

It's Not Intersectional, It's DxE: An Exposé Written By DxE's Victims

Dear Animal Rights Community,

The misery, torture, and sheer suffering animals endure at the hands of our capitalist economy has outraged us. We have all seen gruesome footage of what it means to be an animal in the modern day factory farm and have chosen to side with compassion. We have made a decision to work towards creating a world where animal oppression is no longer a reality. We, as animal rights activists, do our best to ensure that animals' voices are represented, that animals are given the dignity they deserve, and that our fellow humans are awakened to the unfathomable violence embedded in their everyday choices.

As activists in the animal rights community, we also recognize that the suffering of humans, based on systems of power and privilege rooted in colonialism, is very much connected to animal oppression. Therefore, we acknowledge the necessary social justice activism baseline of intersectionality. We simultaneously work to undermine all systems of oppression, race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and species, because we see them as fundamentally intertwined.

Given our anti-oppressive stance, it has become morally impossible for us to keep silent about the various violences we see in the animal rights community. An infamous animal rights group, Direct Action Everywhere (DxE), has wholeheartedly violated fundamental social justice activism principles and continues to do so. As their group begins branching out, we find it imperative to publicize how they completely lack intersectionality, abuse those who disagree, and manipulate or derail their way out of conflict situations. DxE claims to be an intersectional group working towards Total Animal Liberation, the idea that "every sentient being deserves the same safety, freedom, and happiness." However, this group has a horrendous history of racist, sexist, and homophobic behavior, in addition to harboring sexual predators and tokenizing People of Color. Not to mention, the group has a flawed and inept accountability process which leaves victims feeling manipulated, dismissed, or attacked. Direct Action Everywhere is not intersectional, not a safe space, and certainly not revolutionary.

This letter is being issued by the growing number of DxE's victims. We are here. We are many. We are no longer afraid. We are making our voices heard. And we will no longer allow our movement to be co-opted by corporate pseudo-activists disinterested in genuine change. Our intent is not to share individual stories, for valid fear of reactionary attack by the DxE core, but to make these grievances public. Too many people have been personally attacked and/or sexually assaulted by DxE leadership and it is essential that we make this a public conversation in the

animal rights community. Our central goal is to make you question DxE and rethink joining a group known to host abusers, manipulate activists, and undermine and attack oppressed peoples.

A direct message to DxE's current followers: please consider if this is a group you want to identify and work with. DxE's dirty secrets are starting to become public knowledge. These scandals are no longer instances which the core can quietly shove under the rug. Victims are speaking out to prevent future victimization. Listen.

DxE is racist.

DxE is homophobic.

DxE is sexist.

DxE is zionist.

DxE is abusive.

If these sentences shock you, good. They should. If you identify with DxE, think DxE is magical, intersectional, and perfect at what they do – this letter is for you. Stop and think. Don't get immediately defensive, just stop. Stop. Think. We've all been there. We believed in DxE too. Now that we've come out the other side, been manipulated, attacked, publicly humiliated, and shunned, we have seen the reality. There is nothing intersectional or safe about DxE. Reconsider your allegiance. Question DxE.

This entire project has been orchestrated and organized by Womxn of Color victims of DxE, and all contributors are Womxn victims of DxE, save one male of Color. Take into account our identities and how DxE continues to reproduce hierarchal power structures, by attacking, undermining, and invalidating womxn, People of Color, queer, gender-nonconforming, and other marginalized communities. Also, take into account what it means for you to undermine or further invalidate our experiences, if you choose to do so.

Here are the voices of DxE's victims. Each and every single one of these people has been attacked by DxE. Each and every single one of these people was deeply involved in DxE. Some contributors are former core members. Some contributors have been with DxE since the beginning. Some have been dedicated members for years. Some decided to speak out and all hell broke loose. Please take a moment to listen to our stories.



I am devastated by the way Direct Action Everywhere have treated my friends and I, former long-time members since the group's inception. We dedicated ourselves entirely to seeing DxE succeed as we truly believed that not only was DxE working to help animals, but also looking out for us as womxn and people of color.

Despite the leader being a person of color; DxE is set up with the leader's favorite friends (read: heterosexual cis-gender white men) at the top of the hierarchy. The "leadership" roles he gives to some womxn and people of color are facades. DxE's leader and his core completely used my friends and I to do all of the non-glamorous jobs in DxE, objectified us as sexual conquests, and tokenized us as womxn and people of color to pretend they are "intersectional..." even long after many of us have left the group. When we tried to express our concerns we were gaslit and lovebombed by their "Conflict Resolution Team." It was either going to be complete submission to the DxE leader OR face a smear campaign and ex-communication from the community we grew to love and care for.

When we decided to stop being guilt-tripped by them ("for the animals/intersectionality") into doing things that were hurting us; they subjected us to further sexism and racism, victim-blamed us, and turned the DxE community against us with their half-truths, outright lies, and attacks to our character. And why? Because we stood up for each other and ourselves when DxE's leader and core were bullying us into silence.

Knowing that DxE continues to grow and victimize more people; I cannot be silent anymore. Direct Action Everywhere is NOT a safe space for womxn or people of color. And for everyone else, please know Direct Action Everywhere is NOT an organization to support if you consider yourself an ally.



I was thrilled to begin working with DxE. I loved the idea of their grassroots, open network model, that appeared to have no hierarchical structure and was intersectional in approach. It wasn't long before I noticed there is indeed a hierarchy, with Wayne and Priya, two controlling and calculating narcissists, at the top.

I had a wake up call as to the leaders true characters when one of their activists admitted to committing sex crimes. I discovered that there were many womxn activists who were victims of rape, revenge porn and sexual harassment by men in DxE's core who were gaslighted or shamed into silence by the leaders.

Before knowing better, I confided in Priya something serious that was happening to me. Not only was she cold and uncaring, a few days later I was removed as a DxE organizer for telling another activist in private that I thought they handled things terribly. I was told Priya was in charge of this decision. Already feeling robbed of my dignity and autonomy, I was devastated.

This network had meant everything to me. Wayne also dismissed my concerns and said that I and others were threatening DxE's reputation. They showed absolutely no concern as to the injustice we had faced and witnessed. The more I questioned, the longer the list of offences I had allegedly committed, grew. This is the famous DxE 'Conflict Resolution Process'.

In other words, forget everything that has happened to you, accept that you are in the wrong, act remorseful, and make the brand look as good as possible or we'll make things worse for you. When a friend publicly said their decision making did not feel like a victim-oriented approach, they immediately began a smear campaign against him. Anyone who vocalized disagreement was punished by either being removed from the group, or slandered.

I worry about current and future activists, particularly youths, joining DxE. Fighting for animals in what appears to be a warm loving community of activists with a shared dream of animal and human liberation in a harsh nonvegan world is an attractive picture. I fear this group will get worse as Wayne's lust for power grows and DxE becomes a major player in the movement.

They routinely silence womxn and people of color and commit character assassinations against those who dare to speak out against injustice within their ranks. I now see that they are standing in the way of any real grassroots intersectional movement.



I was shattered by DxE's behavior. I was a member of the group for over a year and considered myself very involved and respected. However, when I pointed out some fundamental flaws in DxE's politics (specifically how they support groups which condone military occupation and colonization) and power structure (a rigid hierarchy which disallows non-core activists from decision making processes), the core berated me. Honestly, the things DxE's core said to me are some of the most racist things anyone has ever said to me. I was more horrified, not by Kelly or Kitty's racist attacks or Wayne's absurd derailing attempts, but by how every single individual in the group remained silent. Not one individual was willing to stand up to their bigotry. The degree of obedience and loyalty to the DxE setup became very clear to me in that moment. DxE is ultimately nothing more than a loyalty contest (to Wayne), not an activist space. Not even close.

DxE has normalized hypermasculinity, hierarchal power structures, rape culture, racism, sexism, tokenization, and zionism in the animal rights movement. If you try to point this out to them, they simply destroy you.

At the time, it was unfathomable to me that a supposedly intersectional and socially-conscious group was facilitating this dehumanization, delegitimation, and outright attack on a Womxn of Color. It was a very difficult, abrupt, and vicious process by which I was forced to realize that DxE is in the business of producing and protecting a brand, while simultaneously doing everything in its power to discredit, undermine, and eliminate threats to its structure, by any means necessary. Now I understand why they did what they did. They don't care about doing the hard work necessary for radical change. They are only interested in viral videos and new chapters.

Nonetheless, the extent to which they hurl offensive vitriol at oppressed peoples continues to baffle me. They are doing absolutely nothing intersectional as far as I am concerned. In fact, in my personal experience, they have been the most racist and tokenizing group I have ever encountered. I am speaking up now, to prevent further victims to DxE violence.



As a former member of dxe's core I have seen and participated in the abuse of others. Getting involved with the group was my first experience with any kind of activism and I remember feeling exhilarated and enthralled to be working alongside Wayne. In the beginning it felt as if we were all equals, and that we truly operated on a consensus-based decision making model, but later on as we started to have disagreements it was always that Wayne would veto whomever and the rest of the group would follow his lead.

I was not the first person in the group to bring up issues of sexism and women's safety. That person was met with silence and then dismissal, and afterward we reassured each other that this person's claims were ultimately vague and that we didn't know how to address or resolve any of them. That became a pattern in dxe. It became a problem as more instances of sexual predation and harassment cropped up over time. The group's "accountability process" early on was that Wayne would have a private conversation with the accused (that nobody else was ever privy to)... But it was always that the ones held accountable and whatever accountability meant was clearly based upon Wayne's own personal opinion and affection for the attacker.

As I began to voice my own criticisms within the group I slowly became the pariah. Being core and having some meaningful ties within dxe they afforded me some sort of protection from vicious attack, but there came a time that whenever I began to speak that Priya and Kelly would

look at each other and roll their eyes. It began to feel more like I was fighting for justice within the group than fighting for animal liberation and it was draining. I kept going to demos but stopped attending weekly meetings. My communication with the group remained steady through emails.

Everything came to a head over the decision to publicly endorse a recorded 269 demo with depictions of extreme violence against women. I got into a very heated argument with Wayne in some private emails and he derailed the conversation by telling me that I was more concerned with women's issues within the group instead of racial issues. That was the point where I severed ties with them.

About a year after leaving I have had multiple people approach me to confirm as to whether or not I was physically violent toward another member of the group. It was insinuated that I had assaulted my former partner and I have only found out recently certain members of the group have been telling this to other activists, and also warning others to keep away from me. On a public comment thread on Facebook, Priya stated that my behavior within the group was racist and physically violent. I reached out to her privately more than once to clarify and have only been met with silence.

I am only speaking to my own experience, but I do personally know others who have been victimized by dxE in very similar and dissimilar ways. Some are far worse than what I've been through and I count myself lucky to have left the group with barely a scratch, but my hope is that others will listen and learn from what those who have been so negatively affected have to say.



I am a victim of relentless bullying and character assassination based on outright lies by DxE's core. This became my reality for daring to speak out publicly about DxE concerning their non-intersectional politics and total disregard for creating safe spaces for activists. Over time, I have seen a pattern of this exact type of fraudulent character assassination happening to almost everyone who dare challenge DxE and I find this manipulative behavior inexcusable and disgusting. I am speaking out because I cannot sit back and watch more and more victims come forward with personal accounts of the abuses they have experienced at the hands of DxE, experiences far worse than mine. DxE, the skeletons in your closet are being exposed, the bullying, sexism, manipulating, victim blaming and predator insulating behavior running rampant within your community has gone unchecked far too long.



I worked with DxE for a year, initially ecstatic that I had found what I thought to be an amazing model and network of activists who actually cared about intersectional issues. I believed that DxE cared about its members and cared about being an anti-oppressive group. Was I ever wrong. Over the course of the year I discovered things that they were engaged in that shocked me. I was devastated when things began coming to light showing their true nature.

When I tried to “call in” DxE for oppressive behavior against women, a lack of true intersectionality, and affiliation with problematic and violently offensive groups, I was gaslighted and slandered within the group. I witnessed firsthand what happens when someone challenges DxE on their oppressive and hypocritical behaviors and practices. I discovered what happens when someone attempts to hold them accountable to their own principles of “intersectionality.” I was called “crazy” and “divisive” for daring to bring up oppressive behaviors that were occurring. I was silenced, dismissed, and gaslighted for merely trying to hold DxE accountable to its own principles. The “core” manipulated the situation so as to appear that I was the problem.

I was betrayed by people who I thought were close friends, who stayed silent and allowed me to be treated this way. People who I thought were my friends cared more about staying on Wayne, Priya, and Kelly’s good side than actually standing up against injustice. Since distancing myself from them I have met far too many people who have had similar awful experiences of being silenced and shunned for daring to question DxE’s oppressive behavior. I have seen a horrible pattern of silencing, gaslighting, and cutting off anyone who dares to question their oppressive behaviors or hierarchical structure. They claim to have a space for criticism, but this is false. They claim to be a safe space for marginalized groups, but as I have experienced and witnessed, this could not be further from the truth. This experience was so hurtful that I have not participated in animal rights work for over a year. I hope that by speaking up we can prevent other activists from being mistreated and falling victim to DxE’s manipulation and lies.



As an activist who had been seeking an animal rights group strong on community-building and activism, I was infinitely thrilled to have found such a dynamic and seemingly altruistic support in Direct Action Everywhere, who touted vital principles and notions of intersectionality spanning across all realms of social injustices. The pace was fast, frenetic and uplifting and the group enjoyed fast-rising growth. The friendships formed were many and made one feel supported and protected. What I did not expect, was to witness some of those solid bonds unravel in the most hurtful of ways by those who had helped form them. When members of a group become prey and mere toys to more experienced, older members it’s hurtful. When long-time members are maligned, vilified and ostracized for agenda gains and to protect male organizers

who have become notorious for engaging in predatory behavior, it breaches all of the trust and credibility that was focal and crucial to the group and it's a painful experience for those who believed in those friendships. This is not ethical, just or intersectional in the least. Particularly disturbing are the cases of male members coming on to very young female members, especially when those male members are from the organizing core. There is an obvious power-play in effect within the core of the group that is very subtly played and used to keep people in control, and not just in a sexual way, but in emotionally charged and guilt-imposing ways. What's worse is the way these issues are dismissed when they are brought up by those who speak up. In most cases insinuations of racism and sexism are dished out liberally against those who question, along with a healthy dosage of victim-blaming. In other words, for DxE to continue to claim that they care about women's safety and women's rights as well as other issues is nothing short of offensive. Too many people have dropped out of the community feeling betrayed and abandoned. Too many people have been hurt. Smart, insightful, good people. This is no coincidence. And to continue to ignore or to make excuses for these serious infractions is a mistake, because there should be no more cases of people being manipulated and hurt by an organization who is supposed to care about all beings.



I was an early member of DxE when it first started. I came to DxE believing they were a new wave of activists creating incremental change. DxE claims to fight for true intersectionality with various people from all races, sexes, and heritages working together to abolish oppression that is all connected.

Then I noticed some red flags slowly creeping up. I started working with one of the most well respected, to this day, activists in DxE. He uses activism as a platform to pick up women at actions. I was doing countless hours of work for DxE, and his behavior often made me feel weird. However, since Wayne and the core approved of his behavior; I felt forced to accept that kind of environment for women.

This one golden and respected DxE activist, Assaf, made inappropriate comments, rape jokes, sexual advances, and racial slurs to women and people of color in and outside of the group. Racist jokes were aimed at my family and I. Sexist comments were aimed at one of my partners. I felt uneasy as I realized this is the culture of DxE. Many women and people of color left DxE, because of this harassment.

I confronted Wayne about various issues, including this one, but instead of solving the issue he responded with "well, he is still a great activist." Wayne also shared with me and a few other men his own personal history of sexual harassment of women when he was in graduate school. I

suspect he shared this little known fact about him to help normalize the mistreatment of women in DxE among DxE men. Wayne's response made me understand that fighting oppression isn't important to DxE. They are only interested in getting a bigger (activist) body count and publicity for Wayne.

The final straw came when Assaf proudly told me some things he did at Burning Man which constitutes as date rape of multiple women. It left me feeling disgusted and physically ill. So, I distanced myself from Assaf after months of constant abuse from him. That abuse was never addressed by Wayne and the core. In fact, Wayne and Priya, once my close friends, turned on me.

Chris and Priya sent out a statement about me full of slanderous lies. They aimed the statement at vulnerable activists who Wayne emotionally and mentally manipulates, including one of my partners. I received death threats from people Wayne is allied with now. I was torn and suicidal. I suffered from anxiety and panic attacks for weeks. During that time, Wayne had the nerve to contact me inviting me to a men's only group meeting about creating safe spaces for women (no women were allowed at this meeting). So long as I sought out Wayne's guidance and did everything Wayne said; Wayne would "help" me rejoin DxE and become a "better" person/DxE activist. I, in good consciousness, didn't accept Wayne's bargain.

All of my friends and extraordinary activists from the DxE community who spoke out against Wayne, Chris, Priya, and the DxE core's smear campaign of me were labeled as sexist, racist, and overall just bullies. Just like everyone else who left DxE in the past; DxE gaslit them as abandoning animals and intersectional progress.

So, beware that DxE is not safe for anyone unless you're into racism, sexual assault, and pseudo-activism.



I used to organize off and on for DxE last year. I became increasingly frustrated by certain DxE posts and organizers, and what I thought was grandstanding. I felt like the group wasn't as inclusive or welcoming as they say they are especially with so many snarky posts and comments.

After the posting of a meme appropriating DxE to Civil Rights protesters, another red flag emerged when core members confronted someone who expressed that she did not want to further engage with them. By then I was already cautious of the group but hoping they were willing to correct any wrongs when confronted. After confronting them on the inconsistencies of public statements vs. actual actions, I was cut from the group pages and communications.

I have seen the core members twist words, lie and manipulate to protect their personal agendas under the guise of another agenda (e.g. protecting women of revenge porn). I am aware of them protecting and ignoring victim blamers. I was reminded that DxE is a “grassroots org,” there is no leadership and I can participate in many ways, but I know that's not true. I clearly see a leadership structure. In good conscience I could not participate and knew I needed to cut ties.

I saw good friends carelessly labeled as dangerous and hurtful to victims because they dared to speak out about their truth and experiences. Everyone who spoke out against their actions was later met with smear campaigns, threatening their reputations. I saw people wrongly and unfairly characterized in their mass email communications for the purpose of garnering sympathy and a call to action on behalf of DxE. This group is not safe for anyone. I am speaking up to further prevent good people from being harmed.



So when I found DxE 2 years ago, it was something I needed to help me find my voice for the animals and also gain more confidence. I did just that. I made some amazing friends and met so many people to help me make some big things a reality. I really thought the SF Bay DxE core and supporters were my friends and that I could really count on them. I really thought that they were doing something for the AR movement that seemed to be missing.

So, I started questioning things more when I started seeing the core and other supporters calling out and targeting vegans or activists for various things they said negatively towards DxE. I expressed my concerns to the core that I felt this wasn't cool because we should all be working together and they told me things to shut me up and move along. Then the Hugo incident happened and I was even more upset. Many people started saying they didn't want DxE to be at events because they simply didn't agree with the way they do things and some don't feel safe around DxE members. There are so many other incidents after this that were all upsetting, especially how they handled them publicly or how they chose not to handle them at all. They tried to discredit 3 of my friends who had never been in DxE and targeted 3 of my friends who used to also be in DxE, for things that were lies and uncalled for. Not to mention there were several “favorites” within the core members who did things that should have been made public, but they weren't because of their privilege in DxE. I remembered all the negative things that I had heard people say about them over the years, which come to find out most were true. I discovered that when the core calls its criticisms “all a fabrication” while derailing it to be about how people dislike their tactics, it is to get you to think everything is all good on their end.

When I confronted them again about how they were still handling things so badly, I was asked by a core member “Who’s side are you on?” I should not have to pick a side. I want everyone to work peacefully together but they don’t see what they’re doing is bad. That was when I realized I have had enough. They really hurt me because I thought they were my friends. I caught 4 core members in lies, to make themselves look better and throw other people under the bus. They only care about how they are perceived by their followers, so they look like angels and I say followers because I’m starting to realize they have cult-like qualities. It just hurts to see how messed up things have gotten when we are supposed to be fighting for animals and not against each other! So in short, if you have anything negative to say about DxE, they will let everyone know and try to get all their followers to make you think there is nothing wrong with anything they do.



When I joined DxE, I was so excited for the chance to work with a passionate group of people who proclaimed the ideal of liberation for all, humans and non-humans. I truly believed we valued the necessity for ending all oppressive power structures, the ones that plague many of our own lives included.

This could not be farther from reality within DxE. Contrary to how they advertise, there is a hierarchy within the organization, where those at the top (the core) are primarily invested in building the image/brand of DxE, at the expense of committed and well-intentioned activists, and DxE’s own integrity. Following my long-term involvement in the DxE community, my trust in the core members who had led me to believe that they valued intersectional principles, my friendship, and contributions to DxE, was completely shattered.

I was heartbroken to learn of situations where men in positions of power in DxE were preying upon and taking advantage of vulnerable, and much younger women. I was disgusted by the victim-blaming, smear-campaigning, and dismissive responses I received from Priya (and silence from male leaders) when I expressed my concerns about this, all while DxE were publicly claiming to support victims. I realized I could not continue to support DxE, with this deep hypocrisy built into the fabric of the organization.

I soon became aware of even more defamatory smear campaigns against current (at the time) and former DxE activists. The extent of dishonesty and hurt the core members are willing to inflict on those they once called friends and claimed to love, is devastating. DxE touts their “family” vibe and strong loving community but any member of that community is totally disposable if they don’t participate unquestioningly in what DxE has become.

The core members of DxE routinely engage in manipulation, both of people, and of accounts of

events, in efforts to control and manage information, then throw around words like “integrity” and “transparency.” This is no way to treat people who call each other friends and allies for justice. It’s toxic for a community of activists and kills the trust in the honesty, integrity, and open communication that is purported to be central to DxE.

Safer spaces for activists both in real life and online, are things that DxE has no respect for. I endured baseless personal attacks from Wayne and Priya in retaliation for removing members (who happened to be affiliated with DxE) from a Facebook group I moderate for repeatedly violating the safer space policy of the group. Many activists have been similarly targeted over the course of DxE’s activity.

I continue to have concerns for the safety and well-being of current and potential future members. Especially those who are younger and vulnerable, who are being given a false sense of safety and care in the DxE community; and those who are marginalized by oppressive power structures around race, gender, class and ability that are reinforced interpersonally in DxE spaces while they label the group “intersectional” in name only.

If your motivation for animal rights activism is based in a sense of empathy and compassion for the rights and well-being of others, please make an informed decision about supporting or becoming involved with DxE.



If you have any comments, questions, or concerns, please send them to questiondx@gmail.com.