

# WHY WE MUST RECLAIM PRIDE

The NYC Pride March began in 1970 – the first anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion– as a protest of police brutality against LGBTQIATSNBGNC+ people. Our annual march should continue to fight the oppression we face today.

But Heritage of Pride, the group that has run the March since 1984, has turned it into a corporate showcase. Bowing to NYPD demands and funding concerns, HOP changed the March from an inclusive community event to an over-policed marketing platform. They act more like party planners than protest organizers. Here are the issues we must address:

**OVERWHELMING CORPORATE PRESENCE** ● In 2018, HOP limited the number of marchers in community groups to 200, but allowed corporate sponsors to have up to 800 marchers! Over the years, corporate logos and floats have come to dominate their parade.

**NEUTRALIZING THE RESISTANCE** ● In 2017, on the heels of Trump taking office, HOP refused to allow a Resistance Contingent. After major pushback from the community, they finally allowed it to march near the start. In 2018, they once again denied permission, but finally bowed to community pressure. The contingent stepped off five hours into the Parade, well after the TV broadcast ended.

**BOWING TO THE NYPD** ● In order to save on police overtime pay, the NYPD wants all parades to be under 5 hours. Since the 2017 Pride Parade lasted over nine hours, HOP agreed to limit the number of marchers and changed the Parade route in 2018. The Parade still lasted over nine hours.

Last year, the Parade started at 17<sup>th</sup> St. and 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. and ended at 29<sup>th</sup> St. and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. – a march from nowhere to nowhere. The route was overwhelmingly unpopular, both with the LGBTQ community and with residents of the neighborhoods affected. HOP will be using a similar route this year.

**POLICE PRESENCE IN MARCH** ● The NYPD has been given pride of place in the Parade in spite of the fact that it has never apologized for the part it played at Stonewall, nor for its ongoing violence against members of the queer community, particularly toward people of color and the trans community. HOP has refused to consider calls to prevent police from marching in their parade.

**OVER-BARRICADING** ● The NYPD demands that the Parade be severely barricaded with metal interlocking fences. This restricts access to the Parade and increases the risk to participants in case of an emergency. It also poses serious safety concerns for people with disabilities. Christopher St., a place queer people have traditionally gathered on Pride night, is now cordoned off, and the Christopher St. Piers are closed.

**WRISTBANDS** ● HOP required all marchers to wear HOP wristbands, which prevented anyone from spontaneously joining. After much pushback, HOP has said their 2019 parade will not use wristbands, but will still restrict the number of individual marchers.

**MARGINALIZATION OF MEMBERS WITHIN THE LGBTQIATSNBGNC+ COMMUNITY** ● Key constituencies who should benefit from the annual Stonewall commemoration face significant challenges to participation. Some Elders, Youth, Transgender People, People of Color, People with Disabilities, Immigrants, Previously Incarcerated, Activists, Poor/Working Class, Homeless, and others in our community have been practically excluded or offered diminished participation.

# WHY WE MARCH

We March in our communities' tradition of resistance against police, state, and societal oppression, a tradition that is epitomized and symbolized by the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion.

We March against the exploitation of our communities for profit and against corporate and state pinkwashing, as displayed in Pride celebrations worldwide, including the NYC Pride Parade.

We March in opposition to transphobia, homophobia, biphobia, racism, sexism, xenophobia, bigotry based on religious affiliation, classism, ableism, audism, ageism, all other forms of oppression, and the violence that accompanies them in the U.S. and globally.

We March for an end to individual and institutional expressions of hate and violence as well as government policies that deny us our rights and our very lives, from the NYPD to ICE, from the prison industrial complex to state repression worldwide.

We March to oppose efforts that deny our communities' rights and that brutally erase queer people worldwide.

We March against domestic and global neoliberalism and the ascendance of the far right, against poverty and economic inequality, against U.S. military aggression, and against the threat that is climate change.

We March to affirm that healthcare is a right, including treatment for all people with HIV/AIDS worldwide and intensive prevention efforts, and to demand an end to HIV stigma and criminalization.

We Are trans, bisexual, lesbian, gay, queer, intersex, asexual, two-spirit, non-binary, gender non-conforming + and allies.

We March to celebrate our communities and history, in solidarity with other oppressed groups, and to demand social and economic justice worldwide – we March for Liberation!

[reclaimpridenyc.org](http://reclaimpridenyc.org)

