

Challenging Transphobia on the Left - Participatory Workshop

Overview

As socialists, we believe political education and solidarity are an important part of the route to liberation. The issues that affect trans people are issues that should unite the working class: struggles for healthcare, housing and equality. We want to make clear that trans liberation cannot be won without the liberation for the working class - and that trans women and cisgender women are united in the struggle against the patriarchy.

This workshop gives participants the opportunity to take a deeper look into how we can go about challenging transphobia when it appears in our spaces, by using a recorded conversation from The World Transformed 2020 as a guide to help steer your discussions.

Aims

- Identify where and how transphobia arises on the left
- Practice how to frame responses to common examples of transphobia in a persuasive and constructive way

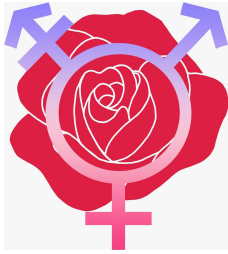
Details:

Duration - around 1.5 hours long

Maximum capacity - 20 people

Audience:

This session will work best with people who are already on board with trans liberation, but want to improve their skills responding to transphobia when it arises. We are currently developing more resources for people who are questioning aspects of trans liberation, but it's worth bearing this in mind when sending out invites!



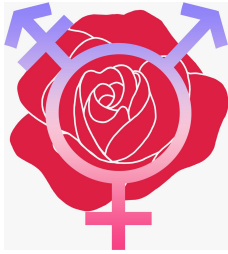
Facilitators Notes

Before the session

- Send an email invite to your comrades/local group about the session, along with a Zoom link
- Tell them the session will look at examples of transphobia on the left, and what we can do to challenge them
- Include this video from TWT on challenging transphobia on the left as “required reading” - we will be using this video a lot in the workshop. Here is the link to share: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lThVIAJw5I&t=7s>
- Include in the message that your group strongly supports trans liberation. This is a session for people who are already on board with trans liberation and want to learn more about transphobia and hone their skills responding to it. TWT is creating future resources specifically for people to ask questions about aspects of trans liberation, but this is beyond the scope of this session. Also include a content warning that the session will include discussion of some transphobic comments
- Mention that if any trans people want to get in touch before the meeting to talk through the session plan then you would be happy to speak to them
- Ensure that participants are able to rename themselves in the Zoom settings and that break out rooms are enabled

Prep for the meeting!

- Read through the session plan beforehand and have the Youtube video ready to play on your browser!
- This session involves screen sharing a Youtube video and organising people into break out groups. You will need a good internet connection to do this. If you think you will need it, ask someone else to do the tech for the call. [Here is an explainer video](#) on how to share your screen!
- If you want to talk to one of our facilitators ahead of running the session for any tips or questions then please drop us a line on transpoliticaleducation@gmail.com.

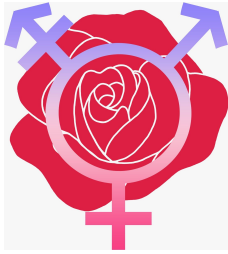


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- Have a quick [read through this article](#) which talks about examples of solidarity between trans and non-trans women. It will be useful for the second part of the session! Feel free to also send this around in advance of the meeting.
- Read through the FAQs at the bottom of this document for more tips.

Agenda:

Time	Activity	Notes / Materials
5 mins	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Welcome everyone to the session- Say that if people want to, they can add what pronouns they use (eg he/him, she/her, they/them) in their zoom names. You can do this by clicking the three dots on the top right hand corner of your video and clicking "rename"- Say that today we are going to be discussing how transphobia arises on the left, and how to challenge common transphobic tropes in a persuasive and comradely way- Give a verbal content warning - that we will be using the session to discuss some examples of transphobia. We will try to approach this as sensitively as possible but please be aware of this before we start!- Say that this is a trial session created by TWT. We are hoping that by testing out the session you can let TWT know what worked, and how it could be improved. All of your feedback would be very welcome and there will be space for this at the end.- Introduce ground rules: <p><i>Ground rules:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- This is a space supportive of trans liberation. We are developing more resources for people who have questions about aspects of trans	



liberation - but this session is primarily about discussing how transphobia arises and how we can respond

- Please be aware of how much you are speaking - and make space for others to do the same
- Acknowledge that people are coming into the session with different levels of experience and knowledge. Please be mindful that some people may have personal experience of the topics we discuss in the meeting
- Ask that we don't assume anyone's gender in the session and refer to people by the pronouns indicated in their Zoom names

Run through agenda:

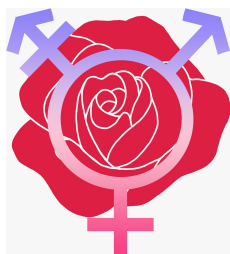
- 1) We will break out into groups of around 5 (or just as a group if there are less than 10 of you) and discuss how we see transphobia arising on the left and society at large
- 2) Come back together as one big group and feedback the discussions you had
- 3) Break out into groups again to practise unpacking and responding to an example of transphobia, using the video as a resource to help shape our discussion
- 4) End - the session should take around an hour and a half!

In a minute we are going to break into groups to discuss how we see transphobia manifesting on the left, but first we are going to watch a very short clip from the video shared around in advance of the meeting.

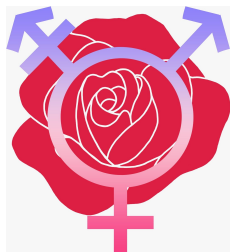
In the clip, Nim is asked about the strategies used by transphobic organisations, how they activate people's fears, and some first principles we should think about when responding.

Play video

*Screen share
and play
youtube video
from
32.09-33.44*

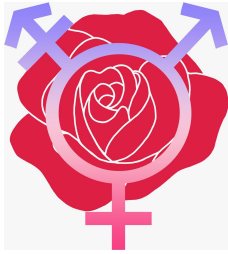


15 mins	<p>Breakout Group Discussion</p> <p>In breakout groups of around 5 (or just one group if there are fewer than 10 people at the meeting) ask your participants to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where do we see transphobia arising on the left? - What are some of the key transphobic themes that come up multiple times? - How does all of this relate to the clip you have just watched? <p><i>Say you will post these questions in the chat box, and ask someone from each group to take notes and feed back at the end</i></p>	<p><i>Sort everyone into random breakout groups or around 5 people for 15 mins. Post the questions in the chat!</i></p>
15 mins	<p>Whole group discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask everyone to come back together again (if on Zoom end the breakout room discussions) and ask someone from each group to feedback their discussion - Provide space after each person has fed back for anyone else to develop on what has already been said, but don't allow the conversation to go too off track! <p>Thank everyone for their feedback - say that we are going to unpack some of the things that came up more in the next part of the discussion!</p>	<p><i>Bring everyone back to a whole group discussion</i></p>
15 mins	<p>Breakout groups: practising how to challenge a transphobic statement</p> <p>Introduce this part of the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For this activity, we are going to unpack a specific statement which has transphobic implications together - The aim is to practise how we can frame our responses, and to demonstrate that trans and non-trans women are united in the struggle for socialism and against the patriarchy - First we are going to break into groups to discuss the statement together. We are not going to feedback from this initial part of the discussion - Instead we will come back together to watch a clip from the video, and break into groups again to unpack the statement further based on what we have just heard in the clip - Finally we will come back together again as a group, where there will be 	



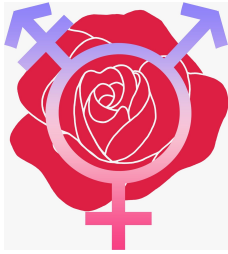
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	<p>the opportunity to feed back some of the key points!</p> <p>The statement we are going to unpack today is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>"I support trans liberation, but we have to understand the rights of trans and non-trans women are sometimes in conflict."</i> <p>For 15 minutes we are going to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When do we hear this argument being used and what are some of the specific forms it can take? - What might motivate someone to say something like this? - How can statements like this be harmful to trans people, especially trans women? <p><i>Sort everyone into groups and post the statement and questions in the chat</i></p>	<p><i>Sort everyone into random break out groups of around 5 people. Post the statement and questions in the chat so everyone can read them.</i></p>
5 mins	<p>Watching a clip from the video as a group</p> <p>Ask everyone to come back together again (if on Zoom end the breakout room discussions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Say that you hope those discussions were interesting! - Reiterate that we're not going to feedback from our discussion groups just yet, instead we will watch a quick clip from the video responding to a question about this statement - Then we are going to break back into groups again to further unpack the statement based on what we just heard - Finally we will feed back to the group! <p><i>Play video</i></p>	<p><i>Bring everyone back into a whole group</i></p> <p><i>Screen share and play the youtube video from 47.20-50-49</i></p>
15 mins	<p>Breakout group discussion on the video clip</p> <p>In break out groups discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the clip - Charlie and Nim talk about how policing single sex spaces harms non-trans as well as trans women. What do you think they meant by this? 	<p><i>Break out into groups of around five and post the questions to discuss in the chat</i></p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can you think of any examples of trans and non-trans women's liberation overlapping? - Thinking about Nim's framework from the first clip we watched of rooting responses in the material, structural and contextual, how would you begin to respond to someone who makes a statement like this? <p><i>Post the questions in the chat and ensure that someone is taking notes and is ready to feed back at the end!</i></p>	
15 mins	<p>Whole group discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask everyone to come back together again (if on Zoom end the breakout room discussions). - Give each group time to feed back from their discussion. After each person has fed back leave some time for anyone to add to or develop any points made. - You may want to feed in any examples from this article about examples of solidarity between trans and non-trans women. You can also share this in the chat in case people want some further reading! 	<i>Bring everyone back into the same room</i>
10 mins	<p>Wrapping up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thank everyone for coming to the meeting and say you hoped it was useful - We recognise that we have only had time to unpack one statement today and you may still have lots of questions you want answered! TWT is planning more expansive trainings in the future so watch this space for more - We want to provide some time at the end for people to offer reflections on what they thought was useful and what could be improved about the session - First ask people to offer any thoughts on what was useful, then what could have been improved (don't forget to take notes) 	



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After the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Let us know how the session went, including any feedback, by emailing us!	
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FAQs

We hope that running this session will be a really positive experience, but have included a couple of FAQs that may be helpful. Please do drop us a line ahead of organising the session on transpoliticaleducation@gmail.com - we'd be more than happy to chat to you about any facilitation tips and techniques, and answer any other questions you might have!

What do I do if someone starts to disrupt the session?: depending on how disruptive the person is being, reiterate that as mentioned at the beginning, this is a space of mutual learning and respect. Ask politely that they allow the session to continue. If after around 30 seconds they are still being disruptive you may have to remove them from the meeting.

What do I do if someone says something transphobic?: reiterate that it's beyond the scope of this session to deal with any questions people might have about aspects of trans liberation, and that this was included in the email sent out beforehand. If they are here to learn and listen then they are welcome to stay, but if not then kindly ask them to leave. If they are being extremely transphobic and you feel it is necessary you may have to remove them from the meeting.

How can I protect trans people who may come to the meeting?: offering an opportunity for any trans people who are interested in coming to the meeting to chat to you beforehand about the session is helpful. Likewise, following up with any trans people who attend the meeting afterwards to check in and ask how they felt about it.

I want to run this session but I'm not confident facilitating it: we have a small number of trained facilitators who may be able to facilitate the session for you. Please do get in touch with us if you feel you need their support for this session.