

TRANSADVOCATE

An open letter to Lisa Vogel: I bought my MichFest ticket!

By Autumn Sandeen

Published April 14, 2015 | Updated June 26, 2018

https://www.transadvocate.com/an-open-letter-to-lisa-vogel-i-bought-my-michfest-ticket_n_15130.htm

Abstract

Hi Lisa Vogel, Perhaps you know of me. My name is Autumn Sandeen. I've written about MichFest quite a few times over the past seven or eight years. Have you noticed that the beloved LGBT inclusivity community the past few days has been directing its ire at the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) and [...]

Article



Hi Lisa Vogel,

Perhaps you know of me. My name is Autumn Sandeen. I've written about MichFest quite a few times over the past seven or eight years.

Have you noticed that the beloved LGBT inclusivity community the past few days has been directing its ire at the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) and the LGBTQ Task Force, as well as their executive directors Kate Kendall and Rea Carey? Have you noticed that the trans community is directing its ire at The TransAdvocate and its four editors? I bet you know why.

Last year, you said you wanted organizations to remove their names from the Equality Michigan petition before you'd discuss the "womyn-born-womyn intention" (the intention) of Michfest with their representatives. Well, some have. Have you seen what it's cost those two LGBT organizations and The TransAdvocate so far?

How willing are you willing to risk the ire of your beloved MichFest community to now enter an honest and productive discussion with representatives of these three organizations? As much ire as we've endured?

Over the years trans people and their community allies have protested, picketed, engaged in direct action, engaged in peaceful protests, set up informational booths, set up camps outside the festival, and last year even a petition was begun that saw many large LGBT organizations sign onto it asking for the intention to end.

Nothing, but nothing, has moved you to change the intention.

You often state discussions on this important issue have been ongoing, yet these have been ongoing for decades -- or not really ongoing, we should say. We both know, Lisa, you've never really sat down in a room with trans people across a table discussing the intention.

Lisa, we also both know your language has changed over the decades, but you always find something to equivocate over. So calling us trans women womyn doesn't mean trans women are welcome at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival because, well, you've never added that final sentence at the end of the intention -- "and trans women belong at MichFest too."

So. Here we are.

Here at The TransAdvocate we want a discussion to be about evolving the intention's intention to an inclusive one for this 40th Anniversary MichFest year. Negotiations need to be about the process for doing so, not if it should be done.

But, if you believe trans women are males, then please have the courage of your convictions and tell representatives of trans community that face-to-face. Tell us why the intention must endure yet one more year where trans women are the only kind of intersectional women who aren't welcome at MichFest.

A path is cleared: three groups off the petition, ready to meet with you to engage with you in honest and forthright discussion about the intention.

We at The TransAdvocate have a strategy that's clearly going forward: the goal is discussion aimed at evolving the womyn-born-womyn intention so it includes trans women too.

The tactics I'll personally advocate for going forward will include sacrifice and presence.

So, to begin. On April 13, 2015, I bought a Ticket to MichFest. When I receive it, I'll be mailing it to NCLR's Kate Kendall. If the intention evolves to become inclusive of all women before MichFest this year, I'll go. If not, I'll ask Kate to give it to another disabled woman on a fixed income -- like I'm a disabled woman on a fixed income.

If you choose not to meet with us soon, then I will come up to your bay area offices and wait outside. If

you choose to, you can come out of your office then and schedule a face-to-face meeting with others and me then. I'll ask any trans womyn who want to join me outside your office for that possible "appointment watch" to join me if they'd like.

Or not. You see, I'm personally paying a price for The Transadvocate suspending our organization's participation with Equality Michigan's petition. Many believe we've lost our way, so I don't know if any will join me.

What is it though what Martin Luther King Jr. said?

Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.

It's time, Lisa. It's time for you to say the words "and trans womyn are welcome at MichFest under the intention too."

I hope to see you in a meeting soon, Lisa; I hope to see you at MichFest this year as well.

Warmest thoughts,

Autumn

Suggested citation

Autumn Sandeen. "An open letter to Lisa Vogel: I bought my MichFest ticket!." TransAdvocate, April 14, 2015.
https://www.transadvocate.com/an-open-letter-to-lisa-vogel-i-bought-my-michfest-ticket_n_15130.htm