

# Breaking Bridges and Destroying Trust: How communities are harmed when libraries protect hate speech

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## What Happened?

In 2019, Vancouver Public Library and Toronto Public Library rented space to organizations providing a platform for author Megan Murphy.

## Why is this a big deal?

Many people within the LGBTQ2+ community believe that allowing Megan Murphy to speak in a public library provides defacto support for her transphobic beliefs and causes marginalized/vulnerable populations to feel unsafe in these spaces.

## Community Responses in Toronto

- **Glad Day Bookshop:**
  - *"We made it clear that this was a choice between years and years that staff, community members and organizations like Glad Day have invested versus a few hours with a hateful speaker from another city. They didn't choose us. The leadership of the TPL does not value our voice, our investment or our relationship."*
  - <https://www.facebook.com/GladDay/posts/2495308547172600>
- **Kaleb Robertson/Fluffy from *Fay and Fluffy Storytime*:**
  - *"I could not call myself an ally and fighter for my community if I continue a relationship with a space that will host someone who is actively fighting to take away my legal rights as a human. Trans people existing and having rights to employment, housing, and safety is not a discussion."*
  - <https://www.instagram.com/p/B4NPpLbqIYb/>
- **Toronto Comic Arts Festival:**
  - *"This decision by TPL leadership has significantly damaged relations with the LGBTQ2S+ community in Toronto and internationally, and have made vital library spaces, which are meant to serve the public, less accessible and more unsafe to marginalized communities."*
  - <http://www2.torontocomics.com/2019/12/30/tcaf-statement-about-toronto-public-library-and-the-2020-festival/>
- **Hand Eye Society:**
  - *"[...] we believe the decisions of TPL's leadership has made the TPL less accessible for marginalized people, who no longer feel safe there. The TPL Board has damaged LGBTQ2S+ relations in this city and this is a fact that cannot be ignored."*
  - <https://www.handeyesociety.com/official-business/statement-toronto-public-library/>
- **Pride Toronto:**
  - *"It was our believe that the TPL was committed to creating library spaces that are inclusive, safe and welcoming. The recent decision to allow the event with Meghan Murphy is a betrayal to our LGBT2SQ+ Communities."*
  - <https://www.facebook.com/PrideToronto/photos/a.294656772036/10167692198152037/>
- **From an open letter by "a group of Toronto and Ontario writers and members of the literary community":**
  - *"Offering Murphy a platform means denying the resources and promise of safe and equitable space to trans communities."*
  - *"If this event moves forward, the signed writers and publishing professionals will no longer, in clear conscience, participate in TPL events."*
  - <https://www.change.org/p/toronto-public-library-request-for-tpl-to-cancel-rental-booking-for-transphobic-event-at-palmerston-library>
- **From an open letter by "artists, writers, and scientific innovators"**
  - *"An event about gender featuring a transphobic speaker will undoubtedly result in spreading messages that invalidate and encourage further marginalization of transgender Torontonians."*
  - <https://www.change.org/p/toronto-public-library-toronto-public-library-collaborators-condemn-tpl-s-decision-on-meghan-murphy-talk>

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