



541 Willamette St #310, Eugene, OR 97401
508-443-6337 (4GENDER)
info@transponder.community

20 November 2022

Gwendolyn Ann Smith founded Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) in 1999, with a vigil to honor the memory of Rita Hester, a trans woman who was killed. TDOR became an annual observance on November 20, which pays tribute to the lives of trans people who died by anti-transgender violence and suicide around the world.

Transphobia is systemic discrimination against transgender and gender diverse people and is deeply rooted in the misogyny and racism of colonialism. The goal of transphobia is to make trans people seem abnormal and dangerous, and this fallacy of danger leads to the death of trans people from trans-related violence.

We saw transphobia today during the attack in Colorado Springs.

We saw transphobia from the protesters at Old Nick's Pub on October 23.

We see transphobia in our schools.

We see transphobia on our ballots.

Transphobia is killing us, and any day queer people gather is an excuse to attack us.

As we enter a time of escalating state and interpersonal violence, we want to make it clear that our resistance today is born out of the American Civil Rights Movement, led by trans women of color who took a stand against police harassment. They fought against transphobia, homophobia, racism, sexism, and capitalism.

Trans people have existed by some definition or understanding since the beginning of humanity. Our lives are rich with shared experiences, meaning, and joy. Every year we dream of a future where we do not need a day to honor those who have left this world too soon.

In order to make that future a reality today, we must stop vilifying Black people, Indigenous people, brown people, and people of color. We must stop vilifying femininity and disability.

We must continue to build families that exist beyond the confines of the state, and work with one another to fight against oppression in all forms.

We must also ask ourselves how to find solidarity with each other. How do we keep the state from dividing us? How do we love one another?

Transgender Day of Remembrance is a day of Resistance.

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Please join TransPonder for TDOR on Sunday, November 20 from 3-6 p.m. at the Erb Memorial Union at the University of Oregon, to venerate the trans and gender diverse lives that were lost in the past year to anti-transgender violence and suicide with a memorial and vigil.

We want to thank University of Oregon LGBT Education and Support Services and all our volunteer community members for contributing to this event.

Please see our website: www.transponder.community, email us at info@transponder.community, or contact us at 508-443-6337 (text okay) with any questions. If you are a media outlet and need a statement, please contact Kyle at 541-799-0921.

