



MARTY DAVIS

"We're not trying to represent the trans community. This is who we are as people and how we live our lives and we're just trying to show support for Chrissy."

**-CHRISTOPHER SEIN,  
GENDERQUEER PERFORMER**

In response to the recent attack on Baltimore transwoman Chrissy Polis and the approaching one-year anniversary of the first of three reported pre-Pride queer bashings, Q Patrol and Pride Northwest are hosting a Community Safety Forum Tuesday, May 10 to discuss strategies for visibility and safety.

Both incidents inspired heated debates about appropriate responses to anti-LGBTQ violence. In the wake of the pre-Pride assaults, the issue of police involvement in community foot patrols

(Q Patrol works with the PPB) created some division. While that conversation stayed local, the debate over a local response to Polis' attack elicited reactions from across the nation.

"We were just going to get together a couple of our friends, do a little video thing for Chrissy," says Christopher Sein, 26. "I didn't expect people from all over to object to it."

Chrissy Polis was assaulted in April inside a McDonald's restaurant by two teenage females as an employee caught it all on video. News of the suspected hate crime, along with graphic video of the attack, has circulated widely online.

The assault inspired local drag performers Kitty Montenegro and Sein (aka ChiChi and Chonga), who identify as transgender and genderqueer, to organize a gathering at the West Burnside McDonald's in the spirit of Genderfucking Takeover—a group formed in response to 2010's Memorial Day weekend attacks that creates visibility for gender variance by going out in drag *en masse*.

The event post on Facebook April 26 quickly drew protests from transgender activists as far away as Maryland and Britain who were concerned that the planned demonstration would misrepresent transgender people in a way that would trivialize them in the eyes of the public.

## The Right Way to Fight

Community to discuss response to violence at safety forum **BY ERIN ROOK**

"Whilst I would be the last to condemn freedom of speech or even action to highlight issues, this is not going to help the acceptance of gender variant, transsexual and intersex members of society who live their lives as that affirmed 'gender' 24/7," wrote Human Rights Campaign board member and transwoman Meghan Stabler in a Facebook note criticizing the "shameful" event. "They do not live our lives and should not assume that they can lead the charge on public accommodation access."

Sein says he was never trying to be anything but himself and argues that all kinds of gender-variant people, including drag queens, are a part of a larger community.

"We're not trying to represent the trans community," Sein says, pointing out he is genderqueer and that Montenegro identifies as transgender. "This is who we are as people and how we live our lives and we're just trying to show support for Chrissy."

Still, in real-time response to criticism from Stabler and others, Montenegro and Sein edited the event's Facebook posting, removing the word "tranny" from the description and attempting to provide context for their original vision, which Sein says was meant to be "like 'It

Gets Better' in a way."

Ultimately, the pair decided to "officially" cancel the demonstration, directing people instead toward a community forum. Rather than hosting a separate town hall, local trans activists decided to address their concerns at the Community Safety Forum. That forum will include a recap of Q Patrol's first year and a summary of Pride NW's safety plan, and will feature a representative from the Oregon Department of Justice, Mayor Sam Adams and members of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and the Portland Police Bureau.

Genderqueer performer Georgia Ray Baby-cakes says she expects the discussion to be productive, adding that she supports outside conversations as well.

"We've seen amazing things come out of our community discussions in Portland in response to specific attacks," she says. "These discussions cross the lines that need to be crossed between closed-community groups as well as between the people of the community and their government and local law enforcement." **JO**

*Community Safety Forum, Tues., May 10, 6-9 p.m.; Q Center, 4115 N. Mississippi; pdxqcenter.org.*

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