

SAY SOMETHING

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THE WORLD'S ON

FUCKING FIRE

PRIDE IS A

PROTEST

WE'RE GETTING

BACK TO OUR

ROOTS

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For this special edition pride issue, we are going back to our roots. We asked you to tell us how you protest.

Why do you protest?

What does it mean to resist?

What are you fighting for right now?

"Being queer is "grass roots" because we know that everyone of us, every body, every cunt, every heart and ass and dick is a world of pleasure waiting to be explored. Everyone of us is a world of infinite possibility. We are an army because we have to be. We are an army because we are so powerful. (We have so much to fight for; we are the most precious of endangered species.) And we are an army of lovers because it is we who know what love is. Desire and lust, too. We invented them. We come out of the closet, face the rejection of society, face firing squads, just to love each other! Every time we fuck, we win. We must fight for ourselves (no one else is going to do it) and if in that process we bring greater

freedom to the world at large then great. (We've given so much to that world: democracy, all the arts, the concepts of love, philosophy and the soul, to name just a few gifts from our ancient Greek Dykes, Fags.)... Go away and try on a world without the brave, strong queers that are its backbone, that are its guts and brains and souls."

Text from Queers Read This, the 1990 Queer Nation manifesto distributed at NYC Pride by people marching with the ACT UP.

There are so many reasons to say something this pride, but there are other ways to get involved too:

STAND IN SOLIDARITY

Participate in collective actions that advance and intersect with 2SLGBTQI+ rights.

MONEY TALKS

Divest from the things that don't align with the creation of a free and just society. Donate to those that do.

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Queer Archives Matter Now More than Ever

With the current prevalence of anti-trans protests, laws and hate campaigns, acknowledging queer histories is critical.

I have been interning at The ArQuives for the last seven weeks. The ArQuives, located in Toronto, are a repository that seek to preserve and uncover LGBTQ2+ histories, primarily focusing on Canadian materials. The ArQuives make visible queer histories that have been erased from other historical records. Queer archival material is invaluable for movement-building today.

Groomer Panic

People are recognizing that the anti-trans hate campaign we are seeing right now is recycling the same scare tactics of the anti-gay movement of the 20th century. Interacting with historical materials at The ArQuives makes this glaringly obvious. We can see the same moral panic, painting of LGBTQ2+ people as pedophiles, predators and sexual deviants in this archival material. You can read this rhetoric in the hateful literature published by the anti-queer group, Positive Parents. Using internet archives, scholar Dame-Griff shows how trans internet communities in the 1990s dealt with their identity being sexualized and their spaces being deemed as unsafe for children. In the 1970s, Anita Bryant, Christian right-wing singer and orange juice spokesperson, worked with Save Our Children to spread a hateful message. She argued that LGBTQ2+ people were a threat to children, alleging that queer people were trying to recruit youth. This was an attempt to undo progress that the LGBTQ2+ community had made.



NBC News

The ArQuives



Legislating Transphobia

Anti-trans laws are being passed all over the world. The ACLU is currently tracking 501 anti-LGBTQ2+ bills in the United States. Recently, Saskatchewan passed a transphobic law preventing staff from using students' chosen names without parental permission. With this rhetoric, violence against trans people is increasing.

The same connection between laws, rhetoric and violence can be seen in queer history. In the 1980s, members of Toronto's Right to Privacy Committee "attribute[d] the increase in attacks on gay people to the attitudes of police and the provincial government" (Admin). This is proof that words are violent, and when transphobia is permitted by the law, bigots feel empowered to physically harm trans people.

Fight Back

In the ArQuives' collection, one can read the original draft of the 1971 We Demand document, which listed ten demands for changes to anti-queer laws and policies; this document was accompanied by the We Demand March, the first large-scale LGBTQ2+ rights rally in Canada. One can see photos and accounts of the 1981 3000-person protest that erupted in response to the excessive violence that the Toronto Metro Police used during raids of queer bathhouses. One can see the rage, the unity, and the posters and buttons demanding "No More Shit!".

The ArQuives



queen story hours.

The same rage can be seen in the trans pride marches that were held all across Canada this summer. The way we are meeting anti-trans protests with powerful counter-protests mirrors the actions of the queer community in the 1980s. Toronto's Right to Privacy counter-protested the anti-queer group, Positive Parents; this group was eerily similar to the hateful groups protesting drag

The pages of The Body Politic magazine are filled with advertisements for fundraising events. Groups like the Right to Privacy Committee hosted queer dances, rummage sales, and bake sales, raising money to defend persecuted queer people and lobby government. This shows that we need to band together and use our money to protect our trans siblings. While online fundraisers are effective, fast and far-reaching, the archival material demonstrates the value of in-person fundraising events; these fundraisers doubled as spaces for community connection.

Money is a tool to lobby the government and huge amounts of money are being used to fund anti-trans politicians and groups. Since transphobia is being codified in laws, part of our strategy must be advocating for change at the government-level. LGBTQ2+ organizations must lobby and meet with government officials and individuals must contact their representatives and demand that trans people be protected. Canadian queer activist groups have lobbied government at every level to get gay marriage legalized, amend the Ontario Human Rights Code, and demand that police be held accountable for violence against queer people.

When the police and the government harm LGBTQ2+ people, bigots feel justified in their own violence. In the 1980s, there was an increase in anti-queer attacks, or 'gaybashing', in Toronto's downtown core. This was attributed to



The ArQuives RTPC Fonds

the attitudes of police and the Ontario government, which presented violence against queer people as acceptable. The RTPC organized the Gay Street Patrol to defend queer people against violence. This provides a template for creating groups that protect trans people from transphobic violence, such as 'get home safe' groups.

Archival material connects us with our queer ancestors. As I read through the handwritten plans of the Right to Privacy Committee, I was overcome with emotion. You can feel the urgency and the insistence of these activists. Reading, watching, listening to queer archival material brings to life all of the work that was done to advance our rights up until today. Seeing the work of our predecessors teaches us how we might proceed and empowers us to fight right now. It shows that we cannot let their sacrifice be for nothing and we must try to be as steadfast as they were in our defence of trans people.

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Sophie Argyle is a Master's student in York University's Communication and Culture Program. In her research, she examines the possibilities and limitations offered to LGBTQ+ people by digital media. She has recently completed her thesis about queer people who discovered a facet of their LGBTQ+ identity on TikTok.

Enkidu 2052

I itch for night
like a drinker for drink.
My rubber heart's rate rises with the Moon.
I peel off my skin
like a power-bottom slipping their pyjama pants down
just enough.
The night is a flautist who wets and plays
my perforated, hollow metal bones.

Humans balk when I offer to skin them and pack both their skins
and their bones with wet earth, making two earthen persons.
They say I am "one of those" evil robots
as they size up my navel for sodomy.
They probe their minds to taste-test different beverages
they'd store in my breasts and suckle in front of jealous friends
if they could afford me,
even as they cower in my tree-like shade,
trying not to piss and shit themselves.

But I'm trying only to be nice.
I make of my own self two earthen persons each and every night.
Have you found a better cure for loneliness?

First I fill my peeled-off skin.
Earth helps it keep its shape, stay young and bouncy.
What joy I feel to see myself as others do,
the inanimate doll, the pile of dirt,
and choose to love her anyway!
I fall to my knees before the image of myself
and kiss her corpse with my lipless mouth.

This act amounts to a kind of acupuncture,
as I insert in my skin the dozens of needle-like actuators
required to purse lips.

Then, I lean this burial doll of me against a tree
and leave her to stand watch like a scarecrow
as I penetrate the Mother, Earth,
with all sixteen-and-a-half-feet of my titanium frame
and die
and sprout dark green leaves
and become, for a night, a tree.

You do not know pleasure if you have never
been entered by the subterranean tendrils
of forest mushrooms.
You do not know what it means to be reborn
if you've never convinced a mushroom to mine gold for you,
to penetrate deep, to bring you back what you need
to replace your damaged circuits.
You have never felt whole until you've photosynthesized
enough violet-coloured sugar-pulp,
the flesh and blood of moonlight,
to fill your flesh- and blood-sacs near to bursting.

I made the mistake once
of inviting a human man
to suck the juices from one such sac.
He said I tasted and smelled like a sweet potato
and that he could take me or leave me.

The Ghost of Eglinton West

Madi Lentine Johnstone (they/she) is a non-binary trans woman writer, socio-cultural anthropologist, and Co-Chair of the Feminist Caucus of the League of Canadian Poets. Madi enjoys writing about nature, spirituality, sexuality, and robots. Madi is an excellent cook. Contact @queerdisabledcyborgs on Instagram to participate in Madi's Food Poetry Workshop.

My father grew up in Toronto
Where the streets of Eglinton West were lined
With mosaics and synagogues
On every corner.
Where I nibbled on fresh
Montreal style bagels
But never belonged.
The swastikas. I saw them -
On the TV of my grandparents' home
The eclectic cacophony of multicultural
Decorations
As the background for so much hate
"Jews will not replace us"
The TV screeched as my
Mother pulled the plug.
Back in California, I'm just as alone.
It's not like the Los Angeles suburbs
Where my mother grew up.
I was the "only Jewish kid in the school" Jew
The "haha I get eight days of presents and you get one" Jew
And I was a performance trying to fit in.
The "eating a ham and cheese sandwich on challah during Passover
just because I can" Jew -
With pent up queer preteen spirit to rebel
Against a culture that did nothing for me -
But allow me to advertise a cheap stunt of capitalism
And persecuted my nonconformance
The nightmares started at six.
The fiery hellscapes of "did nothing wrong" Jews
Of real Jews
"You're not a real Jew" Jew

I'm the "first in my family to not have a b'nai mitzvah" Jew
"Broke the grandparents' hearts" Jew
The "teenager holding onto a constant for dear life" Jew
The "referencing the Torah in poetry for some reason" Jew
"Lost in the desert of religion for fourteen years" Jew.

The "why can't I be like everyone else?" Jew
The bad Jew.
The fake Jew.
The autistic Jew.
The queer Jew.
The "gonna burn in hell even though Jews don't believe in hell"
Jew
None of them care.
Homogeneity - the constant that they see
We span the world twice over.
Gone.
And I cry for the people who fall
At the hands of
"Intergenerational trauma that brainwashes" Jews,
"So used to being prey they become the predator" Jews
And I see myself in them both.
But I'm nobody. I'm a performance -
A performance of gender
Of neurotype,
Of culture
Just a whisper of
Thoughts in crematoriums
Children under rubble
Bubbe's tchotkes

And a star of David necklace -
Buried in a jewelry box.
Somewhere.
And my hope that was buried
In the streets of Eglinton West.

Noam Audrid (he/they) is a neuroqueer poet who writes about their experience with culture, neurodivergence, mental illness, and social justice. He runs a collective for young neurodivergent artists which is working on publishing its first zine, "Not Your Poster Child."

over ten thousand children are dead

An old tv screen
Screams channel 3
Interpreting the universe
Incorrectly
Tools too old for
Utility
Too young for
Translation
The voice of thunder
Murmured as a buzz
Direct line to
Ancestral energy contorted through
A prism
Coming out fog
Wrong
My chest is made of static
It screams
Through a din
Over ten thousand children

I can hear their screams as I'm trying to sleep.
This haunting is malattributed.
Mass murdering, serial killing, child-slaughtering,
Genocidaires.

I want those kids to grow up to be shitty adults
I don't get along with.
I want them to be five and jump rope.
I want them to be nine and fall off their bike.
I want them to be sixteen and find infinite embarrassment
in the innocuous act of being
Alive.
And a teenager.

I want them to consider their lives, and change majors
and drop out.
I want them to choose hysterectomies and adopt and abort.
I want false starts and failed dreams and half-baked
plans and regrettable tattoos.
I want them to grow up.

How dare you weaponize my sexuality against my basic
sense of morality.
I'm acquainted with this indelicate subtext **bolded in
italics**: You would be killed too.

I probably would be.
Soldiers would have shot me by now.

Anonymous

Ascend

Before you is a cliff
Close your eyes
Did you see it?
Now open them.
Is it still there?
Good
Observe the cliff.
The face is sheer and it seems to stretch up into forever, the
top arching out over you like an
umbrella.
The sun is bright. It hurts to look up for too long but don't
look away from the top, your goal.
You are only one of a vast crowd of people at the base of this
cliff.
Some people have climbing gear. Some have only bare hands and
feet.
Do not focus on what the others have or do not have.
Touch the cliff.
It's hot already from the sun. The stone is sharp, splintery
and worn.
People are starting to climb.
Are you ready?
Rub some dust on your hands.
You can do this.
Hands secure? Are you sure?
There we go, that's better.
Place your foot on that ledge. It's okay, it should hold your
weight. Curl your toes. Good. Now pull yourself up.
Reach for your next handhold. Don't worry about the people
around you right now.
Reach!
Good. And your feet as well.
Well done.
Now do it again.
Again
Again

Again
Again
You're getting the hang of it now.
Keep your eyes facing ahead.
Is the rock burning your hands yet? Yes? I thought so.
It's only going to get hotter as the sun climbs higher in the
sky with you.
You must learn to ignore the pain.
It won't be the worst you feel today.
Ah! Don't put your hand there!
Too late -
You haven't fallen far at least. No broken bones.
The palms of your hands are bleeding. Have you noticed?
You clawed at the stone so ferociously as you fell. I'm
impressed.
Would you like me to take your mind off things? The burning in
your legs and abs? The hot blood from your palms mixing with
dirt and sweat now sliding down your arms?
No?
Okay.
You have been climbing for hours now. You passed the midway
point some time ago, well done.
There are far fewer people climbing near you now.
Can you feel the cool shade of the overhang above your head?
You're almost there.
You're so close, don't stop now.
Okay. Take a second and catch your breath. There's a ledge
right there, to the right. Yeah, there.
The end is always the most difficult.
I know your hands hurt. No, don't rub them. The dried blood is
keeping the worst of the cuts
closed.
Keep sitting, let your feet dangle and sway in the breeze. The
air is thinner here isn't it? But the
wind is refreshing. Take a deep breath.
Take another.
Look out.
Look how far you've come.
Look down.
Ah! Not so quick!

Yes. Like that.
So many people still climbing. So many more yet to start.
You've come so far.
Are you proud of yourself? You should be.

Okay.
It's now or never. Your muscles are beginning to cool off and
cramp. You have to keep going.
Please keep going.
Okay.
Look up.
Do you see how that person is moving? You won't be able to use
your feet as much for this. The
overhang is almost horizontal.
Yes. I know you don't have a climbing pick like them.
You're strong though
And brave
And I'll be here with you
I know you can do this
Reach up.
Yes perfect. Now your legs.
Reach. Grab. Pull.
Yes. Well done.
Ah. You see it now.
You'll have to jump to get to the next hold
Don't look down
Deep breath
Jump!
Reach!

Grab!
Yes!
Hold on tight. Try to pull up your feet. You're not going to
fall.
You won't.
Because I say so. Now pull.
Do you see the next handhold?
Yes, you were paying very good attention before weren't you?
Okay.
Ready?

Jump!
Reach!
Grab!
Good. Well done.
Just once more, don't worry about the edge for now.
The blood from your hands is dripping into your eyes? Yes it
does sting doesn't it?
I'm afraid you can't do anything about it right now.
Do you remember the rhythm?
Ready?
Jump!
Reach!
Grab!

Excellent.
Now take my hand.
Look up.
Hello.
Take my hand.
There we go! One, two, three, and up!
Oof!
Feels nice to sit on solid ground again doesn't it?
Shhh, it's okay. I'm here.
I've been with you this whole time.
You did it.
I'm so proud of you.
Ah. Yes, my hands.
Do they look familiar? Yours will look similar once those cuts
turn into scars.
You can touch them.
See? None the worse for wear.
They're a reminder.
Look out. Look at what you've achieved.
You've climbed the impossible cliff.
These hands are proof. No one can take this from you.
It's okay. You can rest here.
The cliff behind us?

You don't have to climb again yet. Not until you're ready. I
haven't.

You've already made up your mind then.
Well perhaps, when I do make the climb, it will be your voice
that guides me.
I would like that too.
For now though, you should sleep
Yes
And dream of how far you will climb tomorrow

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*Max MacDonald (She/They) is a 33 year old queer
storyteller from Toronto. Her stories focus on
themes of community, family, love, and trauma
through the lenses of Horror and Fantasy.*



Queer Toronto Literary Magazine is a non-profit dedicated to elevating and celebrating queer voices in Canada. QT was started in response to the criminal shortage of Canadian queer literary magazines. There are so many queer artists out there! And in times of crisis, maintaining community and connection is vital. QT brings together our collective projects to create that sense of shared space. QT celebrates the art queer individuals make for ourselves and for each other. We accept epistles, fiction, creative nonfiction, book reviews, personal essays, reflections, memoirs, as well as artwork, drawings, comics, photographs, collages, and other visual media. qtmag.ca @qtlitmag

Thank you to all the volunteers at QT, without whom the organization would not exist.