

# Queer Query

Volume1 Issue 5

BGSU's LGBTQA-Q Newsletter

April 15, 2005

## Upcoming Events

Thursday April 21

Queer Law Issue 1  
Deputy MaryAnn  
7pm BTSU 208

Wednesday April

Discriminatory Restrooms  
3pm 318 BTSU

Every Tuesday Vision

BGSU's Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Queer Intersex Questioning and Straight Supportive Undergraduate Student Organization  
9pm, Women's Center  
107 Hanna Hall

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Every Month Transgender Support Group

A support group for all transgender people in NW Ohio Sponsored by the Toledo Area Pride Center  
3-5pm at the Toledo Area Pride Center

Out@BGSU?

Confidential Coming Out Support Group  
(Professionally Run)  
Call 419.372.2081 for the confidential meeting time and place

## Studies: TV Could Reduce Homophobia

Christopher Curtis, PlanetOut Network  
Thursday, April 14, 2005 / 05:55 PM

Television could reduce homophobia, according to University of Minnesota communications research reported by the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

Researchers measured feelings toward gay men before and after college students watched episodes of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," "Will & Grace" and "Six Feet Under." Respondents admitted to feeling less homophobia after watching each show. Communications professors Edward Schiappa, Dean Hewes and graduate student Peter Gregg say this phenomenon is due to a form of "contact hypothesis," a mechanism for reducing prejudice through contact between majority and minority groups.

While contact hypothesis works through direct interaction, the researchers believe television creates a similar effect. In what the researchers call "parasocial contact hypothesis," subjects reduce their prejudice by watching members of minority groups on TV or in films.

"The study only reinforces what we at GLAAD already know -- that visibility leads to understanding and understanding leads to acceptance. It's really that simple," Damon Romine, entertainment media director for GLAAD, told the PlanetOut Network. "The more images there are, the greater the understanding, and that leads to tolerance of difference -- and that's something we should all be striving for."

Results of the studies on "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" and "Six Feet Under" were published in the journal Communication Monographs. The results from the "Will & Grace" study have not been published.

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?date=2005/04/14/5>

## Opponents Mobilize Against Day of Silence

by Larry Buhl  
April 12, 2005

The National Day of Silence has become the largest grassroots student action for LGBT rights, with more than 3,000 U.S. high schools and junior high schools participating. But an organized opposition is trying harder than ever to thwart the event's success.

For one conservative Michigan high school senior, the yearly event -- where LGBT and supportive students wear special T-shirts and engage in silence for a day to draw attention to the harassment of queer students -- was hard to take. The "special time" sanctioned by the administration led Clint Armstrong to launch an Anti-Day of Silence last year at Gull Lake High School in Kalamazoo, Mich.

"There aren't days when heterosexuals get to parade around and show off their sexuality," said Armstrong, whose protest last year drew 12 students (compared with more than 20 who participated in the Day of Silence). So far this year Armstrong has sold 17 T-shirts saying, "Protesting against the Day of Silence 2005" and "Keeping our school on the straight and narrow." Many of the counter-protesters are his friends, and most of them religious, said Armstrong.

Though his Web site insists that homosexuality is "unnatural, immoral and unhealthy," Armstrong, a letterman wrestler and a polite speaker, cloaks his protest in First Amendment and equal time rhetoric.

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## Oregon Supreme Court Decision Denies Thousands of Families Basic Protections

Thursday, April 14, 2005 WASHINGTON

Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese expressed deep disappointment today in an Oregon Supreme Court ruling nullifying more than 3,000 marriages of same-sex couples performed in Multnomah County in 2004. Solmonese made the following statement:

"In the blink of an eye more than 3,000 committed couples are now strangers under law. Today is an incredibly sad day for fairness and equality in Oregon. But tomorrow the fight will continue.

"Struggles to end inequality do not succeed overnight. This is the latest chapter in a long movement, and we feel confident that Oregon courts will eventually put an end to the exclusion of committed same-sex couples from the protections and responsibilities that other Oregonians depend on.

"Our faith in justice, however, is overshadowed by the sadness we feel knowing that yesterday these couples had full equality and today they have no security under law. We are committed to working with our members and allies in Oregon to continue to have a conversation about equality and fairness under the law. We'll work to ensure that the couples whose marriages have been painfully revoked will live to see justice another day."

While the Oregon Supreme Court nullified the marriages already performed, the court did not rule on the question of civil unions, saying this case did not address that issue.

[http://www.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Press\\_Room&CONTENTID=26471&TEMPLATE=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm](http://www.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Press_Room&CONTENTID=26471&TEMPLATE=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm)

## Day of Silence cont.

"We're not a hate group, but we don't believe this kind of event [Day of Silence] should be in schools," he said. "Our motto is to allow people free speech, and that speech should apply to both sides."

Those who support LGBT students say such arguments miss the point of the annual event.

"I believe in the First Amendment, and I think there is a place for respectful airing of views," said Kevin Jennings, executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN).

"Unfortunately these protests are based on a willful distortion of what the National Day of Silence is all about. It's not about sexuality. It's about the problem of four out of five LGBT students who are routinely harassed in schools. It's about the problem of students who are harassed and bullied being two-and-a-half times more likely not to go to college. I don't see any counter protesters addressing the issue of how to stop that." GLSEN supports the Day of Silence but does not organize or lead students in the protest, Jennings affirmed.

As for the argument that straight students don't get a special day, Jennings countered that, because gay and lesbian students are often bullied into silence because of who they are, "the other 364 days of the year could be considered straight days."

While small in actual numbers compared with those who participate in the Day of Silence, student opposition is growing. Last week the Conservative Club of Rancho Cotate High School in Rohnert Park, Calif., launched a pre-emptive challenge to the Day of Silence. About a dozen students stood across the street from the school, wearing anti-gay sweatshirts and waving signs such as "God Rained Fire Upon Sodom." Because the protest was not on school grounds, the school did not try to break up the event, although it did call on local police to make sure the protest didn't turn violent.

Adults are also organizing counter-protests.

The conservative Alliance Defense Fund has organized a "Day of Truth" to take place on April 14 for "Christian students to take a stand for God's design of sexuality." As with Armstrong, the 11-year-old religious freedom organization claims that the counter protests are a matter of free speech.

"We want to have a level playing field in schools," said Joe Infranco, ADF's senior attorney. "[By hosting the Day of Silence] schools have told students to disregard moral and religious values. We don't think schools should take that role. In a free society, we have a marketplace of ideas."

As with Armstrong's protest, ADF is urging students to buy T-shirts protesting the Day of Silence. Participants will wear the T-shirts on April 14 with the saying "The Truth Can Not Be Silenced," and pass out cards to other students that express their condemnation of homosexuality. The ADF also rejects any violent or confrontational behavior, Infranco said.

ADF's recruiting efforts drew scorn from Jennings. "They should be ashamed of themselves," he said. "Young people who take part in the Day of Silence -- many of them straight -- just want to make schools better places. They deserve support from adults, not opposition from adults. The so-called Day of Truth was invented by adults to address an imaginary problem. The Day of Silence was invented by students to solve a real problem."

Jennings says most of the 3,000 official gay-straight alliances nationwide will participate. ADF didn't have any specific numbers on how many counter-protests would be launched.

So far counter-protests haven't led any school administrators to cancel the Day of Silence. But events at Gull Lake High School suggest that both sides might make progress, if not toward reconciliation, at least toward openness. Armstrong, who is, ironically, on friendly terms with the head of Gull Lake's gay-straight alliance (GSA), said his friends and the 30-member GSA group have planned an after-school meeting to hash out their differences, verbally and peacefully.

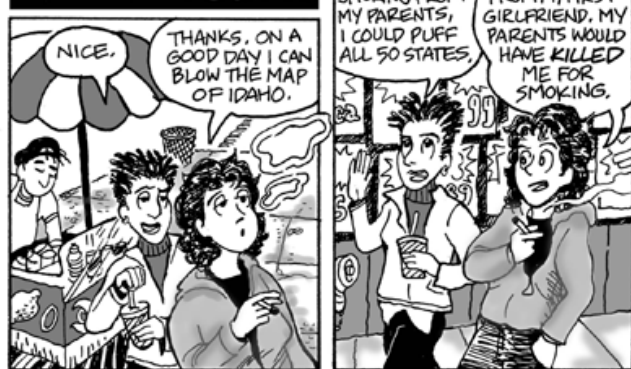
If the meeting stays civil, it will represent what many LGBT adults who went to school in the "real" silent era (more than 10 years ago) would have considered unthinkable.

<http://www.planetout.com/news/feature.html?sernum=1131>

## BitterGirl

bitter girl

lip and learn



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## Interns Wanted

Want a great internship opportunity? Want to get involved in the LGBT community at BGSU? Want to make a difference? The LGBT Resource Center is currently looking for students who are interested in doing an internship for academic credit for the Fall semester 2005. If you are interested please contact Nicky at [nickyd@bgnet.bgsu.edu](mailto:nickyd@bgnet.bgsu.edu).