



Library podcast

Panel Discussion: Ending Anti-LGBTQ Violence

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[00:00:35] How's everybody doing tonight. We're good.

[00:00:40] All right. I want to welcome everyone to tonight's program LGBTQ hate crimes Seattle isn't immune. My name is Davida Ingram and I am our Public Engagement Programs Manager at The Seattle Public Library. I'd like to thank The Seattle Public Library Foundation for their support so that we can offer programs like that like tonight do we haven't have any donors in the audience tonight. You can make some noise if you're a donor to the library

[00:01:09] And if they aren't can we give them a round of applause. Applause

[00:01:17] I also want to extend a special thank you to our community partners for tonight so to Spectrum Dance Company and also to Donald Byrd who's in the audience. Applause. They are gearing up for their. Actually they are not gearing up. I think it's very much happening this week where the impulse world premiere and I'm excited that they decided to kick off the program at the Central Library. I also want to thank cross-cut and our panelists and moderator for joining us for tonight I want to be real with you customarily at this point in the program I normally let people know to please silence their cell phone so if you happen to have a cell phone please silence it and we silence it because we have podcasts and that just lets us have a really smooth podcast. And then

[00:02:06] I typically share information about our restrooms. So the Seattle Public Libraries policy for our public restrooms are that you may use the restroom that best suits your gender identity. Last week we had an incident that concerned our single stall bathrooms and I wanted to let you know that due to the events that happened last week that we decided to augment tonight's program because a lot of community members have expressed to us that they want a more inclusive environment and your feedback and voice matter to us tremendously. So with support from Spectrum and the panelists and our moderators tonight we agreed that we would do a yes. And is anybody familiar with. Yes and so when you facilitate yes and means that you don't do either or but you say yes we do think it's tremendously important to acknowledge the loss of life that happened last year at about this time.

When I look out in the audience as someone who's queer I see people who gave me hugs and drive my eyes when I was crying last year. And so we're saying yes to acknowledging that hate crimes in the LGBT community are still an issue that we're contending with. And also as someone with CIS gender privilege we're also acknowledging that an LGBTQ spaces sometimes the T is too silent.

[00:03:33] And so in this space tonight we are striving to make a trans inclusive environment and one where we are thinking about how to make radically inclusive institutions and community. So thank you to spectrum for making a yes. And and also for allowing us space to talk about something that's important to our community. As someone who's African-American when I look at spaces from the civil rights movement and I think about how bathroom laws used to affect my community it moves me. And as someone with CIS gender privilege I would have to say after the incidents from last week there hasn't been a point that I have taken a trip to the restroom that I haven't seen my privilege. So for those who happen to be non binary and trans and the audience tonight we want to say thank you for your bravery and also to allies for speaking out and asking us to be accountable and to think about the ways that we can have a more inclusive environment. I always think of institutions like fairies. Has anyone been on the ferry recently community members are kind of like people who are on jet skis you move faster and you're more nimble sometimes institutions move more slowly. But we do move when you ask us to. And over the last few days we've been listening and you've been asking us to think about our policies. So I'm going to read and I want to thank my my colleagues at the library. Have you ever been in a moment where you had to kind of figure something out quickly have you ever done it with your family isn't a tricky I'm like one of five.

[00:05:11] So when I do stuff and with my family it's kind of hard to get everybody information. So I'm just going to I hate doing opening remarks and I normally rush through them. But these are important. So I'm going to slow down and read what we wrote and I want to acknowledge in advance that you may listen and it may not meet all of your needs and this is where we're going to ask for you to use your surveys tonight. And also there will be space to share. I think there will be limited time and we'll get to that. But I'd like for you to listen and see if this covers what you think the need is. And then if it doesn't we're still listening and we won't stop listening. So we said tonight we have opened up to single occupancy restrooms. They are immediately behind the auditorium these restrooms are normally in a staff area but for two night we have opened them up so that they may be available the mall to stall restroom so the ones that I normally call the public restrooms are also available to all. And I want to emphasize the policy of the library for the public restrooms have not changed. So if anyone is disputing your right to be in the restroom of your choice our staff is here to advocate for you and to make sure that you have the access that you need. The one difference is that we also have access to a single stall restroom which was the issue at point. Last week and may I have staff from the library wave their hands.

[00:06:37] If you need way finding help staff on there off to the side so you may not see all of their hands.

[00:06:43] Staff are available to help you get to the restroom that would most be appropriate for you. Does that cover some of the expectations that people had tonight.

[00:06:52] You all are a very quiet audience. You're scaring me. Did the remarks earlier the kind of cover some of the things that you needed to hear. If there are things that you didn't hear that you'd like us to think about the next time would you feel okay sharing that in your surveys and are real okay kind of continuing with this show as planned so that we still will leave time to talk about hate crimes.

[00:07:15] So that's our Yes and so yes to talk about LGBT hate crimes and to leave some space towards the end of the night to also talk about ways to make a more inclusive environment at the Central Library. I'm from college and response culture so when you talk back to me it makes me feel alive. I am going to introduce our moderators for tonight and I want to thank them because they spent time this weekend checking in and I really appreciated it. And I also think we agreed that we wanted to model an inclusive environment so I'm going to ask everybody tonight to please not make assumptions about people's pronouns or their gender identities.

[00:07:53] So we are going to introduce ourselves with our gender pronouns and we're also going to make space at the end to kind of remind people how to make a more inclusive environment. So I want to introduce Johnny Robinson Jani uses they. Then he him pronouns Jani is a queer and trance writer and community organizer who works with gender justice league and lion's mane art collective Jani is an intersectional feminist advocate for communities of color and LGBTQ persons they hope to become a writing teacher in the public school and prison system.

[00:08:30] Jani believes in grassroots solutions and empowering those most oppressed by class race or gender identity to reform broken institutions our CO moderator with Jani is v Minda Lulu Zurich Carpenter she her pronouns.

[00:08:49] Lulu has created her hollow earth radio Lulu nation to archive the stories of queer and trans people of color and I believe her also adding that Lulu is a teacher at Seattle Girls School. So those are our moderators before the moderators come up and give us the overview of tonight. I also wanted to leave space to have a word from Spectrum and before spectrum comes up I just wanted to point out that our city librarian has taken the conversation that we've been having really seriously and empty if you can give a wave of your hands so people see where you are. If anybody would like to be in touch with him I also have his business card so we can pass this out.

[00:09:28] But for now I'd like to bring up Joshua from Spectrum Hi there I am Joshua Crouch.

[00:09:41] I am currently the principal of the school of Spectrum Dance Theater and crosscut and in the library have partnered with us to provide something that I think expounds on what was the deep inherent seed of who we believe that we are. Spectrum to us that the art form of dance is not just a passive thing that allows you to escape reality although that is one of the glories of why we go to things like concert I think in the early form formulation of spectrum. It became very clear to us. That not everyone was allowed a safe space to explore who they believed their expression of self was and also that the world required of us a deeper look at what our role in engaging in that environment was. So two very key tenants of who we are then became a parent that first and foremost our building. Our

actions what we perceive the world of art to be must be inclusive for everyone so at Spectrum the idea of what a body and dance is is quite reasonably whatever body you have. That anyone is capable of using some sense of inherent expressiveness and we can call that dance. The other core tenet I think. To who and what we are and what drives us in everything we do is that we can no longer just sit on our laurels as artists and become these ancillary. Haphazard parts of our culture. We must engage in social and civic dialogue especially in places where there is a disconnect and a disparity that we see in our community because community is the greatest and the most important whatever your community that that requires of us then to look.

[00:11:35] At things that we find troubled in the world. And. Donald Byrd our wonderful artistic director has had a prolific career in doing this and asking the questions and in shining light on things that may not always be comfortable may not always be what you want to go to a theater to be distracted by. But then again we are not about distraction we are about trying to improve the world around us. It impacted everyone in various levels to their own life stories. Last year. I think pulse served as a reminder for those of us who had far too often tuned out. How greatly interconnected we were and how great a shared pain there still was in so many facets so the work of theater that we are premiering this this call to action and this honorarium is is not just to honor the memory of those that we lost not just to ask us to look more deeply at who we are and engaging the world around us. Not only for the LGBTQ community but for any community. This show challenges us. Our expectations and our ideals and how comfortable we want to be with them. It allows us to express a new voice of what we think our role in the world should be and at the core of that.

[00:13:01] Are conversations like this. What the library has so wonderfully stepped up to do what we are constantly I think in all of the organizations we represent stepping up to do. And in this sense we're arriving. Or we're where we're. Go let me backtrack. Not to be too ablest there I'm terribly sorry. We're arriving at this sense of what we feel compelled to do right. That we want to change the world when we see disparity. We want to ask for feedback when we're uninformed. We want to approach a better tomorrow. And that requires a conversation that requires the willingness to listen and the willingness to speak up. So I do hope that you engage actively in what's going to happen here tonight because that's that's what we tried to do in the studio. That's what we tried to do in the theater. Now I want you to carry that further come see the show. Carry that even further. Take what you learned from that experience into your life thereafter. Continue to question continue to believe in your own validity in your own voice and continue to explore. How the intersectionality how the humanity of all of us inherently requires that. We be participants in the world around us and not just and creatures right. Without. Bogging you down too much further. I'm gonna turn it over to those who are far much more capable. Of leading you into that sort of education than I. Thank you so much. Take it away.

[00:14:34] Applause Thank you very much.

[00:14:37] I'm so excited to meet you because I will get Seattle Girls School in. We had a storytelling unit and one of my students made a story just about you and so it was great to finally see you.

[00:14:46] Yes. Her name is Grace and I'll tell you about it later.

[00:14:52] Yes. So why are we here. I think there were a lot of points that got touched on really well. And you know there are other pulse vigils happening tonight and there's probably going to be more while we are in the middle of Pride season. And I kind of want to draw attention to the fact that

[00:15:11] You know there was last week also a vigil for the numbers of black trans women that have been killed this year. There's probably going to be more. This year. And there were many last year as well. And. I. I know that it just kind of seems like tragedy upon tragedy but I don't want to lose that sense of humanity and that sense of loss. And that sense of. I hope

[00:15:36] A growing resistance and a quiet calm purposeful anger that you don't want this to happen. I just want to make space so for people who know about what happened impulse.

[00:15:52] We encourage you to learn more about the Latin next community and in the end of July.

[00:16:00] Emerald City black pride as well as I'm forgetting some Latin next pride and some other organizations that identify as communities of color are coming together to have APAC pride. So look out for that if you want more information ask us after the program. With that I would love for folks to have a moment of silence. I know in Seattle and in the northwest we are uncomfortable and sometimes I want to encourage you to experience whatever range of emotion you need tonight. We are going to be talking about violence. We're going to share personal stories. We have people that talk about sexual assault domestic violence all the things that happen in regards to violence from the personal to the interpersonal as well as the institutional and to just take care of yourself in that moment as a person that used to advocate for youth and young adults in the sexual assault domestic violence and trafficking field we need to just honor that we're just giving you that warning and encourage you to do the same if you ever have a program. So with that I want to encourage you if you are able to close your eyes or lower your eyes. And we're going to have a moment of silence and I'll lead you through that. What I want you to concentrate on is like what brought you here tonight. What led you to this moment that you would like to learn from each other from communities from those most marginalized from people of color and to come here not in a in defensiveness but come here knowing that there are lives on the line in our words and our actions. It is important. So we're gonna have a moment of silence because the folks that passed away a year ago deserve that regardless of what our actions are before this or after this. We are going to advocate with them with what ever faith or silence that you have as well as whatever actions.

[00:17:44] So with one minute's silence and have this moment to think about them thank you so much for taking that minute sometimes a minute takes a long time.

[00:18:02] And at the same time when we think about the fear that hate causes you think about the people sometimes when they're in their homes thinking about whether to live or or to die or whether they were in a bathroom getting harassed or if they're bullied at school that moment of fear that we're here for them that moment that silence when you're by yourself or with community. So I just wanted to

[00:18:30] Provide a semi institutional response to the institutional violence of excluding the disabled trans person from the bathroom last Friday. And I know that. The story kind of kept changing and I also want to acknowledge that. As far as the employees that I know at the library that I know that there are clear and trans librarians who are working really hard on this issue and I'm not trying to ignore that but as an institution this was the institution that

[00:19:03] I worked for and this is how they responded to the library and I worked for gender justice league. It's a trans organization that puts on trans pride does all kinds of advocacy work for Washington State trans people and the asks Were three first a public apology that actually features that the person who was hurt was both disabled and trans that was excluded from the original non apology that was posted on Friday. Second. Would be a review of bathroom policies in all public libraries in Seattle. That seems reasonable and called for for this situation and three would be a de-escalation training that is mandatory for all library staff. And that is especially true for security staff. But true for really all staff I think is the way that we need to go forward in order to work on escalating violence in our communities. As an institutional solution so I guess I wanted to bring that forward as. Asks and I also want to thank Davida personally for being so responsive on this issue and for working really closely with many communities not just me and not just my organization on how do we respond to this and how are we actually actively accountable when we mess up. So with that

[00:20:22] For me as a cis gendered person like watching that video and people I'm about to come in moderate panel on they're like What are you going to do and how are you going to be accountable. I just wanted to know that I'm in a learning place and I need to learn as a cis gender person and like what can I do so actively asking community members and for me personally what was hardest about the video if you have a chance to watch the video was a trans person was asking for safety from somebody that was supposed to protect them and we see this oftentimes and that's what we're going to talk about tonight. We welcome our panel to talk about that as well asking for safety asking for safety. I don't feel safe and then exited from the building and that was really hard and that is a moment for us to learn and what are we going to now do about it. So our framing for this conversation and the flow is that we want to talk about the personal interpersonal institutions and that's how we frame the question and then we're going to the last question that we're gonna ask the panel is for a liberation centered solution. Sorry. Lint liberation centered response of like what do they see liberation or Justin look. Justice looking like in the world and that looks like many things to marginalized communities because oftentimes we're pig pit. Sorry we're told that we're being negative by mentioning but we need to talk about what the oppression is that's out there and talk about what we see as liberation whether that's expressing our anger and how do we show up for each other and with that we will introduce our panelist yes so. I

[00:21:58] Don't know everybody on this panel but I'm going to add a personal note where I can so Ricardo Salvador Gonzalez uses he him pronouns and he is a young professional has recently taken the lead of the immigrant refugee and undocumented outreach program at Seattle counselling service which I used to go to which is the oldest LGBTQ counselling service established in 1969. He is a Miami born Hispanic whose parents sought political asylum in the United States from communist revolution in Cuba Nicaragua and Ricardo is currently a mental health counseling student at the City

University of Seattle. And then next we have who uses she her pronouns and LGBTQ hate crime survivor. She was born in Mexico on a tourist beach town and came to Seattle when she was 17. She's been here for seven for twenty seven years. Her favorite food is Chinese fried rice and her cat's name is Poppy. Next we have a rye who uses this she her pronouns a clear network program coordinator at API China. She is a mixed race chronically ill prison abolitionist who is dreaming wildly and fighting to win. And last but certainly not least a good friend of mine the lady who uses she her pronouns is a community engagement advocate at the Northwest network for bi trans lesbian and gay survivors of abuse as an advocate. She practices advocacy based counseling to center and increased survivors self-determination and safety in order to build a loving inclusive and accountable communities. Lady also serves as a co-chair on the Ingersoll Gender Center board of directors and as a performance artist activist talk facilitator and a public speaker formerly at the Ted x Middlebury voice and vulnerability workshop.

[00:23:58] Healing the scars of my political body.

[00:24:02] Thank you. Applause.

[00:24:07] So my question is a little bit personal and I know that as queer people as trans people our life informs our work. The personal is political. And so I wanted to ask is there something that led you to your work that is personal about your story or your partner's story or your mother's story. Is there something that brought you to this work in particular and what does it have to do with what we're talking about tonight.

[00:24:36] I guess I will begin. Ricardo. Everybody. Still I wanted to share a little story about myself. I'm from Miami so you know there's a lot of Cubans and other Latinos down there. But I went to an all boys Catholic high school and it wasn't like that. It was the very much the all boys Catholic school and I guess I stood out compared to everybody else. And I guess people could start understanding or knowing what is queer. Gay LGBTQ and every day I would get told how I didn't fit in. People would call me faggot every day. And that really affected my well-being. I lost a lot of my support and people outed me. And that kind of made me hyper aware of my mannerisms or if I was a little bit more feminine than other males at the all boys Catholic school. And that kind of pursued my interests and understanding psychology and in finding those allies and that kind of made me reach out to our sister school where there's more women there. And they were my they were the first model to me of what an ally really is. And they were the ones who kind of helped me build myself back up. And also my family being from another country and and then telling me their narrative of how to be resilient and fleeing war just to have freedom inspired me to be the person I am here today

[00:26:11] Hi everyone. My name is Olga. I'm 49 years old. I'm from Mexico. And I'm so proud to be here tonight. I came to the states when I was 17 years old. The reason I came is because my father die and I don't have anybody to support me to help me because back in the 80s it was really tough for everybody especially for a gay boy. Very I was very feminine and I came from a very normal family. I was 13 and my whole family. So I'm like a tomato. So basically my brothers my older brothers kicked me out of the house after my father passed away because he don't really support me. He never agree

with my sexuality. He was never happy with me especially because I got his name. So there was like very embarrassed for the whole family. It was like a shame for all down. But that's who I am. So I know I cannot make living in Mexico because I have a lot of discrimination and a lot of problems. I remember to two times when I was like 8 years old. They keep not me and bit me in the streets. It was a bunch of kids. I goes this was just ignoring they was very ignorant with that they don't. I come from a very small place small town so they don't really lie. They don't know how to treat gay people back down. And I was in the 80s. It was tough. It was really hard down so I came to chill and to pick apples over there when I was 17 and I like it.

[00:27:45] I was very such a great experience. But the job over there was just very. We only work but seasons. So I decide to come to the City to Seattle. So I've been in here since 1991. We work in my entire life. I'm a housekeeper now. I clean homes for living. I've been doing these for like 16 years. I build my clients for the same since then and I still work for them. That means I'm good at what I do. They really love me and I love them is like part of family with me and I a survivor of domestic violence. I love three years ago. I have this partner. This boyfriend who never even told me his name. He just call in Mississippi and I didn't invest. I didn't find out much about him. I was just going with him because I was in drugs. I was in drugs for like seven years. I didn't start drugs and towards I was 40 and I did it because I was under very depressed situation that I got the porter and 2000 and October 2008 I get deported one day the immigration just come to my house and take me. I don't even understand why they didn't show me paper. They didn't show me nothing when they got me in the detention center over there in Tacoma. I supposed to get attorney and they don't even let me. They don't even let me have attorney or nothing. They just don't give me rights to anything they just deport me.

[00:29:20] And when I went to Mexico because I already look different like now my family just don't know how to reach me. They treated me like like any like some stranger. They don't even know how to call me. It was Berry. It was really stressful for me. I really have a very hard time with them and nobody helped me with anything and I was not prepared for any of these. So I decide to come back again to the to the stays. Because basically this is my country. I mean I've been doing all my life I've been living all my life in here especially in Seattle. Well I know under Washington state. So I get kidnapping and Tijuana when I get back I get rape I get beat up and then they call my sister ask him for money. The guys who kidnapped me over there they sexually attack me they give me a C.D. they treat me like like a piece of meat like piece of trash. And actually I was feeling like that. It was very painful. So when I finally come in to Tijuana. They ask my sister for the money they charge five thousand dollars and they told her that if she don't give them the money they gonna just disappear me just kill me. And I begging her over and over to send the money. And she finally did and they just bring me in a van through here to Seattle. And since then I was. This is nine years ago now. And

[00:31:00] Like three years ago I have a domestic violence with my partner. He just raped me. I mean she just beat me and robbed me. And the police came the sheriff came over and instead of being my size and helping me he was very aggressive with me and verbally very mean very nasty. He asked me if I was a prostitute. I hate that I'm honestly I hate that I don't want nobody call me prostitute I've been working my entire life and I don't change my body for selling my body to anybody. I'm so proud

of me. I work anywhere with my head up and say I'm not I'm not I've never do that. Never exchange sex for drugs or money for drugs or anything or money for for sex. I don't do that. I hate it for real. And that's why I was really angry and that's why I decided come here and talk about it because I think it's important to other people to know about that. And I wouldn't encourage anyone who was there in the same situation that there is help for us. I went to Seattle counseling and the day that I walked through that door My life changed. I went to the program. They gave me two psychologists one for drugs and one for mental and I did it. And guess what.

[00:32:20] Almost three years now clean and sober here I. Thank you

[00:32:31] So I just so I just first want to I appreciate Lulu kind of preface prefacing we're gonna be talking about some hard things so I just want to say like please everyone take care of yourself whatever that looks like for you. So if that means standing up stretching walking out eating food that's my way. Whatever whatever works for you like please take care of yourself. How are that manifest. OK. That's really really important. And if anybody is triggered or things come up for you if feel like you have some.

[00:33:00] You want to talk to somebody I can hang out a little bit after we can check in. Please feel free to call API China or that the network is also a great resource for that. So it's so important. So please take care of yourselves.

[00:33:15] So I come to this work. I'm mixed race. My dad is an immigrant from India. He came here and I think the pain and rage of migration and the racism that he experienced by having you know a white passing family and being challenged around that a lot right are like little kids when I was a little kid.

[00:33:35] People would stop me and be like Are you OK. Who is that. Right. You're like that's just my dad. I don't know what you're talking about. Right. That those little moments of like that's so fucked up. And I think all of that would manifest interpersonally in our in our family right. So I grew up in a really really violent household. And I found myself just replicating that kind of relationship. As I move forward in my life. Right. So I just found myself moving between various domestic violence relationships whether being with men or women or gender nonconforming folks like that was just that was what I thought relationships were. And that was what my grandparents relationships were on both sides. So I have like families and ancestors from different continents and it's like this legacy of family violence was passed down on both sides.

[00:34:24] And I think when I finally was able to like think about that and look at that and want to make a change I was like but I don't I don't know how and I don't have the tools to do it.

[00:34:32] And I feel like that's that's how I first came to this work. We'll talk more about all of this and say hello can you hear me.

[00:34:39] Yes this is wonderful. My name is Lady uh like you only mention of an advocate at the network you said feel free to chat with you later on and talk about your relationships and your experiences of hate crimes. Oh yes.

[00:34:53] Um I grew up in Cleveland Ohio one of the most segregated citizens country is a black. Is that better. There we go.

[00:35:02] Um you know black trans person who survived childhood sexual assault hate crimes obvious violence. Uh uh depression as well as a do you say uh repercussions of living in Cleveland Ohio.

[00:35:19] I also want to know almost having a high school which was not fun as a black trans person at all. For me um. And then I became an activist through community engagement. I also got my degree in dance from the college dance and science. Um and long story short the wonderful world of burlesque and commune engagement in this city brought me to my local network where I get to support uh survivors who were directly experiencing a sexual assault and domestic violence. Gentleman's thank you so much it's OK to blast

[00:35:57] Thank you for sharing so much of your life. Um and what brought you to this work. Um as a survivor of many forms of oppression um. Our next question is connected to interpersonal and oftentimes you hear the phrase the revolution starts at home and when you think about movements um when we think about violence that happens to LGBTQ people. There are different types but oftentimes pulse is one of them where the violence that happens in streets or the clubs is highlighted and people were like this happened and LGBTQ people were like this has happened forever since Stonewall and beyond. When we think about the revolution starts at home. What does this phrase mean to you. And how do we create change whether it's violence in our homes or on the street.

[00:36:43] Well thank you guys again. I just wanted to mention that kind of pick up where I left off. About where how my parents helped me become who I was and also how my parents are who they are today also because of me. I decided to pursue to understand what what is the mind how people communicate and what is identity. And from that I learned how to heal and also teach my family how to understand me how to be more accepting and how to love regardless of how people identify. And that's what I want to share to the community as well. And that kind of ties into my line of work where I'm the immigrant refugee and undocumented outreach program coordinator. We also work with partnering with others other organizations. And it's important for them to validate other people's experiences all our voices matter. So we want our goal is to aim to educate families professionals providers and religious leaders how to be more inclusive to have solidarity efforts regardless of what you're intersectional identity is because that's who we are and we should include more people than exclude.

[00:37:58] I do have a message for anyone who don't accept us. If you accept yourself. You can do better than anyone else. I love myself. I have a very good relationship with my family now.

[00:38:12] I mean it's not the greatest but I try because they accept me now as who I am. I don't have a shame on me of anything.

[00:38:22] I talk to them about anything and then we have a good relationship not only with my family with everybody around me. A few very confident and I don't have any issues with anybody about who I am. I'm very proud of myself and if I can just encourage anyone that if it just be you you know

[00:38:45] I don't have any issues with anybody I go anywhere and I feel just like like normal I don't I don't have any shame of anything I'm fine I'm happy for so I think it's hard for me to separate the personal but in our personal and the institutional right because those are all wrapped into the same thing and have such effects on each other.

[00:39:14] And so when I think about like what it means like what the revolution starts at home means right. I think it starts with acknowledging that the majority of violence that people experience is actually from folks that they know or from institutions right. It often is in your home. It is in your interpersonal relationships. And then when you try to reach out for help to people like the police right there actually just there to cause you further harm. Right. Because the reality is so many of our systems just don't fucking care about us at all. Right. They don't care if we die we are disposable to them. So when you can't rely on those systems and you feel like you don't have options.

[00:39:49] That's where abuse can thrive even the person who went into Pulse. Right. He often frequented that nightclub and was likely queer himself. Right. So when you talk about the revolution sites at home like what had his life been like up to that point where he felt like he hated himself he hated other people he had to take that step right.

[00:40:09] That's personal. That's interpersonal. That's the institutions that's like it's all rolled and it's all rolled into one. And so I think we're just really staying grounded and you know the the high rates of trans women being killed particular trans women of color particularly black trans women often killed by their intimate partners and when I think about that I just really think about yes when the revolution starts at home it starts with you right.

[00:40:37] Like how am I doing the work to know what are my values. Am I living those values. How am I being accountable how I'm not just saying sorry but I'm doing so. How can I practice that from the smallest things in my life. Like I said I was gonna do the dishes and I didn't do the dishes the like what does that mean and look like when you can start on like such a tiny level. Right. We can be ready to hold the larger things that happen and I think again to take it back to the to the personal side it's like if you are queer in an abusive relationship like what are your options. Who can you go to where can you go. If I'm looking for safety right. A word that we talk about all the time and I bet if we asked for it pulled outward panelists everyone run on the audience. The word safety would mean something different to everyone here the word justice would mean something different to everyone here. And what are we doing in our own interpersonal lives to have those conversations with each other. Because I too I too am rolls around and my abuser breaks into my house which has happened. I'm not going to call the police. You're right. Like I'm not going to call the police on a black woman. I

don't know what's gonna happen. Maybe I want safety in that moment. I don't want that person to die. I don't want that person to get deported. I don't want to get arrested myself. Right. Because we know it more often than not the police are like well same gender. Well I don't know how to deal with this well rest both of you.

[00:41:59] And I think the network did a study and it's like an app 50 times that they get somebody they get it wrong and thank you.

[00:42:10] Thirty three times more likely to arrest the wrong person or arrest both people if they get caught up in domestic violence. So thinking about how like we are. Altering the relationships that we already have. Yeah just talking to each other. People are already in our intimate networks around like how do we create safety for ourselves. How are we building the world that we want. How are we working towards. I feel like now I'm talking about the liberation question. See I can't I can't separate these things. I'm thinking you can do whatever you want. Yeah. Thinking about like when we can alter the way that we are working with the folks already in our lives like that is how we can build towards a violence free world.

[00:42:51] That's how we can end the violence that happens when we really build up our skills around holding each other around living and acting out our values.

[00:43:05] Thank you.

[00:43:06] I think I'm just gonna dive right into like two plugs specifically that the network you know provide specifically to speak to the points that we have made.

[00:43:14] So 1 there's a learning institute or technically it's the LGBTQ intimate partner violence learning such collaboration with um ADP the new york city antiviolenace project. You can look it up online on websites also connected to the network site in the network dot org. There's also a project that I am very excited to be working on specifically that hate violence information gathering. So it's all about how do we as a community like whole and taken the information of what our communities need what they don't have how they can you know how they experience bias you know how it changes how you walk and live through the world you know.

[00:43:52] And then uh we're doing this right now it's currently online which is separate from the northwest network site itself. So we call it 2 0 6 5 6 8 7 7 7 7 and advocate like myself or other people in the room. I'm gonna pick up the phone and whether you like delivering things and I like meeting support with your relationship trying to flee. Like it's the same phone line or where they are ready to go.

[00:44:13] Now there's a separate hate violence information gathering line which is all about. How do you how does a community pool its own resources with its own experiences to then create a tool which Lowy Institute is also doing to create a tool uh to change how we can live in this world how we can build that liberate a future we're looking forward to currently playing around with the idea of

building a toll online as well that people can interface with it in real time and not just go through the mind. I also left some pamphlets over there with that hate gathering information my phone number.

[00:44:47] Feel free to talk to me about it later.

[00:44:57] So I also want to address the question of the police because when we're talking about violence we're talking about the repercussions of violence and usually the police get involved and usually the police are actually further perpetrators to queer people people of color trans people particularly. And I think the assumption that the police make that sex. That

[00:45:22] Trans women are sex workers is a larger phenomenon that has yet to really be studied or come or held accountable for anything the police have ever been held accountable for that. And it is just even harder to think about the fact that. Trans women are usually excluded from employment to a level where they must perpetuate participate in the underground economy. And so they either find themselves in criminal activity or survival sex work. And so to criminalize them further just seems like we're pushing a broken system to criminalize more people and criminalize the people that already have so little to work with and already so excluded from our institutions. So I want to ask something a little bit more hopeful.

[00:46:17] I think it's interesting that this bathroom incident that happened on Friday is happening in the middle of a climate of talking about bathroom bills in this state and in this country which is such a degrading and undignified conversation.

[00:46:31] I think the trans movement has a lot more to talk about and this is just a major distraction. But at the same time we're talking about human rights here. When people are talking about excluding people from the bathroom it is about excluding you from public space. I don't want to see you in my restaurant. Therefore you can't use the bathroom in my restaurant. I don't want to see you in my school. Therefore you can't use the bathroom at my school. I don't wanna see you in my church synagogue. You know just I want to see you in public. You can't use the bathroom is what this fight is about. And so this fight is important but I want to move us further and so for opening up institutions then what does it mean to get beyond advocacy that is about just you know whether or not someone can be in public space. What does it mean to open up an institution. What do you want to see in institutions going forward. And just so that we have time for Lula's last question to.

[00:47:28] I just want to ask for two people to answer this one if you can kind of choose between the so for advocacy I think it's really important to kind of think because I was I was working with some community community partners and I always get this strange feedback that they're like Oh we're not trying to reinvent the wheel. That kind of pull me back like I never asked you to reinvent the wheel but it kind of made me reflect law and it brought to me the idea of I'm not trying to reinvent the wheel but we should look into all the moving parts of the wheel. And that speaks to not to get philosophical about what Aristotle's stated about plurality that not to have just one certain view or are the binary of the other but that we all have our own truths and those truths are important and those are realities and not that one is more valuable than the other but that they're valid. So I wanted to let everybody

know who has power to validate other people's experiences because that's what that's how we make systemic change. Now by saying one is more important than the other but that that we all are important and that's how we are more culturally relative of how to not reinvent the wheel but give a voice to all the moving parts. And that's what I wanted to share

[00:49:02] I will speak now. Okay. Um I think it's really important to uh ask deep questions uh and have that deep questioning be practice uh thoroughly for the network we are. This is uh a basic principle called engagement or proposition uh now engagement instead of our position but engagement of our position. I think it's important to move with that framework when we come up with situations like this to happen with the restroom and door. Uh the institutions that may be harming our people like uh I think when it comes to hate violence comes to bias. You know there's always a way to use any individual thing to cause harm to someone else. So I think it's important to not make blanket statements to make those assumptions as well. I'm just so dangerous. You know it's the same way that a police officer comes and sees two people fighting at both of the same gender or appearing to be the same gender you know to make the assumption that oh maybe this person because they're bigger than the other person they must have been must be the person causing the most violence. That's what happens when you don't ask questions. That's one institutions uh continue to manifest violence. So I think it's very important. As a community as communities to really learn how to take the moment to figure out how can we work together to build a better solution to build a better liberation. You know the rewarding but at the end and at the same time realizing that sometimes you do have to burn the house down. Sometimes it has to happen

[00:50:37] Like that sometimes enough is enough. But at the same times how can you like as an activist as a person who's living intensely in the world.

[00:50:44] Like how can you really be present. Uh and the way you engage with the world around you. Does that make sense. Yes okay.

[00:50:59] And dissenter the leadership and voice of the people most directly affected and pay them pay them to do so. My bank account is kidding

[00:51:14] Kidding not kidding. So

[00:51:19] Jani and I were debating about what should be the last question. So I'm going to center the question about safety. So on an individual and all levels even on an institutional level a lot of people are talking about safety.

[00:51:30] How do we create safety for our children. How do we create safe safety for marginalized people. And so my question is how do you define safety for yourself and how can people be. Oftentimes people say ally shit but I would say like how can people be comrades to your struggle in creating safety. And when I think about safety I also think about liberation and justice rights and not just the safety of like I'm gonna be safe by locking my door but how do we actually create genuine safety within the city of Seattle. And when people create policies in the city of Seattle that actually

throw certain communities under the bus while certain communities get to be safe. How do we continue to talk about safety on our terms.

[00:52:16] So I think the first step for safety is to be an ally and not just for someone just like you but for somebody completely different than you. And that's where it starts to begin. This way you stand up for one another and that's what makes things safer. So if you see somebody else getting discriminated for whatever reason say no say Stop. Stand up for that person and make sure that they're safe and that's how you make people feel safe and yourself safe that if you're willing to go out of your way to speak up for somebody else that is oppressed in some other way shape or form they're gonna do the same for you. So I feel like that's the first way to make a more safe environment. And if you feel like there isn't that make a list of places that you do feel safe in that way you can get the help and support you need and designate the safer areas. And hopefully one day we won't have to worry about this and things will be a lot safer. But everyday we have to fight for it. So all Mario wants to say is that she wants for police to be educated and not treat women who are trans with respect so she's saying from her experience when the police came to the crime scene just because of the way that she look he automatically treated her differently because he thought she was a sex worker and that police should not treat her like that that they should be there to be the help and support that I was mentioning before that they're there for safety and they're supposed to stand up for you and they're not if they're not doing that. Something is wrong in the system. And we need to stand up and and share voices that people need to be treated with respect no matter how they identify. It as he

[00:54:25] I think I'll take it back to the revolution starts at home. So

[00:54:30] Talk to your friends your family your chosen family or intimate partners or into networks what makes them feel safe. What does safety means to them. How are we creating safety for ourselves. I mean in the anti violence movement we for decades have invested in trying to make the police nicer or understand this issue better or take it more seriously and rates of harm have not gone down.

[00:54:53] And we know that police are like one of the primary purveyors of sexual violence in particular against trans women and people of color. Right. Nationally it's the second largest complaint against police officers. No one is excessive force and number two is sexual violence. Right. And that's never talked about.

[00:55:10] So how are we creating the systems that we want and need for ourselves. How are we dreaming about the world that we want. I know it's like you right my one my bio dreaming wildly and fighting to win. Like if we're not actually visioning the world that we want we'll never get there.

[00:55:24] So how are you talking to your intimate networks about that. How are you creating these systems for yourself whether they be and honoring the smallest things that we do to to help keep ourselves safe. Text me when you got home are you feeling unsafe in your house tonight. Why don't you sleep on my couch like those things are so meaningful. That's what may help me survive my abusive relationships without that I wouldn't have made it right. And so really honoring like what those

little things can do and mean and visioning largely and taking the steps in that direction right. And understanding that like institutions have always existed to try to control us and to try to harm us and to try to kill us.

[00:56:03] And so we knowing that like we have to do it for ourselves I'd like to bring out a point around safety when I go there.

[00:56:16] Working at a domestic violence uh advocacy organization is a lot of programs believe that like you have to have safety first before you can have you know self determination which are usually the two big things like TV or eggs or pushing for something. I'm very proud of the network for making it stands with is placing self-determination first knowing that you cannot have safety without having self-determination. So I think to speak to his point as well about imagining the world we want to live in. It's like uh edited to make the same point. Back to engagement with your position as I feel and I'm calling on our communities right now doing it right now. Calling out where the opposition is so easy or least that's what how we're most often taught to respond to someone harming us is to go Oh this hurts right. Which I think is an important thing to do as a community as us as individuals who experience harm uh bias and violence but I think uh I'd like to challenge us also as well. It's like what does it mean right to not just be in response. So what's happening and to actually say this is how I want to be in the world. This is how I want my world to be around me and these are the steps I'm willing to take to make that happen.

[00:57:28] Um I'm very proud to talk about the network celebrating 30 years. It's the of the anniversary this year. This is it.

[00:57:36] Yeah well like intimate partner violence isn't new.

[00:57:45] We know very well that those systems that fail us like the criminal legal system we know that it's failing us as people as queer people as people of color at the intersection of them.

[00:57:56] But what can we do now to continue to live for. That's why I'm really proud to be working on this specific initiative. How do we as a community collect information about how our systems are failing us and then make our own tools make our own like National Institutes create our own resources where we get the sense that our power as opposed to just being broken and weak all the time we're allowed to be weak where humans right.

[00:58:20] But how do we use that experience to create our own tools to make our own incubating thank you for encouraging us to build or use our own tools our own resources and imagine a world beyond safety and like. I also want gummy worms and sometimes when we think about this imaginary dream of like we can vision forward and thank you all of us for encouraging us to imagine beyond just safety as well. So with that before we go into transition to the listening session we would love to have two to three questions from the audience that are directed at our panelists to expand about. Yes we have mikes here and we have a system.

[00:59:11] So if you want to raise your hand We're going to ask two or three questions and then around 8 15 we're going to do a little stretch and then we're gonna move into a little bit of a listening session in regards to the recent incident that has happened here at the library questions from the audience. They're

[00:59:34] High. So I have a couple questions that also touch upon the incidents that the incident that did happen on Friday and the library's response also. So what it seems like you. Happened what. Well I wasn't here for the apology but I also read the statement the public statement that was put online and from what it looks like.

[01:00:04] So during the entire process I have seen communications that were coming out of the library. I was talking about that I was blaming essentially the transgender person that was doing a lot of victim blaming and saying that it was their fault for everything that happened. Also it was and there was a lot of marketing spend a lot of PR spin of everything that was happening that was coming out. And that was all before the official apology. And the thing is that official apology came out after many many people in the community started writing e-mails started like raising a ruckus like after our already marginalized community that is tirelessly fighting against Initiative fifteen fifty two when we had to take time and effort away from that fight in order to address this issue. And only after all of that has happened. After the Seattle Public Library was there after we did this giant show of strength of our community was it was only then that the Seattle Public Library came up with a proper apology. And the thing is this is something that happens time and time again to our community. Is it only the institutions only offer apologies after we raise this large of a ruckus. And this shows that if we do not have the strength that we have when we band together that these institutions will continue to trample upon our rights. And so what I want to ask the panelists is how do you feel that the library could start to mend these relationships because as we saw if we don't do it as we saw as if we don't band together and show this strength to push back they will like institutions like this will continue to try to blame us for trying to stand up for our own civil rights. So how can the library. Do you feel that. How do you feel that the library could start helping mend these relationships.

[01:02:53] Thank you so much for your feedback. My name is DeVita and I'm the staff person who's hosting for tonight and I just want to have one point of clarification. We wanted to have time in this program. We'll have this time until about a fifty five because we have to close the auditorium at 9:00 to listen. And I also wanted to make sure that in terms of things that are addressed to the library I wanted the panelists and moderators to know that they can. We want you to speak for yourself. The library is using this as an opportunity to listen and so I didn't want anybody who was invited as a guest as a panelist or moderator to feel like they had to answer for the library. Is that OK. My question was asking the panelists how they feel institutes of power can start trying to mend relationships because

[01:03:46] Because if ensues a power show that they use their power to abuse our our relationships first and then apologize afterwards it seems very disingenuous. And what I'm want what I want to hear from our panelists is how they feel that instances of power can begin to mend these relationships after they've been broken so far.

[01:04:15] It's so far to the point where it seems on mandible Bradley. I think it it's the short answer.

[01:04:27] To lesson. So get go to the community partners. I would say to Vito just as a friend. I think you've done a pretty good job of it in preparing for this uh session. But we know what hurts us in our communities is that we I'm talking about trans people. We know what hurts is. We know what it's how institutions fail us. So I challenge you and you all as well to reach out to your communities that you want to include in your decisions proactively and sometimes you can and sometimes it's up to you. You messed up a thing and you go Oh wait what else is here. Right. And that's why you connect with people like that on this network services that's when you connect with community organizers and activists that are here who can then tell you like oh what's going on. Like I went to use the restrooms before I went home. Uh and you know trans persons go I'll use the men's restroom because I'm least likely to have some pop off. Right. And I realized oh these doors are like three fourths size.

[01:05:23] I just thought about like what if I like your trans mask and the person who tried to use this restroom and I sat down and all of a sudden someone can just be all of my junk you know like say uh this is about safety like that's a thing like immediately stood out to me.

[01:05:39] I don't know. I like what a person design that chances are they weren't thinking about like trans fats and people who may have to use that or people who it make sense. You know like how do you include your community and your partners who are here through your organization. NW network does training technical assistance like it's right here. Like how do you include your partners into a building Institute.

[01:06:03] Um does anyone else have something else or I have a little bit of uh you want say some mature sugar.

[01:06:10] I never heard about it before. That was the uh the door. I heard about that and I did like it. I feel terrible about that. But you know what.

[01:06:19] Talk about it. Bring it out tell people about what happened in the theater library and that's going to help because when people talk more and more and raise the voices the community is going to do something about it. The police gonna do something about it. The government gonna do something about it. We need to bring it out. We need to stay together and talk about it yeah.

[01:06:40] And I think what what I've seen from tonight and maybe this is not true of all institutions I definitely think tonight is accountability in a way that most institutions refuse. Right. But starting to model and ask for that accountability and affirm that I think that will actually start changing things. But the models so far is that if you have screwed something up. Oh don't apologize. That makes you open to a lawsuit.

[01:07:08] Oh my God. Oh I might feel guilty or something. Fucking apologize. Just own up to it right away. And live it

[01:07:17] As Ricardo said right. Don't just say sorry do sorry but that's an action. It's not just words and it's not like a PR thing.

[01:07:26] You actually have to try to build bridges and restore relationships that are broken by this trust being broken. That's what accountability looks like.

[01:07:41] I was wondering like what's hard for me about Seattle Public Libraries. It's one of the major institutions that a lot of prop I Mike.

[01:07:48] Ok I was like did I get this cut off.

[01:07:51] I'm like Oh no. I have a big waist

[01:07:55] It's known for keeping homeless folks safe. So as a person that used to work for a. We always think about like how can we partner with librarians and librarians would always reach out like how do we keep homeless folks safe. And at the same time the majority of homeless folks are LGBTQ are trans because of what happens to us institutionally. And the one basic human right is like using the bathroom. And I remember Sally Clark talking about specifically the bathrooms here about as if all homeless people are drug users as if all LGBTQ people are trans people are using drugs. And that is a bathroom issue of like if you are homeless and you need a safe place to use to to inject your home hormones like and being violated by someone looking in on you as you're doing that what does it really mean to partner in safety as

[01:08:48] A public institution. For me I think like that security to be trying to open is like why did they not. Actually. Take. A person to the bathroom because they are like I need to pee. They could have escorted the person to a bathroom to use the bathroom instead of exiting them out the door is what.

[01:09:07] And the people here need to be trained differently. If we have been here many times do we two issues not just talk about it. How do you actually change sees

[01:09:23] And I think to making sure that's not a one off event right. That you're still talking about this and I think I'll go back to like. How are you censoring the voices and needs of the people most directly affected. Like how are you talking to the trans community about this and are you paying them for their expertise and their lived experiences because fucking pay them.

[01:09:45] I'm going to just I keep saying it right because usually the amount of times that marginalized communities are like come to us teach us tell us and you're never compensated for all of that labor is bullshit.

[01:09:55] Right. So pay people for it find money to do it don't ask unless you can pay.

[01:10:00] And really making sure that like that is also institutionalized you need a steering committee of trans folks of color that you paid who constantly give you feedback. Maybe that's what you need to do.

[01:10:10] Like how are you making this an ongoing policy so it doesn't it's not only discussed after something happens but that you are constantly having these conversations around access. Are we truly an accessible place for all identities for all members of our community. What does that mean and look like. And that should be a conversation that yes is happening on the daily

[01:10:37] Going up going up latency going off of what this fine person said.

[01:10:45] How do you guys feel that the general populace could be more proactive rather than reactive.

[01:10:53] So to be more proactive I want to reach out to any service providers and organizations to get trained to be more LGBTQ affirmative that way when people do look disoriented or lost trying to find a restroom they can be more understanding empathetic to know hey this person needs a restroom let's ask them where we can best appoint them so that we understand where they're coming from and what they may be going through because you know in other institutions maybe they don't have that same care customer care customer service. So we want to ensure that people are understood. And I think it's best to train people systemically how to be more affirmative and inclusive.

[01:11:34] Applause Oh hi there.

[01:11:40] Hi hi hi. Okay. I'd like to say that like emerging activists I'm assuming uh. I would like you all to become activists if you're not currently uh that emerging activists often make statements right. Um and I think a develop activists like uh it's efficient. That's one of my highest goals is efficiency and efficient activists.

[01:11:59] Uh uh.

[01:12:01] How do you say uh one that gets things done is someone that ask questions. So it's time. Back to what I was saying before. So how can you. Body questioning of your experience and questioning how you can do better. So I'm not saying go to any trans person and sort of ask him anything you want to please dear God don't do that. And regardless I'm saying how do you like how do you formulate the questions you have about the world that you're living in and figure out ways to attain that information.

[01:12:30] Does that make sense.

[01:12:34] I used to make Lulu. I'm bringing the mike down.

[01:12:37] Um can I see a raise of hands of people that have general questions for the panel before we transition. So I see one two. And can we end the Q and A for the panel. With those two questions and then we're gonna transition to more of the listening session in regards to specifically the library and any questions people have for the library or strategy sessions in regards to what the library can do differently is that cool. Yeah. Can I get a thumbs up if everybody understands what I just said. Okay. Awesome I'm a school teacher.

[01:13:09] Awesome. Can we bring the mike over there. I need some affirmations I need eye contact

[01:13:17] Thank you so much for sharing so immediately into the panel. Um my question is I know we're in Seattle Public Library engaging with Seattle based folks Seattle Arts Community. But what is the important part of the title of this panel discussion for you. Panel is the Seattle isn't immune. Part of it. Um and if you could just share your thoughts about that.

[01:13:47] That is a really great question. Just want to thank you for that. Maybe just to kind of like start off get you thinking.

[01:13:53] I think there is no weirdness that oh we live in a bubble up here and it's liberal and it's perfect. It's not. Our mayor was just involved in a major sex scandal that hurt a lot of queer people and hurt a lot of older queer men particularly because these are allegations that have been thrown at them because oh gay men are pedophiles was the thing that was said a lot in the 70s and 80s. So if you think about how that's kind of been transition now into oh let's just frame trans people as pedophiles according to the ultra right wing or whatever. Then. You can see that there's kind of like change and then a backlash change and a backlash as the larger societal social issue struggle. Right. So how is Seattle not immune. I think it's very clear that it's not.

[01:14:38] I was going to say from my experience at school Seattle is in a lot of the times especially places with privilege of power. Turn the blind eye when I was part of the Honor Society and I was like oh let's do some LGBTQ affirmative things and then everyone turned their heads. Nobody you know added on. No one really cared. And then I brought it up again. The next meeting and the same thing happened and then I brought it up like Hey you didn't hear what I said. And they're like oh we have to remain conservative. It's in the bylaws. So it's like wait a second. So I read the platforms and there was nothing there. So it's really good to make sure you're well read on what bylaws and you know certain things because some times people say that and don't do anything so I asked my peers also did you guys read the bylaws. And they're like No. So that's how Seattle isn't immune. Nobody's going to stand up unless certain forms. So make sure your allies are informed because if they're not oppressed by this the people really won't understand or stand up for it.

[01:15:45] So that's how Seattle is going to bring it back to I think institutions and talk about. Right. We have a police department that is under a consent decree from the Department of Justice for being fucking terrible right for using excessive force too much for being racist. We have a detention facility that where we cage folks who are undocumented. Right. Almost two thousand people. We have a youth detention facility here. We live in a city where that performed over 400 sweeps of houses

people last year that just totally dehumanize us again. All of these communities like all of those institutions right disproportionately affect queer folks and so every single one of those is like we we don't even allow people to live right. Caging them.

[01:16:33] We're saying you can't sleep here you can't sleep there you have to constantly keep moving an institution like Seattle Public Library which we would think about as someone to partner with. Right. You can't even use a fucking bathroom here. It's constant. It's every part of people's lives.

[01:16:49] So I think really thinking about like broad strokes like how how this is part of every single institution and really thinking about the amount of silence that there is in the community the amount of times people are like I'm witnessing something I'm not sure what to do. I feel uncomfortable. So I'll just do nothing. So like challenge yourselves to be better about that. Challenge yourselves to think about how we want to spend 210 million dollars building a new youth jail that's just got to cage a bunch of more queer folks. Or maybe we had to run away from their home and are engaging in sex work because that's how they can get their hormones and that's the option that's available to them. And so we're going to cage them right like that's a queer issue that's a problem for our communities. Like what are you doing to really recognize all of those moving parts and understanding that like we can say we're liberal all we want but the reality of how that manifests in our lives particularly like queer communities and trans communities of color. Like it's a daily daily problem

[01:17:52] Um I'm gonna ask a question that is both to want cash and to radical we we ask like what is safety for us and what is justice for us. And we seem to all agree that the police will never be justice for us and safety for all of us. Is anyone thinking about having someone not the police take over some police functions. People who have not come up through the US as U.S. police culture which used to lead to so much violence has anyone done any policy work or anything like that.

[01:18:26] I'm gonna repeat the question just for people who maybe didn't hear that so the question is if our domestic police forces are so violent. Is there anyone doing policy work around bringing in someone from outside the United States to oversee police work or to have civilians involved in overseeing police. From my time on the Seattle LGBTQ commission with both the lady and Lulu I can tell you that we sat on community.

[01:18:55] We attempted to engage in community review boards of the police and there's so much that's institutionalized right. So there is an institutionalized civilian review board. There is an institutionalized Commission for Community for police accountability. Right. And then there is an institutional LGBTQ liaison in the police department. And then there's officers under that guy. So I don't know if there is an institutional answer to reforming the police.

[01:19:26] I think there's been a lot of attempts and I'm not seeing any fuckin results. So I I'm hesitant to kind of say if there's anything institutional that I want to see from the police besides just cutting their funding demilitarizing them and making them all social workers

[01:19:49] I'd like to say I apologize if I didn't answer this sufficiently before. But one of the things that the Northwest now is doing with the LGBT LGBTQ intimate partner violence Institute learning institute that we have is making tools like going out to communities finding information dislike bias uh hate lines we're talking about and making tools that governments and institutions respond to actually. We have a paid researcher on staff who come out and you know use the data that they always saying we need the data we need the data. We've taken the data right and made a tool with it that allows you know the place like the network to be funded to directly support people or experience to make economic and an abject lack of access to economic and educational access. You know there's so many different ways that uh harm comes to us. And one of the ways is like if you don't have a place to live like oh maybe you like it might end up in you know doing survival sex worker God knows anything else to make sure you can get your needs met right. That's one of the ways that we get preyed upon. All right. So now we're in a position where we can actually meet people where they're at meet people with with their lack as well and to support them through that. So again I think the network is I want to applaud it not just because I work there but I do love NOLA a huge fan. What does it mean to actually meet the people who are causing harm to you.

[01:21:11] Meeting them where the harm is and making to say it's specifically combat that you know of all for burning down all the things but again how do you start with. Well what's happening here. How can I use the environment in front of me to get my needs met that make sense.

[01:21:27] Yes yeah I think I think you can just spend some time thinking a lot about like actually we have a lot of power right. The people have all the power really it's like people power. We have the power. I get really inspired by models like the Black Panther Party right. That really was like they were patrolling the neighborhood they were doing the work themselves. They're like by and for their communities like it's possible right we we can build the world that we want. So I think really just thinking about like what are ways that we can do the work. How are we building our own models. How are we having. I mean I'll say it again. Right.

[01:22:01] How are we having conversations like hey I'm witnessing maybe my friend is causing some harm. I can talk to them about it. All right we're socialized our whole lives that the only way we can get safety is by calling the police and we think that there is no other option. And we think that we have no power then in that situation. And that's just not true. Right. A conversation can be really meaningful showing up for people can be really meaningful saying I'm recognizing that you're causing harm and I'm not going to dehumanize you and I'm not going to throw you away. I'm going to excuse your behavior but I'm going to stay here with you and hold this conversation. You are fearing someone's gonna come to your house. We're just gonna have a team of people on schedule sleeping at your house so you're not there by yourself like there are endless possibilities of what we can do. And so I think just like doing that internal work of breaking down the leg feeling that it's not possible or the feeling that there are no other options like we actually have a ton of power and there's network as a great tool API and the network had like a series of classes around building skills about how to deal with harm in ways that don't involve the police.

[01:23:06] So there's absolutely resources and options out there.

[01:23:11] I don't know much about law in the United States but there is one thing that I want to share with you guys. The two times that I've been discriminated it was by police and by immigration and I don't know it's because I look in like this because I changed my life. I don't know but I can just tell you one thing that feel awful that feel terrible and I don't want to keep this to keep happening again to me over and over.

[01:23:38] I want to do something I want to talk about it. I want to. I want to tell everybody to stand up and do something talk about it. Bring it up. Don't let the police take advantage of us especially with this precedent that we got right now. Oh my God. I feel like we're not safe at all.

[01:24:02] I wanted to provide some short term solutions. I provided a lot of resources and one of those resources is Jim Ritter. He's the LGBTQ liaison officer. So if you do feel like you know most police are not safe. This is one guy you can count on. And he goes across the country even to Canada to train other police to be more affirmative for the LGBTQ community. And he also provides the safe place sticker so he can train business organizations to know what to do in response for someone who needs a safe space. So if you want to advocate for that for your small business or for any other place that needs some place like that or in a cultural community where there is no LGBTQ spaces please do contact Jim Ritter and he can help start bringing change with and empower

[01:25:13] We're doing a podcast so if you can use to make okay just real quick. I would like to make a statement. I want to respond. I appreciate you sharing.

[01:25:23] I'm going to do it. So I am all for again engagement before our position and I'm all for collaborating as much as we can.

[01:25:32] I think it's evident from the most of the testimony shared here on this panel and from our lived experiences that the police currently including that that person and their campaign is not appropriately serving us right isn't appropriately meeting the needs that we have. I'm not saying to exclude them. They do think it's important to say what else can we do. Like what is happening currently is not enough our people are still experiencing you know hate violence it's still happening. And I think it's wonderful that we have stickers on most of the shops you know throughout the city. It's a sign that our communities you know our businesses are saying we want to do more. We want to shop for communities. That's wonderful. You know but the stickers not enough came ice like what else you got. You know. How can we as a community continue to build on that work and say what does it actually mean to build an infrastructure where these businesses have the capacity to support our people and not just call the police when something happens you know it's like rewind just a few days ago what happened when a security guard came here to this library to support someone.

[01:26:40] How'd that work out. Right.

[01:26:42] So obviously just calling you know the security system where the police officers was not enough. They don't have the means to support us. They don't know how to support us effectively.

Right. Not saying again to burn them down. I'm not quite there yet personally necessarily publicly publicly as a network employee. But I am saying that we do need to learn how to support them in supporting us.

[01:27:08] If it's all right I'd love to check in.

[01:27:10] About time we have about 20 minutes before the auditorium closes and I wanted to honor the commitment that we made at the beginning to listen to public comment about the restroom incident that happened last week. My name is DeVita. I am a staff person at the library. We have other staff available and I wanted just to mention two important things. One because we have a limited amount of time and we're really invested in hearing from the most affected communities. I'm going to ask if you're cis gender that means you were assigned a gender at birth and that's the gender that you feel like suits you best to leave space for people who are transgender non binary and gender nonconforming to speak first. I also know that my colleague Mike generously is kind of making time this evening to share some feedback from trans staff at the library would it be OK if we can have that input from Michael first and then open the floor up Yeah I see heads nodding thank you.

[01:28:14] So over to Michael.

[01:28:17] There you are. My name's Mike. I'm a circulation clerk at the University branch library. I use them pronouns. I'm here today because I'm here to listen but also because. I want you all to know that. There are employees in this library who care who really want to see this institution do better. I am meeting with other transit employees of the library and we had some words that we wanted to share with you which is that we take our rhetoric and our written values and even the name of this event really seriously. Seattle isn't immune and neither are we. This is we see this as a critical opportunity to take responsibility and model how institutions can be accountable and do better in the future. I know I don't feel safe using the restrooms in this the public restrooms in this library and so I see you and I'm here to listen and I will continue to do work to make sure that this institution is accountable to our communities. And there are other people in this institution who feel similarly.

[01:29:17] Thank you all for being here tonight and for sharing with us so at this time if there are folks in the audience that would like to make any public statements. Also if before you speak if you want to state that you don't want to be recorded or on record you can actually state that before you speak so that we are race that off the podcast later on that's being recorded. Is there anybody at this time that would like to make a statement about the incident that happened within the Seattle Public Library.

[01:29:54] So one thing I want to repeat. Shit happens. We all understand that and we all understand that we live in an imperfect world where lots of people still need educating about what are about how to interact with transgender people properly. The biggest the most egregious part of this incident wasn't necessarily what happened at that incident per say but the most egregious part was. Afterwards where the library continued to deny that they deny any wrongdoing put PR spin on it and and victim blamed the the the the transgender person. All of that is the absolute most egregious part

of this and that and the fact that it took such a showing of power shows that the library isn't willing to do the right thing unless it's forced to do so.

[01:31:02] And that's how I how I feel about the whole thing. Also one thing I would like to ask my CO. Was it. I would like to ask Micah if if. That if the library has ever. Reached out to their transgender employees beforehand to LA to ask them about how to. How to be better towards the transgender community beforehand if and even if they ask them. Like

[01:31:38] Did did did the library go forth with any other recommendations or anything like that. Or is this just something that they have. Asked them to come to so that they have a transgender person to be the face of the library so that they look more friendly since I'm answering this as an individual I'm going to ask to be off record for this but I would love to share this with all of you and you all can repeat it.

[01:32:16] There's a question over here this is a government building a city center. You go on city hall down the street and they have single store bathroom for transgender on second and third floor. So it should be systematically saying through the whole city or areas institution. How can one see building. It one way or another busy building another way. And then we get discriminated against and have to prove our point let's say thank you for sharing.

[01:32:46] And just to just to clarify is the Seattle Public Library. Is it a department under the city of Seattle. And so for folks that don't know the city of Seattle has required that it's under law now that they need to provide gender gender nonconforming bathrooms gender neutral bathrooms as well. And so thank you for pointing that out. There are other statements comments or questions.

[01:33:14] Oh Seattle. Well OK there's a question from Davida

[01:33:22] This is more a comment. But I do want to encourage you to share your feedback. If you do not feel comfortable speaking in person it can be kind of nerve. Wracking. You do have surveys and we still would love to hear your your insight on how we can do a better job. I sat in on a lot of meetings as we prepared for it tonight and one of the things that I ended up coming back to a lot was this is a intersectional moment for the library. So if you think about intersectionality. The reason why we first started talking about it is because civil rights for women of color weren't being respected. And so you had to be a white woman to get sexism acknowledged or you had to be a black man to get racism acknowledge.

[01:34:07] When we look at the issue that happened last week we see a nexus right. We see connection points between disability and access needs between how we make institutions safer for people to use the restroom from all for all genders even on down to how we define family. So when we think about how the library can do it better I think it does require a collective response because we need so much insight to do that job well. So as we have this conversation even for myself personally I see how much more accountable I want to be as a person to think about people's access needs because sometimes. Access needs are visible sometimes they're not to think about how am I thinking

about how transphobia insist sexism is always a foot and being mindful of it and also thinking about the ways that in this particular case we happen to have someone who has racial privilege bring this up to the fore as a person of color. I wonder how often trans people have had the same issues but have been of color and been invisible eyes. So. There are folks at the library who are raising these issues and we would like to continue to him by our communities to help us work through this issue together with you because as someone who does social justice and civic engagement and arts programs all the time in this library we actually have a criminal justice series and I've heard that over and over again from the panelists. We've been doing rapid response because of the anti-immigrant attitudes of art. That are happening. These things happen because people have an appetite for them so I'm hoping even if we feel quiet tonight that we'll continue to speak. Is that OK for us. Do we feel comfortable doing that

[01:36:02] As my job as moderator is to encourage you to clap so I can we have another comment over here.

[01:36:15] I'm cis though is there someone else who is transgender non binary gender queer who would like to go before me low vision so I can't tell either Hi I'm Tracy I I'm fine with being recorded although I'm a little scared about it too because I as a volunteer I operate in a non-profit volunteer run initiative that partners as a community partner with a library that celebrates queer books queer romance books and we have an annual conference every year in this room and we're having our fifth one in November. And the thing that we learned years ago was the issue with the bathrooms and I really learned it after our second year and twenty fourteen when one of our trans authors wrote a blog post and said What a great conference. Really loved it. What was up with the library's bathrooms.

[01:37:05] That was really uncomfortable. And we brought that feedback to the library. At that time so I really want to talk about how this issue wasn't. Last week was sounded really terrible for that patron and I love our library partner I love them with all my heart. But last week was terrible but last week like many institutional problems was not a surprise. It was not new. Raise your hand if you've been uncomfortable in the bathroom in the Central Library. I happen. Those are really short doors and I'm cis so it's it's even uncomfortable for me. My point is is even if we've tried going we've given feedback to the library over the past few years a year and a half ago we did a public comment at the Seattle LGBTQ commission. I was there with you Lulu to talk about how we want to encourage what how can we get the system to encourage the library to better meet the needs of all people. We've had colleagues talk to the city of Seattle office of civil rights. So this has been a multi-year process and I'm so sorry that what happened last week happened but if that's what it takes for people to have a listening session together then let's take that step together and let's be the fastest ferry there is. Let's be the clipper. Because. In all honesty. That's what we need and I love the partner. I love the library. We can't wait to partner again and walk with you on that journey together so we can serve our people with you. But we need to really do that. And I have to say in a moment of leadership if my colleagues said my employees said that they didn't feel comfortable using the bathroom I would really want to get on that and fix it. So. Thank you. To everyone here today. And. Thank you to the library for listening and I hope you will still be our partner in November.

[01:39:10] We really want to be here again but we really want to give our people the message on that day that they can feel really good to come here and celebrate books together. As. So

[01:39:27] This is just a time check we have about five more minutes so we can take one more question before we're gonna ask our panelists to for any last comments from them.

[01:39:37] Anybody from the audience. Okay. So with that I'm going to there is. There we go.

[01:39:44] I put up I put out saying something because I too am cis gender. No I think this is really my discussion to have but something I wanted to bring up is we started tonight by hearing about how if anybody really needed to. For tonight only we have way finders will take you to the staff bathroom that seems to be a really interesting dynamic where it's OK. On the one night that we know there's a bunch of transgender people here we're gonna let them use a bathroom where they feel safe. That's not an answer.

[01:40:16] Thank you for. Would anybody like the light at the library like to respond to that. We're just let it stand as the truth. One step. And could you hold for the mike.

[01:40:28] I'm so I was sorry I was additionally interested to hear from the library. I was excited to hear that there was gonna be an opportunity for library staff to help navigate um bathroom accessibility but just wondering why 10 like is that going to be happening tomorrow is happening the next day. Why. Just tonight. It just it felt really weird thinking that they're not trans people here tomorrow or the next day.

[01:41:03] I need help with this answer because I don't know all of it. As I mentioned I don't work in this building usually. I do know that there is an all gender bathroom that has been in the progress I've like in the planning stages for a while and that will be built by the end of the year. So obviously that's not a solution for tomorrow but that is a solution for 2018 at the very least. What about bathroom.

[01:41:25] Sure. So I'm Marcellus turn. Everyone calls me empty so I'm empty I am your city librarian and so I first want to acknowledge the effort that you put forward in sharing with us it's sometimes hard to speak in front of the audience that you want to speak to. So we're listening. I also wanted to verify with DaVita that whether this was just a listening session where I was not to say anything or whether it was an opportunity to speak and so there were a couple of things that she said we can answer. So as Micah shared we are in the process of adding a single user restroom here at the central library that has been in the works for the greater part of the year and we are hopeful that it will be in place by the end of the year. We have a new goal to set if it's November your conference is coming. I don't know that we can make it I don't hammer I don't build I don't do any of that but certainly we can put that forward as hey we have a big conference coming in and we'd certainly like to address that. With regard to the question about why tonight while because of the incident last week this is our first opportunity to exercise some of the interim measures that we can put in place until we have the single use a restroom. So tonight was one event where we figured the crowd was going to be large enough that we'll have this available during the course of the week up until well starting

tomorrow. Up until we have the gender neutral single user restroom we are making available a restroom for anyone who makes that request. So all you have to do is ask a staff member why we're having to do that all of our single use restrooms are located in staff only areas so we have to get access to provide you to that. So that's why we will have the escort and assistance. But all you have to do is make that request known to our staff

[01:43:16] And they will accommodate. So we do have an interim measure in place. And we have our fingers crossed for the future project. So thank you very much.

[01:43:27] You mentioned that there is only single use bathrooms in the staff area. What about the family access bathroom that the incident was originally around that is also a single use bathroom and according to the new laws within Seattle within within all city public buildings all single use bathrooms must be must be available for transgender people and so on.

[01:43:58] Sure. So a quick answer.

[01:44:00] The law does not state that every library every building must provide a gender neutral restroom what it says is that if you have a single user restroom it must be made available for gender neutral purposes. So that's what the law says. So no one was obligated to go out and create new single use restrooms or anything like that with regard to the specific restroom that you're referencing. We have a family restroom which is placed in our children's library and children's departments and those restrooms were placed as a result of the building of our libraries by request that we make them children family user friendly restrooms available to families to bring in with their children. We tried to maintain that as much as possible so that our public and our users of the children's areas who need to use those restrooms have them available when needed. We are looking at how we can accommodate to address the needs of our gender neutral or single use restroom so that's our interim measure that we're trying to put in place. But that was the reason why the family use restroom. So we're engaged with legal right now having that defined. So that's that's not that's not a scapegoat measure that's just saying where we.

[01:45:15] Excuse me. Thank you for asking your hard questions. We're gonna transition in this moment. I would love for you all to come and talk to Seattle Public Library staff and to close out.

[01:45:25] I want to encourage folks specifically when we think about workers of institutions they can answer questions and there's also people that are in power they're not present in this room and we need to put pressure on those folks as well as the people that are above the folks that are present today to encourage that they have to change their bathrooms. So thank you for your advocacy and keep on putting the pressure on. I'm going to pass it to Jani.

[01:45:48] Yeah and I don't know if anyone wants to add anything from the panel feel free to just pick up the mike and signal to me. But I just want to thank everybody so much for coming here for sitting here and listening to everyone and so I just want to encourage people to continue putting pressure on the library and institutions that fuck up and just say hey you need to be better about trans folks.

People of color people with disabilities whatever it is and just don't be afraid to say something even if it's you know something that you don't necessarily experience yourself if you just see something that's not right.

[01:46:22] Just say something about it and hopefully they'll listen last comments from the labor we don't know about time.

[01:46:31] Know we're doing good for time we're a little bit over but I want to say just as a library employee. Thank you so much for your honesty and your love and your request for accountability selfishly has anybody here gone to legendary children the program that we do for Kuttu park communities. I know that we have not been able to host legendary here because we don't have an all gender bathroom and I keep wondering what would it look like for us to be able to continue to do some things that I think we do do well which is try and work with kids pop communities and do LGBT programming and also to make this something that becomes more inclusive. It shouldn't be ambitious it should just simply be inclusive. That's me speaking personally but I know that social justice is social right. So spending time having this challenging conversation and listening with the humanity and love that we had will make a difference. I just want to say thank you and again thank you. If you haven't had a chance to share your comments please write them on the surveys and again can we give a warm round of applause to our panelists and moderators. For making this moment possible.

[01:47:42] And also thank you to our city librarian.

[01:47:45] I really appreciate it seeing our head honcho come to this conversation and to listen and to witness. So thank you to empty too. Thank you

[01:48:00] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.