

National GLB News

Report Finds Increase in Anti-gay Violence

Eric Johnston
Thursday, April 28, 2005

Violence against LGBT people increased 4 percent last year, according to a national coalition that documents such incidents. The increase came on the heels of a 26 percent rise in anti-LGBT violence the previous year.

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) released the data this week in its annual report on violence against lesbians, gay men, bisexual people and transgender individuals.

"With respect to violence, the nation's LGBT communities entered a very new and very dangerous era in which all of us were under attack at levels not seen in recent years," said Clarence Patton, NCAVP's acting executive director.

NCAVP's report on hate violence in 2004 found that the 4 percent increase in violence against LGBT people coincided with numerous anti-gay state ballot initiatives, a presidential call for a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage and the deionization of lesbians and gay men during the 2004 election cycle.

It followed the trend of 2003, when a 26 percent increase in anti-LGBT violence occurred as the nation reacted to such victories for the community as the striking down of sodomy laws across the country and the right for same-sex couples to marry in Massachusetts.

One prominent gay leader laid the blame for the rising violence on right-wing religious conservatives.

"The leaders of America's anti-gay industry are directly responsible," said Matt Foreman, the executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Among the leaders Foreman identified are the Rev. Jerry Falwell, James Dobson (head of Focus on the Family) and Tony Perkins (leader of the Family Research Council).

"This spike in violence parallels the exact same period since the right went into demonic, anti-gay hyperdrive following the Supreme Court's Lawrence v. Texas decision in July of 2003," Foreman said.

"Since then, church pews and the public airwaves have been awash in ugly, anti-gay rhetoric and fear-mongering. These words obviously do not just vanish into the ether. As intended, they are absorbed and become fuel and justification for violence."

According to the NCAVP, the number of violent incidents against LGBT people rose from 1,720 in 2003 to 1,792 in 2004. The 90-page report tracked hate-related incidents in 11 cities, states and regions across the country: the Chicago area; Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio; Colorado; Houston; Texas; Massachusetts; Michigan; Minnesota; the New York City area; Pennsylvania and the San Francisco Bay area. Additional information was included from Kansas City and St. Louis, Mo.; Tucson, Ariz. and Vermont.

According to the NCAVP, its report is the most complete examination of such violence against LGBT people because it draws on data from victim service organizations. The FBI also publishes annual hate crimes statistics, which include anti-LGBT incidents. But the FBI statistics consistently contain information on far fewer cases, because the bureau relies only on reports from law-enforcement agencies.

<http://www.planetout.com/news/article.html?2005/04/28/1>

Texas Says Gays can't be Foster Parents

By Natalie Gott
Associated Press Writer
Thu Apr 21

Texas could become the only state to bar gays from becoming foster parents under legislation passed Wednesday by the House. The ban is part of a bill to revamp the state's Child Protective Services agency. It passed 135-6 with two abstentions and now heads to the Senate.

The foster parent amendment is not included in the Senate version of the legislation, but that body could accept the House bill. "It is our responsibility to make sure that we protect our most vulnerable children, and I don't think we are doing that if we allow a foster parent that is homosexual or bisexual," said Republican Rep. Robert Talton, who introduced the amendment.

If the House version of the bill becomes law, Texas would be the only state to prohibit homosexuals and bisexuals from becoming foster parents, according to the American Civil Liberties Union Lesbian and Gay Rights project. Texas doesn't ban gays from adopting children. Arkansas had barred gays from becoming foster parents, but a judge said the law was unconstitutional in December.

Under the Texas House bill, anyone who applies to be a foster parent or a foster parent whose performance is being evaluated must say whether he or she is homosexual or bisexual. Anyone who answers yes would be barred from serving as a foster parent. If the person is already a foster parent, the child would be removed from the home.

Talton wouldn't comment Wednesday, but during debate on the bill the day before he said, "I don't think it is right for young children to be exposed to this type of behavior when they are young and innocent."

Cont. on page 2

Flaming Hot Summer Issue

Flaming Hot Summer Issue

Texas Foster Parenting cont.

Eva Thibaudeau, a social worker, said she and her partner of eight years have adopted four children and have served as foster parents to 75.

"I am just so hurt and surprised, especially now (when) we are facing an ongoing crisis of not having enough resources to take care of foster children," she said.

Randall Ellis, executive director of the Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, estimated that between 2,000 and 2,500 children could be affected.

"The truth is that a parent's sexual orientation has no negative consequence on the children that are raised in those homes," he said.

Republican Gov. Rick Perry does not want the child protection bill to get bogged down with a "side issue," though he believes marriage is between a man and a woman, spokeswoman Kathy Walt said.

The bill to overhaul the system follows recent child slayings that occurred after caseworkers investigated suspicions of neglect or abuse and decided the children were safe to remain with their parents.

It would give all of Child Protective Services' foster care and case management duties to private companies, which already manage 75 percent of foster homes in Texas.

http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ap/20050421/ap_on_re_us/gays_foster_parents_5

International GLB

Election of Pope Benidict XVI portends further conflict between church and GLBT community

WASHINGTON —

The Human Rights Campaign pointed to years of statements by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the newly elected pope, in expressing concern about the Catholic Church's future treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

"We hope that Pope Benedict XVI will follow the biblical tradition of expressing love and compassion for all," said HRC President Joe Solmonese. "In the past, he has made deeply disturbing comments regarding gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, so his selection as the 265th pope is distressing. It's imperative that there be a positive conversation with the Catholic Church about GLBT people of faith and we welcome that discourse."

"The selection of a new pope is a time of hope and anticipation," said John Mattras, member of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church in Manhattan and president of the Scriptorium. "While we welcome the opportunity for open dialogue with the new pope and church leaders, we're deeply concerned by a pattern of homophobic and uninformed statements and opinions relayed by Pope Benedict XVI that fall wholly outside modern western norms."

In 1986, as cardinal, Joseph Ratzinger delivered a Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons. He said, "Although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil."

The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith website, directed by Cardinal Ratzinger, includes the following statement: "Those who would move from tolerance to the legitimization of specific rights for cohabiting homosexual persons need to be reminded that the approval or legalization of evil is something far different from the toleration of evil."

http://www.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Press_Room&CONTENTID=26512&TEMPLATE=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm

'Gay' Bar Torched Ahead of Homosexual Event

Police Investigating Arson in Holy City Slated to Host World Pride

Posted: April 29, 2005

1:00 a.m. Eastern

By Aaron Klein

Unidentified arsonists set fire to Jerusalem's only "gay" bar this week ahead of plans, blasted by top religious figures, to bring a world homosexual event here this August that has been blasted by top religious figures. Shushan, a homosexual bar near Jerusalem's bustling Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall, suffered significant fire damage earlier this week when a man entered the doorway of the club and threw a burning rag inside. Flames spread quickly but patrons escaped without injury.

A Jerusalem police spokeswoman told WND an investigation is under way to determine whether or not the arson was in protest of World Pride, a mass international gathering of homosexual, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals slated to take place in Jerusalem this summer. Shushan owner Sa'ar Netanel is part of a coalition planning the event.

"The police will investigate and we'll see," said Netanel. "This is the first time the club [has been] attacked, but I already received threats on my life."

Last month, an unlikely alliance of Israel's two chief rabbis, Latin Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Catholic Archbishop Pietro Sambi and leaders of the Muslim community demanded at a news conference World Pride be canceled.

"We are shocked to have received notice that a worldwide assembly of 10 days, including an immodest parade devoid of minimal propriety, is scheduled to be held in Jerusalem this summer," the top leaders said in a joint statement last month. "It will offend the very foundations of our religious values and the character of the holy city."

The homosexual event, organized by InterPride, the International Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Pride Coordinators, was previously held in 2000 in Rome, where it attracted about a quarter of a million participants. Images of the Rome festivities, featured on various homosexual websites, show throngs of shirtless men in shorts and bikini briefs congregated on the streets, some of them holding hands.

Gay Bar Set Aflame in Jerusalem cont.

The theme for this year's Jerusalem gathering, according to the event website, is "Love without borders," with the goal of bringing a "new focus to an ancient city through a massive demonstration of LGBT dignity, pride and boundary-crossing celebration. In these times of intolerance and suspicion, from the home of three of the world's great religions, we will proclaim that love knows no borders."

The 2005 event brochure explains Jerusalem was picked as this year's site in part to strike a religious chord:

"WorldPride 2005 will bring thousands of us to Jerusalem to confront preconception with reality, prejudice with an opportunity for understanding, in a way that will capture the attention of the world. Together we will proclaim that in this ancient religious city - and in this region - we, too, belong."

Hagai El-Ad, executive director of the Jerusalem Open House, a homosexual and lesbian community center sponsoring World Pride, told WorldNetDaily yesterday: "The attempt to set fire to the Shushan bar is a crime that should be investigated vigorously by the police. We call upon Jerusalem's mayor [Uri Lupolianski] to make the very short journey from City Hall to the Shushan bar right across the street so that he, too, could share in taking a stand against violence and for tolerance."

The Open House last week presented what it called a coalition of religious leaders - which included the rabbi of a homosexual synagogue, a leader of the ultra-liberal Jewish Reconstructionist movement and a local rabbi that officiates same-sex weddings - to counter last month's gathering of Jerusalem religious figures condemning the homosexual event.

"The Jerusalem religious leaders were parroting the words of the Christian right by denying religious freedoms. ... I am proud to speak out for World Pride," said Ayelet Cohen, a rabbi from Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in New York, the world's largest "gay synagogue," and a member of the pro-homosexual religious panel.

Organizers of this year's event expect to draw more than 100,000 gays and lesbians from around the world to the holy city. But a WND investigation has found that only a few hundred hotel rooms are currently booked by foreigners coming to Jerusalem for World Pride.

Russell Lord, owner of Kenes International, a Tel Aviv travel agency that specializes in "gay vacations" and is one of the main agencies for the homosexual event, told WND: "only about 300 rooms are booked through me right now. I am getting calls from about a hundred or so more who are interested."

Inquiries to hotels sponsoring World Pride and other participating travel agents revealed another 200 rooms booked. In addition, a liberal Jewish organization, United Jewish Communities, says it is bringing a delegation of about 300.

"I think once we get closer, things will pick up," said Lord. He estimated a total of "maybe 4,000 people" will come from abroad, which he admits is "a far cry from the attendance of World Pride in Rome."

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=44030

Gender Issues

A Quest for a Restroom That's Neither Men's Room Nor Women's Room

Date: 4-Mar-2005
New York Times
WASHINGTON (March 4, 2005)

Political epiphanies can occur in unexpected places. For Riki Dennis, a 35-year-old humanities student who is transsexual, it was the women's room at a rest stop on Highway 101 north of Santa Barbara.

"The boyfriend hit me, even in mellow California," said Ms. Dennis, who was in the early stages of becoming female when she was assaulted by a stranger after using the women's room. "I said, 'Sir, I have no designs on your girlfriend.' I just want to use the bathroom."

Ms. Dennis, whose lowish voice is now the lone betrayal of her birth sex, is a foot soldier on a new political frontier: the campaign to establish gender-neutral bathrooms in public places. The idea is to make sure that transgender people (an umbrella term that can include transsexuals, cross-dressers and those with a fluid, androgynous identity who do not consider themselves completely male or female) can use bathrooms without fear of harassment.

Ms. Dennis is one of 250 or so members of People in Search of Safe Restrooms, a group founded here three years ago. It reflects a small but active movement, mostly on college campuses but also in a few cities, in which the bathroom, that prosaic fixture of past battles against racial segregation and for the rights of the disabled, has become an emotional and at times deeply personal symbol of a cultural and political divide.

In fact, bathrooms have become a cultural "fault line," said Mary Anne Case, a law professor at the University of Chicago, where the Queer Action Campaign for Gender-Neutral Bathrooms recently got 10 single-use restrooms on campus designated gender neutral.

"Very few spaces in our society remain divided by sex," Professor Case said. "There's marriage and there's toilets, and very little else."

To young transgender people, especially college students, the issue has particular resonance.

"Students are looking hard at the right to express their gender, a painful rite of passage for every young adult," said Riki Wilchins, executive director of the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition, a nonprofit group in Washington that fights discrimination and violence based on gender stereotypes. "These kids are demanding the right to be who they are and what they are 24/7. They're tired of being harassed or hassled when they simply need to use a public facility."

And so many students - including those at Beloit College in Wisconsin, Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y., and the University of California, Santa Barbara - have lobbied successfully for gender-neutral bathrooms.

At the New College of California, a liberal arts college in the Mission District of San Francisco, men's and women's rooms have recently given way to "de-gendered" restrooms, devoid of urinals as well as of white stick figures with pants or a skirt. Signs on the doors proclaim the new restroom politics: "Lots of people don't fit neatly into our culture's rigid two-gender system."

At the City College of San Francisco, a community college with more than 100,000 students, about 10 percent to 12 percent of the students are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. After complaints of harassment by a transgender student, campus administrators recently transformed some men's bathrooms into gender-neutral ones.

Two new satellite campuses, to open in 2007, are being planned with men's, women's and gender-neutral bathrooms on every floor of the buildings. Major new construction on the University of California, Santa Barbara, campus is also going to include gender-neutral bathrooms.

One reason the issue has significance on these campuses is that in contrast to previous generations, in which

Restrooms Cont.

"I use the male bathroom, because I live my life as a male," said Rolan Gregg, a 29-year-old student at the California College of Arts and Crafts in San Francisco, who was born female and, though he is taking hormones, does not "pass yet," as he put it. "The problem with not passing is that my risk of violence is really high. So going to the bathroom becomes really scary."

Public restroom use is governed by a legal patchwork of city and town ordinances and state laws. San Francisco is one of five cities, including New York, with regulations protecting public restroom access based on "gender identity," which refers to a person's internal sense of gender rather than their birth sex.

But in other places, restroom access based on gender identity is "an evolving area of the law," said Chris Daley, executive director of the Transgender Law Center, a San Francisco-based civil rights organization.

Here in California, where the governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, speaks derogatorily of "girlie men," the battle over public municipal bathrooms began in San Francisco in 2001, when the city's Human Rights Commission surveyed use of the city's bathrooms after complaints by transgender people and others about harassment in public and private bathrooms. As a result of the survey, the city passed guidelines recommending gender-neutral bathrooms be an option in public places.

"In San Francisco," said Marcus Arana, a discrimination investigator for the commission, "the choice between being hassled or holding their water affects thousands of people."

Elsewhere in the Bay Area, advocates of gender-neutral bathrooms are beginning to make themselves heard. In January, they pressed the board of supervisors of Alameda County to adopt a resolution forbidding discrimination in public facilities, including restrooms, based on gender identity. Alameda County was the home of Gwen Araujo, a 17-year-old transgender high school student who was murdered in 2002.

But at the meeting, opponents to the provision focused on potential side effects of the law.

"You can be sure that stalkers and peeping Toms will take full advantage of this change," said Catherine Norman, 54, a substitute teacher from Fremont. She added, "Bathrooms are about biology, not perceived gender." Whenever he is in an airport, Shana Agid, a 30-year-old transgender art student, finds himself praying he can hold out until he gets on the airplane.

"Day after day, it gets a little old," he said of a ritual he confronts at least a half-dozen times a day. "It feels ridiculous to tell people as a grown person that you have trouble going to the bathroom."
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.

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F40714FE3A590C778CDDAA0894DD404482&incamp=archive:search>

Mommy, Am I A Boy Or A Girl?

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18, 2005
Associated press

It's the first question new parents hear: girl or boy? But hundreds of babies are born each year where the gender isn't clear. Prompt surgery to assign one was once the norm.

But gender depends on more than anatomy or hormones. It also seems to stem from the very earliest brain development, researchers said Friday in urging doctors to hold off on the knife until children can determine their own sex.

"To discover who or what a child is ... you have to ask them," Dr. William Reiner of the Oklahoma University Health Science Center told a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

"There is no one biological parameter that clearly defines sex," added Dr. Eric Vilain of the University of California, Los Angeles, whose research suggests gender is genetically hard-wired into the brain before birth — regardless of which genitalia develop.

The issue is "intersex," the name for numerous conditions that result in roughly one in 4,000 babies born with both male and female traits.

One of the more common is congenital adrenal hyperplasia. In such cases, genetic girls with XX chromosomes are exposed in the womb to such high levels of androgen — the hormone that triggers male development — that they appear male externally even if they have female reproductive organs. A different condition leaves genetic males less responsive to androgen during development, so they're born without a penis.

The parents must pick a gender somehow, to know what to call their child and because gender is required on a birth certificate. So specialists check non-obvious factors such as which sex chromosomes the child has and levels of sex hormones in the blood.

But Vilain's research suggests there are factors at work that can't be measured. The scientific dogma used to be that hormones alone could "masculinize" the brain, he said. But he identified 54 genes that work differently in the brains of male and female mouse embryos just 10 days after conception — before sex hormones are ever produced.

Doctors also once thought that how people were raised and their genitalia were enough to determine gender, said Reiner, who as a urologist performed sex-assignment surgeries on babies.

But Reiner began seeing children who had been assigned to one sex as babies and a few years later began identifying themselves as the other. He re-trained as a psychiatrist to study these children.

His latest review of 94 intersex children found over half of the genetic males "transitioned" to become boys despite being raised as girls and undergoing female surgical sex assignment.

How? As early as age 4½, the children would suddenly say, "I'm a boy," or pick a boy's name, Reiner said.

Hence his advice to parents to think hard before agreeing to surgery for an intersex baby: Dealing with the social trauma of switching gender later is enough without the issue of surgery that can't be reversed.

Aside from the emotional trauma of such a switch are legal issues.

Virginia Harmon of Chevy Chase, Md., was born with Klinefelter Syndrome, where instead of the X and Y chromosome of males, people have an extra X chromosome. She was raised as a boy, but at age 14 began developing breasts and "began negotiating with my parents" to transition to a girl. At 25, she had female sex-assignment surgery.

But law in Texas, where she was born, doesn't allow her to change her birth certificate, which still states that she is male — so she couldn't marry a man there.

Indeed, most U.S. law assumes that everyone is clearly male or female, putting up hurdles for everything from name changes to marriage for intersex patients assigned the wrong gender, said law professor Susan Becker of Cleveland State University.

So what should parents do? Get as much information as possible on the child's physical and genetic condition, Reiner advises. He puts parents in touch with the Intersex Society of North America to hear personal stories.

And more doctors are putting off sex-assignment surgery, he said. A recent survey of pediatric urologists found two-thirds would call genetically male babies boys even if they have no penis — while five years ago almost all would have recommended raising them as girls.

"Then if at age 12 they say, 'No, I'm a girl,' at least you haven't damaged anything," he said.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/02/18/tech/main675080.shtml>

Queer Query

Flaming HOT Summer

Pride: The Beginning of it All

It started in 1969 in New York City on the evening of June 17th. The Stonewall Inn, a very popular gay hangout in the Greenwich Village section of the city, was packed with its usual crowd. What was somewhat unusual about the night was that New York City Alcohol and Beverage Control Board agents, along with a group of NYPD officers, raided the bar to enforce a seldom-used law. This action was not uncommon, as raids on gay establishments were carried out around the city with virtually no resistance. Patrons were escorted out of their gathering places, sometimes by force, occasionally beaten, and quite regularly arrested for no just reason. And in fact, the raid on this night was the second on that very establishment in less than seven days.

But there was one thing very different about this night. Lesbian and gay men decided spontaneously and for the very first time to fight the police harassment. The crowd, both inside and outside of the bar, erupted with violent resistance as the officers began to pick and choose which customers would be hauled off to jail. More and more law enforcement officers were summoned, and the patrons became even more united in increased outrage. Word of this event spread like wildfire, and larger throngs gathered on the following nights to denounce and protest the mistreatment. These rallies became known as the "Stonewall Rebellion" and the "March on Stonewall," and were the genesis of the modern gay and lesbian freedom movement. They were directed against the violence and widespread discrimination against the community. Out of these demonstrations was born the gay community's quest for equality, liberation, and basic civil rights

Pride celebrations today have evolved into an annual ritual and have mushroomed to encompass hundreds of thousands of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender participants throughout the entire world ... and this does not include the countless spectators. The attire of attendees is generally vibrant, and can range from next to nothing to full leather and fetish wear. It is all a reminder to the world that we deserve and are entitled to the exact same rights as other citizens, and should enjoy the freedom to live our own lifestyles without others passing judgment and spewing hatred. As important, the celebrations are a symbol of unity and solidarity, and provide a vehicle to demonstrate the unique personality and characteristics that make up the very diverse GLBT populations of the world.

Gay Pride also allows the community to establish a presence, and create an awareness that hopefully stimulates intelligent discussions. For many it is their very first step out of the proverbial closet. And for all it is an opportunity to participate in some of the biggest events of the year and to share their experiences. (<http://www.prideevents.com>)

Queer Summer Events

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival

August 9-14, 2005

There is magic in the air at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. Womyn who want to step out of the mainstream for a week and into the best party on the planet can taste that magic - it has kept Michigan alive, radical, controversial, deeply musical and passionately creative for the past 30 years. For tens of thousands of womyn, Michigan triggers what is akin to tribal memory as we create this intergenerational, international female community each August. It's a place where the music is as diverse as the womyn who attend, where mothers and daughters and granddaughters come together and find their common culture as each rising generation adopts the Festival and makes it their own. <http://www.michfest.com/home.htm>

Camp Trans

August 8th-14th

Camp Trans is an annual protest of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival's policy barring trans women from attending. As the largest women-only space in the country, Michigan is the focus of Camp Trans' work to end anti-trans discrimination in queer & feminist communities, organizations and movements across the country. <http://www.camptrans.org/>

Gay Games

From 15-22 July 2006, Chicago will play host to the world and welcome thousands of athletes, spectators and cultural participants into our homes, our hearts and our city for the seventh quadrennial Gay Games Sports and Cultural Festival. The Games will feature 12,000 participants, competition in 30 sports, world-class athletes and artists, band and choral performances, nightly medal ceremonies, a week-long arts festival, parties, and spectacular opening and closing ceremonies featuring entertainment, pageantry, and the parade of participants from more than 70 countries. <http://www.gaygameschicago.org/home.php>

Pride Celebrations this Summer

Cincinnati

June 12th - Pride Pep Rally and Parade starting in Clifton's Burnett Woods lineup and Pep Rally begins at 11:00 a.m.

parade kicks off promptly at 1:00 p.m.

June 12th - Pride Festival

located in Northside's Hoffner Park

1:00 p.m. - 7 p.m.

<http://prideisalive.com/>

Detroit

Sunday June 5, 2005, Noon-7pm

Downtown Ferndale

<http://www.motorcitypride.com/>

Columbus

Saturday June 25th - Pride Parade and Festival

http://www.stonewallcolumbus.org/Pride_2005/

Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh Three Rivers PrideFest

Saturday, June 18, 2005

<http://www.glccpgh.org/>

San Francisco

The Celebration begins Noon on Saturday, June 25, in Civic Center Plaza, and runs until 6 PM. On Sunday, June 26, it begins at Noon and runs until 7 PM.

The Parade is on Sunday, June 26 and begins at 10:30 AM, traveling west along Market Street from Beale to Eighth Street.

<http://www.sfpide.org/>

New York

The Rally: Pride Starts Here!

Bryant Park (42nd Street and 6th Avenue)

Sunday, June 19th, 2005, 2pm-6pm

The 36th Annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender PRIDE March

5th Avenue and 52nd Street to

Christopher and Greenwich Streets

Sunday, June 26th, 2005, 12pm-end

Moment of Silence: 2pm

<http://www.hopinc.org/home/>

Chicago

Parade- Sunday June 26 at 12 Noon

June 26 - 36th Annual Pride Parade - Steps off at 12 Noon from Halsted and Belmont, proceeding north on Halsted (to Broadway); then south on Broadway (to Diversey); then east on Diversey (to Cannon Drive), at Lincoln Park.

<http://www.chicagopridecalendar.org/>

Cleveland

Saturday, June 18, 2005

Parade 11:30 AM Line-up 1:00 PM Step-off

Rally 2:00 PM, Voinovich Park

Festival 2:00 - 8:00 PM, Voinovich Park

Queer Query

What is a Gay Vacation?

There is no single definition for a gay vacation. Some trips, like an all-gay cruise, have become so synonymous with the concept of gay travel, that they dominate the collective consensus of what a gay vacation is. But offers several different kinds of vacations, and they each have specific and different appeals.

The editors at OUT&ABOUT provide this helpful guide to help you find the right vacation for you. To start, it's helpful to organize gay vacations into three basic categories:

1. The 'gay environment' vacation

These are vacations where a tour operator or group organizer books an entire mainstream cruise ship or resort hotel, and re-markets it as a gay/lesbian vacation. Companies like RSVP, Atlantis Events, and Olivia Resorts and Cruises are the best known purveyors of this kind of vacation, but there are a few other smaller companies who run an occasional trip as well. Big party events, like the Easter Weekend White Party or the Dinah Shore Party in Palm Springs, share some of the same atmosphere that make a "gay environment" vacation so special. Spending your vacation in a safe, self-contained resort environment with 300-3,000 other gay women and/or men is a liberating and fun in a way that a mainstream vacation can never be. You'll find more information on these vacations on the gay cruise and resort vacations page.

2. Gay vacations with a small 'g'

The second tier of gay vacations are smaller group experiences, with 10-100 participants, and a wide variety of vacation options. Most of these options fall into two types, with a number of hybrid variations. One type is the customized tour, offering a travel experience with gay-specific interest. This type of tour offers a decidedly gay composition and generally appeals to a niche market among gay travelers. The other type is a mainstream-type tour with minimal customization, but marketed as an all-gay departure. These tours offer mainstream tour opportunities, in the company of gay traveling companions, on the premise that you'll have a better time sightseeing on a tour bus full of other gay people, than a tour bus full of straight people. For many gay women and men, that is unquestionably true. But some gay travelers would actually rather travel with straight people, risking the company of homophobes and forfeiting the romantic comfort to avoid being in a group that labels them as gay. You'll find many of these types of vacations, tours, and cruises listed in our calendar

3. Independent gay vacations

The first two types of gay vacations are all group vacations that you join as a member. This third type of vacation is independent -- you or you and your companions travel on your own. But by choosing a gay-popular destination and staying in gay-specific accommodations, you can fashion your own experience to be just as gay as you want it to be. There are countless options when you choose this kind of vacation.

(<http://www.planetout.com/travel/article.html?sernum=8430>)

Entertainment

What's So Gay About American Music?

By Anthony Tommasini
Published: October 24, 2004

Musicologists now seem to agree that Handel was gay. So, it is thought, was Schubert. About Tchaikovsky there is no doubt: definitely gay, along with Britten, Copland and many other major composers and musicians.

They may not have been gay in the modern sense of the word, as the defining component of their sexual identity. Certainly not Handel, who hid what must have been terrible loneliness under a cloak of irascible heartiness. Nor Schubert, whose relationships with the young men in his circle still elude our understanding. Schubert's devoted friends considered the pudgy, bespectacled and sickly composer a genius in their midst. But who was sleeping with whom? We're not sure.

That we can now flesh out these giants' stories with this crucial missing component of their character is due to the efforts of some pioneering cultural historians and musicologists. Yet, along with the outing of past master composers and musicians there has been a more dubious effort by some to find evidence of a collective gay sensibility in their music.

What exactly is a gay sensibility? With today's gay icons ranging from the brainy, unkempt liberal firebrand Congressman Barney Frank to the stylish, flamboyant and cuttngly funny fashion guru Carson Kressley of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," who can say? And if it does exist, just how is a gay sensibility expressed in music? Especially purely instrumental, or "absolute," music?

The latest to enter the discussion is Nadine Hubbs, a professor of music and women's studies at the University of Michigan, whose new book, "The Queer Composition of America's Sound: Gay Modernists, American Music and National Identity," has just been released by University of California Press. This is an ambitious, provocative and impressively documented work, with more than 70 pages of detailed footnotes for a 178-page text. It tries to prove that what has come to be considered the distinctive American sound in mid-20th-century American music - that Coplandesque tableau of widely spaced harmonies and melancholic tunes run through with elements of elegiac folk music and spiked with jerky American dance rhythms - was essentially invented by a group of Manhattan-based gay composers: Copland, of course, and Virgil Thomson, Paul Bowles, David Diamond, Marc Blitzstein, Leonard Bernstein, Samuel Barber and Ned Rorem.

Ms. Hubbs's treatise, which focuses mostly on Copland and Thomson, is enriched by her keen sensitivity to traces of coded gay sexuality, veiled homophobia and cultural anxieties in American music and life during the early decades of the 20th century. The book will rightly provoke heated discussion in musicological and queer-history circles. My gay brothers and sisters should welcome Ms. Hubbs's account of the pivotal role played by gay composers in the development of a musical idiom that as the book argues, still signifies "America," not just in the concert hall but also in movies, television and commercial culture.

Yet, I suspect that many musicians, however fascinated by Ms. Hubbs's treatise, will share my discomfort over the notion of trying to identify anything as elusive as a gay sensibility in music. It's significant, I think, that most of the advance praise for the book ("a landmark study," "breathtakingly original history") comes from cultural historians, not musicians. My aim here is not to review the book but to raise the stakes for the debate Ms. Hubbs's work is sure to provoke.

One admiring blurb on the dust jacket comes from a well-known musicologist, Susan McClary, winner of a MacArthur Foundation "genius" award, whose contentious 1991 article "Constructions of Subjectivity in Schubert's Music" became a manifesto for a number of queer theorists. Ms. McClary tried to identify homosexual qualities in the slow movement of Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony. Her notion that Schubert was inviting listeners to "forgo the security of a centered, stable tonality" and "experience - even enjoy - a flexible sense of self," has always struck me as a convoluted way to

Giving Actual Lesbians a Chance to Portray Actual Love

The New York Times
By Ned Martel
April 1, 2005

Somehow, in the recent mass marketing of girl-on-girl action, someone neglected to depict actual lesbians in actual love. This is not benign neglect; instead it is a willful, fearful variety. Network television will allow female characters to kiss in a girls-gone-wild kind of fling, but if the lovers settle into a commitment, as Marissa and Alex did on "The O.C.," puckers land safely on each other's cheeks or are inventively edited to shield the national audience from same-sex lip-lock. On Showtime's "L Word," female characters are allowed to go for it, in love and in lust, but they are made-up and attired as if they were supermodel stand-ins for real-life lesbians.

In "Girl Play," the director Lee Friedlander attempts a less preening, less exploitative depiction of Sapphic love. And in so doing, she makes the case that film is less fettered than television, that indie directors don't need to factor in any artificial sense of what would titillate or horrify the audience. Although often tedious, the characterization is at least realistic and honest, as two characters confront the challenge of monogamy.

"Girl Play" is mainly a simple pair of soliloquies about lesbians struggling as life partners, with some scenes of farce and dread in the mix. Unfortunately, the two main characters are forced to talk into the camera, for far too long, about their feelings. These unrequited lovers are frustrated Los Angeles actors, and they indulge themselves with a dual dumping of their anxieties onto the viewer. The film even relies on these women to do voice-overs during dramatic scenes, as they narrate small details we can perceive on our own. "I breathe deep and open the towel," one of them explains unnecessarily.

Robin Greenspan plays Robin and Lacie Harmon plays Lacie, and the performers are also credited as writers, so there is a sense that they are speaking from their own experiences or at least from the heart in depicting actors cast in a play who gradually fall in love. That intimacy helps the story move past pat formulation and flat scenes, which often seem a riff on the Tina-and-Bette attractive opposites on "The L Word."

In this film Lacie is a blond prowler of the bar scene, eager for the connections of sex, but not the commitments; her past relationship was suffocated by the sexless plight known as lesbian bed death. The brown-haired Robin is the serial monogamist, pushed into something new by her jealous partner's carping and scolding.

Neither performer upstages the other, but the admirable film is weakened by timidity or a lack of skill. Ms. Greenspan and Ms. Harmon struggle to make many, many minutes of close-up shots look and sound interesting. They both lack Ellen DeGeneres's skill as a pantomiming performer of vivid anecdotes, but to their credit, when they let their streams of consciousness flow, they are being frank about sex and sadness and the backlash against same-sex coupling. Ms. DeGeneres, in her daily morning-show monologues, is still putting the pain of her coming-out aftermath behind her; she rarely refers to her sexuality, which is either a service to the further acceptance of famous gay people or a step backward.

One step forward would be a more liberated, full-throated depiction of lesbians in film and television, which in "Girl Play," and over all, seems far too soft, too kittenish, too Californian. If film and television producers want to take more risks in their depiction of lesbian life, they should skip the caution and go directly to the caustic musings of Marga Gomez and other lesbian comics in New York, who transmit the frenzy and outrage that "Girl Play" lacks.

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F07FEDE103EE932A35757C0A9639C8B63>

New Sexuality and Disability Zine at BGSU

Jeanette K Beal

On a balmy spring evening at some random folkster concert somewhere in Ohio, someone got the idea for a zine. She called up some friends and asked around...

The 'zine was to focus specifically on issues of identity - disability and sexuality identities specifically. She felt there wasn't enough pro-disabled, pro-queer stuff around.

She was one pissed off blind, lesbian, feminist from Boston, and her team of pissed off people jumped on to create the chaos that became *RESTRICTED!! voices on disabilities and sexuality*. We don't define it for you, we just created a space for you to talk it, write it, think it, be it - and let a whole audience of folks read it. We, (the team, that is) created a space, and want *you* to fill in the gaps!

That's the story of the zine. Or that was the story of the zine. Now it's whatever you make it out to be. You indeed. You can catch a copy of *RESTRICTED!!* at the Women's Center, at Grounds For Thought in BG, and by ordering a copy off the website: restrictedzine.net. Lots of options, just one 'zine. And subscriptions are cheap too! Check out the site for more information and to yak it up in one of the forums or guestbook. Have a stab at it!

<http://www.restrictedzine.net>



Queer Query

Have a Flaming Hot

Interns Wanted: the LGBTQA- Resource Center, Fall 2005

Do you need credit for an Academic Internship?

Are you interested in furthering the rights for LGBT Folks at BGSU?

Are you interested in learning skills for your future career?

The LGBTQA-Q Resource center is currently looking for Interns for the Fall 2005 Semester. If you are interested, or have any questions, contact the resource center at

Bitter Girl

Forget Me Not
Joan Hilty



bittergirl@qsyndicate.com

JOAN HILTY ©2005

<http://www.planetout.com/content/slideshow/splash.html?coll=481&order=2&navpath=/entertainment/comics/>

A Couple of Guys

Prompt Queen
by Dave Brousseau



e-mail: acoupleofguys@qsyndicate.com

www.acoupleofguys.com

© 2005 Dave Brousseau

<http://www.planetout.com/content/slideshow/splash.html?coll=482&navpath=/entertainment/comics/>

Flamey and Flambo

Dear Flamey and Flambo,

Since coming to Bowling Green I have come out of the closet to most of my friends. Now that I am going home, I want to come out to my parents. I am tired of hiding myself. I'm just not sure if the time is right to tell them. Do you have any suggestions?
Tired of the Closet

Dear Tired of the Closet,
Its perfectly understandable that you don't want to be in the closet, but it is also important to make sure that it is time to come out. Are you ready to come out? Its important to be comfortable with your sexuality before you come out to your parents.

It is also important to think about how your parents will react. It is common for parents to overreact at first, but keep in mind that being comfortable with your sexuality probably took you a while, and will probably take your parents a while.

Finally, it is important to have support system so that if you need to talk to someone you can. If you have friends in town that you are already out to, then that's great. If not maybe you should check out the local LGBT Center or Support Group.

Good Luck!

Flambo (with consultation of Flamey),

Queer Query