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## ***Proud Boys, far-right groups terrorize New York City drag event***

A video showing New York City (NYPD) policemen holding the metro transit fare gates open for several members of the Proud Boys has surfaced on social media, garnering millions of views in the 48-hour period since its posting.

The individual filming the video can be heard questioning the officers' actions in disbelief, demanding to know if the militia members were being allowed to evade the subway fare by the police.

The video was posted on TikTok on Sunday, and by Tuesday evening it had upwards of a third of a million individual user "likes," 18,000 comments and 13,000 "shares." A reposting of the video on Twitter showed 3.4 million more views, along with 13.9 million views of the thread to which it had been attached.

In an example of popular disgust with the collaboration between the police and the political far-right, one commenter wrote, "I've literally seen the NYPD chase people [for] fair evasion, this is insane." Another user added, "cops let their own in."

The video was filmed after the Proud Boys, along with the ultra-religious, anti-vaccine, anti-LGBTQ Guardians of Divinity, threatened a Drag Queen Story Hour (DSH) event at the Queens Public Library in Jackson Heights on December 29.

Between the two extreme-right organizations, over two dozen members were present at the event, while about 150 counter-demonstrators showed up in protest against the far-right provocateurs. Guardians of Divinity members and Proud Boys hurled slanderous epithets and attempted to intimidate supporters of the event.



Proud Boys chairman Enrique Tarrio rallies in Portland, Oregon, Aug. 17, 2019 [AP Photo/Noah Berger]

Multiple publications reported that a masked neo-Nazi was on the scene, giving a “Heil Hitler” salute. Although the man was allegedly arrested, his identity has not been made public.

Dozens of NYPD police were on hand, ostensibly to hold the two groups of protesters apart, but essentially to protect the fascists.

DSH is a nonprofit organization that sponsors and arranges public events in which drag performers read stories aloud to children. The December 29 event followed similar incidents in New York City and a wave of extreme-right, anti-LGBTQ agitation around the country. Just a few weeks prior, a similar event organized by DSH was picketed by the Guardians of Divinity in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood.

On December 19, both the office and the home of Democratic New York City Councilman Erik Bottcher were attacked and vandalized with homophobic graffiti. Videos posted on social media accounts tied the attack to the Guardians of Divinity. Bottcher and Hudson are both openly gay politicians who have been outspoken about their sexuality in their political campaigns.

Earlier this fall, a similar demonstration was staged against a DSH event and was subsequently followed by an attack on the offices of Democratic City Councilman Shekar Krishnan, who represents the Elmhurst/Jackson Heights district.

On Sunday, December 18, a DSH-organized event in Austin, Texas was cancelled due to concerns over safety following provocations by the New Columbia Movement hate group

at multiple locations across the state. As with the December 29 event in New York, Proud Boys and neo-fascists were present.

On the same day, members of the Proud Boys marched near a bar in Jacksonville, Florida. The group had been harassing the club owner with violent threats in relation to drag performances that had been hosted there.

A drag show in Columbus, Ohio in early December was cancelled after Proud Boys threatened performers and staged armed demonstrations through the streets of the city. A Columbus police officer was seen giving a high-five to a white nationalist militia member marching with the demonstrators. An article in the *Nation* cited multiple connections between the Proud Boys and police in Columbus, with one Proud Boy claiming to be an officer himself.

While the Rupert Murdoch-owned *New York Post* has attempted to paint the counter-demonstrators at the December 29 event as violently anti-police, the *New York Times* has, in milquetoast manner, referred to the Guardians of Divinity merely as “protestors.”

The Democratic Party, which controls both the state and city governments of New York, has done nothing in response to multiple demonstrations of tacit or open police support for fascist groups such as the Proud Boys, and the failure of the NYPD to defend targets of far-right provocation and terror from outfits such as the Proud Boys and the Guardians of Divinity.

Instead, Mayor Eric Adams, a retired police captain, and Governor Kathy Hochul have competed with the Republicans in demonstrating their “law-and-order” and pro-police credentials.

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