

Fight for LGBT Rights: *Fight for Socialism!*

The LGBT movement has fought and won many gains in the past few years, but the battle is not over. The Supreme Court decision against DOMA has raised the hopes of many people who have waited so long to be able to have their relationship with their partner recognized, to be afforded this basic democratic right, which is taken for granted by most people. This was a hard fought gain. It was the blood, sweat, and tears of the LGBT movement and its allies which achieved this victory; not a gift granted by the benevolence of the Supreme Court Justices or the Obama administration.

In 29 states, it is still legal for private-sector employers to fire queer employees on the basis of their sexuality! A system that confines whole layers of the population to second-class citizenship is unacceptable. Secure and stable employment is already difficult to find and keep in the ongoing crisis of capitalism. For the most exploited sections of LGBT workers—black, Latino, transgender, immigrant—it is often near impossible. Both straight and gay men have a rate of poverty between 13 and 15%, while lesbian and bisexual women are around 24% as compared to 19% for heterosexual women. Transgender individuals are 4 times more likely to live in poverty than the population as a whole, and 1 in 5 experience homelessness.

The capitalists' system is the root cause of the crisis and now they want to shift it onto the backs of working people through austerity and cuts. Furthermore, they've cynically exploited marriage equality as a political issue for years, and only now use it as a carrot to counterbalance the stick. The Democrats are a party of big business. They will never be the defenders of our rights (it was Clinton who signed DOMA in the first place). Only an alliance between LGBT workers and the broader labor movement can provide a serious alternative to the attacks of the capitalist class and their politicians.

We believe that legislation and reforms are not enough to guarantee genuine equality. There must be a material basis for equality: free quality health care for all; equal rights and pay regardless of race, marital status, sexual preference, gender identity, or expression; full employment and housing programs to combat poverty and homelessness; and the right to collectively organize in the workplace so that nobody's rights can be trampled on.

Only a labor party, based on the unions and armed with a fighting socialist program, can guarantee these benefits and fight against capitalist exploitation, and the heterosexism and racism which it sustains and thrives on.

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