

A BOMB DROPPED BY A QUEER OR TRANS SOLDIER STILL KILLS

Why are we doing anti-war and anti-military recruitment outreach at queer and trans events? For a long time, mainstream media, in support of lesbian and gay inclusion in the US military, have pushed a narrative of proud LGBT military service. These stories, often profiling LGBT people who are happy to be serving in the military, celebrate US service as a great job and a way to “protect our country.” This pro-military discourse has only ramped up following Trump’s transphobic tweets in fall 2017.

We are queer and trans people who oppose not only homophobia and transphobia but also war, militarism, and US imperialism. We want to disrupt a conversation that seeks to co-opt our liberation struggles into pro-war, pro-military propaganda.

Here’s the truth:

- The US military is the largest source of violence in the world. The US military is currently embroiled in horrible, long, unjust wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; is supporting a brutal assault on Yemen; and maintains almost 800 bases in over 70 nations and territories across the world, inflicting environmental destruction, sexual assault, and other forms of violence on the local populations. The US military is GROWING exponentially as Trump expands the defense budget.
- The US military is the world’s largest polluter.
- Working for the US military is a terrible job. Sexual violence is endemic in the military. Veterans do not get the services they need from the VA. Recruiters lie about military benefits in order to recruit vulnerable poor people and people of color. 22 veterans commit suicide every day.

Doesn’t military service enable trans people to get health care who otherwise wouldn’t have access to it? You shouldn’t have to join the military to get health care. Right now, we can all be fighting for low- and no-cost trans health care in our communities. We can be raising money to help trans people practice self-determination about their bodies and well-being. Together, we can fight a military budget that takes vital resources away from health, education, and housing.

Isn’t military service a way for people of color and poor people to get ahead in the US? Many people who are made vulnerable by an unjust economy and who live in communities with under-resourced schools are recruited to join the military by the promise of a free college education. No one should have to risk their lives and undergo the horrific trauma of imperialist warfare, in order to go to college. The fact that the US military exploits people who are desperate to get an education is one of the many reasons that we should come together to dismantle US militarism and to fight for wealth redistribution and economic justice.

Aren’t you blaming people who join the military? We are part of international anti-war, anti-militarism, and anti-imperialism movements, which include veterans of the US military and people targeted by the US military, as well as currently enlisted people who oppose war and militarism. Rather than focusing on judging people’s individual choices, we come together as queer and trans people to uplift our communities’ histories of opposing war and to build shared solutions for real peace, security, and justice.