said a throw away comment once or
however we get there whatever it was if
it got us in the room if it gets you in
the room then it's a it's a start and
that idea that if Liberation struggle is
trans struggle and TR then trans
struggle is Liberation struggle and that
feedback loop that you captured so
well that in in that sense of History
we we can draw from whatever Liberation
struggles whatever victories have been
won against oppression whatever those
fights were we can claim that history

and use that history as our own because
queer people will have been in the room
for every one of those so I love that
we have taken ourselves through a bit of
theory a bit of
history and I want to talk a little bit
now about this idea of intersectionalism
which has been a really big part of
everything that you've talked about
and so the question that we' we'd
listed on the website was how does the
project of trans Liberation intersect
with other struggles such as class
abolitionism and women's Liberation
it's come up in different places but I
wonder if you could each speak to maybe
one instance where you've really seen
those two things meet and feed on each
other in a in a positive way so I'm
going to bounce to eugina first
okay okay you're not going to like my
answer though
because so I've been thinking about
well the other three will say something
really good about solidarity and and
class and and and so forth so but I have

been thinking a lot just recently about
how do you how do how do we connect with
so for example the the lower working
class that the white the white van man
the Essex man voter that is stereotyped
in voting who voted brexit
who is perhaps on Twitter tweeting
things about refugees
so yeah I I was listen I was listening
to Dan Evans this this academic talking
about this situation that this Petty
Bazi as he calls it that he's also a
part of from South Wales that you
know these lower middle class people
who are Tradesmen and so forth who hold
potentially objectionable views on
certain issues but Dan Evans believes
there's the possibility of solidarity
because they also have potentially
radical positions on well indeed even uh
many conservatives today have
potentially radical leftist positions
on things like nationalizing electricity
and energy water greater funding
for the NHS and so on so in terms of
class solidarity it's potentially there

the question is how do we do it
are we am I involved at the moment in
identity politics or something larger
it's something that I have to ask myself
and I've been asking myself even just
prior to this how much am I doing to
kind
of to cross those yeah those those
Rivers cross the bridges to towards
people who might ordinarily frighten me
so there are potential class
solidarities in Britain right now but
there's also a lot of stereotypes in my
head of the brexit voter for example or
of which there are many right 52% or at
least there was the last count
so yeah I'm just kind of bubbling
slightly but basically my point is that
there should be class solidarity it has
to be a mass movement like Liberation
has to be a mass
movement but and so it starts with class
it starts with you know working class
and lower middle class and middle class
downwardly mobile middle class which I
think is my category there are many

many people millions and millions of people but we have to have like a language a discourse or methodology a way of bringing together that class solidarity so that it works and that's the big question because I I have been in situations where I've been confronted by yeah transphobic abuse or or yeah just subtle or or otherwise I I've be I work in a place which has anti-trans campaigners and there are limits to your solidarity there are people who are obsessively hateful of trans people which I probably would not want to engage with so it's about knowing what are the boundaries within this class based mass movement that we need to build so in terms of the word class I see the word class I think yes and that's a very complex thing right like there are people today who are working at University who are earning £7,000 a year and there are people who are working class who have asset wealth they own a house and so on and they're

actually doing quite well so class is quite complex but generally what what brings this all together is a real dissatisfaction and and and a despair the way that Britain is at the moment we firm has failed in terms of its ideas neoliberalism has failed we want something more radical it's about having class solid solidarity and I'm still working in my head and I think people on the left are still are beginning to have this conversation now and it's it's not an easy one because if you're from a minority how much are you prepared to give even within that that class situation so I don't have any easy answers to that but I think it's the kind of thing that we need to talk about in in these kinds of spaces actually if I could bounce it to Leslie just because I think you have been a a walking talking example of exactly where we see Flags flown side by side and on picket lines and in in those spaces where those different worlds meet and people get to realize actually it's

it's the same world we're all embedded
can you talk a little bit about that
thanks very much well that's really kind
I mean I think other folk here have
probably done far more than me but I I
mean you might have noticed I've been
wandering about with an rmt hat I'm not
actually a member of the rmt
but it was rather nice my husband
grae and I and many other folk had been
going along to the rmt picket lines I
think the first strikes were in the
summer of last year and you know we'
take our our pride FL our United Pride
Flags along and never nobody ever said
anything nasty about them in fact I get
the impression they thought they were
quite colorful so they kind of got used
to us and I think there was one day
in particular it was really freezing
cold and we've been helping handing out
the r&t stickers and leaflets to the
public who were extremely supportive of
the strikes by the way and we were all
just finishing up and we were gra and
I were leaving and one of the one of the

the the Reps the rmt Reps came down the
street after us and gave us each an rmt
hat which are brilliant by the way
they're not as colorful as ucu hats but
they keep your ears warm all and so that
think that's the thing I mean if if
you're consistent if you do turn up if
it's not just like parachuting in you
know we whatever and you know try to
sell your newspapers or whatever then
never seen again
maybe that's not good but if you go
along and I mean I think the thing is
that on the one hand you don't want to
be dishonest with where you're coming
from politically but at the same time
not kind of shoving the politics down
people's throats if f are in the picket
line they've got important things
they're on strike for goodness sake
that's the main thing always bring cakes
that's the important thing support
solidarity and cakes but you know I
think eventually even if people are
maybe not to entirely sure initially
when they actually realize as has been

pointed out that you're actually just
a human being a working-class person
like themselves you can overcome a
lot of barriers and the other thing that
occurs to me is I think for once Corella
Braverman and trashy soon did as a favor
I think it was one day at the Tory
conference K Braverman comes out with
her disgusting attack on refugees yeah
again surprise surprise being LGBT Plus
or even I think said Being a woman and
and you know a woman is suffering from
misogyny sexism is it enough to allow
you to apply for Refugee status oh no
and then I think was the next day trashy
sunuk starts when to go at trans people
I mean they really joined up the dots
didn't they how convenient I mean they
really made the connection I mean we'd
been making it for a long time but then
they made it for us thank you Tories I
mean it most

[Applause]

insincerely I'm GNA jump in because I
was going to talk about the hostile
environment so you'd like beautifully

set set it up Leslie yeah and I think there's this question around like where do our struggles meet as well right everyone does everyone know what the hostile environment is Right nods some nods anyone not know no is there people anyone yeah okay good just in the sense of like there's so there is okay so with the hostile environment policy in the UK with which has you know led to all of these like Relentless document checks that are designed to you know make Britain a hostile place for migrants and refugees and for people of color broadly especially black folks there's this question of like okay so in the forms of bureaucracy that have been instituted through the hostile environment policy which is like okay so if you go and work in any public institution you're going to have your passport checked right and this can be like this can be quite it's not just work it's also like if you're trying to get housing in some parts of the UK because obviously Scotland is part of

the UK okay still like you might face
that around trying to access Healthcare
it these are all really concrete
material like concrete things that
affect our everyday
lives and obviously also we as trans
people you know okay so the whole
question about gr is also trying to gr
reform is trying to make our lives a
little bit easier around documents but
surely the actual problem is having to
have a having to show your papers all of
the effing time right and it then
becomes like okay so sure as trans
people we have particular like as trans
binary folks like there are particular
things that are upsetting for us around
that like it might be your identity
marker in your document your gender
marker might be to do with the name
might be to do with your picture and it
be then you're like oh great this place
that I work has got this terrible
picture of me on
file or I've got it on file because I've
got to send it to them by email every

time they want to see my passport
whatever but then in practice it's like
okay so the burden of proof that's put
on on the people the hostile environment
is challenging is is targeting sorry is
intense and like this is really extreme
around lgbtq Asylum Seekers and refugees
some of the stuff that Theresa May
introduced like when the hostile
environment was being concocted and
becoming legisl when it was becoming
legislated you know involved like
asking these really invasive questions
around in public life like having to
prove your sexuality
like having to on through like you
know use of like photographs talking
about your sex life you know all this
private stuff that nobody should have to
disclose yet alone to the home office
right so it's like okay so there are
these moments where in trying to
challenge bureaucracy we can understand
where we meet different forms of harm
like very different forms of harm but
actually we all have a a shared interest

in say getting rid of this Relentless document checks and this is also remember that the the climate of checking documents in this way is recent like 20 years ago there was a public conversation around having identity cards and it was ludicrous like as in like the idea of having an identity card that somebody from the state somebody from the police would check was considered ludicrous and 20 years later we have the hostile environment policy where it's like anywhere you go they there's anyone you work for has the right to check for your passport and Report you if you if you have unclear work like permission to work if you don't have proof of right to work in the UK so that's that the it's one of these examples of like how can we think through these hinges of like where our struggles meet and intersect and I know it's not the most like uplifting like thing example but it is like a really important one because like yeah I feel like if we're pushing against this if

we're pushing against the hostile environment as much as there's a impetus to try and get gr reform in the really limited terms that you know like I'm going to try and not go off about the history G reform but like no we there was a whole the even the Scottish government's consultation process was a massive time waste they consulted us twice they first announced the two days for Eden pry that they weren't going to G reform everyone was hella upset like we were like why do we have to spend all this time talking to the government when we also don't want the government to have this information on us and then like what did we get we got this watered down version that didn't even happen in those constitutional crisis like amazing thanks amazing anyway

yeah so I think like one of the things that that I always think about with in terms of intersectional interseuality is this is actually something that I very often use in my capacity as a union representative

very often when workers in the in the
workplace are dealing with transphobic
abuse we use what's called a one punch
technique the equality Act 2010 is
pretty much the strongest piece of
legislation that Union reps usually use
because unlike along with health and
safety because unlike most employment
law it kicks in before two years
after two years you're covered by
employment law before then it's
literally just the company made up rules
which don't actually matter
so essentially like what we'll do is
we use the one punch and now what that
is is very often when transic abuse is
dealt with is done it will be on two
counts it will be on the count of gender
reassignment which is I say that I
have changed my sex legally under the
under the equality act and it'll be on
the case of sex which uh
counterintuitively does not actually
mean sex it means gender so we'll
very we'll usually use these two as like
a way to say right this is why

you know these are these are the two counts that you're that you're in violation of but simultaneously we'll also try and use a similar technique if it's if it's assist women where we'll we'll try you know we'll find other ways in which the these intersections like make any kind of abuse in the workplace particularly bad but the fact of the matter is whether it's in the workplace whether it's in society the people that are actually usually in power and doing the oppression are the same people is more or less it's the own in class so if we're going to build power to bring about trans Liberation that power could also be used to bring around Liber to bring about liberation of other people so why not combine those forces and if anything that makes us even more powerful but yeah like to to Gina's point I did want to say like I I think we can we can think a lot about like all the complexities of class and and and and these kind of these stereotypes of like

oh here's what kind of people are like
but I mean the fact of the matter is
if you ask me there's there's only two
classes and that is the folks who work
for a living and make money by working
and the folks who own things for a
living and make money by owning things
and I think to me that's the big
difference

I really like

yeah how concrete a lot of those
examples are and they go some way to
sort of feeding into that next question
which is what can we do right now to
advance trans Liberation and that
finding these little hinges as you call
them now where where two different
fights meet and we fight together we
find a solution for both I think is a
really interesting starting point for a
lot of things and a really exciting
place that I think has been cropping up
more and more out of necessity that
place where Refugee Rights or migrant
rights are meeting LGBT rights just
being one it was heartening to see so

much so many recognizable faces from the
queer community at the Palestine
solidarity rally on Saturday that again
it's you know when we say people are
being bombed in Gaza queer people are
being bombed in Gaza this idea that
you can separate people along these
lines is ludicrous but it's also
done deliberately by people who hold
that power so I wonder if I can ask
now for just a maybe a brief example if
you were going to throw in and I'm
saying brief so that I can bounce it out
to you next so thinking caps on for
any questions that you had or
contributions that you want to make in
response to any of these questions
something concrete right now that
could be done for Trans Liberation or
that you're you've been involved in or
that you've seen be
effective in terms of fighting for
Trans Liberation right now today where
we are in Edinburgh does anyone want to
yeah go for
it thanks very much I'll be quick I

well I think I was mentioned I'm a member of the United Scotland lgbt plus committee no merit own it was just there was gaps in thought I did and that means I get to go to these conferences like the SD LGBT plus conference and it's amazing in one way that we pass all these wonderful revolu revolutions I wish resolutions about all sorts of great stuff and it's wonderful they get past unanimously and then silence and they get Cy stuck the bureaucracy will be kind of doing what they do and you're average member you know average Union member probably doesn't even know what's happened so what happened to me recently was my husband gam is a member of the United retired loans branch and he asked the branch if they'd be interested in getting somebody for the United Scotland LGBT plus committee and unfortunately for them they got me but I just spoke for about a minute about what the committee did and after that I said just please cross-examine me and they cross-examined me wonderfully and there

was one member a lady member said that they were worried about an eight-year-old person deciding they were trans and they could just get all these drugs and that hormones and that and they might decide when they were about 13 that they' made a mistake so I just basically explained very quickly that there was about a three to four year waiting list for your first appointment at a gender identity clinic and even if that went fine you were going to have to wait longer for assessments and in the end of the day it was down to your GP if you actually got puberty blockers which are by the way totally reversible no problems at all and the person was the member was kind enough to say that they thought that had answered the concerns they had and I think it' be really good if people are in a trade Union if they could maybe try and get somebody from the United LGBT plus committee hopefully somebody better than me to come along and speak to a branch meeting because again it's an opportunity for them to

meet a a queer person we've got a lot of
trans people on the committee trans and
onbind new people on the committee and
it might be the case that it's the first
time they've actually met one of us
thank

[Applause]

you

okay I've got a long answer so bear with
me

so I think one of the things that I
really want to underline is Liberation
is about
practices right it's about what we do in
our lives so it's a question about like
where do we make Liberation in our lives
where where are our struggles located
right when we're talking about rights
when we're talking about work like even
workplace issues like we're talking
about these institutional cont text
right if we're talking about we're angry
at the state we're pissed off with the
gender Clinic you know these are all
forms of Institutions so that's like one
place of struggle that's the most maybe

the most obvious the most visible say
the the one the bit that has the most
most collateral in terms of the media
and where all these the ones that we can
kind of like concretely grab and hold of
and think about and so that's one space
of like where we're trying to liberate
ourselves from maybe but then next to
that is like okay there these political
elements in our everyday lives like
these forms of Oppression that we
experience like everyday like
transphobia in our everyday lives etc
etc and how we understand those
things politically and then there's also
like the like this General Social level
of like who's in our community who's in
the room with us today like who's in our
everyday lives and because like these
like if you know these forces of these
cultural forces of Oppression be racism
sexism transphobia h phobia ableism
sanism xenophobia like these are all
forms of division and you were talking
about the separation and this this like
practice of trying to separate us right

and like dividing rules like the oldest
Colonial tactic in the book right like
how do you other people how do you say
dehumanize
people and so there's like okay so how
do we challenge those that Dynamic of
Separation in our everyday lives in our
social lives in our in these polit in
how we understand our lives politically
and then also in these institutional
contexts where some of us you know some
of us some this might be about where we
work this might be about where we pray
it might be about where we grow up like
these are all these different forms
of where these separations happen and so
and because ultimately like we have to
break down all of this separation you
know it's like I'm thinking a lot about
obviously this week thinking about what
I've been learning from my career pal
inan friends and like my query nonbinary
and trans Palestinian friends because
they're the people I have the deepest
conversations about political grief with
and part of that is because like you

know my experiences of organizing in
Edinburgh is like Edinburgh has been
really bad at dealing with racism in the
Aquarian trans communities in our
organizing spaces and it's eaten through
a lot of really important organizations
that have been here and part of that is
like okay so how do we challenge that
separation how do we challenge the forms
of otherness that when racism gets
raised there's a problem that's emerging
or it's clear that like there's a lack
of action on racism and this is like
even after 20 even after everything with
BLM in 2020 you know even after George
Floyd's death even after everyone had a
book had had we had all of our book
groups to learn about anti- racism if it
was a new thing to us we're still
failing on racism so which is a really
basic form of SE of SE of
Separation in our lives in our everyday
lives so I really want to say like
that's these are things that we can try
and make and undo these divisions and
that there are really simple practices

also that can be really empowering like
you know we haven't spoken so much about
Mutual aid but like there have been
loads of really great Mutual Aid
products in Edinburgh in Scotland in the
UK not just about redistributing
money but also doing practical
redistribution of things like be that
gender like we were doing lots of stuff
with as for Trans Health around gender
affirming kit like Mak like having
clothes swaps like providing binders and
like you know and like false what
what's the word what do I want to say
you know like providing kit that made
your body feel a bit better about
yourself providing L doing laser hair
removal for each other this kind of
stuff and it's like all of these really
practical things in the everyday are
ways that we can build Liberation for
ourselves because if we're trying to get
rid of these forms of depression we're
trying to get we're trying to shift the
weight of survival into one of thriving
right of thriving a Feeling joy and if

we can uproot those forms of violence
from and it's like in our bodies right
this is like you know when I think about
what what gender affirmation has given
me it's like oh it's given me literally
more breathing space more thinking space
more being space and all of that is
embodied it's not just mental and yeah
and so it's like okay so how do we do
that and maybe like love and like care
and these everyday practices of like who
is in our life who we support who we
prioritize their ways of cutting down
the separability and I'm not really you
know and it's like there's no one siiz
fits all it's all like whatever we can
you can do what you can try and do sorry
what want to say do what you can try and
do but there's there's like a dozen
ways and some of them will be better
than others but there's not necessarily
wrong ways you just got to keep trying
things so yes that's my long
answer
so for myself like and this one's
a personal one to me like I'm sure one

or two of you has probably been in in in
a group chat with a politics chat and
the internet is is is kind of a siden in
that it pretends you look through this
box and you're looking at it and it
pretends it's the whole world but it's
not actually the whole world it's a wee
bit of the world it's not even that
it's a tiny bit of the world but then it
seems like it's everything and the only
thing that you can do is interact with
it on its terms in a we tweet or or in
an email or what have you you can
interact with it on its terms but it's
constantly like people on there are
constantly telling you if you didn't
care about this you're a bad activist or
they're telling you like you have to
care about 20 things a second or they're
commiserating with you and you get into
this cycle where you'll find all this
bad news and then you'll you'll share it
with your mates cuz commiserating with
it is cathartic and then after you've
shared it with your mates well that felt
good so you go back to the thing again

and and what that happens is what what happens with that is it builds up and builds up and builds up until either you burn out and stop caring or you do something really stupid and and this is the radicalization pipeline that things like the all right use that's why so many of them do school shootings but it happens to us and all and and one of the biggest things that helped me get out of that is getting doing stuff in person like whether that's music and food and song or whether that is like building Community but I mean obviously I'd be I'd be remiss if I didn't they say didn't just join the Union start organizing one because when you see something small where you are whether that's in your workplace whether that's in your community whether that's on your street well when you're on the internet there's nothing you can do because you're one person among billions but then when you're in the real world all of a sudden if you start doing a food

stall every day or every week or say if
you go down to a pub and have a
conversation with one person every day
or well you can see that you can see
that change and if you get 10 people
well you can basically do anything you
want you can you can have the local
conso like in your pocket if you
pardon my language like like it's
actually it was actually absurd to me
how much power I realized that I had in
my local community when I actually
started actually looking for ways to
stick my nose in other people's business
and and like and that's what I think is
like is like one organize your
workplace two just try and do small
things local with your mates because you
will find you actually have a lot more
power than you thought you
did
okay the very short answer following
Tilly is yeah get off Twitter
yeah yeah and I'm a hypocrite but I I
definitely no I do TW God bless Elon
Musk he's made Twitter almost unusable

I I I I almost don't go on it I mean
maybe sometimes once a day but it used
to be like five times a day
join the union okay so I'm I joined ucu
and I just for the crack and just
thinking oh yes the the the pink hats
but really interesting with the unions
because I'd grown up you know in
Thatcher Britain and the narrative is
unions were rubbish they destroyed
Britain thank God for Thatcher and that
that was the Blair right that's the
labor narrative as well but when you've
actually been involved in in the union
and I thought okay nothing's going to
happen because Edinburgh University it's
entrenched all these things it's part of
the neoliberal progress Nar not regress
regressive narrative but there was a
breakthrough I think it was two weeks
ago the union won in terms of the
pensions are being cut and now those
cuts have been repealed removed and
it's like
wow exact it was all me no no it wasn't
and but I I joined and I and I was I

picketed and I I did Little Bits I mean
a few you know one person on a picket
line but if 50 people decides to do that
suddenly you've got 50 people on a
picket line being part of a mass
movement and and realizing you can be
successful we we've been brought up by
the media and The Narrative of the two
main parties to believe that these
things don't work but they do so it's
it's about realizing you know people
like mck Lynch now are like Superstars
because people are realizing these are
straight talking people who know their
stuff they they recognize the inequality
in written and they're not they're not
prepared to put up with it and people
kind of like that so it is about being
inspired and joining unions and
interacting with people from all over
fighting for each other's rights and it
is a wonderful feeling so get off
Twitter join
unions okay I'm G to come out to you
with a mic does anyone have a
question or a comment want to get the

bowl rolling with this yeah there we
go I was waiting to see if other
trans folk wanted to put their hands up
first because I'm really here to listen
to trans voices but just soon as nobody
jumped in and I've got a big
mouth I'm I kind of accidentally H
hijacked Jane godley's recent toilet
door drama on Twitter I don't know if
anyone saw it
I'm a I'm a bit of a troll Hunter on
Twitter I think it's a byproduct of
having a toxic childhood that actually
in times of great crisis and War I'm
extremely comfortable and I I think it's
play time so I've been hosting like
24-hour dance parties for Scottish music
and talking to people in Ukraine about
the rillos and people all over you know
talking about my local chy quite a
lot and it seems to work if people
just keep talking to each other and one
of the conversations I had with tell you
that seems to have changed where I
was going as I was going to go to a demo
because I knew that the intersection

organizing had come between the gender
critical

feminists and fascists and I've been an
anti-fascist ever since I was a teenager
and I had a strange experience of
being dogs as a trans woman despite the
fact that I'm sis and I'm a mother so

I I said very little I just kind of let
it happen and I had a really funny uh
interview with the police when they had
all this and Intel on me about how many
children I fathered and Abandoned and
what kind of sexual deviant I was and
I was talking about how my kid needed
a piano lessons but his dad was been a
bit of a about him coming for his
dinner and things like that so we had
this really odd hourong conversation
that I ended up lecturing them about
fascists and techn fascists and how
they use Twitter and things like that
and the trolls are toxic troll energy
you're right do not engage but you can
engage with them and not engage
emotionally so I'm not quite sure but I
think what I've done is a volunteered to

sort of

kickart uh an organization based on

moms for Trans in

Ireland where it's moms that go along

and if you need somebody on the front

line to take the grief because they're

all con they're conspiracy theorists and

they're down rabbit holes and they

believe all sorts of things for all

sorts of reasons but what they believed

about me was that because I was there

standing next to my trans brothers and

sisters opposing fascism that that meant

that I was born a man and they can

believe that if want

Good Luck to them but I'm looking

to recruit not I'm not a leader uh

but I'm looking to recruit moms young

moms old moms Grand moms any moms if

you've got a mom if you want a mom if

you live next door to a mom or down the

street from a mom please put them

in touch with me I'm Linda Perry on

Twitter you can have a look at my

Twitter I eat trolls for breakfast I'm

like a I'm like a an elf with do Martins

I really
do I I really do rip people some new
arales some
days and so I jumped on Jane Godley
getting trolled and I says right let's
do it and I tagged Ms for Trans and they
were up for it I've got a woman in
Sterling has a professional career
called I mean so this is a it's going to
be locally organized but if anybody
knows any moms or knows anything that we
should be doing tell us you know and
Leslie cakes yes
pies
pies H sustenance will is our strength
is our strength brilliant thank
you I've got a I've got a we Ru I always
bring sausage rolls on the pickets did
anyone else have a hand in the there oh
yeah there you go I'll hand it to to you
and then if you want to hand it
down hi so I wanted to return to the
what net and well what everyone has
mentioned that trans Liberation in a
large part is Liberation from parents
and thank you for Mom's for Trans uh

initiative but yeah it's I think it's
like for young trans people across the
world parents are this the single group
of people that has the most power of
that has the that poses the most
existential crisis of them I mean people
are like tortured are institutionalized
by their parents and because we have
this ideology this parental ideology
where parents have the absolute right to
dominate to determine like to
dominate the bodies of their children of
young people I I mean that applies like
to different degrees in around the world
but it's a thing that helps around the
world yeah I come from China
and so yeah I was to say every single
trans person in China under the age of
25 are that would be like millions of
people are like under the the single
most thing single thing that they worry
about is their parents deciding one day
to just send them off to one of the
internet addiction treatment centers
because that's one thing the parents can
do you know no matter what if you're

adult or not yeah like I mean these are
places not just for Trans people I mean
they all there AI also like nonr people
and that they also send people there for
like just being just playing games
too much but yeah like I I I think so
much of trans Liberation is I mean I me
how would you go about soling it how
would you go about like removing that
fear of being institutionalized tortured
abused you know awful stuff happen in
these places they're literally prison
they they hire ex veterans to beat
people
up worse stuff like how do you remove
that fear well it's by making it so that
parents no longer have that power over
young people for not just not just in
particular for Trans people like but
like they have no right to torture
people for whatever reason it's like it
like trans to me trans Liberation is
liberation of young people it's the
liberation of children from parents I
think that is like yeah just a
a from a Chinese trans perspective I

think that is the single most important thing because sometimes like CIS allies who really do a lot for Trans people and like speak on behalf of trans people every day and they they and I mean often times they they they lot of the work they do is fight against the tough narrative gender critical narrative and in the like feminist discour and that is how that work is very important for the everyday reality of trans people is yeah that is like parents that's the single yeah and I'm very scared so one one thing I'm scared of seeing in the UK is that many of the anti-trans groups they're adapting this parenti narrative from the the film they tried to screen ad adult human female one of the introductory sentences was oh is it really harmless when doctors Mally our children like that narrative a few weeks ago in Toronto in Canada there was this anti-trans March and within that

anti-tr there's a larger protrans
counter March but within that anti-ri
crowd a a a young person held up a PL
card saying I belong to my parents
that is I would imagine that that
person's parents asserting their like
you know they're making their children
say proudly I belong to my parents I
think that is really the thing that I
mean if that that that that that the
effect of that is is like when you have
state backing for parents power you get
what what happens in
China yeah because the go it's not that
the government is oppressing those and
these are like private institutions
they these all they are semi-legal but
no one cracks down on them because
parents have the right to do what they
want to children
so I'll go and then I'll pass to that
yeah I I definitely I definitely
think so I think that like you know
my relationship with my mom improved
significantly as soon as I had moved out
and no longer lived with her you know

but like I I do think that
like you know the emancipation of young
folks is is a seriously important uh
thing for us to fight for and we're
we're seeing some of that in Edinburgh
like I'm aware of like there's a
recently started students high
school students union that have been
they're very coordinated but they've
been organizing right now in the
in the high schools for
computers and they're they're
specifically basically they've been
given these computers but they're
basically completely useless because the
company doesn't want to be doesn't
want to be sued to if they look up
anything bad
but I so they've been organizing
around that and I do think that like
stuff like that and Young Folks getting
together is really important but I also
think that as adults we have a
responsibility to have a a pedagogy
that's less based on domination and
recreating the domination of society

to kind of paraphrase a FR and and
more based on learning alongside the be
the bars and actually treating them with
dignity as human beings and I think
that's the main thing is just I think I
feel like you know you see the way that
like you know your boss dominates you
and you think that's the way that I
should act towards my be but actually
then you know it's not right if a boss
does it to you and a be's just as much a
person as you are they're just a bit a
bit
stupider you know no but I shouldn't say
that I a boss a patriarchal father you
know all these things thank you for
sharing actually I think there's
something you described about the fear
of being sent you know being sent away
to re like to the internet
re-education maybe there's a question
about resilience which is well not a
question there you know I really want to
remember that like we're really
resilient like we like trans people and
nonary people have survived we've

survived some you know and I'm not going to try and talk super personally because it's a bit of a weird it's bit weird for me to talk super personally but I mean I was out as a trans teenager one of the things that really gets me at the moment is a total lack of TR trans teen trans kids voices in the whole conversation at least in the UK around trans youth which I think already demonstrates that they don't value the knowledge that trans youth have of themselves you know that it's like oh no your your like your voices don't matter what you want your feelings don't matter what you want doesn't matter because and I mean obviously that's media as well and that's like how the media media functions through othering is silencing it's very easy to silence mind but I also want to just like jump think about like some of the things that I've really taken strength from recently and like I mean definitely the past couple of years in particular

is

the maybe it's like it's kind of like
the reverse pedagogy it's the I think
about parents who've learned loads from
their trans kids including sometimes
gaining the strength to come out as
trans you know and it's not that we the
adults are transing the kids it's the
okay there's all this dispersed access
to information like trans people were
more present in in popular culture and
actually yeah like you know I say this
like I learn from my students in the
same way that you hope good parents
learn from their kids you know that's I
think any of us who are grown up who are
grown up and have our parents you know
we're still hopefully teaching our
parents stuff that's part of our role
and yeah I think just having having that
space and being like it's and then
thinking I you know I also think about
my friends who are like trans trans
folks who who are parents and they also
have trans kids and again just like this
process of learning and there's so much

power in that I I then also but I also
want to be like but you can also divorce
your parents right like that's a legal
thing you can do at least in the UK it's
obviously really troubled if you're a
minor as well but like you know
sometimes the sometimes the harm doesn't
end even when you're an adult
so oh yeah and also I was going to say
the transsection 28 thing I'm trying to
remember what was I was looking trying
to remember what was called section 35
around this like trying to
restrict any kind of trans
affirmative practice in schools which
could also really backfire on trans
affirmative parents as well just
yeah so I have it's like kind of a
very practical question in that in
the the very small world that is like
student organizing a lot of folks
have noticed that at Edinburgh
University campus security have
gotten a lot more aggressive recently
about
being physically aggressive towards

students and also calling the cops on
student protesters and student
organizers like recently there was a
protest today where a student that
was protesting for Palestinian
Liberation got taken in so I
guess what like what do we do in the
face of mounting violence from both like
the institution that we're technically
like part of and also like them like
weaponizing the State against us and
also I have so many questions I'm
sorry I have another question which
is there's like a lot of talk about
educating others and bringing others
in to create like you know broader
Liberation movements but what do you do
when you're emotionally burnt out from
educating people when opening up about
your experiences to folks that might be
hostile is really too taxing too
draining like I don't know like yeah
what do you what do you do when you just
get burned out I don't
know so
oh I I can definitely address the I

think what do you do when you're burned
out I

think I think a lot of it for me

is I was defin I've definitely been in

that position where you're like oh I

don't want to explain things and have

the trans

conversation it's a reality that like we

kind of have to have it a lot

um

I I'll confess I I try not to think in

terms of burnout I try and think in

terms of you know can I be bothered and

in terms of like what you know I think

it really helps to have a a supportive

group of folks around you and you know

have that support and have like folks

that you can turn to because I think it

is unfortunately a reality that like we

do kind of have to have a lot of those

conversations and it's a learning

experience as you have those

conversations more and more while it

will be

exhausting there is I I I do feel that

you get better at it and you get better

at it myself I got the autism so
you'll probably notice if you're talking
to me that I do probably say a lot of
the things that I'm saying here just in
a conversation because I'm like a
robot but but like what I do find is
like if you're having a conversation
with somebody and somebody brings it up
like it really does help just to you
know you can say the very
Basics and then just kind of blust their
past but I think I find actually asking
them questions about themselves or
getting to know them helps actually
quite a lot because I find for myself at
least a lot of the tiring of having the
trans conversation is the fact I've said
it so many times it's
boring and that's why I find it tiring
and I find when you actually get to know
the person who's asking you the
questions and and and like I I think of
it as a little bit of a game oh you're
going to ask a question I don't know
exactly which one well I'm going to ask
you a question first that said if

someone's being really annoying about it
like there is this is nothing wrong with
saying like oh can we talk about this
later or whatever and I do think that
like doing it on your own terms is also
a thing that will help you know
but I think when I hear the word
burnout what I usually what I usually
think is a systemic failure of a support
structure because burnout I think
there's for myself there's two kinds of
burnout there's I don't have the energy
because people aren't supporting me enough
and that means you need to build a
support network or I can be bothered and
that's fine I think it's fine to not be
bothered sometimes I think it's good to
not be bothered sometimes because that
means you can save your energy for
things you actually want to do you
know I thank you very much I think
really good questions I mean
and following on from what Tilly said I
I mean this is a bit of a Shameless
ad for resistance transphobia in
Edinburgh but what I like about the

organization is that we've got so many amazing people with so many different skills and talents and abilities so many creative people but it's turning out to be that if somebody does need a bit a time out they can take a bit of time out knowing that the organization is still there they've still got support if they need it but there's no pressure to do more than you feel you want to do and I agree I think it's something that's good to you feel you can be bothered the thing about the protests I mean yeah absolute solidarity I wish I could have been along this afternoon I just couldn't be I was up to the eyes with stuff but I think the thing is that the only way to protect ourselves and protect the right to protest is basically strength of numbers I think amazing I mean I know a number of folk here came out when that person got arrested and they got de arrested un arrested and that only happened because there were loads and loads and loads of folks surrounding those seven police

fans and going do the police station
brilliant and I think unfortunately we
can't rely in appealing to the
university authorities or any
authorities we just have to do it
strength in numbers it's like the
anti-ra thing I mean basically if we
you know the home office tries to do
something nasty hostile environment it's
only through getting the numbers out
there Ken Street in Glasgow Nicholson
Square in Edinburgh that you can
actually you can't actually stop it
we've stopped them before we'll stop
them
again

[Applause]

lesie just said most of what I'm
going to say say so I was just going
to add like getting the sharing the
knowledge and the information about
what's happening cuz it's something
about like spreading this understanding
of the reality that you're facing
especially if it's like increase police
and increase security we know that like

who who gets affected when there's increased security around campus it's like PC it's like women it's like femin Fe feminized people queers trans folks obviously in there and yeah and it makes me think about like there's loads of ways of being like oh this is like it's a waste of money like the university I did my postgraduate study at there was loads of political organizing there was a really long occupation for like three or four months the university spent like half a million on security during that time which was the same time they were cutting 235 jobs so it was like okay this is messed up but sharing information and also not just on the internet unless you're going to hack the algorithms but making sure everybody knows right because I think that's the strength of with K Street is like is part of the political history of Scotland now because this thing happened and we know that Str of numbers works we had we we are technically out of time and there was one online question which

I just want to give an opportunity if
anyone has sort of a brief response and
then I'm going to hand over to k
which was around the connected struggles
of disability and trans rights and if
anyone wanted to put a we word out on
that yeah
right I'll run that past kid yeah yeah
yeah but yeah so disability and trans
rights where those
overlap yes I think that's a really
important question I mean I have to say
I have only to my shame got a bit
educated about disabled peoples and
you know the situation they're in it's
through a person I know particularly
somebody I know through Co action
Scotland Dr Dr Sally Witcher and
she describes herself as of disabled and
she told me about what is called the
medical model of disability and the
social model of disability and the
medical model of disability is basically
like well you know you've got a problem
you've got this you know we can maybe
help you a bit but you know you've got a

problem it's a medical issue and you know basically we might try our best to help you but it's your problem as an individual and that's the medical model crudely speaking the social model is basically that Society is structured under capitalism to make people disabled there's absolutely no reason why anybody whether they can see or not see here or not here have the use of all the limbs or not have all the use of the limbs if they actually organized things properly and made everything genuinely accessible to people nobody would be disabled and I think a good example of that is this we might have seen the the the the basically it's a Tories they want to force rail rail operators to close down ticket officers that's obviously a big big issue not just for people that you know have mobility issues or whatever or you know sensory issues but somebody like me that's useless with technology I have to get help to switch the microphone up for good to sake am I going to be able to

operate a ticket office a ticket machine
no I am not I am not so that's a small
example of how you know society makes
people disabled makes excludes people of
totally totally totally stupid reason
absolutely to do with capitalism wanting
to save money that's it so it's
capitalism that makes people disabled
and there's no reason for that thank
you
I'm going to add really quickly yeah
and just say that there's so many
practices that come from disability
Justice organizing that we've all taken
for granted especially during the
pandemic like the whole kind of strategy
of mutual Aid and Collective care that
we all are developing in our lives
that's all because of disability Justice
and like I'm really grateful that like
my friends who are disabled of the
people who I've who I've learned those
kind of skills from but I also want
to say that within the trans Community
we have real power if we actually have
deeper conversations about the Nuance of

the intersection between trans and
disability and particular around chronic
illness I think some of the most
interesting work that been H that's work
I call it work whatever some of the most
interesting stuff that's been happening
is trying to think through the
intersections of that around our
Healthcare and I just want to encourage
people to try and have more of those
conversations like gather your friends
be like hey like you know check in
around what's going on with your health
especially if you're experiencing
chronic pain because there's really
interesting stuff going on and it's
there's not enough research about it
right so we we often know more than the
research so that's that's just like
thing to do brilliant thank you Natt
I'm going to read one final statement
which was sent in by sred Nelson who
runs the lavender Menace
archive and then I'm going to hand
over to Kate who's got some last bits
and pieces so she writes I believe in

crossing the line not just once but as
many times as it takes to build a bridge
that we can all walk across Del L gra
volcano who is an in who is intersex and
lives both as a man and a woman made
that statement in 2005 about her work as
a photographer I'm a 75-year-old
feminist and I believe that what Del
Grace said about their art also applies
to the feminist movement I'm very glad
this meeting is being held tonight and
I'm sorry I couldn't be here but I'm
grateful for the opportunity to talk
about feminism is a Liberation movement
an enabler of women and of all people
who are defined as other and unequal by
the patriarchy in the media and on the
internet these days you're likely to
hear about a kind of feminism whose goal
is to build a fortress around people
with XX chromosomes but the feminist
movement I joined in 1970 whatever
joined means because I am because I can
assure you I didn't fill in a form
couldn't have been more different one of
my heroes was shth Firestone who wrote a

book called the dialectic of sex it was based on Marxist theory and featured an almost science fictional picture of liberation of the world they thought big in those days Firestone believed that what we call the binary today will be overcome by technological change but only if society makes the right choices feminists have to question the organization of culture itself self even the very organization of nature she said that questioning is still ongoing living as our authentic selves is Crea of resistance feminism and queer Joy are bridges and we'll keep walking so with that can

[Music]

I hi folks some of you will know me but many won't my name is kit and I'm one of the people that's been putting this together together it's been a great team I wanted to just for for starters say a quick word like tonight has been really heartening speaking for myself I have I've learned a lot I've been inspired and I've also been

reassured and I've been reassured that
the root to trans Liberation is not
through some great work you know the
revolution would be welcome but while
we're waiting for it it's the small
things it's our day-to-day
interactions it's the relationships that
we're building with one another that are
making a real difference here and we've
heard examples of that and we've been
given examples of things that we can do
I want to just take a moment with you
all to extend sincere thanks to all of
the speakers tonight

Leslie and

Nat

Tilly and

Gina and thanks also to Mari and

Lighthouse for being wonderful and

supporting us as ever

hosting this and doing all the

complicated internet bits that we're not

always great at I've seen a real

interest in sharing one another's

experiences and concerns as well in the

discussions that we've had this evening

we're about to put the mics away but
that's that's really not the end of the
conversation it's sort of the beginning
we need to keep on talking to one
another and we need to keep on building
those human connections so we have run a
bit over time we were hoping to sort
of finish up the official chat by 9 but
we have the room for a bit longer so I
invite you to have conversations with
one another I invite you to go and check
out the Stalls if you have a moment I
very much encourage you if you haven't
already to join the resisting
transphobia in Edinburg mailing list
there is a paper sign up pad at the back
and I'll also do a little spreadsheet
one at the front to make that easier
and if you've been inspired and if you
want to carry on with this work I invite
you to come along to our next organizing
meeting which will be on Monday the 13th
of November
which is rather exciting for one
it'll be our second ever full big
in-person meeting and it'll be here at

augustin's so you can't say you don't
know the
way and also there's going to be an
organization called Flint present and
I'd like to invite Ames to come up very
briefly and explain what that's all
about because
sorry just just
briefly two minutes yeah super
quickly I'm part of an organization
called Flint which is trying to
imagine and build a National Trans
organization which is revolutionary
which is abolitionist which is
joining the the fight for against
colonialism against racial capitalism
in the UK and across the world
we're doing stuff in Edinburgh with rt
we're also based in London and
we're doing sort of an assembly in
Manchester as well later in the year
our work is very briefly it's got like
four points to it it's coalitional so
we're working with trade unions will'll
be at the queer block at the Palestine
March in London tomorrow my history

is in sort of Border abolitionist work
and search and rescue and we're very
much working towards looking at how uh
border appolition is part and and
Central to to trans Liberation as well
as is sort of all abolitionist work
we're also looking at like models of
radical education and member defense uh
so whether that's like making sure that
everyone knows how to be a medical
advocate in a very violent medical
system but also how we can protect each
other from landlords and evictions or
like today I just came for a little
Wonder around edor and suddenly I was
outside a police man CH Ching like let
him out didn't know who he was but I
was like he's coming out of
there but but part of that is also
the what we're doing right like how do
we protect each other how do we fight
for each other how do we see a police
van with someone going into it and know
that person is my comrade that person is
my sibling I'm not letting that van
go away and how do we as trans people

know our rights in those situations as well especially against cops landlords immigration enforcement who are not only sort of violent in many ways but also specifically will be violent towards trans and gender non-conforming people but also I think most crucially we're trying to be an imaginative space as well like none of us have the answers but also a lot of us are spending our time like I think someone on the panel said surviving and a lot of what we're trying to do is create imaginative spaces too like we're not just burning stuff down we're not just stopping police fans but also thinking what do we build up in that space as well which is a very abolitionist cool to I guess like burn it down and then radically imagine different spaces of like care love and and joy where those institutions of violence are are going to disappear and we're going to we're going to create something in their space yeah so we're going to be at the at the

meeting in November we're going to be
having an assembly in London on the
9th of December and I think an assembly
in Manchester on the 6th of December if
you want to like come chat to me in this
room maybe for a pint afterwards as well

I really need one that would be sick

yeah come and let me know brilliant

yeah I suppose just one one last

thanks for our wonderful speakers this

has been an amazing night and I'll let

you go into the

night thanks so much for coming

[Applause]

folks