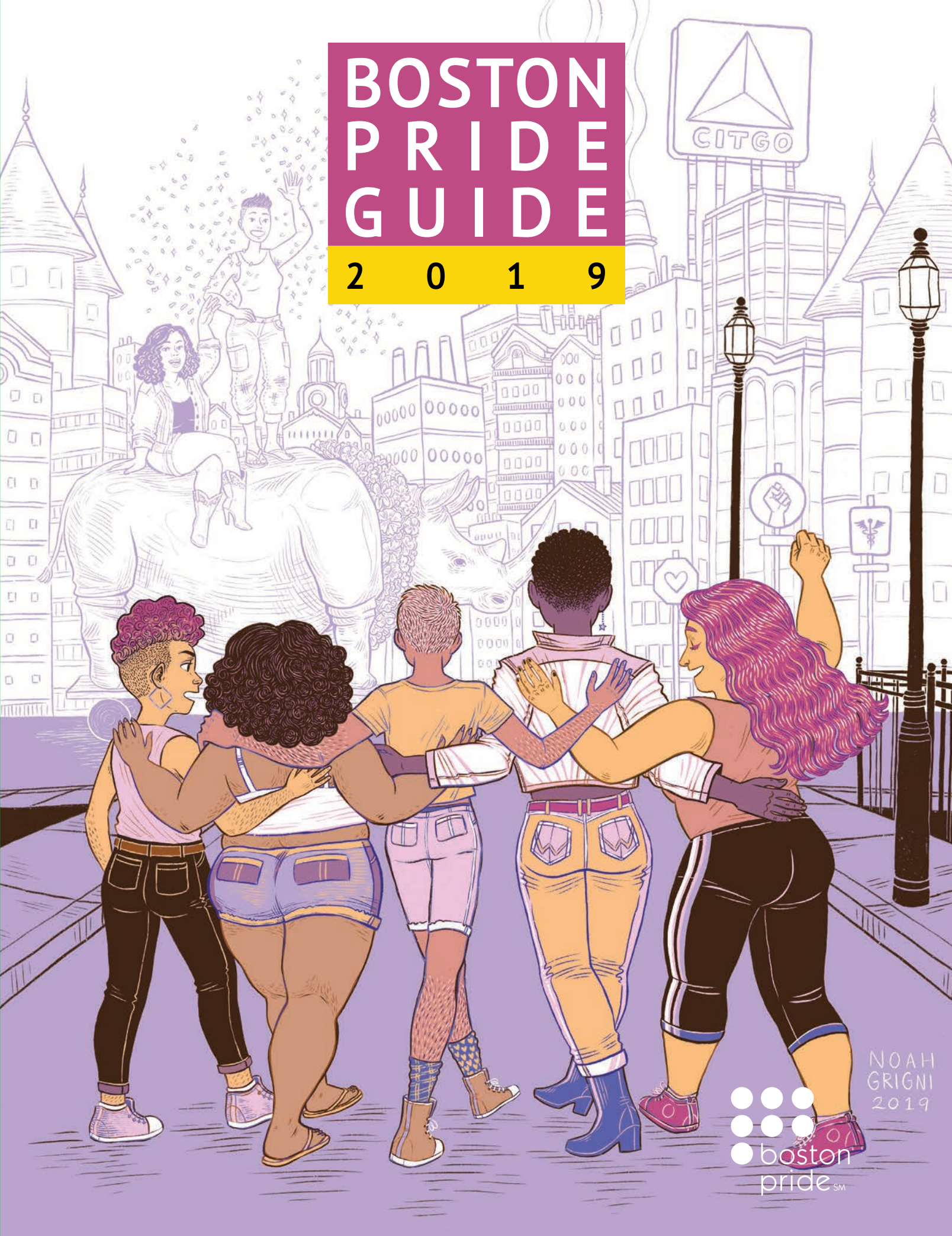


BOSTON PRIDE GUIDE

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Hélène Vincent

for

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Looking Back, Loving Forward

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, which gave rise to the Pride movement, our community is engaging in deep reflection. In this anniversary year, the Boston community selected the twofold theme *Looking Back, Loving Forward* to rejoice in the strides we have made over the last half-century and to acknowledge the struggles that still lie ahead.

While it is important to commemorate the golden anniversary of Stonewall, we did not want to lose sight of the significant activism that occurred both before and after the legendary riots. As such, we centered Boston in designing the cover. Noah Grigni, our Boston-based cover artist, reviewed images of the earliest Boston Pride celebrations, ultimately selecting a Boston Globe photograph of the 1972 parade as his inspiration. The picture shows four women, marching forward with their arms around each other. Noah updated the image to better reflect the diversity of Boston's present-day queer community. In addition to setting the scene before unmistakable elements of the Boston skyline, the cover pays homage to a unique piece of Boston's queer history: the lavender rhino (or Mache Rhino), the original mascot of Boston Pride. The nature of the queer community, like the rhinoceros, is gentle – that is, until provoked.

Within the Guide, we examine the history of sexuality from antiquity through today. Several authors explore the legacy of the Stonewall Riots, focusing on the early activism that set the stage for the Riots, and reflecting on why Stonewall has become the place and event that many consider to be the birthplace of LGBTQ rights in the US, despite evidence that it technically did not earn that designation. We also commemorate, on the tenth anniversary of her passing, Woody Woodward, a local activist who created space for women to share their love of biking.

Hindsight provides us a more robust perspective on queerness. Early conceptions of gay sexuality led men to rigidly define their identities in terms of their sex roles. Deeply entrenched homophobia raised barriers to coming out and created generations of gay people who would come out later in their adult lives. Transgender care was initially developed to incorporate gatekeeping measures but is now evolving to an informed consent model.

Several of our contributors discuss the critical role that the arts played in the formation of the modern queer community: The world of disco provided a venue where the most marginalized, particularly in communities of color, could come together and revel

in their diversity. The influence of new pop cultural phenomena, such as Pokémon Go, which attracts LGBTQ players, has yet to be seen. Art not only plays an essential role in shaping the culture, but also provides a medium through which community members can express their identities: from an autistic man using poetry to explore what it means to be “normal,” to a son using comedy to share his childhood experience of coming to terms with his father coming out, to a comic strip drawn by a young transgender boy grappling with the frustration of being misgendered while waiting to begin hormone treatment.

Loving Forward encourages us to look to the future and the progress yet to be made. Gains we've made are slipping away, as our rights are attacked on multiple fronts. Faith-based adoption providers are trying to use religious accommodation laws to discriminate against LGBTQ would-be foster and adoptive parents.

Even five decades after Stonewall, the LGBTQ community is still in the process of coalescing and ensuring that each segment of the community, particularly queer people of color, have a voice. In crafting this volume, we intentionally centered some of those voices, from a woman navigating her invisible pansexual identity while married to a man, to an asexual activist encountering increasing levels of acceptance each year that she marches in the Boston Pride Parade, to a black lesbian Pride and labor organizer tackling the issue of queer appropriation of black culture.

In this anniversary year, it is easy to get caught up in the past: to view our past through a singular lens, to try to realize what we perceive, through the lens of history, to have been the objectives of that global movement launched at the Stonewall Inn in 1969. But how do we define that movement? Movements are often plurivocal regarding desired outcomes and means to achieve them. While the rioters at Stonewall were unified in fighting back against oppression, they were a diverse group, with different opinions on what the ideal future would look like and how to best achieve that world. This year's theme empowers us to build on their foundation, to create our own ideal future, to look forward, guided by love.

Jessie

Jessie DeStefano
Editor-in-Chief



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The Boston Pride Guide

Volume 5 (2019)
the official annual publication of the 501(c)3 nonprofit
The New Boston Pride Committee, Inc. DBA Boston Pride
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Mission Statement

Boston Pride produces events and activities to achieve inclusivity, equality, respect, and awareness in Greater Boston and beyond. Fostering diversity, unity, visibility, and dignity, we educate, communicate, and advocate by building and strengthening community connections.

Vision Statement

Boston Pride creates change and progress in society by embracing our community's diverse history, culture, and identities, promoting community engagement and inclusivity, and striving for visibility and respect in unity.

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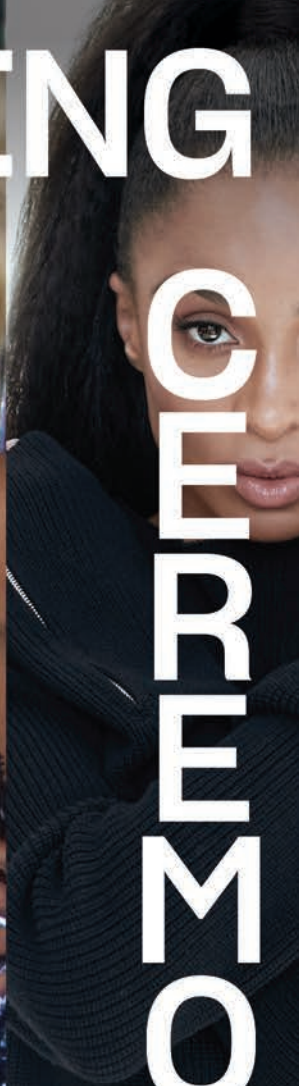
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Honoring and Perpetuating the Legacy of Stonewall

As we celebrate Boston Pride during June, we join the rest of the world in recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City, which was one of the pivotal events at the beginning of the LGBTQ+ movement in the United States. With our strong history of contributions to the movement, Boston Pride established a Stonewall 50 subcommittee with the sole purpose of recognizing the importance of this anniversary and of highlighting the contributions Bostonians have made in our quest for equality. Partnering with The History Project, the Committee has put together an array of events throughout the month that we hope all can enjoy. Banners have also been placed at specific historical locations throughout Boston to commemorate the significance each location had in the LGBTQ+ movement.

Looking Back, Loving Forward, Boston Pride's 2019 theme, chosen by the community, acknowledges our history, specifically of individuals and groups that forged ahead to enhance our community's voice through strength, courage, and sacrifice. *Looking Back* refers to the inclusiveness of the origins of Gay Liberation and how it was part of a countercultural movement that changed the world. *Loving Forward* refers to the importance of including all people, to listen to their voices, understand their experiences, and extend support. The fight for our rights and the fight for our ability to love ourselves and each other freely without fear, hate or persecution must continue.

The Stonewall 50 events include musical concerts, author talks, and a public Community Forum during Pride Week on Monday, June 3 at 7PM at historic Faneuil Hall. The Stonewall 50 Community Forum will include keynote speeches by Raffi Freedman-Gurspan and Amy Hoffman, followed by a panel

discussion, moderated by necn's Sue O'Connell, with Dale Mitchell, Elijah Oyenuga and Garry Daffin (see page 38).

We hit a milestone with our Community Fund this year! A record \$80,000 is ready to be distributed to community groups as we go to print. Our community has stepped up to support the efforts in fundraising, and one of our sponsors, Tito's Handmade Vodka, is contributing \$10,000 for the next round later this year. With these continuing contributions, the Community Fund remains in a good position for the immediate future.

We are excited to be celebrating the 5th year anniversary of our *Boston Pride Guide*. Since 2015, the Guides have been a platform to highlight individuals of our community with their stories. The stories connect the reader to shared moments and the realization that we are not alone. Creating community through stories has been a craft that continues through this year's Guide. As in prior years, we celebrate this year's Pride with a selection of articles which resonate with our diverse audience.

While 2019 looks like another record-breaking year for our signature events, we are also gearing up for the 50th anniversary of Boston Pride in 2020. We have big plans to celebrate and we welcome all to come join us to plan for next year's Pride. In the meantime, enjoy this year's Pride events.

Finally, we would like to thank our Boston Pride community members for their endless support. Your participation through volunteering, joining, giving, caring, and supporting in any form is greatly appreciated. We have traveled a long way together and will continue to travel even further towards success. We must remain ever vigilant in protecting what we have won. As we always say, "It is always someone's first Pride."



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The City of Boston



PROCLAMATION

Whereas: *The Boston Pride Committee has been a strong advocate and supporter of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender communities throughout New England and is celebrating Boston Pride in the City of Boston; AND*

Whereas: *The City of Boston is honored to welcome members of the LGBTQ community and their Allies to celebrate 49 years of Boston Pride; AND*

Whereas: *The theme for this year's Boston Pride is "Looking Back, Loving Forward" a fitting tribute to the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots- a pivotal piece of American and LGBTQ history; AND*

Whereas: *The City of Boston would like to thank the Board of Directors, the Committee Chairs and all of the volunteers, for your continued support and commitment to the mission of Boston Pride over the past 49 years; NOW*


Therefore, *I, Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of the City of Boston, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 31st to Sunday, June 9th to be:*

Boston Pride Week 2019

in the City of Boston

I urge all of my fellow Bostonians in recognizing the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer communities and their enormous contributions to the quality of life in the City of Boston.




MAYOR OF BOSTON
May 31st, 2019

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MARTIN J. WALSH
MAYOR

May 31, 2019

Dear Friends,

It is my deep honor and distinct pleasure to welcome you to our city for the *49th Annual Boston Pride Week*. I thank you in advance for coming together in a diverse array of cultural events to celebrate LGBTQ equality, visibility, and pride.

Boston's Pride Week is one of the oldest such celebrations in the world and the largest in New England. As Mayor of Boston, I've seen the powerful and positive impact these events have on both individuals and our communities. I remain committed to making sure Boston is a city that protects the rights and embraces the identities of all our residents and visitors.

This year's theme, "*Looking Back, Loving Forward*" is a fitting tribute to the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising, a pivotal moment in the LGBTQ story and indeed all of American history. Boston is a city that cherishes its history, from our role in the Revolution to our role in marriage equality. We understand how important it is to learn and apply the lessons of the past, both now and into the future. With all that's happening in the world, we must never forget the courage of those who stood up to demand equality, and we must never forget our duty to stand with the LGBTQ community and all those who face discrimination today.

On behalf of the City of Boston, I wish you a joyous and memorable week and I encourage you to take advantage of all our city has to offer.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

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KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

May 2019

Dear Friends and Visitors:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Lieutenant Governor Polito and I wish to welcome you to Boston Pride 2019!

By embracing diversity and promoting inclusivity, Boston Pride Week continues to honor and recognize the achievements of the LGBTQ community here in the Commonwealth. 2019's Boston Pride Week will again serve to celebrate diversity and foster a sense of unity and visibility under the theme of "Looking Back, Loving Forward." We are all proud of the meaningful and significant contributions by the LGBTQ community that have made Massachusetts richer in history and more diverse in culture. These contributions will surely bring long-lasting impacts to the Commonwealth and beyond.

We send our thanks and congratulations to the organizers for the hard work that goes not only into the advocacy and outreach, but also into putting together this week of fun and celebration.

Please accept our best wishes for an enjoyable week!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Charles D. Baker in blue ink.

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR



Handwritten signature of Karyn E. Polito in blue ink.

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR





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Boston Pride Week Calendar

■ Flagship events ■ Pride Sports ■ Pride Arts ■ Black Pride & Latinx Pride ■ Stonewall 50 ■ Pride@Night events, see page 82

FRIDAY, MAY 17

6:00PM ■
King & Queen Boston Pride Pageant
Club Café (209 Columbus Ave., Boston)

THURSDAY, MAY 30

6:00-8:00AM ■
Daybreaker Pride - Yoga & Dance
Faneuil Hall Marketplace (1 Faneuil Hall Square, Boston)

FRIDAY, MAY 31

12:00PM ■
Flag Raising
City Hall (Boston)

Dusk ■ ■
Pride Family Movie Night
Boston Common (Boston)

8:00PM ■
Boston Gay Men's Chorus
Concert: God Save The Queens
New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall (290 Huntington Ave., Boston)

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

12:00-5:00PM ■
Pride Day @ Faneuil Hall
Faneuil Hall Marketplace (1 Faneuil Hall Square, Boston)

2:00PM
High Heel Dash for Charity
Bell In Hand Tavern (45 Union St., Boston)

7:00PM-midnight ■
A Pride Kiki at PEM
Peabody Essex Museum (161 Essex St., Salem)

7:30PM ■
Pride: Hand in Hand Chamber Concert
First Church Boston (66 Marlborough St., Boston)

7:30PM ■
Voices Rising Concert: The B-sides: 15 years of favorites old and new
First Church Boston (66 Marlborough St., Boston)

8:00PM ■
Boston Gay Men's Chorus
Concert: God Save The Queens
New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall (290 Huntington Ave., Boston)

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

7:30AM-1:00PM
2019 AIDS Walk & Run Boston
DCR Hatch Memorial Shell (47 David G Mugar Way, Boston)

3:00PM ■
Boston Gay Men's Chorus
Concert: God Save The Queens
New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall (290 Huntington Ave., Boston)

3:30PM ■
Voices Rising Concert: The B-sides: 15 years of favorites old and new
First Church Boston (66 Marlborough St., Boston)

6:00PM
Pride Remembrance Memorial
Garden of Peace (64-98 Somerset St., Boston)

MONDAY, JUNE 3

7:00PM ■
Stonewall 50 Community Forum
Historic Faneuil Hall (4 S. Market St., Boston)
Check out **Pride@Night Calendar** on page 82 for more events!

TUESDAY, JUNE 4

6:00-8:00PM ■ ■
Pride Lights
Blackstone Square Park (1535 Washington St., Boston)
Check out **Pride@Night Calendar** on page 82 for more events!

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

6:00PM ■
Boston Pride OUTWOD
CrossFit Invictus (209 Columbus Ave., Boston)

6:30PM ■
Stonewall Uprising—The WGBH Documentary
Rabb Hall at the BPL (700 Boylston St., Boston)

10:00PM ■ ■
Latino Wednesday
Legacy (79 Warrenton St., Boston)

THURSDAY, JUNE 6

6:00PM ■
Author Talk Featuring Russ Lopez
Commonwealth Salon at the BPL (700 Boylston St., Boston)
Check out **Pride@Night Calendar** on page 82 for more events!

FRIDAY, JUNE 7

5:30PM-7:30PM ■
Charlie Gibson's Boston: Specialty Tour Launch and Reception
Gibson House Museum (137 Beacon St., Boston)

6:00PM
Boston Dyke March
Boston Common (Boston)
Check out **Pride@Night Calendar** on page 82 for more events!

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

10:00AM
Pride Services
Union Church, Old South Church (Boston)

11:00AM-2:00PM ■
Pride Brunch And Celebration Of The "Don Joint: Narcissus" Exhibition
Childs Gallery (169 Newbury St., Boston)

11:00AM-6:00PM ■
Boston Pride Festival
City Hall Plaza (Boston)

12:00-6:00PM ■
Boston Pride Concert
City Hall Plaza (Boston)

12:00-7:00PM ■
Festival Bar
City Hall Plaza (Boston)

12:00PM ■
Boston Pride Parade
Copley Square to City Hall Plaza (Boston)

7:00-11:00PM ■ ■
Boston Pride Youth Dance
City Hall Plaza (Boston)

Time TBD ■ ■
Pride Community Boat Cruise
Location TBD
Check out **Pride@Night Calendar** on page 82 for more events!

SUNDAY, JUNE 9

1:00PM, 2:00PM, and 3:00PM ■
Charlie Gibson's Boston
Gibson House Museum (137 Beacon St., Boston)

1:00-8:00PM ■ ■
JP Block Party
Perkins Street (at Center St., Jamaica Plain)

1:00-8:00PM ■ ■
Back Bay Block Party
St. James Avenue (at Berkeley St., Boston)

9:00PM ■ ■
Wicked Huge Pride Finale
Candibar & Legacy (275 Tremont St., Boston)
Check out **Pride@Night Calendar** on page 82 for more events!

MONDAY, JUNE 10

6:30PM ■
Panel Discussion on In Search of Stonewall
Rabb Hall at the BPL (700 Boylston St., Boston)

TUESDAY, JUNE 11

7:10PM ■ ■ ■
Pride Night @ Fenway Park
Fenway Park (4 Jersey St., Boston)

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

9:00PM-1:00AM ■ ■
"If You Can Feel It, You Can Speak It" Open Mic
Bella Luna Milky Way (284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain)

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

9:00PM-1:00AM ■ ■
EN-ER-GY X
Oberon (16 Arrow St., Cambridge)

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

2:00PM ■
Intergenerational Dialogue About Stonewall Among LGBTQ Youth and Elders
Teen Central at the BPL (700 Boylston St., Boston)

TUESDAY, JUNE 25

6:00PM ■
Author Talk Featuring John Manuel Andriote
Commonwealth Salon at the BPL (700 Boylston St., Boston)



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Music Director



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For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/flag

Flag Raising

As the official kick-off to the 49th annual Boston Pride festivities, the Flag Raising Ceremony, hosted by Mayor Marty Walsh, will introduce the 2019 Boston Pride Marshals (see page 48) to our community. Held at the epicenter of municipal authority, on the steps of Boston City Hall, the yearly hoisting of the queer, rainbow-striped standard is a demonstration of pride and power, of celebration and struggle, of hope and resilience. Addressing the celebration's theme *Looking Back, Loving Forward*, the Ceremony will fittingly reflect on our past, honoring the Stonewall Uprising and its legacy five decades in the making. Likewise, local speakers and leaders in our community will inspire the next generation to keep up the good fight, as our multicolored flag waves defiantly, through the full Boston Pride celebration, in the coastal winds of the Hub of the Universe. ●



It's not Pride Week until the rainbow flag is hoisted high above City Hall Plaza. So come join the ceremony to begin the celebration! Credit: Marilyn Humphries.





Thanks for making a difference in our community

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Pride Day@ Faneuil Hall

Family fun and entertainment will be central to the day-long celebration of Pride in one of America's top 10 most-visited touristic destinations! The so-called "Cradle of Liberty," where the likes of Sam Adams congregated to exhort the crowds to fight for their independence, will play host to the 19th annual Pride Day @ Faneuil Hall.

True to its tradition, the event will feature emerging talents in our community and in our region, starting with no fewer than three dance troupes! Queens With A Mission (QWAM), Phunk Snap, and the UnKnown Hype Dance Company will perform their engaging, choreographed creations. The all-male crew of QWAM champions self-confidence across the Boston dance scene and the queer community. Born out of the phunk phenomenon, the gay dancers of Phunk Snap raise awareness for Sanfilippo Syndrome throughout the performing arts. The mixed crew of competitive dancers from UnKnown Hype promotes self-respect, discipline, and appreciation through dance.

But the dancing won't keep to the stage, as spectators and onlookers alike are invited to shake-it-off on the brick and stone pavement. The celebration will feature its signature, energetic session, as Zumba with Jess returns to lead one of the largest, outdoor Zumba classes in our city.

Throughout the day, drag performers will grace the stage with impromptu sets by Kandi Dishe, Karisma, Amanda Playwith, Benji, Majenta Witha-J, Kerra Daniels, and QueenJP!

Music and dancing continue throughout the day with a variety of local singers and performers, illustrating Boston's best talent from our community. Two 16-year-old prodigies will grace the stage this year. Zola, of Cambridge, will bring her soulful rhythm to perform her single "Real to You" as well as excerpts from her maiden 2018 EP titled "In Plain Sight." Longe, formerly Angelo David, of Boston, will rock the crowds to his own pop and alternative creations, including "House Is Burning Down" (a song about being bullied) and "Mirror" (an introspection) from his first album released in 2013. The stage will also welcome Pittsburgh-based singer and songwriter Rocki Boulis, who has worked with *X Factor* season one winner Melanie Amaro and co-wrote her first EP "Girl Code" with Victoria Monet.

The event will welcome a local band for a first-time appearance on the Pride stage. No/Hugs, an intense alternative group of four, will command the audience by combining their edgy and bold sound, featuring unique spurs of prog, blues and pop-punk, with massive vocals, in a virtuosic and vigorous performance.

Finally, under the auspices of Boston Pride Grand Marshal Dale Mitchell, visitors will learn about Ethos, a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote the independence, dignity, and well-being of the elderly and disabled through the coordination and delivery of high-quality, affordable home and community-based care. As the queer community ages, Ethos fills a key gap in providing resources and support to elders and elders-in-the-making! ●

EVENT DETAILS

Saturday, June 1
12:00-5:00PM, rain or shine

West End of Quincy Market behind
Historic Faneuil Hall
Merchants Row, Boston

Ⓣ Government Center (Blue and Green lines),
Haymarket (Green and Orange lines),
State (Blue line)



Free and open to the public

For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/faneuilhall



Folks of all ages flock to Pride Day @ Faneuil Hall for music, Zumba, drag, and dance. Credit: Marilyn Humphries.

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High Heel Dash for Charity

Grab your running gear and head on down to Hanover Street for one of Boston Pride's newest traditions, the third annual High Heel Dash. All proceeds raised at the Dash go to the Boston Pride Community Fund, which distributes grants to local nonprofits and grassroots groups.

Runners and spectators are invited to dress as your favorite superhero and encouraged to define "superhero" broadly as the best costume will win a prize!

Participants will gather at The Bell in Hand Tavern for registration and light snacks before racing down the street to Pride Day @ Faneuil Hall, where the winners of the race and costume contest will be announced on stage. After enjoying the entertainment on our Faneuil Hall stage, everyone is invited back to The Bell in Hand Tavern for the official after party. ●

EVENT DETAILS

Saturday, June 1, rain or shine

Registration and pre-event party
2:00-4:00PM

After Party
6:00PM

The Bell in Hand Tavern, 45 Union St.

High Heel Dash
4:00PM

Intersection of Hanover and Union Streets

Ⓣ Government Center (Green and Blue lines),
Haymarket (Green and Orange lines),
State (Blue Line)



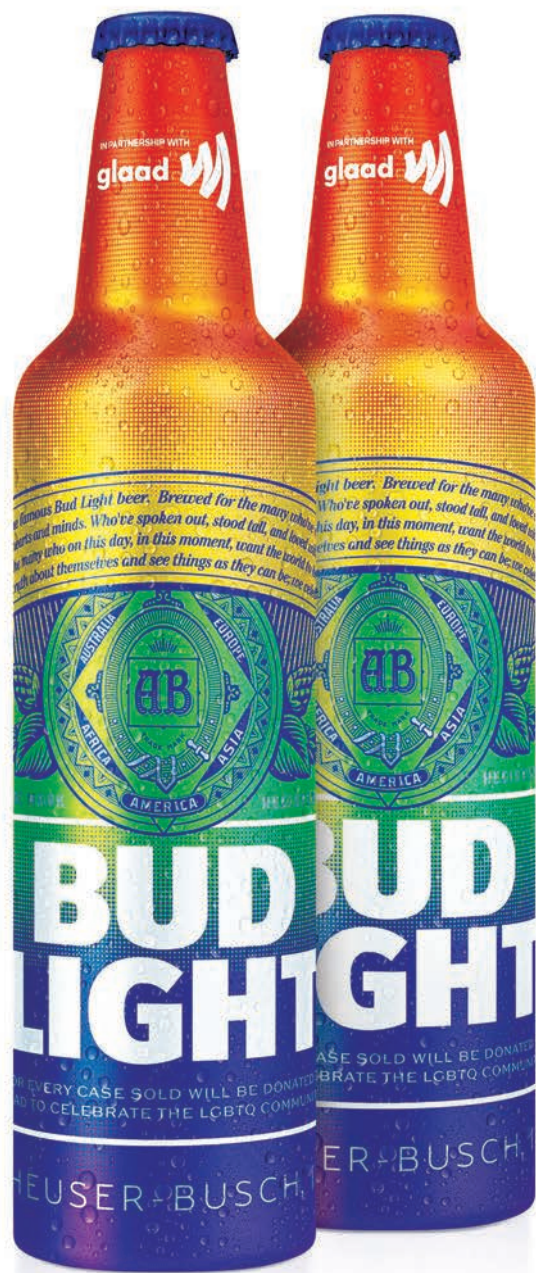
\$10 entry fee to participate; 18+ for parties
Free and open to the public

To register, and for up-to-date information,
visit www.bostonpride.org/dash



High heels add to the fun as runners compete while raising funds for the Boston Pride Community Fund. Credit: Marilyn Humphries.





Proud Partner for 20 Years
 A portion of every Pride Bottle sold will be donated to GLAAD.

Pride Remembrance Memorial

The Garden of Peace, cradled in the esplanade behind 123 Center Plaza in Government Center, is a memorial commemorating victims of homicide. Erected in Boston as a living reminder of the impact of violence everywhere, the Garden's intricate arrangement of manicured grass and pebble stones, designed by Harvard graduate and artist Catherine Melina, is a visual testament to the need for eliminating violence. Adding to the gravitas of the site and enhancing its purpose, the Garden features a towering *Ibis Ascending* by RISD graduate Judy Kensley McKie. The statue symbolizes hope for peace and renewal in our lives, community, and world.

In its third year the Pride Remembrance Memorial seeks both to provide comfort to individuals in our communities and to focus our grief on concrete actions to eradicate marginalization and increase understanding. This Memorial is a call to action, so that all in the LGBTQ communities may be free from oppression and proud of who they are. ●

EVENT DETAILS

Sunday, June 2
6:00PM, rain or shine

Garden of Peace
64-98 Somerset Street
Boston

Ⓣ Bowdoin (Blue line),
Government Center (Green and Blue lines)



Free and open to the public

For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/memorial



We gather to find peace and healing in community at the annual Pride Remembrance Memorial. Credit: Gabriel Ben-Yosef.





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Stonewall 50 Community Forum

This year, Boston Pride's annual public policy forum will take the form of an open Community Forum celebrating the history and legacy of the Stonewall Uprising of 1969. Keynote speakers, providing their reflections on the monumental event that shaped the LGBTQ equality movement, include Raffi Freedman-Gurspan, a former White House Aide in the Obama administration and currently the Director of External Relations for the National Center for Transgender Equality, and Amy Hoffman, Author of *An Army of Ex-Lovers: My Life at the Gay Community News* and veteran of the early LGBTQ rights movement in Boston. The keynotes will be followed by a panel discussion featuring 2019 Boston Pride Grand Marshal Dale Mitchell, who is a veteran of the Stonewall Riots; Gary Daffin, who has, for close to three decades, co-chaired the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, the group which originated the LGB civil rights bills in the Commonwealth in the 1970s; and Elijah Oyenu, Senior Peer Leader at Boston GLASS, who will offer an LGBTQ youth point of view. The panel will be moderated by Sue O'Connell, host of *The Take* on necn and longtime co-publisher of *Bay Windows*.

The Community Forum program will pose questions for keynoters, panelists, and observers, focused on personal understandings of the events of 50 years ago: How has life changed for LGBTQ people since 1969? How do you place Stonewall in the context of the times? What are the goals we should pursue as a continuing movement? ●

Last year, community members gathered to hear keynote speaker Sarah McBride and local transgender activists speak about the importance of protecting transgender rights in places of public accommodation. Credit: Marilyn Humphries.

EVENT DETAILS

Monday, June 3
7:00PM, rain or shine

Faneuil Hall
1 Faneuil Hall Square
Boston

Ⓣ State (Blue line, Orange line),
Aquarium (Blue line),
Haymarket (Orange line)



Free and open to the public

For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/stonewall50





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Pride Lights

Boston Pride and the City of Boston partner to give Pride Lights a makeover in 2019 with a new venue, Blackstone Square Park, and format. Born out of a desire to commemorate our community's early departed, Pride Lights initially saw the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts sell pink candlelights to neighbors and businesses, who would place them at their windows in remembrance. Later, various locations, such as the Boston Center for the Arts Plaza on Tremont Street and Club Café on Columbus Avenue, would host a dedicated community event with the ceremonial illumination of one or more trees in purple or pink lights. The program would feature entertainers and artistic displays and acts by queer performers.

On June 4, Pride Lights returns to its roots with a direct engagement of the community. Strings of pink lights will be available for purchase by attendees, so they can dress the windows of their homes throughout the city. Verna Turbulence will officiate the speaking program, with a focus on HIV awareness, education, and prevention. Attendees will connect with various local organizations at resource tables in the park. A live show produced by members of the drag community will bring the evening toward its pinnacle, at dusk, when the "flipping of the switch" will light up the whole park in pink. ●



Pride Lights is an evening of memory and hope that centers on those affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic and those who are no longer with us. Credit: Boston Pride.

EVENT DETAILS

Tuesday, June 4

6:00-8:00PM, rain or shine

Blackstone Square Park

1535 Washington St, Boston

Ⓣ West Newton Street (Silver line)



Free and open to the public

For up-to-date information, visit

www.bostonpride.org/pridelights



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For a complete schedule of events, including times and locations, visit www.bostonpride.org/sports

Purchase tickets online at www.bostonpride.org/tickets

Pride Sports

In its sophomore year, Boston Pride's program dedicated to athletes and sports fans will combine beloved legacy events with high-energy new ventures. Our 2018 World Series Champions, the Boston Red Sox, will welcome once again queer baseball fans for the seventh annual Pride Night @ Fenway Park on June 11. Fighting for another title, our local team will oppose the Texas Rangers as thousands of fans will don their gay apparel in the stands. A pregame Pride Party on the Right Field Roof Deck will welcome all Boston Pride ticket-holders for music, games, and refreshing beverages. The first pitch will be thrown by a lucky community member and raffle winner... maybe you?

At the intersection of sports and clubbing, Pride Week in 2019 will institute an early morning yoga and dancing ritual: Daybreaker Pride at Faneuil Hall Marketplace (May 30) invites early risers for a morning of upbeat, intergenerational, alcohol-free fun.

This year, Boston Pride and Invictus Boston inaugurate the first CrossFit Pride event in our city, Boston Pride OUTWOD. Gymgoers, fitness enthusiasts and competitive crossfitters alike will join on the evening of June 5 for a high-intensity workout in the Back Bay.

In January, the Boston Celtics joined the Pride Sports family and hosted their first ever Pride Night @ The Celtics. Beyond the Celtics' handy win over the Indiana Pacers (108-135), the evening saw over two hundred community fans cheer as Boston Gay Basketball League members got to perform a shoot-a-round on the Garden floor. The celebration of Pride in basketball culminated with the honoring of multi-Gay Games medalist and nAGLY executive director Steve Harrington, as the "Hero Among Us" by the Boston Celtics organization. ●



Red Sox fans show their pride at Pride Night @ Fenway Park. Credit: Boston Pride.





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Boston Pride Parade

“What is straight? A line can be straight, or a street, but the human heart, oh, no, it’s curved like a road through mountains.” In *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams unknowingly captures that rollercoaster feeling of marching in a Pride parade!

After kickoff at noon from Copley Square, the 2019 Boston Pride Parade will wander through the straight streets of the Back Bay, the South End, Bay Village, Beacon Hill, and finally Government Center to pour into the Boston Pride Festival on City Hall Plaza. Along the way, marchers and contingents will enjoy visual reminders of the history of our community in Boston: Stonewall 50 banners will recognize those places and locations, still in existence or long-gone, where queers fought for equality and dignity (see map on page 46).

Indeed, with a central theme of *Looking Back, Loving Forward*, the Parade will combine the recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising with a hopeful message of love and strength, as many rights still require conquest. Participants in the Parade, whether marchers or spectators, will be encouraged to reflect on the many challenges and incredible victories of our community since 1969.


At the helm of the parade will be Grand Marshal Dale Mitchell, Marshal Ava Glasscott, Honorary Marshal Chris Harris, and Honorary Stonewall 50 Marshal Marsha P. Johnson (for more information on the 2019 Boston Pride Marshals, see page 48). The Transgender Remembrance section will honor those lives lost to transphobia and violence. A specially designated viewing area will be made available to individuals with reduced mobility and older adults at Tremont and Cambridge Streets. ●

To paraphrase Tennessee Williams: Pride is all memory, except for the one present moment that goes by you so quickly you hardly catch it going. Credit: Marilyn Humphries.

EVENT DETAILS

Saturday, June 8

12:00PM, rain or shine

For the Parade route and closest  stations, see map on page 46



Free and open to the public

For up-to-date information, visit www.bostonpride.org/parade





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49TH ANNUAL BOSTON PRIDE

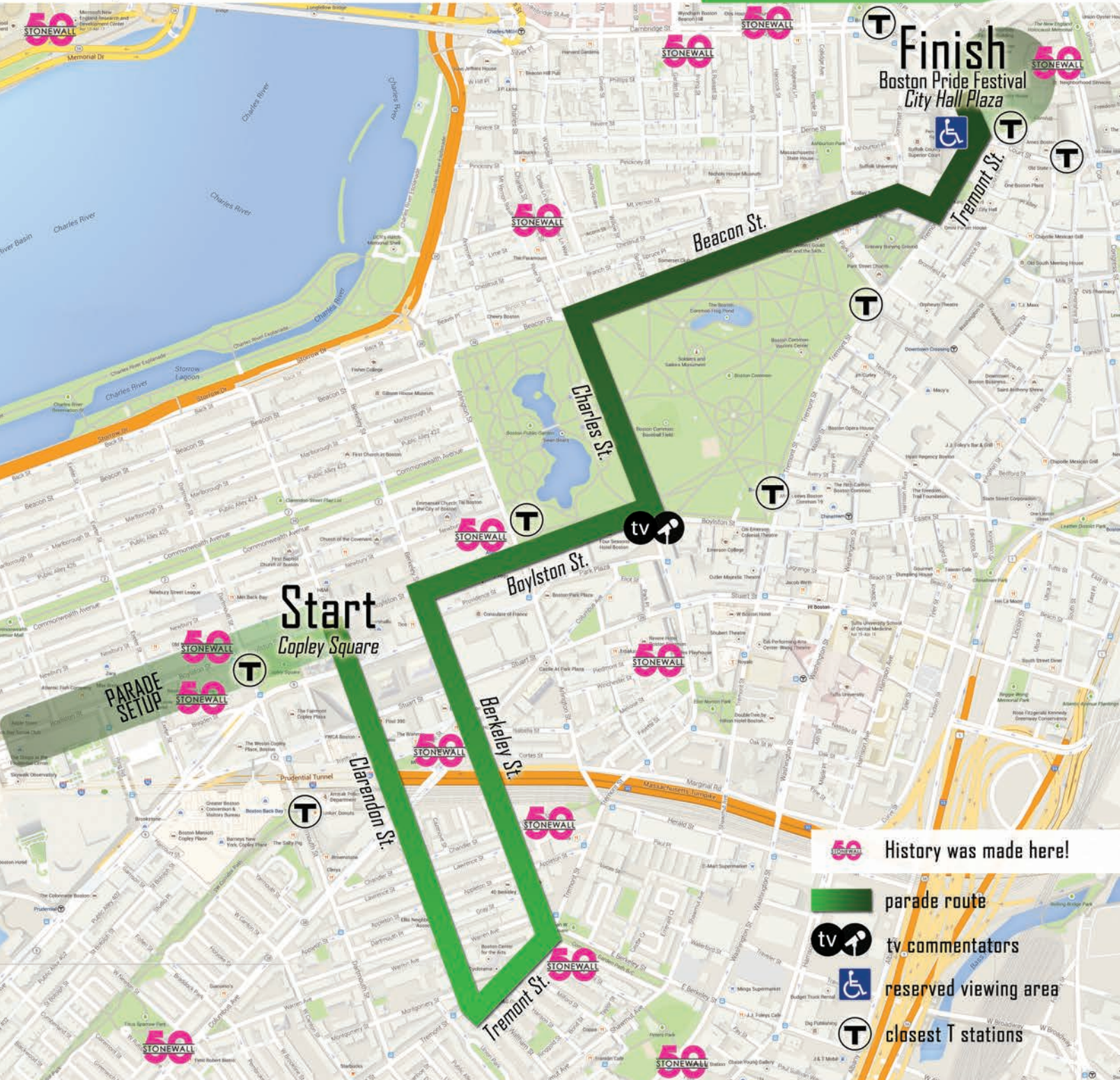
PARADE

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

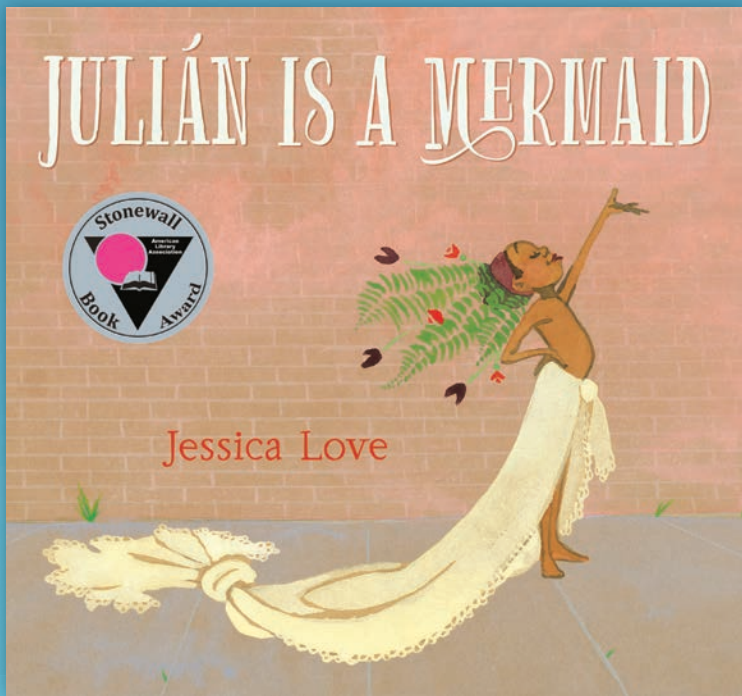
KICK-OFF @ 12:00PM

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LOOKING BACK LOVING FORWARD



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“Alongside Julián, readers learn that anyone can be a mermaid: All it takes is love and acceptance, a little imagination, and a big swishy tail.”

—*The New York Times Book Review*

“Groundbreaking. . . Here’s a happy picture book that challenges traditional gender stereotypes, rendering one boy free to be himself.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

“This beautiful book is one of the very few picture books about a gender-nonconforming child. Yet it feels like a celebration of all children who want to do things differently . . . and a love letter to the grown-ups who deeply understand them.” —*Gothamist*

“A book for the ages.” —*BookPage*

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- ★ *Kirkus Reviews* ★ *The Horn Book*
- ★ *Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*
- ★ *Shelf Awareness*



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2019 Boston Pride Marshals



Grand Marshal: Dale Mitchell

Dale Mitchell convened Boston's very first LGBT Aging Summit in 2001 and the LGBT Aging Project, of which he was named Chair, was formed thereafter. Dale has been a leading champion and advocate for LGBT older adults and caregivers in Massachusetts. He is currently the CEO of Ethos, a Boston-based elder service organization, and his passion is to ensure that LGBT older adults age with the dignity and respect they deserve. Dale has elevated the visibility of LGBT older adults in Boston and across the Commonwealth. Thanks to Dale's vision, today's LGBT seniors—and those who follow in their footsteps—are able to thrive socially and with the necessary supports and providers that are culturally competent and LGBT-inclusive. Dale also is a veteran of the Stonewall Riots in 1969 in New York City's Greenwich Village, as he witnessed the aftermath of the raid on the Stonewall Inn and the clashes between patrons and police officers.



Parade Marshal: Ava Glasscott

Ava Glasscott represented the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the 2018 Miss Trans USA Pageant. She is the first post-op transgender contestant from New England to represent her community in a national pageant. The story of Ava's journey as a trans model has been featured on NBC Boston and the WCVB-TV show *Chronicle*. Ava made a cameo in Amy Schumer's 2018 movie *I Feel Pretty*, which was filmed in Boston. She also appeared in the documentary film *All Stars: The Changing Face of Drag* (2016), which she promoted at RuPaul's DragCon in Los Angeles.



"I am honored to be able to lead this year's parade as Mayor of the City of Boston and look forward to many more in the years to come.

Thank you for your commitment to making us part of one Boston!"

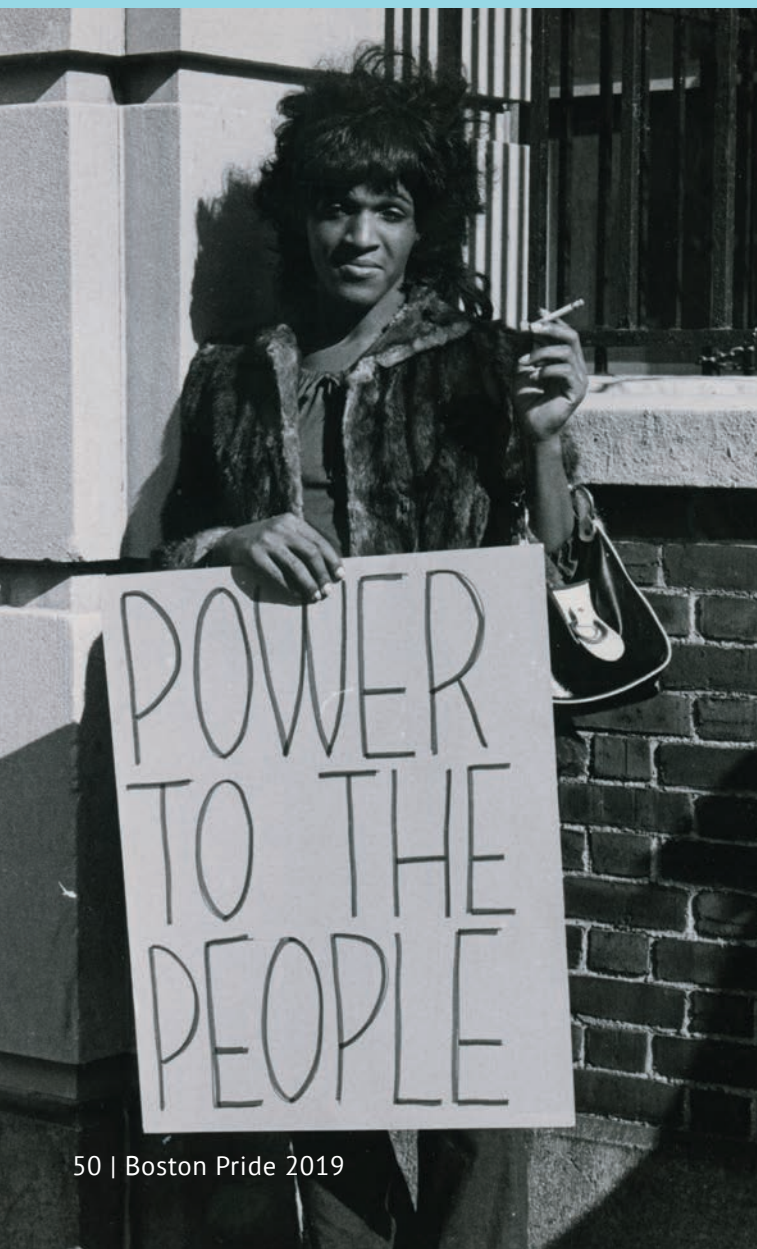
Mayor Martin J. Walsh

*Paid for and Authorized by the
Committee to Elect Martin J. Walsh.*



Honorary Marshal: Chris Harris

Chris Harris, New England's premier promoter and nightlife event organizer, led the revitalization and reshaping of Boston's LGBTQ scene in the last decade and a half. A native of Providence, where he produced club events and block parties, and co-owned the Ego nightclub, Chris relentlessly advocated for equality and safe environments in entertainment. Throughout his work, Chris supported many organizations in our New England community, in particular RI Pride and Boston Pride. He helped Pride organizations in the region secure entertainment for events, and thanked volunteers who donated their time to Pride events by providing free passes to his club nights. When Boston Pride hosted its first international Pride conference in 2012, Chris hosted all the delegates at his venues and treated each one as a VIP. To this day, InterPride members talk fondly about the warm welcome they received in Boston thanks to Chris.



Champion of Stonewall Honorary Marshal: Marsha P. Johnson

Marsha P. Johnson, a gender non-conforming African-American activist and icon, was one of the most prominent participants in the Stonewall Inn Uprising, which started on June 28, 1969 in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. Johnson had organized a party for her transgender/transvestite friends on the night of June 27, 1969, but met with no-shows as friends headed to the Stonewall Inn instead. She went to join them, determined to party somewhere. She was identified as one of the main participants in the riots that broke out after the police raided the Mafia-owned bar. Legend has it that either she or her friend Sylvia Rivera threw the first brick at police. Johnson and Rivera both denied being the first to act, and most eyewitnesses credit a butch lesbian with igniting the resistance to the infamous police raid. Johnson said the riots had already started by the time she got to the Stonewall.

Johnson and Rivera co-founded Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), a group that provided social support and a place to stay for homeless LGBTQ youth. Johnson was known as a mentor for younger gay and transgender people.

Johnson, when asked for what the P in her name stood for, famously said "Pay it no mind." Her death on July 6, 1992 remains controversial. Her body was found floating in the Hudson River. The police ruled the death a suicide and stopped investigating. But friends and acquaintances of Ms. Johnson said she was not suicidal and had been murdered. The case remains unsolved to this day. ●

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Boston Pride Festival & Concert

Civil rights lion Bayard Rustin famously stated, “When an individual is protesting society’s refusal to acknowledge his dignity as a human being, his very act of protest confers dignity on him.” There lie the roots of Pride rallies and festivals around the world, where our queer community stands in unity and solidarity, to demand equal rights and dignity for all. The 49th edition of the Boston Pride Festival continues this tradition and returns to City Hall Plaza, for a day of community awareness and political rallying on the red bricks.


With over 120 exhibitors (for a full list, see page 56), including a food court, the Festival will feature local and national LGBTQ not-for-profit organizations providing health, growth, education, and diversity services. Grassroots queer organizations that promote visibility and connections within our community will display their work and invite the public to engage with their mission. Several Boston-based theater and dance companies will showcase their LGBTQ performances and entertainment. Finally, local queer-owned and operated small businesses will be selling rainbow merch, so everyone in our community can express their identities gloriously!

The Family Fun Zone, a specialty area for the youngest in our community, returns this year with a selection of activities, including crafts and games. The New England Zoo will bring an owl for a unique educational and interactive session with kids. Kids can have their faces painted and then strike a pose in the photo booth with fancy costumes donated by the Norwell Company Theater.

The brutalist backdrop that is City Hall will contrast with the buoyant and upbeat energy of the free Boston Pride Concert, headlined by Beth Sacks, Robyn S, and Todrick Hall (see page 58). Watch the concert from the Festival Bar, a shaded and elevated “box,” or purchase tickets for a meet-and-greet with these stars, including limited VIP access to guaranteed concert spots in front of the stage. All meet-and-greet ticket proceeds benefit the Boston Pride Community Fund (see page 88). ●

EVENT DETAILS

Saturday, June 8
11:00AM-6:00PM, rain or shine

City Hall Plaza
1 City Hall Square, Boston
 Government Center (Blue and Green lines)


 CART

Free and open to the public

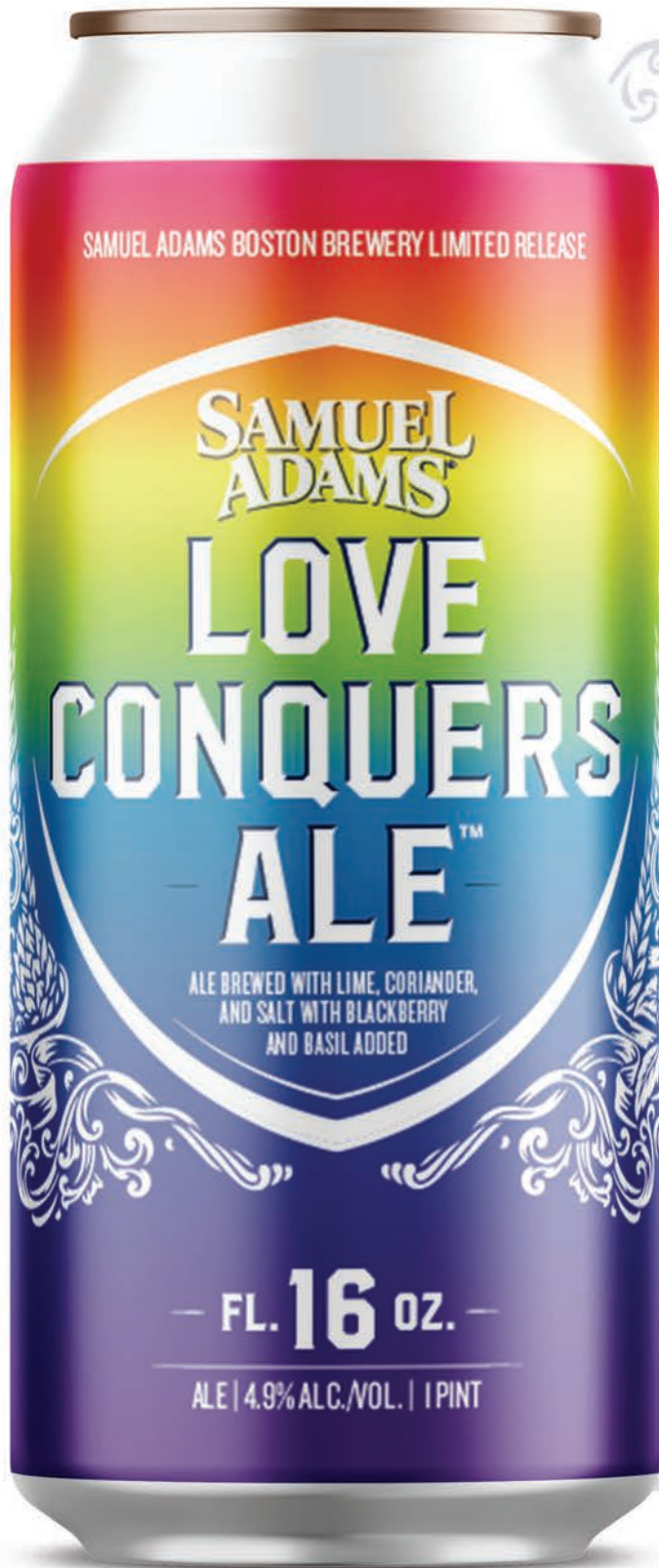
For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/festival



The largest Pride gathering in New England draws in over 150,000 queers and allies this year both to celebrate the 50-year legacy of the Stonewall Uprising and to set the stage for the next five decades of our fight for inclusion, equity, and social justice. Credit: Hurley Event Photography.

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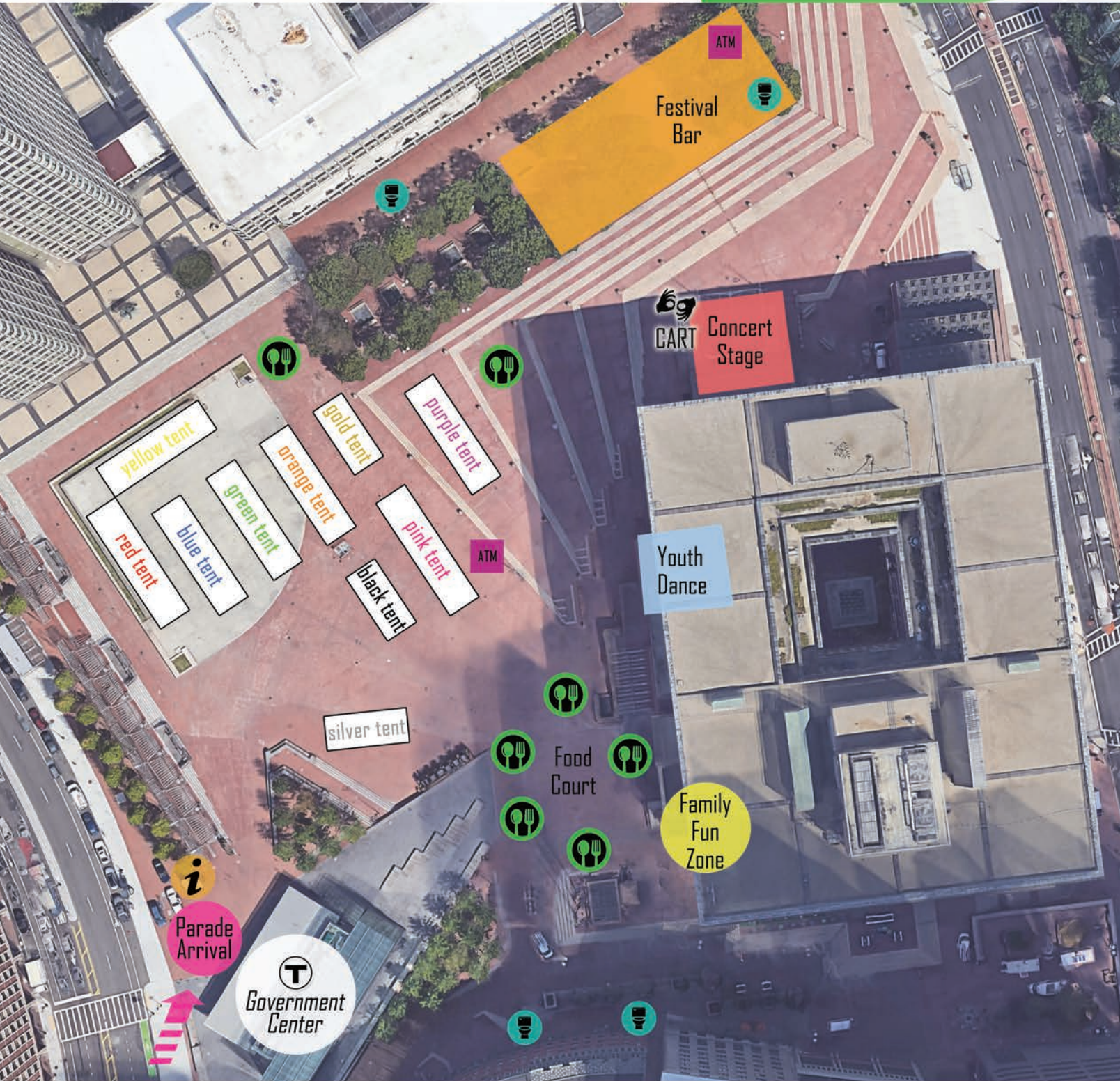
FESTIVAL

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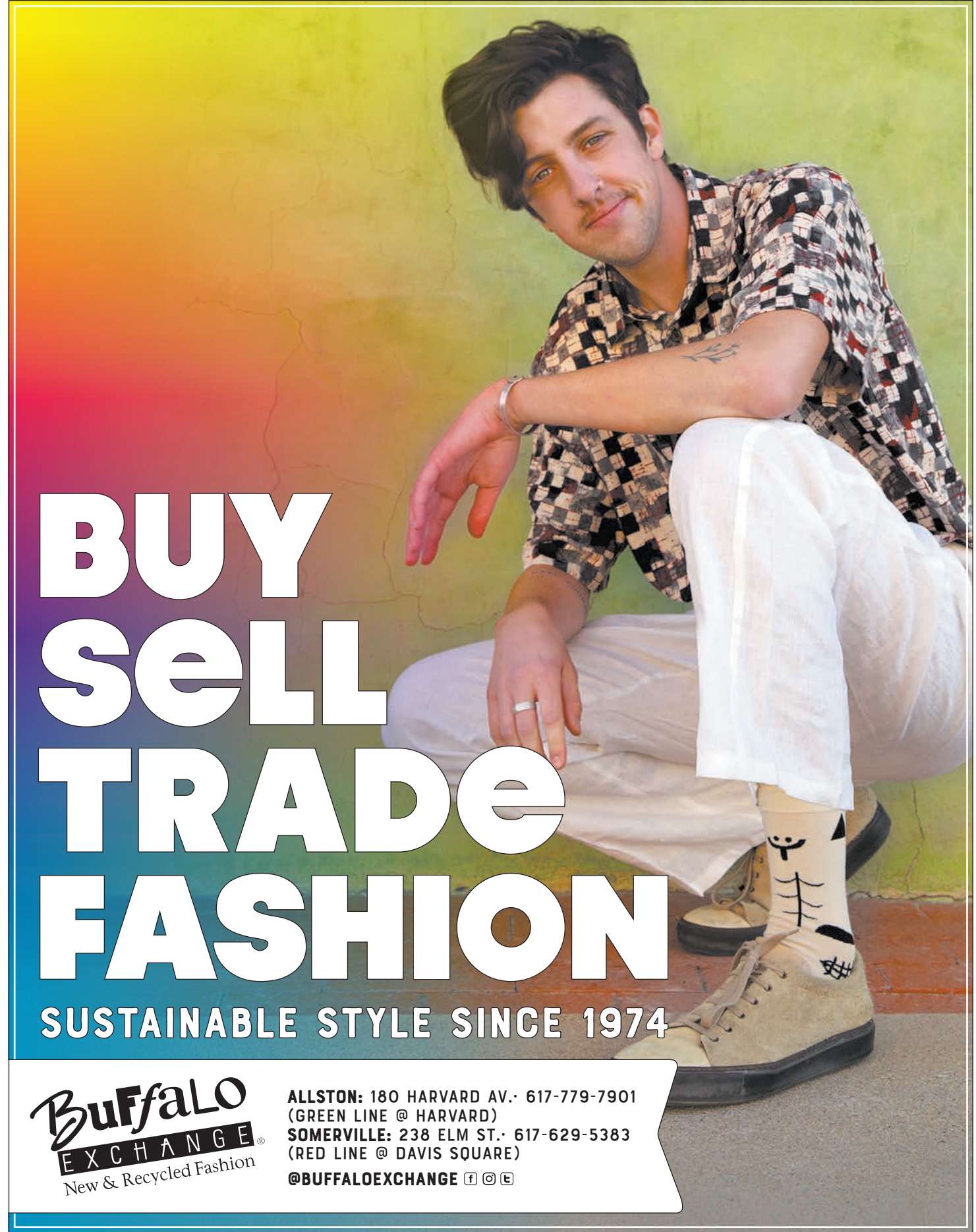


Credit: Hurley Event Photography.

Boston Pride Festival Exhibitors

(list as of May 1; ● indicates sponsor)

- A&V Art
- AARP
- Achieve TMS East
- Action Enterprises
- Adam & Eve
- African American Heritage in Massachusetts
- Alnylam Pharmaceuticals ●
- Amazon
- American Repertory Theater
- Atrius Health
- Audriesfashion
- Bank of America ●
- Bath Fitter
- Bisexual Resource Center
- Black & Pink Boston
- Bold Strokes Books
- Boston Alliance of GLBTQ Youth (BAGLY)
- Boston Area Trans Support
- Boston Ballet
- Boston Pride Concert Artists
- Boston Pride Official Merchandise
- Boston Public Health Commission
- Boston Public Library
- Boston Scientific
- Boston Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence
- Brilliant Botany
- Brooklyn Kings Apparel
- California Cryobank
- Capital One ●
- Center for Virology and Vaccine Research at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
- Citizens Bank ●
- Comcast ●
- Community Research Initiative
- Daftboy
- Dana-Farber Cancer Institute ●
- DEAF, Inc.
- Delta Air Lines ●
- Dignity Boston
- DOVE, Inc.
- Eastern Bank ●
- Endurance International Group ●
- Enterprise Holdings
- Ethos
- Fenway Health
- Fierste Montreal Pride
- Foam Brain Games
- Foxwoods Resort Casino
- FULLBODYCAST
- Gilead ●
- GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)
- Greater Boston PFLAG
- Gypsy bargain
- Health Imperatives, Inc.
- Human Rights Campaign
- Inbound Ink, LLC
- Intact Pride
- International Vegan Association
- Irish For Pride
- ISKCON Boston
- J.Hilburn Custom Menswear
- JRI - MA Commission on LGBTQ Youth
- Keshet
- KIND ●
- Marriott International
- Mas n' Motion
- Mass Trans Political Coalition
- Massachusetts Department of Children and Families
- Massachusetts Lottery
- MassEquality
- Meloria Maille
- Metropolitan Community Church of Boston
- Moving Violations Motorcycle Club
- NBC 10 Boston ●
- Network/La Red
- Nissan ●
- NROR ART
- Nuance ●
- Only Human
- Our Back Pockets
- OUT MetroWest
- Outer Peace
- Paws 4 A Cure
- Philips ●
- Piña Colada Perumex
- Pink Pages / KP Media
- Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of MA
- Pride Socks
- Project TRUST
- Prydeparade
- Rainbow Island
- RESPOND, Inc
- Rhode Island Home Improvement (RIHI)
- Rowe Camp and Conference Center
- Salesforce ●
- Santander Bank ●
- Shayna Yacyshyn Artwork
- Simmy's Crafts
- So Are You Designs
- Sock it to Me
- South End Community Health Center
- SpeakOUT Boston
- St. Anthony Shrine
- Success
- TD Bank ●
- Teeranid Corporation
- The History Project
- The Little Gay Tee Co.
- The Satanic Temple Boston Chapter
- The Silence Shoot
- The Triangle Program
- Time For Love Project
- T-Mobile / Metro by T-Mobile ●
- Trans Doe Task Force
- Transtape
- Triangle Manor
- TripAdvisor ●
- Under the Same Moon
- Valvoline Instant Oil Change ●
- Vertex Pharmaceuticals
- Walgreens ●
- Walmart ●
- Webster Bank
- Wicked Good Henna
- Women's Suffrage Celebration Coalition of Massachusetts
- Worcester Pride
- Yang 2020 Massachusetts
- Your Whole Body



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2019 Boston Pride Concert Entertainment Headliner Todrick Hall

A close-up portrait of Todrick Hall, a Black man with short hair, wearing a black turtleneck. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. His right hand is raised to his forehead, with fingers spread, partially obscuring his face. The background is dark and out of focus.

Multi-talented singer, rapper, actor, director, choreographer, and YouTube personality, Todrick Hall rose to prominence on *American Idol*. His popular YouTube channel has over 2.7 million subscribers and 510 million views notably for original songs, choreographed flash mobs for Beyoncé, musical collaborations, and appearances on *RuPaul's Drag Race* as a guest judge. Hall distinguished himself as a Broadway star, completing a successful run of *Kinky Boots* and two successful tours of *Straight Outta Oz*, both of which were highly acclaimed by fans and critics alike. Recently, he appeared as a backup dancer in Taylor Swift's video *Look What You Made Me Do*. He recently toured the United States and Europe on his *Forbidden Tour*.

SUNDAY
09
JUNE
BACK BAY



DJ DAN SLATER




DJ DENA

BACK BAY BLOCK PARTY

1-8PM | ALL AGES | FOOD | 21+ BAR

\$15 ONLINE • \$20 AT DOOR

ST. JAMES AVE., ENTRANCE IS AT BERKELEY ST

 ARLINGTON STATION
(GREEN, LINE)
BACK BAY STATION
(ORANGE LINE)



LOOKING BACK. LOVING FORWARD.



ADV TICKETS: [BOSTONPRIDE.ORG/BACKBAY](https://bostonpride.org/backbay)



Headliner Robin S.

Born and raised in Queens, New York, Robin began singing at the age of five in a church choir. Blessed with a genuine talent to entertain, she took up vocal training at the age of eight under the direction of the legendary Brook Alexander. At the age of fifteen, Robin joined jazz and cover bands in the New York metropolitan area, performing at dinner clubs, lounges, and other venues. During her tenure as a member of the band Top Shelf, she met the owners of Homeboy Recording Studios. They immediately realized that they found the perfect accent to their music and began laying demo tracks for Robin's vocals.

"Show Me Love," Robin's first Gold single in the United States and Platinum in Europe, introduced her as one of the premier vocalists of the early 90s. The chart-topping single, punctuated with energetic remixes from Stonebridge Productions of Sweden, originally gained popularity in Europe on Champion Records in 1993. The success of the record caught the eyes of executives at Big Beat Records and Robin S was on her way to fulfilling her dreams.

Robin's debut album on Big Beat/Atlantic Records, *Show Me Love*, immediately broadened her fan base. The diverse sounds of the record, which changes between beautiful lush ballads like "What I Do Best" or "Who's Gonna Raise The Child," and bold toe-tapping rhythms, were created by a variety of producers, including Junior Vasquez, Nick Martinelli, and David Morales. "Love For Love," another chart-topping track from Robin's debut album and a fiercely hypnotic track filled with syncopated beats, propelled her to the elite list of dance divas.

Currently touring and performing internationally, Robin's new singles debuted in January 2019 with such notable producers as Carl Cox, Eric Mobley, James Worthy, David Anthony, Freeze, Paris Toon and Mothers Favorite Child.

Headliner Beth Sacks

Beth Sacks hails from New York City, where the International House Artist has been working with International Circuit Remixer and Producer DJ Aron since 2012. Her hit tracks, played around the world at many major circuit parties, include: "Let's Burn It Out," "I Came To Work," "Let the Music Use You Up 2K14 remix," "Tonight Is Forever" (special song for Forever Tel Aviv Pride), "What's Up," and recently "Imagine." Her current hit with DJ Aron, "Hey Hey Hey," is sweeping dance floors around the world. She has recently headlined major European events in Greece, Austria, Germany, and France, as well as New Years celebrations in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Along with DJ Aron, Beth Sacks headlined the main event at the 30th annual White Party Palm Springs, presented by Jeffrey Sanker.



SUNDAY
09
JUNE

JAMAICA PLAIN



EMCEE SAPPHIRA CRISTAL



DJ DUKE (LEAHV)

BLOCK J P PARTY

Divas, Dogs & Drag Show

CASH BAR | FOOD | KIDS ZONE

1-8PM • 1ST HOUR SAVE \$5 • ALL AGES

PERKINS STREET, ENTRANCE IS AT HYDE SQ



T JACKSON SQ (ORANGE)
HEATH ST (GREEN, E LINE)
PERKINS ST (39 BUS)



LOOKING BACK. LOVING FORWARD.



KRISTENPORTERPRESENTS.COM | BOSTONPRIDE.ORG/JP



ALL EYES ON ME

All Eyes on Me is an indie pop quartet based on the songwriting of Christopher James Martin, harmonies by Mary Lee Desmond and Susannah Baron, and the dynamic drumming of Corey Aaron Dobson. The band's sound is informed by 80s pop, 90s R&B and rock from the early aughts. Their forthcoming record is due in 2019.



TAIJA NEW

Taija New, a.k.a. the Newbian King, is an all-around Rhythmic Pop entertainer from Massachusetts. In 2016, Taija embarked on a short tour called "The Pride Tour," where she performed at three major Pride Festivals in the US. She is currently on her second tour named after her sophomore album, *The Heart on the Stage Tour*, which kicked off in Toronto, ON, Canada. The second single off the album, "Headstrong," was also featured on Zachary Campbell's *Bop or Flop Friday*.



THE SPOTS

The Spots is a predominantly female queer band, comprised of teachers from Boston who are committed to social change and making people smile! The band donates all proceeds from their biannual "Rock Out With Your Cause Out" concerts to different organizations in and around Boston. They play a range of music from rockabilly originals to pop cover sing-along songs. Think Springsteen meets Dolly meets Paula Abdul... something for everyone to dance to!



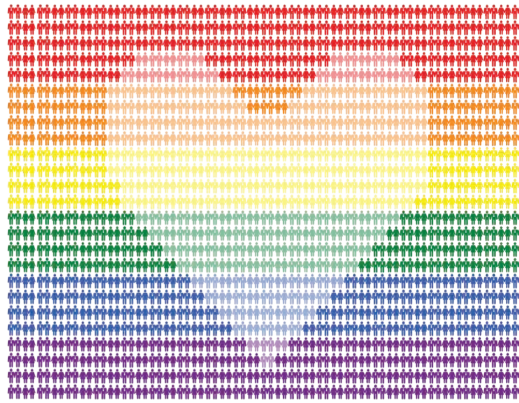
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For more information about Ethos AgeWell Equality of our programs for LGBT elders, please visit ethocare.org, or call 617.522.6700.



Few groups grow older with more challenges than lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender older adults. Less likely to be partnered, more likely to be childless and too often estranged from their own families, LGBTs face significant barriers to healthy aging. Isolation, depression, substance abuse, and suicide are major risks.

That's why Ethos provides a number of weekly and monthly opportunities for LGBT elders to share a meal, make lasting friendships and learn about the resources necessary for healthy aging.

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Brookline, MA

OUT2BRUNCH ROSLINDALE

1st Tuesday of every
month
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Mount Pleasant Home
301 S. Huntington Ave.
Jamaica Plain, MA

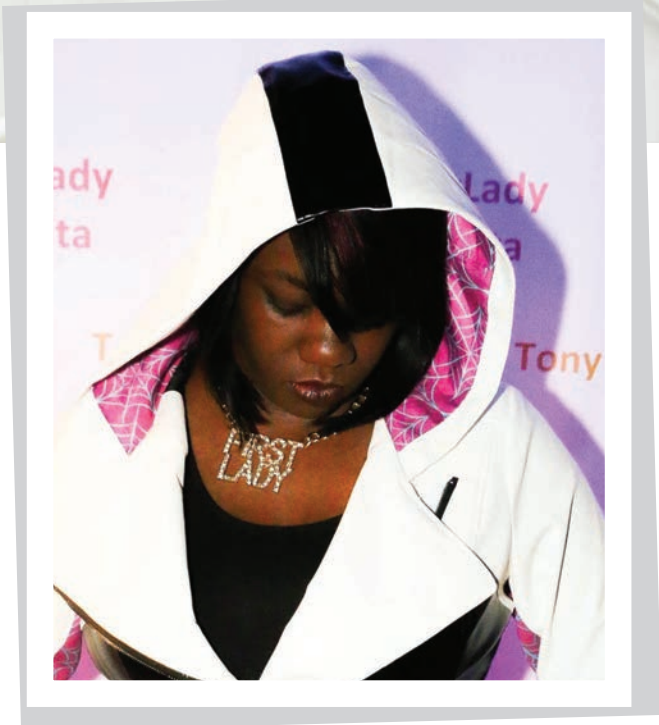
OUT4SUPPER

1st Saturday of every
month
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Roslindale House
120 Poplar Street
Roslindale, MA

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RSVP, VISIT WWW.ETHOCARE.ORG, EMAIL MEALS@ETHOCARE.ORG OR CALL 617.477.6606.

KATE KENNEDY

Pop singer/songwriter Kat Kennedy has toured extensively from Alaska to Brazil, sharing her compelling blend of acoustic and electronic sounds. After graduating from Berklee College of Music, her collaborations with other artists and producers piqued the interest of fans and labels alike. Her 2016 TrapNation release with producer Channels, titled "Flare," amassed over six million plays across streaming platforms. Kat has released a series of singles surrounding her first full-length album which will come out this year.



FIRST LADY SARITA

First Lady Sarita is a female MC from Boston, Massachusetts, born into a family that loves music and playing instruments, from gospel singers (the Helen Hollins singers and Milton Hollins) to rappers (Tony Rhome of RSO and Frankee Lu). In 2002, she debuted her career by joining Living Room Entertainment, then Keep It Moving Entertainment in 2004, of which she became Director of Artist Development. She has opened for many artists, such as Ed O.G, Norreaga, Raequan, Rah Digga, Styles P., Tabi Bonney, Black Moon, Smif and Wessun, and Freeway. She currently hosts talent showcases at the Dublin House on Tuesday nights in Dorchester. She is also working on a new album entitled *The Rebirth*, to be released in the fall of 2019.

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\$50 - Meet & Greet with photo + a guaranteed spot in front of the stage for all three headliners



City Hall Plaza | June 8, 2019

bostonpride.org/tickets

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QWAM

Established in 2016, QWAM (Queens With A Mission) champions self-confidence across the Boston dance scene and the greater LGBTQ community. As a diverse, all-male dance crew, QWAM is a family that expresses and experiences dance in a colorful variety of genres. The crew encourages everyone to embrace their royalty across the East Coast, including in QWAM's very own showcase Reignbow, a showcase of queer and ally talent. ●

FESTIVAL BAR
 party on the plaza
SATURDAY, JUNE 8TH
12-7PM • CITY HALL PLAZA
PRIDE CONCERT • 21+ BAR • GIVEAWAYS
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Boston Pride Youth Dance

As Madonna's "Music Inferno" hit commanded, "It's time to get the dance shoes on!" The fifth annual Boston Pride Youth Dance, a haven of music, dancing, and chilling after the Parade and Festival, welcomes queer members of our community under 21 for a special event at City Hall's own inner garden. Like Dorothy, climb up the brick road on the side of the building—or request usage of the accessible indoor ramp and elevator, should you need—to ascend to the special hideaway. DJ Lisa and MC Yolanda of DanceAway Sound return to ignite the dancefloor for several hundred youths coming from all over New England. Door prizes will once again be awarded to lucky winners mid-evening. Along with free water all evening, a range of flags showcasing the Pride rainbow and the colors of queer identities will be available for sale (\$10.00). In the words of the Material Girl, "Music makes the people come together, yeah!" ●

EVENT DETAILS

Saturday, June 8
7:00-11:00PM, rain or shine

City Hall Mezzanine
1 City Hall Plaza, Boston
 Government Center (Blue and Green lines)



Under 21 (alcohol-free event)
Tickets \$8 until June 1/ \$10 after June 1
Purchase advance tickets at
www.bostonpride.org/tickets

For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/youthpride



Queer youth are invited to get into the grove at the Youth Dance. Credit: Hurley Event Photography.





**As we reflect back on all
the progress we have
made in the last 50 years,
let us keep up the fight
for a brighter future.**

JOE KENNEDY
FOR CONGRESS

A graphic element consisting of three horizontal, brush-stroke-like lines in red, white, and blue, positioned below the text "FOR CONGRESS".

Paid for by Joe Kennedy for Congress.

Back Bay Block Party

Just dance. Like Gaga's invitation to revel, the Back Bay Block Party stands the test of dancefloor times as it enters its 19th edition this June. The largest annual outdoor queer party in New England is much more than a yearly ritual to dress to impress and bust new moves in the Bostonian summer heat. A portion of each ticket sold to the event benefits the Boston Pride Community Fund, which, in turn, funds grassroots efforts in our community through grants (see page 88).

What's goin' on on the floor? Friendly community bartenders will greet you across from the park on the street, and offer, thanks to our partners Tito's Handmade Vodka and Budweiser, a large array of delightful adult beverages (21+ to drink) and non-alcoholic concoctions for our under-21 and sober guests.

Spin that record, babe. Local favorite DJ Dena opens behind the decks with her first performance at the Back Bay Block Party. Following is this year's headlining performer, Australian DJ-producer Dan Slater. Discovered through a talent competition at Sydney Mardi Gras (the down-under capital's annual celebration of queer Pride), Slater impressively climbed the musical ladder to become a much-sought-after disc-jockey and remix-maker worldwide. He received top billing at major events and venues around the world and produced for eminent artists like Cher and Britney Spears. Slater brings the Back Bay crowd his trademark mixed Euro/Latino sound.

Shawty I can see that you got so much energy. So bring that prideful energy along with your rainbow friends and lovers to close out Boston Pride 2019 with a musical bang.

Woo! Let's go! ●

EVENT DETAILS

Sunday, June 9
1:00-8:00PM, rain or shine

St. James Avenue and Berkeley Street
Back Bay, Boston

Ⓣ Arlington (Green line)



All ages, 21+ to drink

Admission: \$15 online up to the day before /
\$20 at the door

Purchase advance tickets at
www.bostonpride.org/tickets

For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/backbay



A dizzy twister dance: find your drink and dance partner at the Back Bay Block Party. Credit: Marilyn Humphries.



70 | Boston Pride 2019





STONEWALL
50

FIGHT BACK! SMASH GAY OPPRESSION!

BAGLY HEELS FOR HOPE MONDAY 6/3
PRIDE TRIVIA BOWL TUESDAY 6/4
ATOMIC KARAOKE PRIDE EDITION WEDNESDAY 6/5
#YAASSS! WITH NAOMI SMALLS THURSDAY 6/6

FRIDAY 6/7 PRIDE ANTHEM
SATURDAY 6/8 PRIDE DAY!
PRIDE 2019 DANCE CELEBRATION
SUNDAY 6/9 RETRO TEA DANCE

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EST. 1983

Back Bay Block Party Headlining DJ **DAN SLATER**

Australian DJ and producer Dan Slater's upbeat and chunky house sounds have conquered dancefloors around the world. With a refined talent for sculpting the energy of a party crowd, he draws from both the progressive sounds of the European club scene and the Latino fire of South America. Dan Slater has, over the years, built a unique, cross-boundary following, with fans in house music, circuit, tech, and deep house. He kicked off his career by winning the Sydney Mardi Gras DJ Spin-Off Competition. This outstanding feat propelled him to sets and residencies at major clubs and events worldwide, such as XLSIOR (Mykonos, Greece), WE Party (Madrid, Spain), SEXY (Cologne, Germany), FFF (Tel Aviv, Israel), The Week (Brazil), the Prism Festival (Toronto, Canada), or Angel (Shanghai, China). Dan Slater has commanded the DJ booths of major venues and celebrations in the United States, like the Winter Party Festival (Miami), the White Party (Palm Springs), Hydrate (Chicago), Joining Hearts (Atlanta), and the Zoo Party (San Diego). In the studio, Dan Slater has produced remixes for Cher, Ultra Nate, Britney Spears, Marcia Hines, and Carmen Elektra, to name a few. He collaborated with JimJam on his first release, "Minute Of You," featuring soul diva Nalaya. Dan Slater subsequently released "Respectable" with Leomeo and Australian singer-songwriter Zoë Badwi, with whom two additional releases are in the works: "Sold My Soul" and "I've Been Waiting." ●





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PHOTO: JEREMY WINNICK

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JP Block Party

Recently dubbed Boston's largest intersectional Pride party, the annual JP Block Party brings together over 2,000 womxn, queer, transgender and nonbinary folks, drag kings and queens, along with families and friends of all ages. The 2019 edition, co-sponsored again this year by Kristen Porter Presents (Dyke Night®, The List: Boston's Queer Agenda, and Drag Boston) will see Jamaica Plain's Perkins Street transformed into a fun-filled oasis of diversity, featuring several cash bars (21+ to drink), a food truck, a drag show, available-for-adoption rescue dogs, DJ, dancing, and performances!

The event will include a Kids Zone, where our community's little ones, and kids at heart, may enjoy face painting, games, a dress up selfie station with costumes donated by The Company Theater of Norwell, and, new this year, a long-awaited drag storytime! The 8th Annual Divas, Dogs & Drag™ Show will once again include lovable rescue dogs available for adoption on site.

Emcee Saphira Cristal returns to host a delightful lineup of local talent. The stage at the JP Block Party will feature performances from graduates of Drag Boston's King for a Day™ Drag King Course, an event made possible in part by the Boston Pride Community Fund. The show-stopping closing act will be diva Lakia Mondale.

After the show, the street morphs into one giant dance floor, with DJ L'Duke (LeahV). Her signature open-format mixing and seamless genre-blending sets have won her the Boston Music Awards *DJ Artist of the Year* and *Improper Bostonian's Boston's Best DJ*. ●

Bring your loved ones of all ages down to the JP Block Party for drag, family fun, and dancing. You might even end up going home with a new, four-legged family member!

Credit: Hurley Event Photography.

EVENT DETAILS

Sunday, June 9

1:00-8:00PM, rain or shine

Corner of Perkins & Centre Streets
Jamaica Plain, Boston

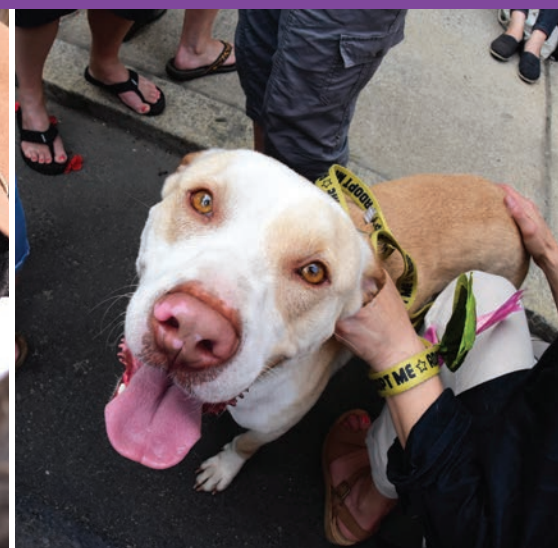
Ⓣ Jackson Square (Orange line),
Heath (Green E line),
Perkins (39 bus)



All ages, 21+ to drink

Admission: free for kids and youth 20 and under, \$15 otherwise (\$10 reduced admission for the first hour)

For up-to-date information, visit
www.bostonpride.org/jp



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For a complete schedule of events, including times and locations, visit www.bostonpride.org/calendar

Black Pride & Latinx Pride

Boston Black Pride and Boston Latinx Pride are programs of Boston Pride seeking to center the voices of queer people of color and to provide safe spaces for Pride-related events and community gatherings. Through continued partnerships with organizations in the region, Black and Latinx Pride have shone since the start of the year.

In February, Black Pride held a Drag Bingo Brunch at Club Café under the patronage of Mizery, who delighted the crowd with her sassiness and legendary joke-telling talent.

Latinx Pride co-presented, in March and April, a series of screenings as part of the ever-growing Wicked Queer, the Boston LGBT Film Festival. These included *¿Cómo te llamas?* (Eva and Candela) by Ruth Caudeli, *José* by Li Cheng, *Las Hijas del Fuego* (The Daughters of Fire) by Albertina Carri, *The Garden Left Behind* by Flavio Alves, the US premiere of *Breve Historia del Planeta Verde* (Brief Story from The Green Planet) by Santiago Loza, the world premiere of *Segunda Estrella a la Derecha* (Second Star on the Right) by Ruth Caudeli, *Las Herederas* (The Heiress) by Marcelo Martinessi, the New England premiere of *Yo Imposible* (Being Impossible) by Patricia Ortega, as well as the program of LatinX shorts.

Planning is currently underway to bring dedicated Black & Latinx events during Pride Week 2019. These will include Latino Wednesday at Legacy nightclub (June 5), the Pride Community Boat Cruise produced by the Multicultural AIDS Coalition (June 8), the annual open mic “If you can feel it, you can speak it” at Bella Luna & The Milky Way at The Brewery (June 13), and EN-ER-GY X at Oberon (June 14). ●



Community members enjoy past Black and Latinx events, including a comedy night and roller skating party. Credit Hurley Event Photography.





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Pride Arts

Writing about her medium, Audre Lorde penned, “[p]oetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before.” In this spirit, Boston Pride puts the spotlight on queer art and artists in our region, for the fourth consecutive year with Pride Arts. This program contributes to this future of change by promoting awareness of various happenings at the intersection of the art world and the queer spectrum. From May 30 to August 18, Childs Gallery will host *Don Joint: Narcissus*, an art exhibition that explores the myth of the youthful boy who falls in love with his reflection as a queer narrative. The Pride Brunch and Celebration of this showcase will be held on June 8.

Our community’s outstanding singing groups will delight this year’s celebration with a multitude of concerts (May 31 through June 2). Voices Rising’s *B-Sides: 15 Years of Favorites Old & New* concerts will transport listeners through a decade and a half of oldies and goodies. The Boston Gay Men’s Chorus’ *God Save The Queens* performances will embrace British pop and rock with tunes from the Beatles and Elton John to Adele and Queen!

The Peabody Essex Museum (PEM), in Salem, will feature a Pride Kiki on June 1. The Scissor Sisters’ Ana Matronic and Siddhartha V. Shah, Curator of Indian and South Asian Art at PEM, will converse on the history of the dancefloor as a space for diversity and inclusion in various communities (see page 92). The evening will continue with dancing to disco and house music.

As part of Boston Pride’s continued partnership with the Gibson House Museum, a launch reception will kick off the new Charlie Gibson’s Boston tour at the museum. On June 7, docents will inaugurate this specialty tour, which explores our city in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century through the eyes of the museum’s founder. Gibson, a Victorian-era gay man, was a poet, travel writer, and horticulturist who, in 1936, decided he would preserve his family’s nineteenth-century townhouse as a museum, for social entertainment. In so doing, however, he forged himself a legacy in the historic preservation movement. The tour will be repeated in the afternoon of June 9. ●

For a complete schedule of events, including times and locations, visit www.bostonpride.org/arts

Purchase tickets online at www.bostonpride.org/tickets



Credit: Fred Mathieu.

Discover the artistic side of Pride with our range of Pride Arts programming.



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08
JUNE

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Official Womxn Pride Party

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DJ JODI

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Pride @ Night

As our community honors the recently departed Chris Harris, who revitalized the queer entertainment scene in New England over the last decade and a half, it is a fitting tribute that Pride@Night, Boston Pride's nightlife and clubbing program, expands to encompass more events than ever.

Annual highlights for Pride@Night include Queeraoke (June 6), where singers are invited to join a packed crowd at the Midway Café to belt out their favorite tunes; the "If You Can Feel It, You Can Speak It" Open Mic at Bella Luna & Milky Way (June 13), the only monthly open mic dedicated to the LGBTQI community of color and its allies; and the Family Movie Night, which will feature this year a screening of *Spider-Man™ Into The Spider-Verse* (May 31) on the Common.

Several new events grace this year's program, providing fun and entertainment for everyone and every taste. Bowlers of all ages rejoice, as Boston Pride is delighted to introduce a new Family Bowling Night to be held at Lucky Strike/Jillian's (June 3). Both trained artists and amateur painters are welcome to showcase their skills at this year's Pride Paint Night at Brandy Pete's (June 4). Beer-lovers (and their supporters) will relish special and seasonal ales at the Samuel Adams Love Conquers Ale Beer Garden Takeover at the Sam Adams Tap Room & Brewery (June 5). Comedy returns to Pride Week with a special event at Laugh Boston, the Pride Comedy Night with Guy Branum (June 5).

Revel at sea this year with two thrilling cruises: The Pride Community Boat Cruise will celebrate Black and Latinx Pride while advancing HIV prevention and education in our communities (June 8); the Mass Bears and Cubs Harbor Cruise will feature a new underwear dance party aboard the Provincetown II (June 9).

Furthermore, the program includes many staples of Pride Week, including Pride Lights, a remembrance of those in our community lost to HIV/AIDS (see page 40); the Boston Pride Youth Dance, a celebration for our community's youth (see page 68); the JP Block

Party, an outdoor, fun-filled intersectional event in the heart of JP (see page 74); the Back Bay Block Party, Boston's largest annual outdoor dance party (see page 70); and Pride Night @ Fenway Park, the annual queer outing to Fenway Park (see page 42).

As of press-time, fourteen Pride clubbing events round up the Pride@Night clubbing series, starting with the brand new Latino Wednesday @ Legacy (June 5). Because Pride is about ensuring that everyone can celebrate in style, no less than four parties will kick off the weekend on June 7: Silent Disco at Assembly Row, Rooftop at the Revere Hotel, the Official Dyke March After Party at Bella Luna & Milky Way, and the Blend Pride Party at Blend. On Saturday (June 8), your faves are back, with the Pride Festival Bar on City Hall Plaza, the ESME Women's Block Party in the Back Bay, the Liberty Hall Mega Women's Pride Party at the Revere Hotel, The Donkey Show @ Pride experience at Oberon, EPIC Saturdays' Boston Pride Main Event at House of Blues, and Lush: The Official Womxn Pride Party at ICON Nightclub. After the Sunday block parties (June 9), queer party-goers will continue the celebration at Pablu Vittar Live in Concert at Royale and the Wicked Huge Pride Finale at Candibar and Legacy. The Pride partying comes to a close a week later with EN-ER-GY X at Oberon (June 14).

Finally, a new addition to the program in 2019 is Pride Plates, for foodies and gastronomes in our community. Boston Pride is partnering with friendly restaurants in the area to offer a 20-percent discount (mention "wicked proud!") when you visit Coda (Back Bay), Bella Luna & The Milky Way at The Brewery (JP), Stella (South End), Charlie's Sandwich Shoppe (Back Bay), Victoria's Diner (South Bay), LoLa 42 (Seaport), and plenty more to come.

For a listing of all Pride@Night events, see the calendar on page 82 or visit www.bostonpride.org/calendar for the latest information and additions to the program. ●

The party continues into the night with music, movies, and entertainment for the whole family. Credit: Hurley Event Photography.



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■ Flagship events ■ Black Pride & Latinx Pride ■ Pride Sports

Pride@Night Calendar

FRIDAY, MAY 31

Dusk ■
Pride Family Movie Night
Boston Common (Boston)

MONDAY, JUNE 3

6:00-8:00PM
Boston Pride Family Bowling
Night
*Lucky Strike/Jillian's
(145 Ipswich St., Boston)*

TUESDAY, JUNE 4

6:00-8:00PM ■
Pride Lights
*Blackstone Square Park
(1535 Washington St., Boston)*

6:00-8:00PM
Pride Paint Night
*Brandy Pete's (267 Franklin St.,
Boston)*

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

6:00-9:00PM
Sam Adams Love Conquers Ale
Beer Garden Takeover
*Sam Adams Tap Room and Brewery
(30 Germania St., Jamaica Plain)*

8:00-9:45PM
Pride Comedy Night with Guy
Branum
*Laugh Boston (425 Summer St.,
Boston)*

10:00PM ■
Latino Wednesday
Legacy (79 Warrenton St., Boston)

THURSDAY, JUNE 6

9:00PM-2:00AM
Queeraoke
*Midway Cafe (3496 Washington St.,
Jamaica Plain)*

FRIDAY, JUNE 7

6:00-9:00PM
Silent Disco
*Assembly Row (355 Artisan Way,
Somerville)*

7:00PM-12:00AM
Rooftop @ The Revere Hotel
*Revere Hotel (200 Stuart St.,
Boston)*

9:00PM-2:00AM
Official Dyke March After Party
*Milky Way (284 Amory St.,
Jamaica Plain)*

10:00PM-2:00AM
Blend Pride Party
*Blend (1310 Dorchester Ave.,
Dorchester)*

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

12:00-7:00PM
Festival Bar
City Hall Plaza (Boston)

2:00-7:00PM
The ESME Women's Block Party
*Boylston St. (at Edgar Allan Poe
Way, Boston)*

7:00-11:00PM ■
Boston Pride Youth Dance
City Hall Plaza (Boston)

7:00PM-2:00AM
LIBERTY HALL The Official ESME
Afterparty
*Revere Hotel (200 Stuart St.,
Boston)*

8:00-11:00PM
The Donkey Show @ Pride
Oberon (16 Arrow St., Cambridge)

9:00PM-2:00AM
LUSH Womxn Pride Party
*ICON Nightclub
(100 Warrenton St., Boston)*

9:00PM
EPIC Saturdays—Boston Pride
Main Event
*House of Blues (15 Lansdowne St.,
Boston)*

Time TBD ■
Pride Community Boat Cruise
Location TBD

SUNDAY, JUNE 9

1:00-8:00PM ■
JP Block Party
*Perkins Street (at Center St.,
Jamaica Plain)*

1:00-8:00PM ■
Back Bay Block Party
*St. James Avenue (at Berkeley St.,
Boston)*

6:00-9:00PM
Mass Bears and Cubs Harbor
Cruise
*Bay State Cruise (200 Seaport Blvd.,
Boston)*

6:00PM
Pablo Vittar LIVE in Concert
Royale (279 Tremont St., Boston)

9:00PM
Wicked Huge Pride Finale
*Candibar & Legacy
(275 Tremont St., Boston)*

TUESDAY, JUNE 11

7:10PM ■ ■
Pride Night @ Fenway Park
Fenway Park (4 Jersey St., Boston)

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

9:00PM-1:00AM ■
"If You Can Feel It, You Can Speak
It" Open Mic
*Bella Luna Milky Way
(284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain)*

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

9:00PM-1:00AM ■
EN-ER-GYX
Oberon (16 Arrow St., Cambridge)

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- 2. SAT (2PM-7PM) ESME BLOCK PARTY**
@ BOYLSTON & EDGAR ALLAN POE WAY
- 3. SAT (7PM-2AM) LIBERTY HALL**
@ REVERE HOTEL 200 STUART ST BOSTON

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ROOFTOP PARTY

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1



2

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WOMEN'S BLOCK PARTY
SATURDAY JUNE 8TH 2pm-7pm

* **NEW LOCATION BOYLSTON & EDGAR ALLAN POE WAY** *

LIBERTY HALL

MEGA WOMEN'S PRIDE PARTY
SATURDAY JUNE 8TH 7pm-2am
@ REVERE HOTEL BOSTON

3



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The Fund is supported by the annual Block Parties and High Heel Dash. Credit: Marylin Humphries.

Turning Fun Into Funds

Boston Pride Community Fund Gives Unprecedented \$43,000 in Grants in 2019

With the dissolution of the Boston Gay Rights Fund (BGRF) in June 2012, many small non-profit organizations and grassroots groups in our community lost funding critical to their mission. According to the Charity Navigator's 2017 Metro Market Study, the Greater Boston area hosts over 265 associations, foundations, and institutions that disburse grants to other organizations. Add to this list the over 100 companies recognized by the Boston Business Journal in 2018 for being the most charitable Corporate Citizens in the region, and it becomes undeniable that a wealth of sponsorship funding and foundation grants is available. However, few are dedicated to supporting queer communities, and those that are tend to be seized by established, mature, and large not-for-profit entities. The disappearance of the BGRF therefore left a gaping hole for focused, on-the-ground, up-and-coming endeavors.

Boston Pride has sought to close that gap by formalizing its annual giving to various community groups into a full program, with dedicated goals, resources, and oversight. Thus was born in 2015 the Boston Pride Community Fund, to provide small grants of up to \$2,000 per year to local queer groups and organizations. From its inaugural cycle in 2016, the Fund is supported by a five-dollar allotment out of every door donation at the Back Bay and JP Block Parties (see respectively page 70 and 74), by the proceeds of

the High Heel Dash for Charity (see page 34), and by 10 percent of all corporate sponsorship revenue that supports Boston Pride's events and programs.

Thanks to the generosity of the public participating in our events and to the substantial financial backing of our corporate partners, Boston Pride raised over \$80,000 in 2018 for the Fund, allowing the organization to more than double its Community Fund awards in 2019 compared to the prior year! After a thorough review by an independent evaluation panel, Boston Pride awarded over \$43,000 in Community Fund grants to 24 organizations in the 2019 cycle (from \$18,500 to 13 organizations in 2018). This significant increase brings the total disbursed by Boston Pride to local queer groups over the last four cycles to almost \$96,000, granted to 48 recipient organizations. Leftover funds will be expended in an inaugural second round of grants post-June, and any unspent monies will carry over to the 2020 cycle.

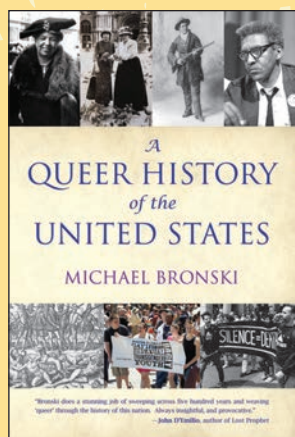
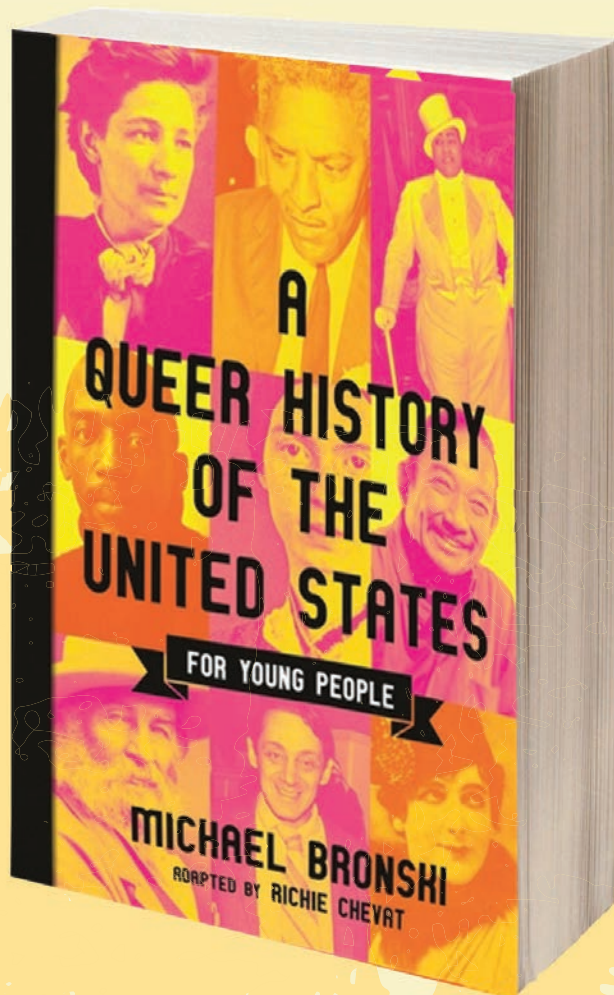
Future Community Fund cycles will additionally benefit from an exceptional donation by Tito's Handmade Vodka of \$10,000 annually for the next three years. Further, the ticketing revenue of Boston Pride's newly created Pub Crawl will be donated to the Fund.

DID YOU KNOW LGBTQ PEOPLE HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO US HISTORY AND CULTURE FOR OVER 400 YEARS?

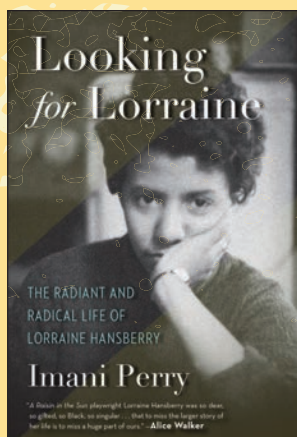
This young readers' edition will encourage those of all identities to feel pride at the accomplishments of the LGBTQ people who came before them and to use their history as a guide to the future.

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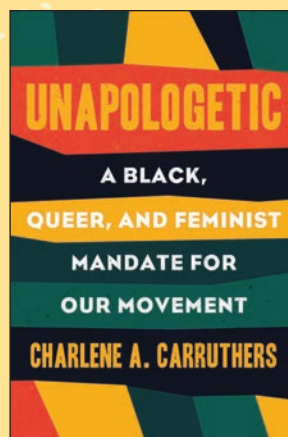
—Publishers Weekly



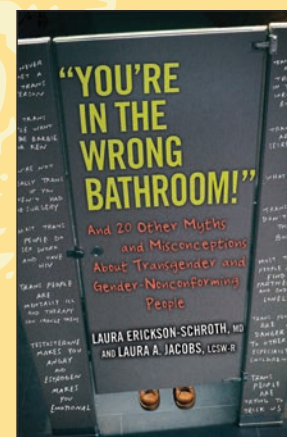
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—Janet Mock



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—Jennifer Finney Boylan

This year's awardees, and their projects, are:

- **Improbable Players**, to produce a theatre performance at the intersection of addiction and LGBTQ experiences, followed by a moderated discussion between the audience and the cast of actors on addiction and sexuality;
- **Mass Bears and Cubs**, for offsetting the costs of legal and other professional services required as the organization pursues 501c3 incorporation and designation;
- **The History Project**, to design, produce, and install Stonewall 50 commemorative banners on iconic and historically-relevant buildings in Boston and Cambridge, where our community's history was made;
- **Dancing Queerly**, to hire Boston-based, LGBTQIA+ teaching artists, dancers, and choreographers for the 2019 edition of the eponymous shows and concerts;
- **SpeakOUT Boston**, for hosting a training program for about 25 queer individuals from the Greater Boston area and MetroWest region, who will learn and enhance their public speaking skills;
- **Healing Our Community Collaborative**, for providing a luncheon educational session as part of their third Transgender Women Health Program;

- **Arlington LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission**, to support year-round Pride programming currently lacking in Arlington, including events to mark Asexual Awareness Week and the Trans Day of Remembrance;
- **Boston Ironsides Rugby Football Club**, for launching a two-day youth experience where younger members of our community can practice team building, collaboration, communication, and self-discovery through the game of rugby;
- **Cape Cod Pride**, to grow and ensure sustainment of the Cape Cod Pride Festival as the organization produces its fourth annual celebration for queer communities in Southeastern Massachusetts;
- **The Theater Offensive**, for the production of MicroFest 2019, a micro-theater festival comprised of eight short plays providing a local, community-based, intersectional, and intergenerational perspective on the Stonewall Uprising and its legacy;
- **The List: Boston's Queer Agenda**, to cover the costs of the technological infrastructure required to maintain its grassroots newsletter reaching diverse segments of the queer community;
- **Arts Connect International**, to finance honorariums to 15 artists and performers at the Arts Equity Summit of March 2019, a forum dedicated to examining and discussing how our community can move towards an ideal vision of social equity within and through the arts;



Boston Pride announces the 2019 Community Fund Recipients at the Spring Open House. Credit: Ann Murphy.

- **The Open Theatre Project**, for the production of the third annual Gay Shorts, a play festival featuring local LGBTQ playwrights, actors, and directors;
- **Trans Club of New England** (TCNE, formerly the Tiffany Club of New England), to support outreach and training efforts for trans families, trans people of color, and non-binary trans individuals in the community;
- **Gay for Good**, to purchase project supplies, as well as snacks and refreshments for their volunteers dispatched throughout the community, who work to assist many service projects;
- **Boston Dyke March**, to compensate the performers, speakers, and interpreters at the 2019 edition of the event;
- **LGBT Asylum Task Force**, to provide free housing, medicine, and basic necessities to queer asylum seekers;
- **Black & Pink**, to set up and manage a weekly drop-in support space for formerly incarcerated people, so they may gather in community, get connected with other local resources, and receive services and care for their concrete basic needs;
- **PAWS New England**, to provide special care needs, such as vet examinations, medication, or specialty food to dogs with medical or physical disabilities, prior to placing them up for adoption at queer events like the JP Block Party;
- **Womxn of Color Weekend**, for the stipends of facilitators and speakers at WOCW workshops that curate spaces for the purpose of healing, restorative social justice, and community building;
- **Camp Lightbulb**, to cover two full camper scholarships in their 2019 Summer Camp, which hosts queer youths in Provincetown and features learning and personal growth activities;
- **The Friends of the Plymouth Council on Aging**, to organize intergenerational forums as part of the Plymouth Pilgrim Pride program, which seeks to bring together queer adults and seniors with their younger counterparts in shared experiences;
- **Quincy Pride**, to support the sustainment of Q Pride Day in 2019, following a successful inaugural celebration last year; and
- **Dr. Feel Good**, for convening yoga teachers of color for a two-day session with culturally-tailored physical activity programs primarily targeting queer women of color in Roxbury and Dorchester.

Notice of the opening of the submission period for the second 2019 round after Pride Week will be provided through our semi-monthly email newsletter. Interested applicants can learn more at <http://www.bostonpride.org/fund>. Visit our website at www.bostonpride.org/news to subscribe to the newsletter. ●

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Dance, Dance Revolution



Finding freedom on the dance floor

By Ana Matronic and
Siddhartha V. Shah

Throughout history, the dance floor has been a safe space for the marginalized. Whether it's the cabaret of the Weimar Republic, the speakeasy of Prohibition-age Chicago, or a gay bar in a tiny Alabama town, places where people gather to perform or dance exist as some of the only public spaces in which alternative expression is allowed, and as such, are incubators in loosening rigid social mores. The freaks, as they say, come out at night. They come out because the darkness allows for safe movement of policed bodies, and under the light of the dance floor, allows for inclusion and exploration. When we come together to celebrate Pride by dancing and marching as a community, we move in the footsteps of those wild and wonderful beings before us, who took the freedom they experienced on the dance floor and channeled it into a fight for their rights to be themselves and, thus, for our freedoms and rights to be ourselves today.

Coming on the heels of the Civil Rights Movement, the ongoing conflict in Vietnam, and the burgeoning mainstream feminist and LGBT+ movements, disco culture provided an intersectional space for young, underprivileged, and ostracized communities to come together, to feel love, to be free. Before 1970 in New York City, laws prohibited men from dancing with each other and required there to be one woman for every three men on the dance floor. These restrictions led to frequent raids on homosocial spaces. Harassment by the police was a regular occurrence until, on a particular hot night in June 1969, the patrons of the Stonewall Inn fought back after one too many attacks on their establishment. For five days, the queers of New York City took to the streets with their allies, giving rise to the modern LGBT+ movement. This movement began on the dance floor, and is why the history of dance culture and the struggle for LGBT+ rights are inextricably linked.

Not even a year after the riots, in 1970, David Mancuso started The Loft—one of the earliest American discos—in his apartment in downtown Manhattan. The laws prohibiting men from dancing together were still in place, but he circumvented police harassment by making it an invitation-only space that did not serve alcohol. This formula provided the blueprint for some of the most important and influential discos in history, where people from all walks of life could come out at night to be as wild and gay as they wanted to be. Mancuso is also credited for being one of the founding fathers of DJ culture, among the very first to mix records on multiple turntables to create a continuous, unbroken stream of sound for his dancers to journey into. Gone were those awkward pauses between songs that stopped bodies from moving together and getting closer to each other. Rather, his style of blending songs—one right into the other—kept the crowd moving and sweating on the dance floor, folding time in on itself so that all that remained was that one, extended moment of communion. The Loft's unique space and sound lured pleasure seekers from the city and country's farthest reaches including many of those who would go on to leave their own indelible mark on dance music and culture in later years: Arthur Russell, Nicky Siano, Larry Levan, and Frankie Knuckles.

The experience created in the Loft and subsequent discotheques gave people another channel to discover music: a physical space more real than the radio station, an intimate connection to the DJ, and an immediate community. This experience was ruled by movement of bodies and a collective, in-room communication. What made people

Coming on the heels of the Civil Rights Movement, the ongoing conflict in Vietnam, and the burgeoning mainstream feminist and LGBT+ movements, disco culture provided an intersectional space for young, underprivileged, and ostracized communities to come together, to feel love, to be free.

dance was different from what people liked to sit and listen to; it was those record collectors who gathered people together and created a new form of music made specifically for the dancer through a collage of eclectic sounds. Born of American Rhythm and Blues but faster, more joyful, and unabashedly queer, Disco is an emphatic YES to experimentation. Anything is permitted within its “four on the floor” rhythm pattern, a pulsating tempo that syncs with our own human heartbeat. Disco’s framework laid the foundation for the three-minute pop song to transform into an extended, ever-expanding mantra: a soundscape for those who liked to dance with a partner, as well as for those who preferred to let loose on their own. It gave space for the queen to be as flamboyantly femme as she needed to be and for the gospel diva to celebrate her own sexual expression and fulfillment without shame. It gave gay men the space to live and give freely within their sexuality and establish a fluid spectrum of redefined masculinity. That sound produced a unique sonic space in which to make friends and find lovers between the notes, to elevate and celebrate the self and the other. It was a sound that turned dancing into a non-stop workout to let off steam, sweat in community, and to feel sensual and sexy. All the frustrations of being gay, trans, black, or brown were transformed into something beautiful, spiritual, extraordinarily desirable, and absolutely irresistible.

Indeed, disco became the soundtrack to liberation on so many levels; it was bound to bleed beyond its downtown Manhattan and Fire Island roots to become a global phenomenon. Central to the concept of disco was that it was a space for everyone, a space where everything was permitted—if it feels good, do it. With total permission comes total freedom, and disco felt free to borrow and blend anything: to get as funky, jazzy, rocky, cheesy, symphonic, electronic, as indulgent or as minimal as it wanted to. DJs created a diverse mix combining the soulful sounds of R&B from Philly & Detroit with Afrobeat from Cameroon and Nigeria, Nuyorican and Afro-Caribbean polyrhythms with the futuristic synthesizers of Munich and Ghent, and in kind, attracted a diverse group of dancers to experience the ecstasy. Black, Latinx, and white people, gay and trans, straight and bi, blended into an androgynous collective body, and together sound and community formed a happy, hedonistic HALLELUJAH that broke barriers and created a whole new way for people to learn about and experience music.

In the post-hippie, pre-AIDS urban centers, the zippy sound of Disco ushered in the era of the dance chart, the extended 12”, the remix, the sample, the break, the rap, and the build. In the fabulous freefall of the 1970s, this celebration of newfound freedoms paved the way for excesses and dangerous debauchery, and Disco, like most musical phenomena, buckled under a backlash—but it

never fully went away. From its basslines and drum breaks came the urban poetry of Hip Hop, from its R&B spirit came Hi-NRG and Freestyle, from its Gospel soul and sense of community came House, and from its spaced-out synth experimentation came Techno. Within all of these genres we find a dance floor, and with it a community for every kind of body to dance, move, groove, sweat, melt, and meld in a wordless space beyond time.

Club culture, as we know it, was founded in the heaving gay bosom and thrusting loins of the 1970s, within a mass celebration of newfound freedoms. That celebration still lives on, and the freedom seeps from the speakers. Witness the bartender who whips out a feather boa every time Sylvester comes on, or the stadium full of sports fans throwing their arms up into Y! M! C! A! without reservation or a stitch of irony. The sound itself is a safe space, rippling through speakers and dancers, encased within the memories and muscles of the elders among us, wafting out on the winds in places where to be gay is still a crime. We keep it going by creating these safe spaces for the marginalized, carrying on the tradition of incubating sexual freedom and gender fluidity.

We insist on making the dance floor a safe space for all to express their fullest selves, encouraging liberation of self that can lead to a collective liberation of spirit. That safe space is not always so, and we remember the thirty-two victims of the arson attack on the UpStairs Lounge in New Orleans (1973) and the forty-nine men and women who lost their lives at Pulse in Orlando (2016). We remember our family lost to AIDS, an epidemic that took so many of the great architects of this culture that sustains us. For them, we dance. ●



Ana Matronic is an orator, author, artist, musician, DJ & broadcaster best known as the lone female member of pop/rock phenomenon Scissor Sisters. Her show Dance Devotion airs every Saturday night/Sunday morning at midnight in the UK on BBC Radio 2. Credit: Suki Dhanda.



Siddhartha V. Shah is Curator of Indian and South Asian Art at the Peabody Essex Museum. His academic and curatorial projects often deal with issues related to racial, religious, and sexual identity in South Asia and beyond. Credit: Bob Packert/PEM.

Editor’s note: Ana Matronic and Siddhartha V. Shah kick off Pride month with a talk and dance party at the Peabody Essex Museum. Saturday, June 1, 7:00PM–12:00AM, free. For more information, visit www.pem.org/whats-on

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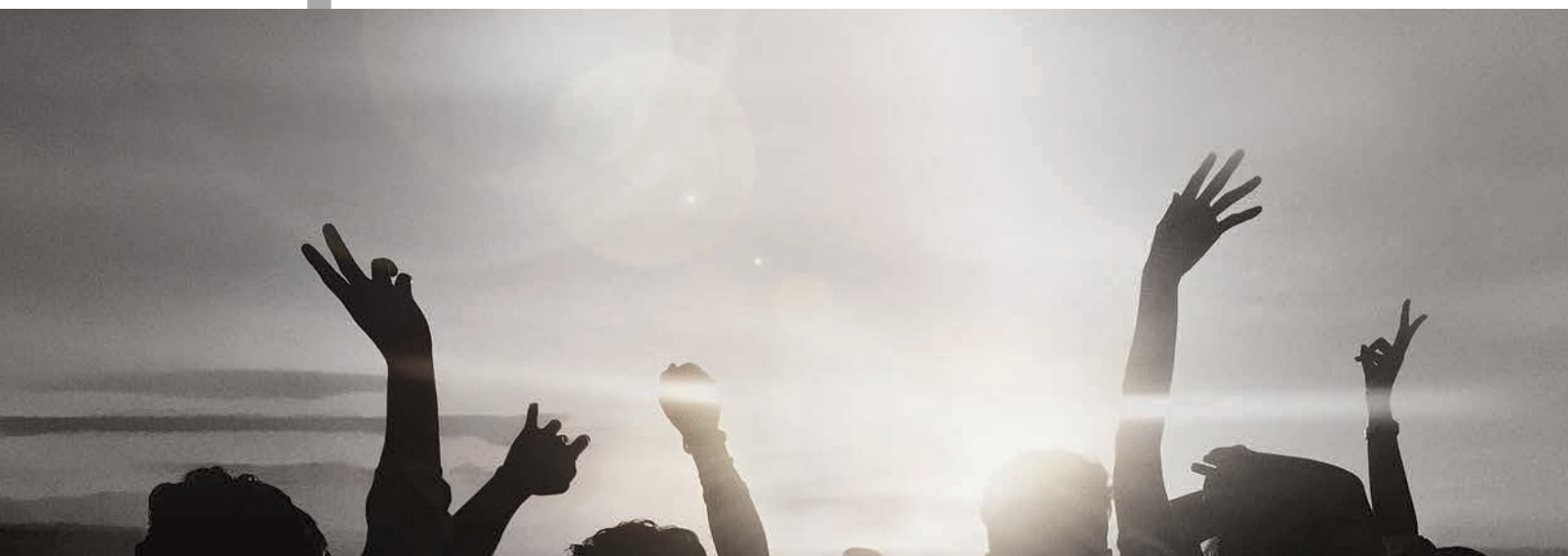


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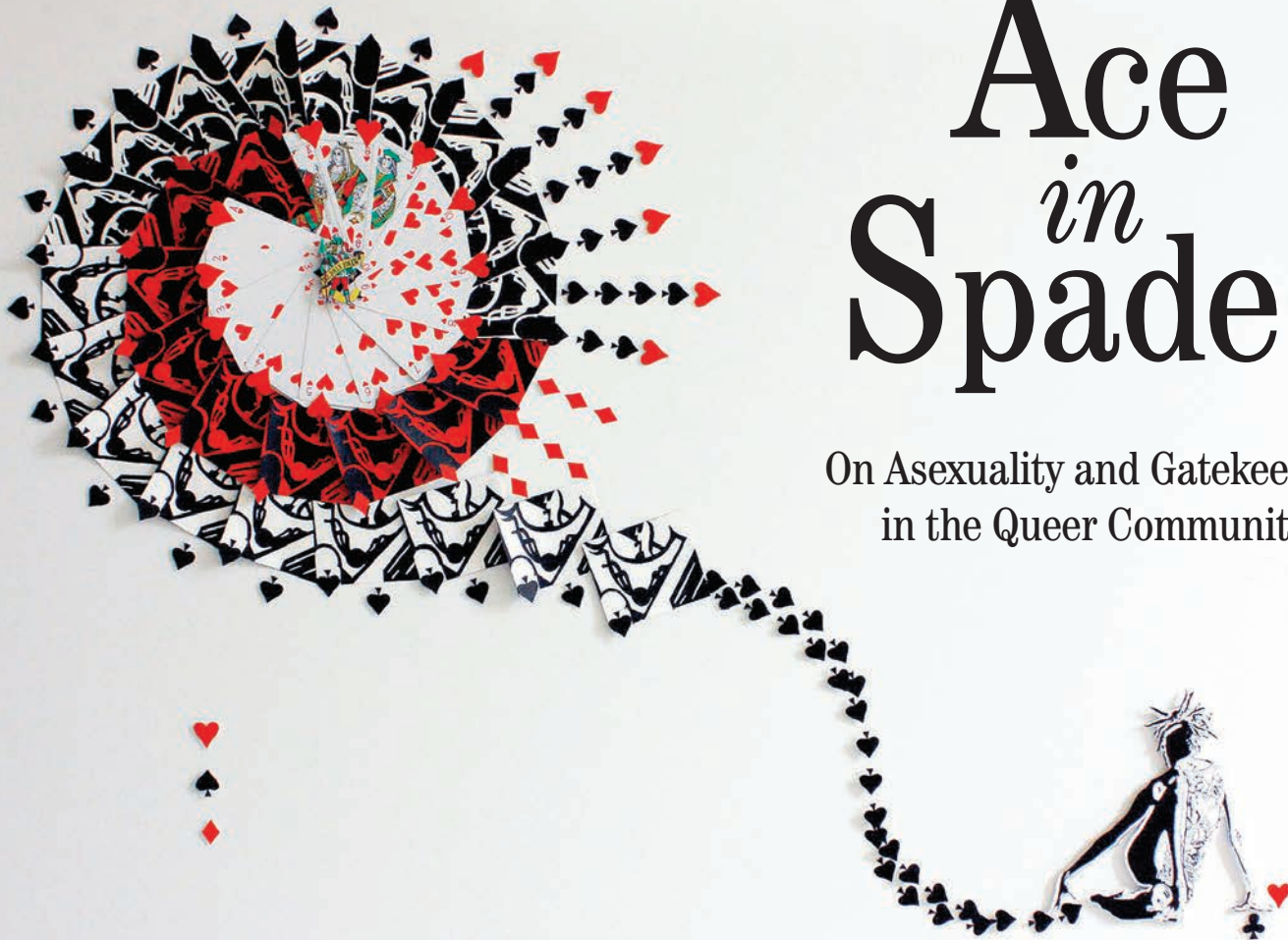
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Ace *in* Spades

On Asexuality and Gatekeeping
in the Queer Community



G

Art: Ceyda Caba, *Love, War & Money* (2011).

By Julia Gilstein

It's June 2014, and the New England Aces (NEA) are gathering on Boylston Street to march behind our own banner for the first time at Boston Pride. I'm excited and nervous to join my fellow aces. My nerves win, and at the last minute, I back out.

I know I'm asexual (ace). I'd realized a couple years earlier that I'm not broken, that there's a word for my identity—someone who experiences little to no sexual attraction—and other people like me. I'd stumbled on the word “asexual” in an online writing forum, researched what it meant, and in an almost lightbulb moment the term just made sense. I'd researched more after that, of course, and joined NEA. But now, I'm not sure exactly where I fall under the ace umbrella. I'm still figuring things out; don't even get me started on how confused I am about the distinctions between sexual (physical) and romantic (emotional) attraction, or whether I might just be gray (someone who experiences attraction sometimes, but it's rare) or demi (someone who may experience attraction after forming a deep emotional bond). Plus, my attempts to out myself thus far have not

That A in LGBTQIA+? It doesn't stand for ally. A stands for asexual and/or aromantic.

gone entirely well. One friend decides I'm bi instead; another says they don't believe me. So it's through some combination of imposter syndrome and fear of coming out that I decide I'm not ready.

That changes in 2015. I march. I ignore the inner dialogue telling me I shouldn't because I still don't know where I fit. Telling me I shouldn't because I don't know if I belong. Telling me that with aces being so invisible, would we even be positively received? And I'm so glad I go. Some folks watching ask us about asexuality, about our love lives, with curiosity. Others speak with derision: “Oh, those weirdos.” “Are you an amoeba?” I don't see aces on the sidewalk, at least not any wearing or waving our black, gray, white, and purple flag colors. But we keep marching. The

crowd politely claps as we walk by. Sometimes they even cheer! The solidarity of our group members that day is inspiring, and the cheering makes me want to cry. I feel like I belong.

In 2016, when NEA organizers ask for volunteers to marshal our parade group, I sign up. I take over the organizing for NEA's

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marching group this year. I even get pulled aside during the parade for a 60-second interview in front of a news camera, where I'm so startled by the sudden questions that I have no idea if my babbled answers are coherent. The cheering this year is louder. I see a few scattered aces on the sidelines who look surprised to see us. We even pick two up during the march!

By the time June 2017 rolls around, I've become NEA's organizer for Pride-related events. The heat during the parade is nearly unbearable, but we power through, waving a variety of flags in ace, aromantic (someone who doesn't experience romantic attraction), rainbow, pan, trans, and various other color combinations. The cheering this year? Loud. And the crowd clearly knows who we are. I see several visible aces on the sidelines, who wave happily. At the end of the parade, I notice tables at the festival with ace and aro merch. Most importantly, the faces of the aces marching speak volumes: exhaustion but exuberance, a sense of belonging, and, well, pride.

In 2018, we update our look with a new banner. I'm fully confident in my identity (demipanromantic asexual, in case you were wondering—romantically but not sexually attracted to a person, regardless of gender, after forming a deep emotional bond) and my place in the queer community. Joining NEA's outreach team has helped that, as has participation in non-NEA, ace-related discussions elsewhere, including at GLSEN workshops, which promote LGBTQIA+ discussions in K-12 education, and Arisia, a sci-fi/fantasy convention that strives for inclusivity. My marshals are fantastic once again. I'm unable to attend the parade this year, but they assure me all goes well.

We're not so invisible anymore, and the feeling is glorious.

It's also in 2018—despite the increasing plethora of articles, YouTube videos, forums, and so on about asexuality; despite more ace characters in fiction and other media (shout-out to the creators of BoJack Horseman, who consulted an ace community in LA for Todd Chavez's coming out story); despite people gaining a better understanding of the different types of attraction; despite the myth-busting; despite #acepride; despite increasing visibility—that I start seeing arguments online about whether people who identify under the asexual umbrella belong in the queer community. I'm sure these arguments existed before 2018/2019, but they've gotten quite vocal lately.

But here's the thing. That A in LGBTQIA+? It doesn't stand for ally. A stands for asexual and/or aromantic.

I repeat: The A in LGBTQIA+ stands for asexual and/or aromantic.

Some might say that the letter doesn't matter. That if aces aren't sexually interested in anyone, they don't belong in a community of folks who are. They might also assume I'm straight because they don't see me in a same-sex relationship, or assume I'm straight because they do see me in an opposite-sex relationship. But sexual orientation is about attraction, not action. If I'm not attracted to anyone, I'm not heterosexual.

Gatekeeping in the queer community is not new. Anyone who can pass as straight and cisgender, who is in a relationship with someone of a different gender, or who doesn't "look" trans, for example, knows what I'm talking about.

Whether I can pass as someone I'm not should not determine whether I belong in the queer community.

Another argument I see: Aces aren't oppressed enough. We haven't experienced the same levels of prejudice as other people who identify as LGBTQI+.

Our community should not be in competition for who is more oppressed. I shouldn't have to argue that aces are sometimes threatened with corrective rape, or are raped. I shouldn't have to argue that some of us are forced to get our hormones checked. I shouldn't have to argue that we're often told our identity isn't real, or that it's just a phase. I shouldn't have to argue that people sometimes think aces must be ugly and prudish, that it's our fault we may not have or want a partner. I shouldn't have to argue that, like other people who identify as LGBTQIA+, we experience higher rates of anxiety and depression. I shouldn't have to argue that those of us in same-sex relationships or who identify as homoromantic or bi/panromantic can lose our homes and jobs. The list goes on. Our experiences are much the same as other queer people.

Many aces, especially those in the early stages of figuring out their identity, experience imposter syndrome. We don't see much of ourselves represented in media, we supposedly only represent one percent of the population, and we don't know if we belong under the LGBTQIA+ umbrella. And, if the queer community doesn't want us, why even bother applying the label? But I'm here to tell you, we absolutely do belong. We should take pride in who we are.

I'll see you at the parade. ●



Julia Gilstein is the Pride Activities Coordinator for New England Aces (NEA) and a member of the NEA outreach team, which hosts panels and workshops on asexuality. She participates in discussions on asexuality, asexual visibility, and ace representation in media outside of NEA as well. Follow Julia on Twitter @JGilstein.

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STONEWALL RIOTS



Reclaiming our Radical Roots

Credit: Ted Eyton.

By Jo Trigilio

The Stonewall Riots. What a perfect story to serve as the legendary origin of the US LGBTQ movement. Set in a time during which homosexual sexual activity and cross-dressing were criminalized offenses, it's a narrative of courage, resistance, unity, and communal support across differences. We have all heard the story. A little after 1:00AM on June 28, 1969, the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street in New York City was raided by the police, as it often was. The Stonewall Inn, owned by the Genovese crime family, catered to a racially mixed, marginalized population that included drag queens, butch dykes, transsexuals, homeless gay youth, and LGBT sex workers. Everyone in the bar was initially held, then most were released one by one after producing an ID. The only people who were usually arrested were gender variant individuals who were not wearing three items of gender appropriate clothing, LGBT street youth who did not have IDs, and the employees for selling alcohol without a license.

During the raid, a crowd gathered outside the Stonewall, many waiting for their friends to come out, cheering each time a "released" patron emerged from the bar. Provoked by the sight of seeing some of their drag queen and butch lesbian friends forced into the paddy wagon, the mood switched from festive to angry. Who threw the first penny, punch, stone, or brick is a matter of dispute. What is indisputable is that those on the front lines, those who were brave enough to fight back at the risk of their own welfare, were those who were most disadvantaged, those who experienced multiple forms of oppression, those who endured the most number of social injustices. Over the course of five days and nights, thousands of people participated in the ongoing riot.

The diversity of the participants responding to a clear injustice permits an elastic narrative of inclusion. We can all see ourselves represented in the origin story. And this is where the story ends for most people.

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What happens next is not as well known. It's the part of the story during which our racially diverse crew of heroic drag queens, transsexuals, butches, sex workers, and homeless youth fall out of the narrative and disappear. In recent years, drag queens and trans and gender variant people of color have complained that the US LGBTQ Movement, catalyzed by the Stonewall Riots, was quickly co-opted by white gay men, effectively silencing the voices and ignoring the needs of the most oppressed among the LGBTQ population. Why, for the past 50 years, have the voices and needs of the most disadvantaged been muted in favor of the most advantaged? What else have we forgotten and ignored about the roots of our movement? Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots provides us with the opportunity to re-center the needs of the most disadvantaged among us by reclaiming the original organizing principle of the Gay Liberation Movement: Because oppressions are interlocked, no one is free until we are all free.

In truth, the Stonewall Riots merely serve as the mythical beginning of the LGBTQ movement in the US. By 1969, many gay activist groups were in place in the US. For at least a decade, gay, trans, lesbian, and gender variant people had been engaging in protests and activist activities, including resisting police harassment in bars and nightclubs. The kindling had been collected for more than a decade. Stonewall was the spark that happened to start the fire, pushing the nascent gay movement out from behind closed doors of secret meetings, out of the underground of informal networks, out of the darkness of the nightlife, and into the streets. Those who, due to their visible gender variance and racialization, were never in the closet, pushed the gay movement out of the closet.

In 1969, open resistance, demonstrating on the streets, in effect, coming out, were radical acts. The bold and brave acts of the riot participants inspired and motivated radicals who had been engaging in protest actions of black liberation, women's liberation, and counter-cultural movements, and radicalized countless others who had heretofore been too afraid to act. The New York Gay Liberation Front, formed days after the riots, modeled itself on the radical liberation movements of the day. Gay Liberation Front groups sprang up in cities and college campuses across the US.

Unlike civil rights approaches focused on reforming the system, the Gay Liberation Front sought to challenge "the power establishment"—a system structured by interlocking forms of racism, sexism, classism, imperialism, and heterosexism. Heavily influenced by the New Left Movement, the Gay Liberation Front was not concerned with acceptance and tolerance. Instead, it sought to create an alliance of the oppressed to overthrow the socially, economically, and politically unjust capitalist power establishment. According to journalist Allen Young, "Gay liberation [had] a perspective for revolution based on the unity of all oppressed people — that is, there

can be no freedom for gays in a society which enslaves others through male supremacy, racism, and economic exploitation (capitalism)." Those in the Gay Liberation Front understood themselves as part of a coalitional network that included women's, black, and Chicano liberation groups. They challenged the institutionalized patriarchal, heterosexual, nuclear family and the mandated gender roles required to support it. The goal was to construct new institutions through the kind of participatory democracy that gave voice to the most powerless.

By the end of the first year, the Gay Liberation Movement began to fracture along two lines. One schism was between liberationists who were concerned with a wide spectrum of interconnected social injustices, and assimilationists who wanted to focus on legislative efforts related only to gay rights. Assimilationist strategies rely on "we are just like you, so we deserve equal rights" messaging. This single-issue approach works best for the most advantaged among us and fails to address the needs of LGBTQ people who experience multiple forms of oppression, like transwomen of color.

The second schism occurred along gender lines. Lesbians, especially those who identified as feminists, felt excluded by male-centered agendas that ignored gender oppression. For lesbians and bisexual women, sexual oppression intersects with gender oppression in a way that is not separable.

In both cases, the issues of gender variant people (i.e., butches, drag queens, transpeople, etc.), especially as they intersect with race and class, were lost in the fissure. The liberationist approach was soon superseded by the mainstream Gay Movement, led predominantly by white, middle-class, gay men. The very people who risked their welfare to bravely resist were, in short order, cast to the margins of the movement.

The best way to celebrate the courageous acts of those on the front lines of the Stonewall Riots is to reclaim and revive the radical roots of the US LGBTQ movement. If we are truly committed to social justice and ending the oppression of all LGBT people, we must reconstruct a more inclusive, broad-based movement that centers the multiple needs of the most disadvantaged. In doing so, we attend to everyone's liberation.

The diversity of the participants responding to a clear injustice permits an elastic narrative of inclusion.

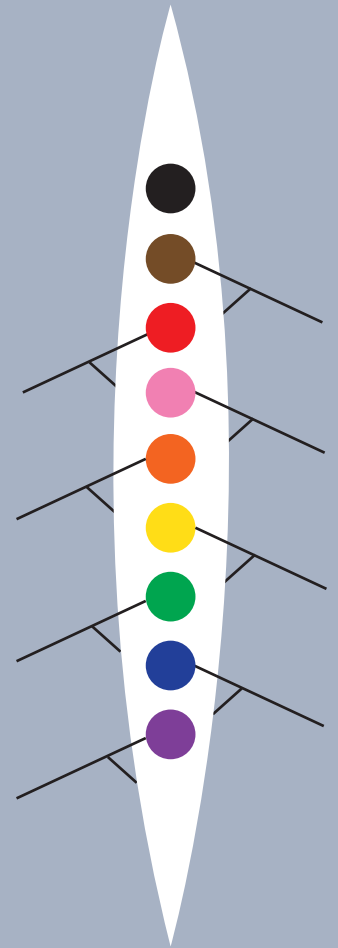


Jo Trigilio is Director of the Graduate Program in Gender and Cultural Studies at Simmons University, where they hold a joint appointment in the departments of Women's and Gender Studies and Philosophy. Trigilio was on the leadership team for the Boston Dyke March from 2000 to 2014, and heads the Boston Dyke March History and Archive Project. Trigilio's current work focuses on nonbinary forms of gender.

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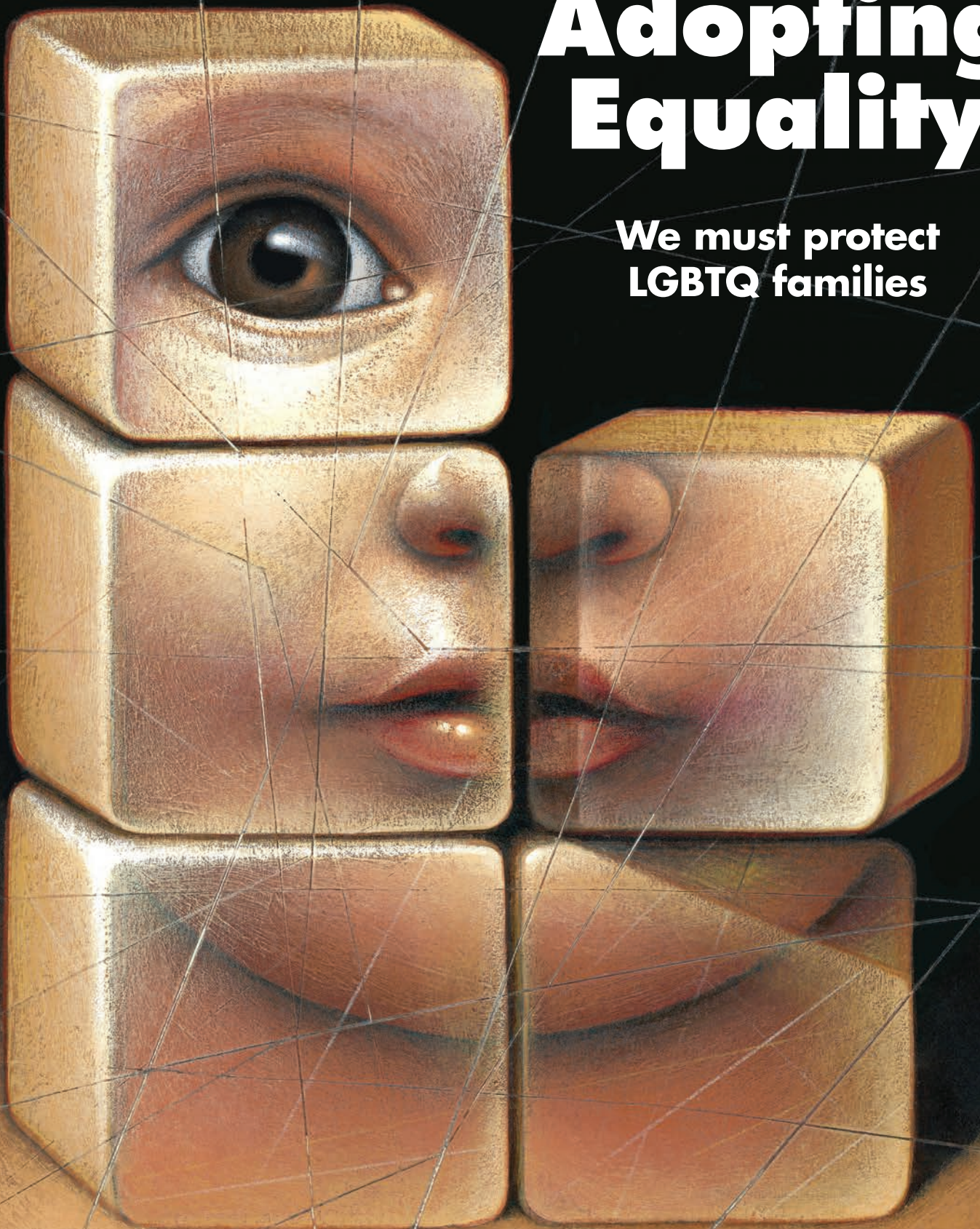
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Adopting Equality

We must protect
LGBTQ families



ADAM NIKLEWICZ

By Emily McGranachan, Julie Kruse, and Schylar Baber

Though it may feel at risk, marriage equality is currently protected throughout the United States. Now that marriage is no longer a viable target for anti-LGBTQ movements, it doesn't mean they've given up their attacks on LGBTQ people and our families. Far from it. Since 2015 they have focused their attention, Eye-of-Sauron-style, on foster care and adoption. With our partnerships legally recognized, opponents of LGBTQ rights are widely adopting the strategy of going after youth in care and LGBTQ people who want to foster or adopt.

Across the country, with increasing frequency, states are passing license-to-discriminate laws that allow taxpayer-funded adoption and foster care agencies to make decisions for children in their care based on the agency's religious beliefs rather than on the best interests of the child. That means these agencies can refuse to consider well-qualified prospective families for child-placement simply because they do not pass the agency's religious litmus test. These laws also harm at-risk children in care—both those in need of a temporary placement and those awaiting placement with a loving, forever family—who are denied the broadest possible pool of qualified foster and adoptive parents. These laws further harm LGBTQ children and youth in care who are denied affirming, supportive care and families. Agencies can refuse to acknowledge the youth's gender identity and sexual orientation, and to intentionally place them with families and institutions that will not respect them either. The data clearly show that LGBTQ youth constitute at least 20 percent of foster youth, which is about double their presence in the overall population.

Our families, and especially our youth, are under attack. As of 2016, four states (North Dakota, Virginia, Michigan, and Mississippi) had passed license-to-discriminate laws permitting adoption and foster care agencies to discriminate against LGBTQ youth in care, as well as LGBTQ and other potential parents. That number has now more than doubled. In 2017, three more states passed these laws (Alabama [though only applying to agencies that do not receive government funding], South Dakota, and Texas). In 2018, another three followed (Kansas, Oklahoma, and South Carolina). In 2018, the only anti-LGBTQ state bills that passed anywhere in the country were specifically targeting foster care and adoption. Opponents of LGBTQ rights, LGBTQ youth, and the validity of LGBTQ-headed families are narrowing in on an imperfect system that deals with people at their most vulnerable: youth in care and adults opening themselves up to become foster or adoptive parents.

There are many intersections of how these harmful bills only further hurt the youth over-represented in the child welfare system. Children who are LGBTQ, children of color, tribal children, and disabled children are all in care at higher rates. And these children often don't have the same permanency outcomes, which means they don't get adopted or have a long-term foster care connection. Instead, they often age out of the system without a forever family, or the associated support and guidance, and they're expected to succeed on their own.

Think about it: family matters even after we turn eighteen. Where do you go when your college shuts down for Christmas





Supporters of LGBTQ families march with the Family Equality Council in the 2018 Boston Pride Parade. Credit: Boston Pride.

break? Who do you call when you have a medical crisis? Or when you can't figure out how to pick the right car insurance? A family, however you define it, is a lifelong connection.

And yet, even with approximately 20,000 youth aging out of the foster care system each year with no forever family, opponents of LGBTQ rights are discriminating to the detriment of these kids. They do that, despite knowing that an estimated two million LGBTQ people would consider serving as foster or adoptive parents. According to the Williams Institute, same-sex couples are seven times more likely to foster and adopt than different-sex couples.

By prioritizing the religious beliefs of the foster care or adoption agency over the best interest of the child or youth (the complete opposite of what the child welfare system is obligated to do), these agencies can discriminate against LGBTQ youth, as well as the adults who wish to provide them a safe and loving home. The child welfare system's guiding principal is to work in the best interest of each child. Foster placements that abuse LGBTQ youth are not in their best interest. Group homes that do not respect a youth's identity or allow abuse toward them are not in their best interest. And refusing to place children in the care of vetted, trained, and loving adults just because they do not pass an agency's religious litmus test, is not in the best interest of children. There are nearly 400,000 children in foster care in the US. A quarter are waiting to be adopted. Another 23,000 youth age out of the system without permanent families. Denying them potential temporary or forever homes with LGBTQ adults is

not in the best interest of children.

When agencies are allowed to base placement decisions on their religious beliefs rather than the best interest of the child, they can, for example, decide that a bisexual teen or a gender nonconforming child should be placed in an institutional setting rather than an affirming placement or they can intentionally place them with a family that believes in conversion therapy (a medically discredited practice that is very harmful to try to change the sexual orientation or gender identity of a child). Only 16 states and DC ban conversion therapy; the rest have no laws against it. In New England, only Maine has not banned conversion therapy.

Children should not have to hide who they are. If states are going to be accepting responsibility for these youth and taking them into their custody, they shouldn't have to hide any parts of their identity for fear of any type of retaliation, specifically from those that are tasked with protecting them. It's important that they express those identities without fear.

Protecting LGBTQ youth in care and preventing discrimination against these youth and prospective parents are LGBTQ rights issues.

That's why the Every Child Deserves a Family Act (ECDF) is so important. ECDF is a federal bill that will counteract these state bills. States that allow discrimination by adoption and foster care agencies will have their federal funding, the main funding source for state child welfare services, restricted. ECDF puts the best interest of children back at the forefront by increasing access to safe

Across the country, with increasing frequency, states are passing license-to-discriminate laws that allow taxpayer-funded adoption and foster care agencies to make decisions for children in their care based on the agency's religious beliefs rather than on the best interests of the child.

and supportive homes and promoting culturally competent care for foster youth who identify as LGBTQ.

Although New England is free of any license-to-discriminate bills, our voices and stories can still make a difference. The Every Child Deserves a Family Campaign needs your stories, your support, and your voices. By joining the campaign at www.familyequality.org/everychild, you'll have the opportunity to receive action alerts, share your family, foster care, adoption or ally story with elected officials. Foster alumni can sign up to become involved in the Campaign's Foster Alumni Action Network. The ECDF Campaign shares real stories with your elected officials and works with individuals and families to help them meet with officials. The more that elected officials and people around the country hear our stories and understand the harm these bills are doing to children, the faster the ECDF bill will pass and state bills will change. ●



Emily McGranachan is Director of Family Engagement for Family Equality, the national nonprofit that advances the legal and lived equality for LGBTQ+ families and those who wish to form them. In this role, Emily plans Family Week in Provincetown, the largest annual gathering of LGBTQ+ families in the world.

This is particularly special because Emily attended Family Week as a teen with her moms. She also runs Family Equality's Family Speak Out program and hosts and produces their bi-weekly podcast, Outspoken Voices. Emily earned her BA at Mount Holyoke College in International Relations and Spanish and MA in Ethics, Peace and Global Affairs from American University in Washington, DC. Outside of work Emily likes to run, read, listen to podcasts and spend time with loved ones.



Schylar Baber is Family Equality Council's Federal Policy Consultant. He was recently Executive Director of Voice for Adoption and served on the governor-appointed Protect Montana Kids commission. He was an American Express NGEN Fellow, nationally awarded child welfare advocate, and respected foster alumni and survivor of conversion therapy. Schylar holds a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Montana. He spent 11 years in foster care before aging out without a family. When he was 25, his mentor and sixth-grade teacher adopted him.



Julie Kruse is Family Equality Council's Director of Federal Policy. She has over fifteen years of experience advocating for the LGBTQ community, immigrants, working families, and women and girls. Julie's efforts have contributed to victories including relief from deportation for tens of thousands of LGBTQ immigrant families, ending "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," and stopping discriminatory tax audits of low-income families. Julie holds a master's in education from Northwestern University and graduated summa cum laude with Distinction in Honors Biology from the University of Illinois. She is a proud stepparent and grandparent.

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From
State Representative
LIZ MALIA

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Primary Care

**Who decides
what being you
looks like?**



By Ruben Hopwood, MDiv, PhD

A primary concern for many health care providers is how to respond when someone experiencing gender incongruence and mental health concerns seeks out gender affirming hormone treatment (GAHT). Individuals who experience gender incongruence are people who I will categorize for the purposes of this article as trans and non-binary, or more widely as gender diverse people. This means individuals who experience their sex assigned at birth (e.g., typically male or female) as being an inaccurate or incomplete marker of their gender identity. Some may or may not use terms such as trans, non-binary, genderqueer, agender, gender fluid, etc. for self-identity. People may identify their gender in alignment with their assigned sex (cisgender). They may identify with an opposite gender from assigned sex, with two or more genders (non-binary, gender queer, bi-gender, two spirit), with genders that shift at times (gender fluid), or with no gender at all (agender).

[W]e get it all backwards and treat secondary issues first, believing that the underlying primary issue will just vanish.

In *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*, out of nearly 28,000 gender diverse people, 78 percent wanted GAHT, and only 49 percent had ever received this treatment. For many, whether they experience or disclose any mental health issues may determine whether they are given access to medically managed and safe treatment or are left without care. When supported in attaining safe GAHT, the overwhelming majority of gender diverse people report their lives markedly improve in ways that are counterintuitive to mental health and medical predictions and expectations, such as decreased depression and anxiety and increased job performance, life satisfaction, and sexual functioning. According to the Report, as well as a 2016 study, improvements exceeded traditional talk therapy and medication treatment for these symptoms with some reports of 80 percent improvement in overall quality of life. And still, health care remains largely focused on resolving secondary issues such as depression, suicidal thinking, and substance use, prior to treating

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the primary concern of gender dysphoria (e.g., significant distress brought on by incongruence between sex assigned at birth and socially expected gender identity).

I propose this focus on secondary issues is largely rooted in an unfortunate, though unsurprising reaction to gender diverse people breaking cultural expectations and norms. In our US culture that often seems hyper-focused on idealized images of unattainable masculine and feminine perfection, it can be challenging and confusing for most people trying to fit into gendered norms. It is especially challenging and confusing for those who do not identify themselves on a man-woman binary or with their sex assigned at birth.

We know the devastating impact on the health of women and gay men that arises from social images and messages around bodies. Cultural messages of what is “acceptable” masculinity and femininity are not new. As humans we seem to thrive on an inherent drive to have everyone in our groups be similar and look healthy according to our often arbitrary or superstitious markers. For instance, during the Great Depression, thin people were considered unhealthy, ill, unattractive, and to be avoided. Ads in the 1930s-1950s for products like Wate-On, admonished women, girls, men, boys, and convalescents, “If you want to be popular...you can’t afford to be skinny.” How different the 21st-century image of health is! It has turned upside-down.

Socially, we tend to exhibit fear, revulsion, and suspicion of anyone dissimilar to our ideals of health and normalcy. The dissimilarity from dominant cultural norms of gender incongruence engenders rejection, violence, and stigmatizing responses from the majority society. The response by gender diverse people to this stigma is understood through a minority stress model. Minority stress is a state of chronically high levels of stress due to being part of a marginalized group. The stress arises from repeated experiences of stigmatization, discrimination, poor social supports, and access to resources for basic needs. The highest known contributor to minority stress is personal prejudice and discrimination against a minority person or group. Responses to minority stress typically result in mental health concerns (e.g., depression, suicidal thinking, isolation, etc.) and coping strategies that may be debilitating or lead to additional experiences of marginalization and discrimination (e.g., substance use, drinking, cutting, eating issues, etc.).

At times, medicine and mental health practitioners focus on diagnosing and treating minority stress symptoms that make more sense to the provider or reduce clinician discomfort with caring for a gender diverse person. The providers (and family and friends) may blame the gender identity on the symptoms of minority stress. They develop the false belief that if these symptoms of “pathology” can be eliminated, then the person will become “normal” gendered as expected by the society. This process of making someone’s core identity and needs a problem is referred to broadly as pathologizing a person or a group of people. Individuals may end up with multiple diagnoses that interfere with or prevent gender affirming care. It’s a paradoxical situation from which there is little hope of escape. The solution (gender affirming treatment) is denied by the circumstances (bias and discrimination) that also create the problem (symptoms



Marchers in the 2018 Boston Pride Parade urged spectators to vote “yes” to uphold transgender protections, including the right to be free from discrimination in places of public accommodation, such as healthcare facilities. Credit: Boston Pride.

from minority stress that become the focus of treatment instead of gender affirmation).

In simpler terms, we get it all backwards and treat secondary issues first, believing that the underlying primary issue will just vanish. There are endless examples of people being denied gender affirming and other medically necessary treatments, such as routine cancer screenings and reproductive healthcare, or forced to wait until some far-off unattainable day when their lives conform to what someone else has defined for them before they can get care. In over a

decade of work in healthcare, providing direct services to hundreds of gender diverse people and helping clinical providers across the country working with thousands of gender diverse people, I have come to understand that the majority of care denials for gender diverse people arise from combinations of bias and misinformation rather than clear conditions that would block anyone from the same care.

This is a bias in health care and society that harms hundreds of thousands of people. It is preventable harm. Addressing this harm involves action, advocacy, and education. Counting gender diverse people in population polls, research, registration forms, and census data increases the visibility of the population and its needs. Integrating gender affirming care into medical and mental health professional education, by use of gender diverse model patients and case examples, teaches the next generation of providers to be aware of, and set better standards for, gender affirming care. Asking every single person who enters care what name they use and what their correct pronouns are demonstrates that you know gender diverse people exist and you want to include them openly in care. Fighting to change the status of gender affirming medical treatments from off-label to federally approved options will improve health care coverage, medical outcomes, and research. Integrating gender diversity into all employee non-discrimination and diversity training

instead of making it separate will normalize the expectation to treat everyone equitably. Putting non-discrimination clauses based on gender identity or expression explicitly into corporate policies creates foundations of intent and accountability for fair treatment of individuals. Removing exclusions for medically necessary gender affirming care from health insurance policies enables people to access safe health care from licensed providers. The list goes on.

The most important action is a challenge to cisgender people: willfully learn (more) about gender diverse populations from the people themselves through literature and thoughtful conversations. Ask yourself and others whether you contribute to transphobic bias unconsciously or consciously. Explore and work to change that. *Who decides what YOU look like or whether you get to be you at all? How can you be an ally for gender diverse people and not an obstacle? When will you take action?* ●

Ruben Hopwood, MDiv, PhD, is Coordinator of the Fenway Health Transgender Health Program and Visiting Researcher at The Danielsen Institute at Boston University. Ruben is Director and Founder of Hopwood Counseling & Consulting in Cambridge, MA. The opinions of the author do not represent any official position, policies, protocols, or practices of Fenway Health, The Danielsen Institute, or Boston University.



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POETIC SPECTRUM

By Scott Lentine

JUST A NORMAL DAY

Never knowing what to say
Never knowing what to do
Always looking for clues
Just a normal day

Feeling unsure
Totally perplexed with everyday life
Always on edge never certain
I wish I could lift this curtain

Needing to constantly satisfy my need for information
Always online searching for new revelations
Going from site to site
Obtaining new insights every night

Trying to connect with people my age
Attempting to reveal my unique vision
But ending up alone and unengaged
Feeling like my life needs a total revision

Just a normal day

CAN'T YOU SEE

Can't you see
I just want to have a friend

Can't you see
I need the same connections in the end

Can't you see
I want a good job

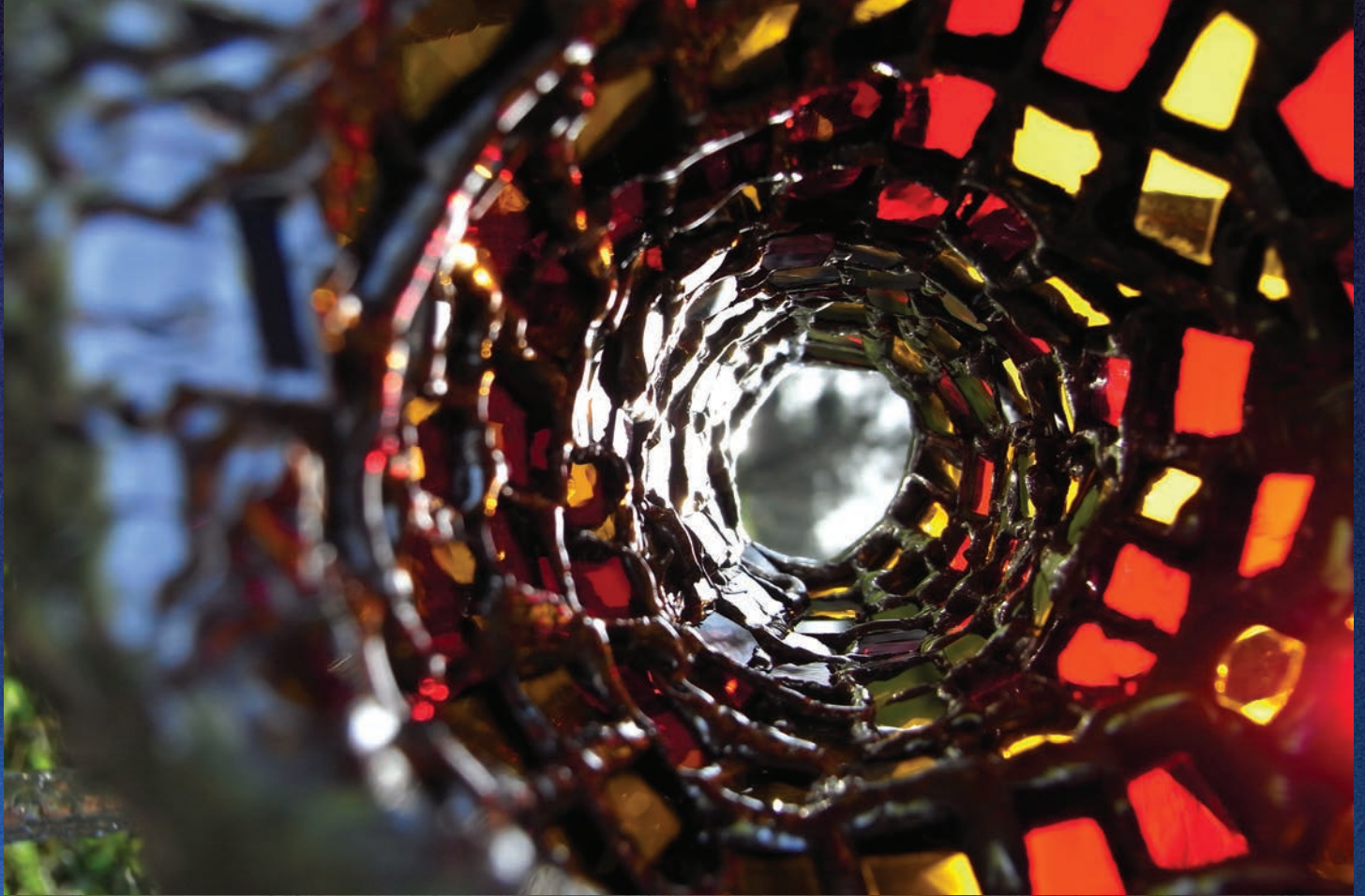
Can't you see
I need to have stability and independence and be part of
the general mob

Can't you see
I want to be independent on my own

Can't you see
I want to be able to have my own home

Can't you see
I want the same things as everyone else

Can't you see
I want to be appreciated for myself



Art: Marco Cannone, *Normal* (2010).

THE ODE TO THE AUTISTIC MAN

Try to understand the challenges that I face
I would like to be accepted as a human in all places

Where I will end up in life I don't know
But I hope to be successful wherever I go
I would like to expand my social skills in life
Making new friends would be very nice

Stand proud for the autistic man
For he will find a new fan

I hope to overcome the odds I face today
Increased acceptance will lead me to a brighter day

By the age of 20, I will have made tremendous strides
I know in the future, life will continue to be an interesting ride
I have made new friends by the year
I will be given tremendous respect by my family and peers

I hope to get noted for bringing the issue of autism to the common man
So that autistic people can be accepted in this great land

Stand proud for the autistic man
For he will find a new fan

I hope to overcome the odds I face today
Increased acceptance will lead me to a brighter day



Scott Lentine is a 31-year-old autistic man from Billerica. Scott is a public policy assistant at The Arc of Massachusetts, as well as an administrative assistant at a law firm. Scott writes poems about autism and several other subjects, including dogs, his summer beach town of Marshfield, and seasons.

You Like Pokémon Too!?

Why are so many of us still in love with Pokémon?

By William R. Anderson

Last summer I received a message online from Hannah, a young woman living in Portland, Oregon. She would be coming to Washington, DC to spend the fall semester working in Congress and wanted to know if I would be willing to meet up with her for an upcoming Pokémon GO Community Day. I readily agreed because, as many have found, spending Community Day with a group is a fantastic way to spend time with old friends and make new ones.

I contacted James and Eric, two other DC players I know from our online community, and we arranged to meet up by the Smithsonian National Zoo on a drizzly Saturday afternoon. That day was the unofficial beginning of “Hannah and her Three Gay Dads.” Once or twice a month we would use Pokémon GO as our excuse to get together, sometimes only in our group of four, sometimes with guests. It expanded beyond just Pokémon GO—we would meet up for lunch or dinner, have a coffee run as tradition, and spend hours catching Pokémon at the Jefferson, FDR, and MLK memorials.

I have loved playing Pokémon games in all their myriad forms for decades. I am fortunate enough to spend every week discussing the latest Pokémon news (and cracking poor jokes) with my friends Steve and Greg on the *It's Super Effective* podcast. Through the podcast I have learned about the various communities that grow around the Pokémon games, and have had the opportunity to share my love of the games with many people. Besides our mix of co-hosts from diverse backgrounds, including the current gay co-hosts, we are constantly in touch with a fan community that includes

lesbians, bisexuals, demi-girls and demi-boys (people who feel they are partially but not fully female or male), and others who are questioning and learning about their own identities.

Why do so many of us who fall outside the gender and orientation norms gravitate to Pokémon? There is tremendous diversity in both the variety of formats with which you can engage with Pokémon (anime, video games, card game, manga) and within

the stories told within the games. With 809 Pokémon to choose from, it would be difficult not to find one with some personal appeal (my current “all time” favorite is Volcarona).

The huge initial popularity of Pokémon GO made evident the long-standing love that many of us had for the game. When Pokémon GO first launched in 2016, its impact was evident: especially in urban areas, people were spending time outdoors again. Because of the design of the game around Pokéstops, you could tell which of your neighbors were playing and, surprisingly, people wanted to talk

about it. The common interest in Pokémon became the foundation for adventuring in your neighborhood streets with the common goal of catching them all. Many aspects of the games appealed even to those who had never played a Pokémon game before—accessibility on mobile devices, the ability to combine it with other activities, and the biggest appeal of them all: collecting!

Over the past thirty years, the traditional centers of gay and lesbian communities have eroded. Increased acceptance of gender and orientation diversity has allowed us to brave life in traditionally

Over the past thirty years, the traditional centers of gay and lesbian communities have eroded.



Art: Campbell La Pun, *Pink Ahhh Claws* (2014).

straight areas of town. Bar and club culture is a shade of what it used to be, as we can now meet people through apps, and younger generations are less focused on alcohol-centered entertainment. We still need to find opportunities to join together as a community for fun and play, throughout the year and not only during Pride celebrations. Pokémon provides those opportunities.

Pokémon GO is not the only avenue for LGBTQIA+ individuals to find opportunities to meet up and share their Pokémon love. Over the years I have participated in both the VGC (video game championships) and TCG (Trading Card Game) competitively. At these events, ranging from local shop tournaments to regional, national, and even world championships, you will encounter members of the community. When everyone is indulging in Pokémon play, it's a little easier to relax and just be yourself. Generally, the Pokémon gaming communities are open and accepting and will not tolerate bigotry in any form. When I have attended organized Pokémon events, I have usually felt that I am in a room full of allies.

In some ways, Pokémon Crystal, released in 2001 in North America, was revolutionary because it allowed you to select whether your player character was a boy or a girl. For some people, being able to play in a virtual world as the gender of their choice (rather than what they were assigned) provided some outlet for living life on their own terms. More recent Pokémon games have made further progress, moving beyond selecting "boy" or "girl" at all. You are presented with pictures of different racial, facial, and hair configurations and you select the one that looks "most like you." From there, many of the in-game characters use non-gendered terms to refer to you, the player. Many of us who have been involved

with Pokémon for the long haul have been asking for additional changes—like being able to purchase any of the clothing items for character customization rather than being limited to the boy clothes or the girl clothes depending on the image you selected at the start of the game.

Ultimately, though, there is a fundamental question for the LGBTQIA+ community to answer when engaging with Pokémon: Who is the most fabulous Pokémon? In my humble opinion, it is Florges, the beautiful Fairy-type Pokémon whose design is a drag queen's dream. My co-host Greg, on the other hand, votes for Roserade, a Grass- and Poison-type pixie. His argument is that Roserade can be either male or female, while Florges can only be female. In the end, it doesn't matter, so long as Pokémon gives us a reason to get together every week to laugh, argue, and play. Pokémon games all follow the same overall formula—you, the player, set out on an adventure starting with selecting your first Pokémon. Your intent is to defeat eight gym leaders and the Elite Four but, along the way, you end up saving the world. Don't worry—with six trusty Pokémon by your side, you can do it! ●



William R. Anderson (@washinthesink) has been the co-host of the weekly podcast It's Super Effective since 2012. He also hosts Drive Check: a Cardfight!! Vanguard podcast and contributes to the Tuesday Knight Games podcast. He lives in Washington, DC with his cat, Scrapple, and will be happy to bend your ear about his other interests including Katamari Damacy (greatest game of all time) and Monster Hunter (Switch Axe only hunter).

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Alex Robinson is a 15-year-old boy living in New York City, where he majors in visual arts at LaGuardia High School. He likes to create art based on his struggle as a transgender youth. Alex enjoys working with pens, markers, paint pens, and a digital tablet. He intends to become an animator or work in the clothing field.



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Art: Khalid Hussein, *Stonewall* (2017).

WHY STONEWALL STILL MATTERS AFTER 50 YEARS.

By Don Gorton

The Stonewall Uprising of June 28 to July 2, 1969, did not begin the LGBTQ civil rights movement. Much happened earlier. Drag queens, sex workers, and gay, lesbian and transgender individuals put up resistance in Los Angeles in May 1959 after a police raid at the Cooper Do-nuts shop. Transgender people and drag queens rioted when police raided a favorite late-night gathering spot, Compton's Cafeteria, in San Francisco in August 1966. And activism predated these riots. The "homophile" movement had been active since the 1950 founding of the Mattachine Society. 1955 saw the creation of the first lesbian organization in the United States, the Daughters of Bilitis. The general public discovered Christine Jorgensen, who became the first trans woman to undergo gender confirmation surgery in Denmark in the early 1950s. The first gay and lesbian protest at the White House occurred in 1965, and on every July 4th for the rest of the decade, an "Annual Reminder" gathering voiced the demand for equality at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Stonewall was thus the culmination of the early struggle rather than a "big bang" birthing a movement ex nihilo.

But even in historical context, the Stonewall Uprising is a singularity. The summer of 1969 was the decisive point at which a community coalesced and forged a collective identity. The brazenness of the riots, which lasted nearly a week, was unlike anything that had ever happened in the history of homosexuality and gender variance. The movement that followed represented a sharp break with the past; the impact over time would transform the world in ways previously unimaginable. What, then, was so special about Stonewall?

First, it electrified the lesbian, gay, and trans activists who would lead a historic wave of community organizing, for example, Craig Rodwell, organizer of the first New York City Pride March in 1970. Within a month of Stonewall, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) had been formed. Soon after, the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) broke away from the GLF to focus specifically on civil rights issues. Unlike pioneering organizations in California, such as the Society for Individual Rights (SIR), the GLF, and GAA, became models for community organizing countrywide. Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson gave impetus to the trans political movement with the founding in 1970 of Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR). The Stonewall Uprising turned what had been a cautious and invisible campaign aimed at improving the public image of sexual minorities into a mass movement that would take the issue of LGBTQ rights into the mainstream of American culture.

Second, the Stonewall Uprising inspired pervasive LGBTQ visibility. LGBTQ people faced immense social pressure to pass as straight, even to the point of marrying someone of the opposite sex. Homosexuality and gender variance were something to keep hidden. Stonewall marked the beginning of a decisive shift in consciousness, when ever-increasing numbers of gays, lesbians, and trans people defied stigma to publicly embrace who they were. "Coming out" became a civic obligation. It was possible to demand



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some respect, which could never have been claimed by people skulking about in closets.

Third, after the Stonewall Uprising, a broad political program began to take shape. Raids on gay bars were met with spirited demonstrations until they stopped. Activists chipped away at extralegal police impositions, like the New York rule that individuals had to wear three items of clothing “appropriate” to their birth gender. Same-sex dancing was effectively legalized in New York in the early 1970s. The GAA launched in 1971 a drive for laws to ban discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations, which finally passed in 1986 as NYC’s civil rights ordinance. Groups like Community United against Violence in San Francisco and the New York City Anti-Violence Project mobilized against hate crimes. Activists began working state-by-state to repeal sodomy laws, which were finally dispatched nationwide by the US Supreme Court in 2003 in the landmark case *Lawrence v. Texas*.

While the early movement was centered on New York and California, Massachusetts moved to the forefront of change in the post-Stonewall era. In 1974, Elaine Noble became the first openly lesbian or gay person to be elected to public office, winning a seat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Massachusetts was the second state to pass an LGB anti-discrimination law in 1989, and stood as a national leader in empowerment of LGBTQ youth in the 1990s. In 2001, Massachusetts became the first state to cover gender identity in a hate crimes law. The advent of marriage equality in the Commonwealth in 2004 went on to sweep the nation: The Supreme Court’s *Obergefell* decision legalized same-sex marriage in all 50 States in 2015. Transgender civil rights won legislative victories on Beacon Hill in the 2010s and were resoundingly reaffirmed at the ballot box in 2018. And just this past month,

Massachusetts outlawed conversion therapy for minors after seven years of hard work by community activists!

The Stonewall Uprising was truly epochal. Over the last 50 years, the event has taken on transcendent meaning because visionaries invested it with a symbolic power that would spur widespread community organizing. Openly gay, lesbian, and transgender intellectuals like Arthur Evans, Kay Tobin, and Donn Teal propagated liberationist ideas that would transform the lives of LGBTQ people everywhere. Untold millions have since come out worldwide. As author Edmund White observed in a 1969 letter to his friends, poet Alfred Corn and his wife Ann, Stonewall is our community’s equivalent of the Storming of the Bastille. In 1969, our forebears confronted oppression and the course of history was forever changed. ●



A Mississippi native, Don Gorton has been an LGBTQ rights advocate in Massachusetts since his days as a student at Harvard Law School. Don led the Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance 1988-94; the Governor’s Task Force on Hate Crimes 1991-2003; and the Anti-Violence Project of Massachusetts from 1994 forward. He co-chaired the campaign to ban conversion therapy for minors, which secured legislation in 2019. He was involved in passing the 1989 Lesbian/Gay Civil Rights Law; the 1996 Hate Crimes Penalties Act; anti-bullying legislation in 2010; and trans civil rights legislation in 2011. Don has also served as Clerk of the Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide, where he is a contributing writer focusing on history and LGBTQ culture. Gorton is a former tax judge and presently a tax counsel with the Massachusetts Division of Local Services specializing in municipal finance law.

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Art: Vakseen, Jez (2014).

Raising Our Voices

Combating cultural appropriation in the queer community.

By Chelsea Bland

If you're a person of color, you've likely experienced one of those cringe-worthy moments when someone of a different culture (let's be honest, usually a white person) tries to prove they can relate to you by saying or doing something clearly inappropriate, or worse yet, wildly offensive.

Frankly, this is quite common within the queer community. From casual gatherings to drag shows, we see people within the LGBTQIA+ community step into the murky waters of microaggressions, cultural appropriation, or outright racism. It happens when folks think it's okay to mimic a black woman's

attitude or be the "fiery Latina" when they are in spaces where they feel more comfortable. And most of us have heard the stories of people in our community using racist or derogatory language on dating apps—so much so that Grindr launched its #KindrGrindr campaign to combat discrimination on its platform.

Calling out cultural appropriation usually brings the chorus of people who try to convince everyone that these types of actions are just a result of folks having fun or only intended to show appreciation for another culture.

In an article in Australia's *Star Observer*, Kristian Reyes defines

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cultural appropriation in a way I think is worth repeating here: “Cultural appropriation occurs when we co-opt aspects of an underprivileged or minority culture and divorce it from its roots for the purpose of costume, fashion, ridicule, or profit.”

As someone who is both queer and black, I regularly navigate the intersecting worlds that make up my identity. Depending on what circles I’m in, my sexual orientation may be ambiguous, but my blackness is always front and center.

My life has taken me on this journey of navigating blackness, queerness, and womanhood. I’ve been able to find my tribe, a safe space that encompasses all of my identities and allows me just to be. So when I see elements of black womanhood trotted around in queer spaces as a punch line or caricature, it stings just that much more.

WHAT DOES CULTURAL APPROPRIATION LOOK LIKE?

It’s common to see white queer folks imitate colloquialisms and mannerisms created and popularized in the black community. Now some try to get away with the argument, “We’re both marginalized groups. I understand your struggle, so there’s no reason to be offended if I belt out ‘yasss queen’ for the tenth time during this cocktail hour.”

Insert exasperated sigh. Proximity to a particular group or loose familiarity with their struggle does not give one carte blanche to cherry-pick aspects of their culture to entertain others or weave into one’s public persona for personal gain.

For example, let’s look no further than pop culture’s favorite lesbian: Ellen DeGeneres. Now, generally speaking, I think she is funny. Her skits with former First Lady Michelle Obama are some of my favorite things to watch on the interwebs. And, DeGeneres’ impact on entertainment and popular culture is undeniable. Where it gets sticky is how she has used her relationship with black celebrities and her own queer identity to step over the line.

Remember in 2015 when she did a Nicki Minaj skit and the characters had exaggerated back sides? Or in 2016 when she shared a meme of herself riding on the back of Olympian Usain Bolt and said that’s how she wanted to run her errands?

Feel free to join me in a collective side eye. The clear issue here is that black folks are continuously used as props. Society’s insatiable appetite for a joke reduces us to a punchline and the complexity of our personhood is erased.

In her theGrio.com article “Ellen just reminded us what happens when white liberal friends get too comfortable,” Blue Telusma explains a core problem behind words and behaviors some view as harmless jokes: “The biggest privilege of whiteness is constant



Tagg Magazine aims to center the stories of lesbian and queer black and other people of color. Credit: Tagg Magazine.

With the ‘othering’ of diverse cultures comes the silencing of their voices.

access to your humanity. White people—as a whole—will always be seen as three-dimensional and sympathetic human beings. Human is their default setting. People of color don’t get that luxury. We are seen as a solid mass of peculiarity. Our default setting is otherness.”

With the “othering” of diverse cultures comes the silencing of their voices. We saw this when DeGeneres chose to jump into the Kevin Hart debacle—as if to speak for all queer folk when it came to his past homophobic comments. While I support a queer-led space for Kevin Hart to address his problematic words and behaviors, this was a conversation that he needed to have with the black queer community. This was a time for DeGeneres to step back and let black queer voices lead the discussion.

Here again we see where queer white folks act in a way that suggests that because they experience marginalization they can therefore speak for all those who face oppression. Being a true ally and partner in supporting other diverse groups means knowing when to use one’s privilege to amplify the voices and stories of those that are too often silenced.



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TELLING OUR STORIES

When I interviewed *Tagg Magazine* Founder and Editor-in-Chief Eboné Bell about the issues surrounding cultural appropriation, she kept coming back to the importance of telling our own stories. This is powerful. When we are in charge of our own narrative, we get to craft our stories and clap back at anyone who tries to distort the record. A key part of this is also being able to share and create our history.

“I would love it if 50 years from now some young lesbian picks up *Tagg*, [perhaps] sitting in their gay auntie’s house, and they are able to read these stories of people who came before them. [To see the] powerful black queer people who came before them; [to] open the magazine and see that a black queer woman started this,” said Bell.

Publications like *Tagg Magazine* are essential, especially when mainstream queer culture leaves out communities of color. *Tagg Magazine* was created to serve—as its tagline states—everything lesbian, queer and under the rainbow. It provides the community with a central source for lesbian and queer culture, news, and events. The magazine, and its accompanying podcast *Tagg Nation*, are intentional about telling the stories of queer people of color, and not in a way that just checks the diversity box. “I’m proud that I get to tell those stories and we’re intentional about telling those stories. It’s not like ‘alright, I gotta get a black person.’ It’s intentional because the owner and editor is a black queer woman. I exist and I have a story to tell,” said Bell.

We are all moved when we get to see a representation of ourselves in the media that we consume. It helps us feel seen and gives us the courage to travel the path that is meant for us.

ROLE OF PRIDES

While we see increased visibility of the LGBTQIA+ community in mainstream media, there’s often a lack of diversity in that representation. Even as we become more visible, whiteness is still the dominant identity.

Pride organizations are not immune from falling into this trap. Prides have an important role in navigating celebration, history, and event creation within the queer community. As organizers it is incumbent upon us not to just borrow from cultures that help us sell event tickets, but rather continue to build coalitions with marginalized groups within our communities. The immense amount of diversity within the queer spectrum means that we can’t continue to have our organizations, programs, and marketing materials mainly reflect the interests and aesthetic of white gay men.

And we can’t make changes just to avoid bad press.

We’ve got to get in the trenches, get uncomfortable, and build upon the strides made by generations before us.

“When it comes to talking about the actual issues that are plaguing our trans women of color, plaguing our brothers who are being heavily policed, and all of these issues in our community people are not as quick to want to embrace that,” said Natalie Thompson, Vice President of Records Management for the Board of Directors of Capital Pride Alliance. “I think that is a major problem within our community, and we have to figure out ways of having those uncomfortable conversations without it turning into a very divisive conversation.”

It’s imperative that we reach out to groups that are underrepresented in our organizations and at our events. This involves creating spaces to truly listen to diverse voices in our community, being open to feedback, even when it’s critical, and taking actions that are consistent with the needs of our community.

We can’t be lazy with our words and dismissive with our actions when it comes to substantive change that honors, uplifts, and centers the voices of those in our community who are most often pushed aside.

When we look at our boards, do we see the full spectrum of our community represented? Are our organization leaders able to speak from their own experiences of living at the margins of race, sexuality, gender and/or disability? Do we even give a second thought to whether someone can physically attend our events because there’s a staircase leading up to the front door?

When we’re truly able to address these issues in a meaningful way our community members won’t have to brace themselves for the next cringe-worthy moment. ●

We’ve got to get in the trenches, get uncomfortable, and build upon the strides made by generations before us.



Chelsea Bland is a proud union member with the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 2 and serves as the local’s LGBTQIA+ committee chair. She also serves as the volunteer chair for Capital Pride Alliance. Beyond her volunteer work and full-time job at a national labor union, Chelsea is also a freelance photographer.

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Let's Talk About Sexual Positions



Art: Federico Cortese, *Lovers* (2000).

Narrow Definitions of Sex and Binary Position Labels Can Limit Your Sex Life

By Justin Lehmillier, PhD

What does “having sex” mean to you? If you’re a gay or bisexual man, chances are that you define it as insertive or receptive anal intercourse, or “topping” and “bottoming,” respectively, as they’re known more commonly in the community.

Men who have sex with men tend to see this as the “gold standard” for sex, according to scientific research. In a 2017 study published in *The Journal of Sex Research*, participants were recruited at Pride festivals to complete a survey about their definitions of sex. Specifically, they were asked to evaluate up to 17 different activities and determine whether each one counted or not.

While there wasn’t 100% agreement on anything, gay and bisexual men mostly agreed that anal intercourse counts—in fact, more than 90% said that “topping” and “bottoming” were “definitely sex.”

No other activity on the list was categorized as such by a majority of participants. For example, approximately one-third said that oral sex, rimming, using sex toys with a partner, and mutual masturbation could be considered sex.

By contrast, lesbian and bisexual women saw things very differently. In fact, there were ten different activities that a majority of them said were “definitely sex.” These activities included using dildos, oral sex, sixty-nining, rubbing vulvas together, and mutual masturbation.

Gay and bisexual men, it seems, define “sex” in a far more restricted way than do lesbian and bisexual women. Moreover, most gay and bi men identify as strictly “top” or “bottom” when it comes to sex. A 2017 study published in the journal *PLOS ONE* found that, among gay men, more than two-thirds (69%) identified with one of these position labels.

So, what are the implications of the fact that gay and bisexual men tend to see sex in such narrow terms and, further, that most identify with a specific sexual role? Is it a good idea to take such a black-and-white approach to sex? As a sex researcher and educator, I see it as being more harmful than beneficial for several reasons, which I explain below.

Narrow definitions of sex lead to a scripted, goal-oriented approach to sexual activity.

When sex is defined very narrowly, this necessarily sets a goal for a given sexual encounter. People try to get through everything else—the foreplay—quickly (or they skip it altogether) in order to reach the “main event” where everyone has their clearly defined roles.

If the pioneering research of Masters and Johnson—the founders of the modern sex therapy movement—taught us anything, it’s that goal-oriented sex doesn’t make for the best sex. In fact, it creates a sense of pressure that forces you to stay in your head and stick to the script rather than getting lost in the moment, having fun, and exploring different sensations.

In other words, sex is no longer about what you want to happen, but what you think is “supposed” to happen. The result is that sex has a tendency to become routine very quickly. Further, pressure to stick to the script can create performance anxiety that reduces sexual desire and arousal.

You would probably be surprised at the number of gay men who have approached me over the years who want my help because they’re in sexless relationships. They’re having sex with their partners infrequently or not at all—and do you know why? It’s almost invariably because their sex life has become too predictable: it’s the same thing over and over.

Rather than trying to mix things up with their current partner, many of them had cheated, some had opened their relationships, and some were thinking about breaking up. However, these things aren’t necessarily going to solve their underlying issue—the predictability of sex. Those who just break up are dooming themselves to experience the same problem time and again because, well, “same script, different cast,” as Whitney Houston and Deborah Cox once told us.

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Narrow definitions of sex prevent you from trying new things.

One of the big problems with the goal-oriented approach to sex is that it prevents you from exploring your sexuality. What do you like? What feels good? The truth is that it's hard to know unless you actually try different things. This means that there could be a lot of things out there—kinks, perhaps—that bring you great pleasure that you just haven't discovered yet.

Trying new sexual activities isn't just a form of self-exploration—it's also a way to fight off something psychologists refer to as the "Coolidge Effect." The idea behind this concept is that sexual arousal tends to decrease over time in response to the same sexual stimulus. As a result, we need to keep introducing novelty into our sex lives in order to maintain high levels of arousal and interest.

For example, if you watch the same porn clip every day, you'll tire of it pretty fast. Watch a new clip, however, and not only will you likely become more aroused, but you may even reach orgasm faster. In fact, there are scientific studies showing that this is exactly what happens!

The Coolidge Effect explains why when I surveyed more than 4,000 Americans about their sexual fantasies for my book *Tell Me What You Want*, I found that novelty was one of the core fantasy themes, regardless of gender and sexual orientation. We crave trying new things when it comes to sex.

There are all kinds of ways to introduce novelty into your sex life, from a new partner to a new position to a new sex toy to having sex in a different setting. The possibilities are endless.

The key point is that you shouldn't be afraid to mix it up. And if maintaining a long-term monogamous relationship is what you want, this becomes massively important. When passion for a partner wanes, amping up the novelty factor in the bedroom (or where ever it is that you like to have sex) can bring it roaring back.

Adhering to strict position labels can limit your potential pool of partners—and your opportunities for love.

Have you ever turned down a sexual opportunity because the other person was a mismatch for your preferred sexual position? You're not alone. It's not uncommon for gay and bisexual men to meet other men and experience strong mutual attraction, but to pass on the opportunity to hookup or start a relationship because they don't have compatible sexual position labels.

Every time this happens, you're missing out on a potential opportunity to have a hot and different sexual experience, or possibly

to even start a meaningful relationship with a great person. When sex is defined so narrowly and position labels become relationship dealbreakers, it not only limits our pool of potential partners, but also our opportunities to find true love.

Adhering to strict position labels can limit your sexual skills, techniques, and satisfaction.

Yet another limitation of taking a narrow view of sex, and strictly identifying as a top or bottom, is that it prevents tops from learning what it feels like to bottom, and vice versa. If you've never experienced the other side, you might be limiting your sexual skills and maybe even making incorrect assumptions about what feels good to someone in the other position.

By exploring and experimenting with different positions, you'll learn more about what feels good and what doesn't. You can then use this knowledge to enhance your sexual techniques in ways that not only increase your own pleasure and satisfaction, but also that of your partner(s).

There are all kinds of ways to introduce novelty into your sex life, from a new partner to a new position to a new sex toy to having sex in a different setting.

Conclusions

What I hope you take away from all of this is that "sex" doesn't have to be just one thing. The more narrowly we define sex and put people in clearly defined boxes that specify their sexual roles, the more limited our sex lives become. We miss out on opportunities for pleasure, self-exploration, and love. We also make it harder to maintain satisfaction over time in our relationships, no matter what type of relationship you're in—monogamous, "monogamish," or polyamorous.

It's time to drop the script, mix it up, and define sex on your own terms. ●



Justin Lehmiller, PhD, is a Research Fellow at The Kinsey Institute and author of the blog Sex and Psychology. His writings have appeared in USA Today, VICE, Playboy, Men's Health, Politico, and Psychology Today. Dr. Lehmiller's latest book is Tell Me What You Want: The Science of Sexual Desire and How It Can Help You Improve Your Sex Life. Follow him

on Twitter @JustinLehmiller or Instagram @JustinJLehmiller
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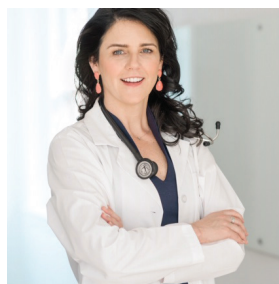
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Corporate Responsibility Makes Prides Go 'Round

Turning corporate support into community activism

By Sylvain Bruni

Credit: Marilyn Humphries.



Since the first anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, Prides have struggled to balance the tension between celebrating the progress our community has made and agitating for not-yet-obtained queer liberation. The nature of Pride celebrations around the world varies depending on the local context. In countries and American states where queer communities are oppressed, small Pride groups—oftentimes the only organized community outlet—strive for visibility and recognition. In large metropolitan areas, like Boston—with over 200 non-profit organizations that serve, represent, advocate for, or cater to our community—Pride is both a platform and a space creator. Pride is a platform for community members and organizations to express themselves, and a space for every member of our community to connect with one another, and with each of these organizations. By bringing our community together, Pride attracts the media’s spotlight, engages our allies and non-community members in a direct way, and amplifies the voices in our community, through our sheer number and impact.

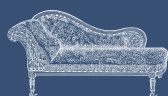
As a producer of events for an ever-growing community, Boston Pride, like other large Prides, has evolved from a small group of activists planning a rally on the Common, to an equally small group of activists planning over 50 events a year! Despite being an all-volunteer organization, Boston Pride has had to meet the expectations of our community and the ever-evolving demands of the times. And the numbers don’t lie: Boston Pride has experienced exponential growth in the last ten years, both in attendance and in events produced.

As with any non-profit organization in our community, money is crucial to the operation, planning, and production of our events; without money, Pride cannot deliver quality programs to our community. There are typically three sources of revenue for non-profits: grants, individual giving, and sponsorship. Grant writing is an art, and grant getting is a science. Without qualified individuals who can marry art and science to win grants, or volunteer bandwidth to learn through trial and error, it’s an option that Boston Pride has not been able to rely on. Individual giving (i.e., private donations from people to the organization) has rarely been successful for our organization. While Pride used to get over \$5,000 of donations thrown onto the Parade’s large rainbow flag, we now are lucky to get \$10. Our orange bucket collections during the Parade and the Festival experience the same sobering lack of success year after year. Our experiment with cell donations (remember “text PRIDE to 12345 to donate \$5 to Boston Pride”?) failed miserably. We collected \$35—mostly from Boston Pride Committee members—and were left with a technology cost of several hundred dollars.



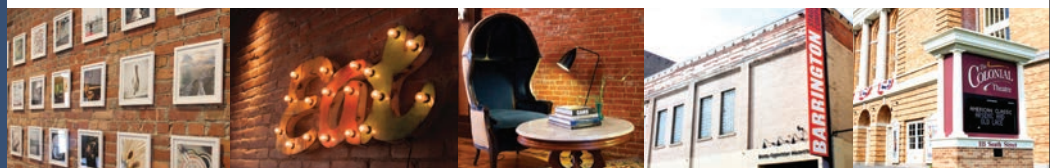
Credit: Marilyn Humphries.

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Credit: Marilyn Humphries.

Our annual #GivingTuesday campaigns have also reached their limits, with donations steadily decreasing over the years. While Boston Pride loves, and is profusely grateful to, all its donors and supporters, the effort, in terms of time and dedication needed to develop and to maintain an individual giving program, is no longer an efficient use of its limited volunteer resources.

This financial reality is not unique to Boston Pride. Every year, when I attend the world conference of InterPride (the international association of Pride organizers, of which Boston Pride is a founding member), I poll my colleagues at peer Pride organizations about how they manage to derive grants and individual donations. With the exception of those from Prides that have paid development staff, every single Pride leader responds similarly: “not worth [our] time.” And that unfortunately has been my experience: why should I spend over 80 hours of volunteer time preparing for #GivingTuesday to collect less than \$3,000, when I can spend 30 minutes convincing a sponsor to support Pride with \$10,000?

Would the community be amenable to forgoing a march completely as even one lacking the (literal) bells and whistles requires permit and security fees?

Radical activists will tell you that you can always plan Pride without money. Certainly. But what kind of Pride? Without money, what do we cut from our 49-year-old celebration? The Concert, which attracts an average of 50,000 per year? The block parties (and the Community Fund they sustain)? The Black and Latinx Pride events, which typically lose money but provide essential space for the community? Would the community be amenable to forgoing a march completely as even one lacking the (literal) bells and whistles requires permit and security fees? Boston Pride has strived over the years to maintain low entrance fees to Parade contingents and to Festival exhibitors, even creating solidarity levels far below cost to ensure grassroots organizations could still connect with our community. All of this comes at a substantial cost that cannot be paid with revolutionary utopian ideals.

If corporations are willing to give Prides money, why not use it as an opportunity to empower, to educate, and to augment their



EXHIBITION

Don Joint: Narcissus

MAY 30-AUGUST 18, 2019

In this exhibition, multimedia artist Don Joint explores the homoeroticism and sensual gaze central to the Narcissus myth through his various series of works including collages, bottles, dinnerware, and other found ephemera.

The show is held to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Stonewall riots. A selection of artwork by other LGBTQ artists will also be on display.

A Pride brunch and celebration of the exhibition will be held at the gallery June 8, 11-2pm. Childs Gallery is located just a short walk away from Copley Square, the start of the Boston Pride Parade.

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Credit: Marilyn Humphries.

programmatic impact? If companies are eager to pay for access to our community, let those payments provide us with the opportunity to develop programs that serve our community, in particular the most vulnerable or most historically discriminated against.

Sure, some companies are solely participating in Pride to promote themselves. But how is that different from an animal shelter (which is not intrinsically a queer organization) marching in the Parade? Of the 2017 Parade participants, for example, Pride only identified a single corporate contingent that was just a marketing operation. All others were either LGBTQ-owned or operated businesses, or Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) of those companies. Who is Pride to tell some community members that they cannot march in the Parade because they are part of a corporation? What does it say about us if we have come to the point that we judge adversely our fellow community members based on their employer or job? What is the harm to our community when a company marches in the Pride Parade and says it values its LGBTQ employees and customers?

No matter what positive community impact comes out of corporate dollars, adherents to the queer purity test will throw accusations of pinkwashing and selling out.

On the contrary, I see the participation of companies and corporate entities as a positive evolution of our movement: it shows that our community is succeeding in driving visibility, acceptance, and equality. It is unfair, and quite conservative and reactionary, to demand that Pride continue to be exactly what it used to be in the 70s. Our movement has evolved, our community has changed, and equality is progressing. There is still plenty to do, and that's why Pride continues to pursue a dual identity of celebration (for what we have accomplished) and of activism (for what's left to be done). Sacrificing one for the other is shortsighted.

Corporate engagement with our community extends beyond Prides with corporations engaging publicly in lobbying against policies harmful to our community. Recently, PayPal withdrew plans for an expansion in North Carolina in response to an anti-trans law. Additionally, companies including Uber, Prudential, Marriott, and Amazon, submitted an amicus brief in support of the community in *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado*. Businesses in the United States, and around the world,

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have been providing their economic weight to ensure equality for our community. There are several companies that have supported Boston Pride for over a decade, and even one beer partner who has provided financial relief since 1999, long before the fight for equality was fashionable. Why would we say no to that support? Why would we turn that power away?

Accepting corporate money comes with its responsibility for Pride organizers to assess each entity: are they actually supporting their LGBTQ employees at work, or do they have policies against discrimination? The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has worked for years to conduct such assessment, through the Corporate Equality Index (CEI). For years, Boston Pride has conducted these internal evaluations and weighted our engagement with companies that did not reach the top 100% score. And typically, Pride's work behind the scenes has been one of education and empathy to affect change in the workplace through support of and interactions with ERGs.

However, for the radical component in our community, this will never cut it. No matter what positive community impact comes out of corporate dollars, adherents to the queer purity test will throw accusations of pinkwashing and selling out. Placing such a purity test on sponsors' intent would result in the abandonment of all corporate funding, for the simple reason that businesses, by definition (as entities meant to generate profits) will never meet the purity requirement. Consequently, as logically outlined previously, Pride would need to downsize and cut programming. I don't believe that this is a net positive for our community. To the contrary. And that opinion is, anecdotally, shared by several organizers who launched and built the Pride movement in the 70s. In their words, "We dreamt to see companies embracing us, welcoming us, caring about and for us." Isn't the point of marching in the street or rallying on the Common to drive visibility, acceptance, and equality?

Partnering with corporate sponsors creates a mechanism whereby Pride can educate and train the company to be a better employer or a better ally to its queer customers. HRC's CEI can be leveraged as a roadmap to perform this work and to yield tangible, positive outcomes for LGBTQ workers and for our community. Additionally, this work isn't restricted to happening in June: beyond Pride week or Pride month, partnerships can ensure visibility of our community year-round. Examples abound to illustrate how an ERG's participation in Pride activities has helped revive the group, motivates queer employees to be out at work, fostered a better workplace climate, and even driven the conversion to gender-neutral bathrooms. Conversely, we have observed how corporations with significant marketing budgets have expanded their equality-focused advertisement outside of our community, thereby making a statement, creating conversations in straight communities and circles of power, and generating visibility, all three positive benefits to our community.

Partnering with corporate sponsors creates a mechanism whereby Pride can educate and train the company to be a better employer or a better ally to its queer customers.

Our community additionally gains leverage and power when engaging in close partnership with businesses. When Boston Pride did not have the operational budget to pay for a meeting space, it was a local bank in the Boston area that donated its community room, so our team could meet every Tuesday. This initial relationship has grown over the years to positive advocacy for policy change and monetary support not only for Boston Pride but multiple other community organizations. This newly gained leverage has led to another opportunity for impact: targeted, thoughtful, and deliberate recruiting of LGBTQ employees. A local technology company didn't have an ERG when they began partnering with Pride, but plenty of motivated queer employees. Seeing a huge need for recruitment, they worked with their human resources department to specifically participate in Boston Pride events to recruit queer techies. And recruit they did: all their jobs openings received a deluge of candidates. That is

positive impact for our community and for our movement. Last year, Boston Pride was similarly approached by two companies that desired to work with Boston Pride to launch a company-wide ERG initiative on diversity and to recruit data scientists and software engineers from our community.

Seeing a clear pickup in sponsorship demand in 2018, the Boston Pride Board of Directors made the decision, for the first time, to allocate 10 percent of all partnership revenue to the Boston Pride Community Fund. This allowed Pride to give an unprecedented \$43,000 to serve underrepresented segments of our community through direct financial support of grassroots organizations this year.

Ultimately, the job of a Pride organization is to create positive impact: lifting up and amplifying the voices in our community, so we gain equal rights, for everyone, everywhere. Corporate sponsorships are *in fine* a means to an end, engaging and rewarding opportunities to affect change for the better. From a purely pragmatic point of view, they keep the lights on and support those programs that have little to no revenue. ●



Sylvain Bruni is Executive Editor of the 2019 Boston Pride Guide and a former President of Boston Pride (2014–2018) and member of its Board of Directors (2007–2018). He has volunteered with Boston Pride on the Committee since 2003 and led two of its major events (Parade and Back Bay Block Party), as well as key organizational areas (communications, security, technology, and sponsorship). Until 2018, he played an active role on the Board and Committee of InterPride and co-chaired the 2012 InterPride World Conference in Boston. Outside of Pride, he is Principal Engineer at Aptima, a local R&D company in the fields of defense, aeronautics, and healthcare.

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PAN OPTICS

NAVIGATING INVISIBLE IDENTITIES

By Luisa Berios*

Luisa writes pseudonymously due to privacy concerns. –Ed.

The prospect of explaining myself to others is so daunting it makes me feel nauseous. Every key aspect of my identity is hidden, or, rather, not directly discernable. And people can't help but generalize and label based on what they see. While such judgements may not be motivated by malice, they nevertheless require continuous effort from me and many others, whose identities are assumed from perception. I look like a Caucasian, suburban, heterosexual, Christian, and happily married mom of one. In reality, I am an Asperger's mom. I am one-hundred-percent Hispanic. I am pagan. And I identify as pansexual. None of these intersecting identities is clearly discernable by simply looking at me.

Sometimes that complicates social and professional relationships.

Not being perceived as holding multiple such identities leaves you open to hearing hurtful comments in everyday conversations. I've heard colleagues and acquaintances complain to me about Latinos and illegal immigrants, never suspecting that I am the descendent of a thrice-deported grandfather from Cuba. Some around me have derided special needs students and went so far as to advocate for the removal of kids like my daughter from the general population! And similar encounters have occurred with people disparaging the LGBTQ community, *my* community, to my face.

Inevitably, though, I do label myself. But I do so only parsimoniously and when the identity I reveal doesn't challenge my relationship with the person to whom I am opening up. Even then, unsolicited advice regarding how to express my identities regularly comes my way. Some suggest I should only describe myself as Cuban and not Puerto Rican as a shield against racism, as Cubans tend to be seen as "more white" in our society. Others encourage me to keep my faith quiet because paganism is allegedly too "New Age" and might cast me as flaky and unreliable. I was advised not to give detail about my sexual identity, as doing so may upset those around me. These repeated experiences reinforced my wariness about sharing too much when meeting new people, which creates a vicious cycle: If people with invisible identities are mistreated when we disclose those identities, we are unable to publicly challenge

misconceptions about our communities.

When I was younger, I was engaged to a woman. We were assumed both to be lesbians. Then, already, I would hear less than tolerant feelings being vented against queer identities, even from members of the LGBTQ community, albeit infrequently. Thus, I was quite reluctant to out myself as, at that time, bisexual. There were women who looked on bisexuality as a false claim, motivated by a desire to please or accommodate men. The absence of a tangible, observable proof of my identity triggered constant denial of said identity. This is one of the struggles of having bisexual or pansexual identities: our identities are not punctually observable, and thus are treated with skepticism.

Despite constant evolution of society and its general attitude towards sexual and gender minorities, bisexual and pansexual individuals continue to be on the receiving end of insensitive judgement by those not realizing that one observable behavior, at a specific time, may not exemplify a lifelong identity. I feel comfortable, though, with the prospect of explaining to my daughter that her mother looked for relationships regardless of gender and found her father. I am confident I'll be able to talk to her about my full identity, without concern for causing distress or rejection. To that end, and despite the current political and social climate, I continuously encourage my daughter to look at people as complex beings. I teach her to fight generalizing perceptions, and to be open to surprises when she meets someone new. I am hopeful that, as people within and outside of the broader LGBTQ community continue to educate themselves on bisexuality and pansexuality, my daughter's generation will be able to grow up in a world where all sexual and gender minorities can be welcomed and celebrated. ●

Luisa Berios is an educator, knitter, and bibliophile. She is the proud mother of an amazing daughter. In addition to the identities described above, she proudly identifies as a Hufflepuff.

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Sporting her signature rainbow mohawk, Woody Woodward sits proudly atop her motorcycle at the 2007 New York City Pride March. Credit: David Shankbone.

TRAILBLAZER

Motorcycling for service

By Marjorie Charney, Boe Morgan, Gin Shear, and Susan Slate

On the day of the 2009 Boston Pride Parade, our community woke up to heartbreaking news: Woody (Donna) Woodward had passed away after a long battle with ovarian cancer. A founding member of Boston's Moving Violations Motorcycle Club (MVMC), Woody spent countless hours volunteering with GLBTQ organizations and fundraising for HIV/AIDS and cancer research.

A staple of Pride days in Boston and New York City, Woody sported a rainbow mohawk that illustrated her approach to life: Woody married her burning passion for riding with a fiery desire to improve the world. As an out and proud GLBTQ activist, she combined community service with living an adventurous life to the fullest.

At home, Woody strove to build community everywhere she went, serving countless local organizations and inspiring others to do the same. For two decades, she (wo)manned the Boston AIDS Walk in a grass skirt and rainbow-colored umbrella cap, simultaneously barking orders to the marchers and cheering them on. She marshaled three-day-long AIDS bicycle rides dressed in various personas: Xena, Wonder Woman, and even the Easter Bunny! She motorcycled thousands of miles to raise funds for breast cancer research on the Pony Express Rides.

Woody grabbed the handles of leadership to ensure the sustainability of the causes and groups she served. MVMC, Boston's own all-women riding club founded in 1985, benefited greatly from her headship, communicative joy, and sometimes stubborn drive towards community service and fundraising. Woody organized the Club to be a volunteer force at community events. Significantly, she

ensured the Youth LGBT Commission had enough volunteers and safety marshals at all their events, year-round. Woody led MVMC's contingent to protect the youth marching in the streets of Boston during Massachusetts Youth Pride.


She also served on the Boston Pride Committee, and worked to ensure the inclusion and safety of the entire community. Remarkably, she stepped up MVMC's involvement with Boston Pride two decades ago, when events faced, at the time, public protests. Woody organized her crew of bikers to protect the grounds of the first Pride Day @ Faneuil Hall, confronting hecklers and keeping them at bay during the celebration. For years, Woody organized a contingent of bikers to show up at sunrise for Festival and Block Party setups. This steady, unwavering commitment to guaranteeing Pride would have the volunteer force needed defined her involvement.

Woody's legacy of service lives on in artifacts that provide tangible accounts of her work and impact on our community. Her giant collection of buttons, pins, gadgets, memorabilia, papers, and even her travel slides are carefully preserved in both the History Project's archives and the MVMC archives of the Schlesinger Library at Harvard University. And her signature 1971 green BMW/5 is now cared for by longtime friend Peg Preble. Woody was even officially memorialized during her favorite time in Boston—Pride Week—as former Mayor Thomas M. Menino declared June 7, 2008 to be Woody Woodward Day.

Woody's legacy was to invite all in our community to do their part. Don't sit on the sidelines, get involved.

As Woody would say, "See ya' there, sis!" ●

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF SEXUALITY

Understanding the Complexity of Sexuality Theories and their Necessity

By Chris Bryant, M.A., M.Ed.

Humanity relies on sex as a means to sustain human life on our planet. Yet, if we are to understand the complexity of sexuality, we must move beyond the simple notion that its sole justification is procreation. In other words, sexuality does not exist solely on the heteronormative end of the continuum; rather sexuality is a complicated phenomenon. Our understanding of sexuality is historically and culturally determined.

Before we can begin to discuss theories of sexuality, it is necessary to understand how sexuality, as we know it, came to be. Prior to the advent of sexuality studies, our understanding of sexuality was derived from cultural observation, mythology, morals, and even magic. Early civilizations in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and China collected data about anatomy and sex. Some 2000 years later, classical Greeks built upon this, eventually creating the base of Western knowledge of sexuality. What has

complicated sexuality studies, and still does, is the notion that sexuality is tied to morality; thus, negating the physiological and psychological components of sex and desire. The imposing view of morality has necessitated a need to classify sex as abnormal or normative. In this respect, a vast array of theoretical perspectives has emerged to explain and categorize sexuality: to aid in understanding, explaining, and defining the seemingly gray murkiness of sexuality for the benefit and betterment of society.

As Central Europe sought to understand sexuality, the creation of classifications within sexuality emerged. In 1868, journalist and gay rights activist Karl Maria Kertbeny coined the terms “heterosexual” and “homosexual” in a letter to Richard von Krafft-Ebing (a gay rights activist, researcher, and psychologist). As the terms gained wider circulation, Krafft-Ebing used the terms in

The imposing view of morality has necessitated a need to classify sex as abnormal or normative.

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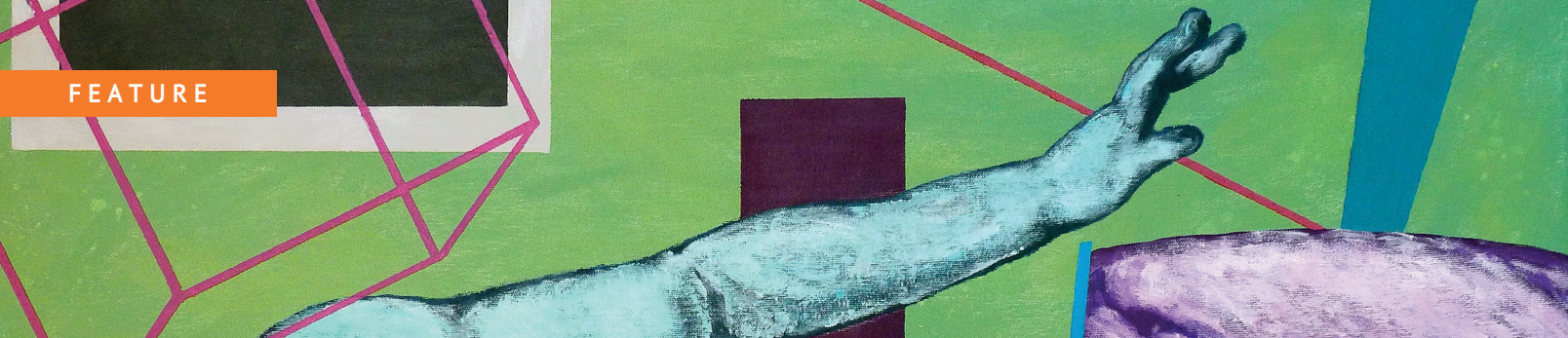
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his fourth edition of his publication *Psychopathia Sexualis* in 1889. What Kertbeny had hoped for was the creation of terms that could politicize the shared struggle of the queer community and create a platform to gain rights and equity. However, these classifications, and a growing understanding of sexuality, also led to discrimination, pathologizing, and criminalization of certain behaviors and acts. Traditional sexuality theorists placed sexual orientation within the context of an individual's sexual identity. According to this paradigm, heterosexuality was the norm and deemed "appropriate," whereas homosexuality was viewed as an inversion of sexuality.

The work of Krafft-Ebing paved the way for future researchers and scholars. Most notable are Magnus Hirschfeld, Havelock Ellis, and Sigmund Freud. While Hirschfeld and Ellis were empirical data gatherers, Freud created a system to help those afflicted with sexual and other problems. Freud's system became so popular that in the early twentieth century, Freud dominated the field of sexuality studies. Freudian ideas, of sexuality and development, became the gold standard for medical practitioners in America until at least the mid-twentieth century. Freud's impact on sexuality and medical practice created a shared need for medicine to work with psychiatrists and the desire to "fix" sexual inversions. While Freud's theories emerged over his lifespan, his central views did not and thus the view that homosexuality was an inversion of sexuality persisted. When Freud died, research in Central Europe tapered off and the medical community in the United States started to take the lead on sexuality studies and research.

In the 1950s, William Masters and Virginia Johnson conducted research on the physiology of human sexual response. Through their work, they created the human sexual response cycle, outlining what happens to the body during sex. There are, however, limitations to their findings, as their studies failed to consider homosexual relations and saw Freud's ideology of heterosexual sex as the only way to achieve orgasm. In the same vein as Masters and Johnson, Alfred Kinsey completed research and collected data on the sexual practices of individuals, motivated by the belief that sex was something that people should be open about. Kinsey's eponymous scale created a new way of conceptualizing sexuality as encompassing a broad spectrum between the poles of the traditional heterosexual-homosexual binary.

In the 1970s, researchers started to develop post-structural theories, which challenged the idea of any universal, absolute "truth"

of sexuality through critical analysis of systems of power and grand explanatory narratives about the human experience. Increased analytical sensitivity to subjectivity lies behind Teresa De Lauretis' pioneering of queer theory. Queer theory is founded on the three interrelated intellectual positions: (1) rejecting heterosexuality as the standard basis of understanding sexuality; (2) positing that sexual subjectivity is shaped through race and gender; and (3) moving away from singular understanding of lesbian and gay studies.

Unlike its predecessors, queer theory is in flux rather than static (meaning that queer theory adapts and changes with the individual) and De Lauretis felt that this was not being addressed in academic studies.

Throughout history, sexuality theories and perspectives have been in constant flux and growth. The onset of scientific methodology in the late 18th century saw the concept of sexuality grow from biologically determined perspectives, to theories

that incorporate psychology, physiology, and behavioral science. Suffice to say that there exists a plethora of sexuality theories all with varying perspectives that are each shaped by culture and ideology. Ultimately, there is no one theory that serves as a better indicator of what constitutes sexuality; however, I would argue as Barker and Scheele note that context is everything. Thus, the historical period of the day has influenced how sexuality and research are understood—while sexuality studies have evolved and developed over time, there still leave much for researchers and scholars to explore.

The field of sexuality studies allows for a multitude of ways in exploring sexuality and gender. Therefore, many of the theoretical frameworks of sexuality studies serves as a historical lens in shaping the future of the field and our understanding of the complexities of sexuality. While many early theories may no longer be widely understood or known, it is the past that has influenced our future. Sexuality studies still has a long way to go and time will only tell if more theories will emerge. ●

[T]here exists a plethora of sexuality theories all with varying perspectives that are each shaped by culture and ideology.



Chris Bryant, MA, MEd, is the Graduate Administrative Coordinator for CIS and Adjunct Professor at Temple University. Chris' research interests are centered on LGBT administration/student experiences in higher education settings, sexual decision making of men-seeking-men, body image in the gay-male community, and hegemonic masculinity.

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Community Conversations: Fatherly Pride

Gay Dad Jokes in Red China

By Jesse Appell

I'm pretty sure I'm the only person in the Beijing comedy scene doing gay dad jokes.

“有人很好奇，在Gay家庭长大是什么样的感觉?”

People are always curious, what was it like to grow up in a gay household?

The air shifts; the audience perks up. The setup lingers. How is life in a gay household strange? Different? Unusual?

I thought up the setup, but I've lived the punch line.



I grew up in Newton, Massachusetts in a family of teachers. My mom taught elementary literacy. My dad worked at Brandeis University, both fundraising and teaching a few courses.

My mother and father were always supportive of me, raising me in a style I think of as “parenting-by-path-of-least-resistance.” He likes sports? Sign him up for soccer. He likes improv comedy? Go to the shows and don't ask what in the world it might actually be good for. Can't get him to sit down and learn piano? Whatever. It's not worth the trouble.

In addition to being a supportive father, it turns out my dad was also gay. One day, in second grade, my dad took my brother and me aside, and told us “daddy loved mommy, but not in that way.”

Or something like that.

I don't mean to make light of what must have been a speech my father had surely tortured over, in one way or another, for decades. It's just that I honestly don't remember any of the words.

Continued on page 154.

At Your Age?

By Brad W. Andersen

Bobby Sherman. David Cassidy. Rock Hudson. Michael Landon. Glen Campbell.

I humorously muse now that it may have been the hair that gained my attention. Regardless of what it was, these men intrigued me at a young age. The reasons that I noticed these men are mostly unknown to me. Yet, decades later, I remember those thoughts and feelings.

As you can tell from the names listed above, I am of the late Baby Boomer generation. I actually remember when having a color television or an air-conditioned car were luxuries. (Yes, honey, there was electricity back then.) In fact, the year I graduated from high school there were only two American automakers that had standard air conditioning in all of their models. Despite my age, I might be called a “baby gay” when compared to Generation Xers, or even Millennials, as my experience in, and awareness of, the gay community are more in sync with younger gay men.

During my mid-forties I began to wonder more seriously about male intimacy, but the journey from this point forward wasn't always as pretty as one of those faces (or the hair) of men from television. The “intrigue” from my childhood gave way to real life events, causing my life to dramatically change. Anonymous online chat rooms were like a drug to me. I had never discussed these feelings with anyone and doing so (with other married men across the country) was liberating, yet guilt-producing.

You see, I had a conservative, homogenous, midwestern upbringing, and an all-encompassing faith. Plus, by this time I had been heterosexually married, with children for 23 years. What does one do with same-sex attraction in that kind of life? For years, I ignored it, thinking it was just a weakness that I had

Continued on page 154.



Art: Patric Stillman, *Another Gay Sunshine Day* (2017).

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Gay Dad Jokes in Red China (continued)

All I remember, looking up at my dad from a low angle that now seems jarring to my adult brain, were two things:

Firstly, a sense of gravitas, as if things would never be the same.

Secondly, an impression that such sense of gravitas was bullshit, and nothing actually had changed at all.

Oh sure, it certainly looked like several aspects of our lives had changed. There was a new house, a new parent-sharing schedule, and, eventually for my dad, a new husband, who would, in time, become a second father to me.

But those were differences in seeming, not in being. To me, growing up in a gay household was not different at all. It was just *more*.

I still ran around the soccer field, now with three parents attending and supporting. I would still play characters and improvise onstage, now with three parents watching and laughing. I still would not learn piano. And still, nobody forced me to.

In this way, life remained normal.

My mother, through a combination of love, spirituality, and patience, made what could have been a world-shattering divorce for everyone into a mere logistical challenge of who is eating dinner where.

Guy, my father's husband and partner of 20+ years, grew up in Israel, moved to America with a few hundred dollars in his pocket, and built a life and a family for himself in a new land using his second language. Ironically, my life path turned out more similar to his than either of my biological parents.

To me, growing up in a gay household was not different at all. It was just more.

His advice and example were vital to me when it was my turn to leave my homeland.

I left my households, both gay and straight, when I was 21 to study Chinese comedy in Beijing as a Fulbright fellow. I apprenticed to a Master comedian named Ding Guangquan, a man of infinite patience, indefatigable energy, and sacred mission. If I hadn't already learned that fathers are not always people with whom we share blood, I would have learned it in Beijing.

Master Ding taught me the key to making people laugh is empathy. We need to connect with the audience emotionally. As an American performing Chinese comedy, I was guaranteed curiosity; but the bridge spanning curiosity and empathy vaults a deep gap.

How to make a group of people from across the world empathize with a stranger? A foreigner? An immigrant? I started by trying to show that my life was the same as theirs.

“我也坐地铁!”

I take the subway, too!

Continued on page 156.



Shortly after coming out, Brad Anderson was able to find community through his involvement in local theater. Credit: Courtesy of Brad Anderson.

At Your Age? (continued)

to conquer. Even so, I was aware of my interest in men in high school. I remember going into a store where there were *Playgirl* magazines and standing there shakily for a long time, trying to decide whether I should buy one. I became self-conscious, thinking the clerk was watching me, and got out as fast as I could.

Eventually, at age 46, I left my home because this attraction to men wouldn't go away. Leaving home was the culmination of months of secrecy. I had not been honest with anyone about all that I thought and did prior to this point. This was hurtful to my family, and I regret it because as a result, they no longer trusted me. Additionally, the stress of living a double standard was tearing me up emotionally. I would travel into the city, unbeknownst to anyone else, to meet up with men, leaving me physically satisfied, but mentally conflicted. Before moving out, my wife and I attended counseling and a weekend seminar taught by a man who left his gay life behind and was happily married to a woman. I was determined to conquer this same-sex attraction, one way or another, yet it felt like an impossible mountain to climb. Not because I didn't have people to help; my wife had been supportive of my efforts to keep the marriage together, as were others. It felt impossible because Pandora's box had been opened, and my desires and feelings wanted to come out. With much anxiety, I started out on my own, feeling truly alone for the first time since age 18. The majority of my existing faith-based friendships immediately ended; to this day, most have never said another word to me. My children were hurt and displayed that by keeping their distance from me for years. My faith-based employment was gone; I had been forced to resign after 20 years in church ministries and leadership. I stayed in a hotel the first night or two without any hope or even a plan and cried.

Slowly, though, my new life began to unfold. After a few weeks of boarding with a family that I knew, I found an apartment in a nearby small, Midwestern city. I frequented gay clubs as much as

Continued on page 156.

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Gay Dad Jokes in Red China (continued)

Unfortunately, I soon found out that when a Chinese comedian makes a subway joke, it is a subway joke, but when I made a subway joke, the audience thinks it's a foreigner-on-the-subway joke.

The audience was primed to believe I was different. They didn't want me to be like them. Ironically, the more I shared how we were similar, the more pushback I got.

Two years of bombed sets later I hit on a solution. What if I shared how I was different, only to show it wasn't different after all?

That's when I began working on the gay dad routine.

I expected the whole thing would flop. The topic was largely taboo. Speaking Chinese robbed me of much of my linguistic subtlety. And, after all, it was an experience (almost) none of the people in the audience could "relate to."

But from the first, I found that people did relate. The jokes hit. People were fascinated. They leaned forward in their seats, eyes shining.

“有人很好奇，在Gay家庭长大是什么样的感觉？”

People are always curious, what was it like to grow up in a gay household?

“来拜访一下你就知道！”

Just come for a visit and you'll see.

“想来我们Gay家，你得先上Gay楼梯敲一下Gay门。”

First, you have to go up the gay stairs and knock on the gay door.

“爸爸给你喝点Gay水，聊点Gay新闻。”

Dad will get you some gay water and you'll chat gay news.

“以后吃点Gay鸡排，喝点Gay红酒...没什么奇怪的！你们想到哪儿了？”

Then we'll have gay chicken and some gay wine... It's just a normal household, what were you thinking it would be like?

The joke hit. Our lives were different in seeming, not in being. A household is a household. Chicken is chicken. There is no gay water. The gay dad bit brought down the house, from Beijing to Guangzhou and everywhere between. Why?

Maybe it's because in their own lives, society has placed restrictions on them: get good grades, make money, get married, have kids, teach them to play the piano. That's normal.

But what if being in a gay family can be normal too? What if living your life, the way that makes sense for you—and your loved ones, and your kids—is normal, no matter what it might look on the outside? Differences only in seeming, and not in being?

If my life in a gay family is normal for me, maybe being “out” can mean a normal life too, whatever “out” means for you. ●



Jesse Appell is a scholar studying Chinese comedy while living and performing in Beijing, China. Jesse is the founder of Laugh Beijing and a former Fulbright Scholar. Jesse hails from Massachusetts and is a graduate of Brandeis, where he performed as part of his “Great LOL of China” tour through North America.

It felt impossible because Pandora's box had been opened, and my desires and feelings wanted to come out.

At Your Age? (continued)

possible and I met a few guys who became good friends. I was like a kid in a toy store—everything was shiny and new.

Eleven months after moving out and starting over, I met a man at a local gay bar who would become my partner and best friend for the next six-plus years, until his death. While I loved my wife, there was no comparison to this new kind of love I was now experiencing. I didn't realize how much love, joy, and fun there could be in a relationship until then. It was like he was my first true love. Imagine that, finding love as a middle-aged man!

Joining the local gay men's chorus and becoming involved in community theaters provided me with social interaction and friendships, some of which continue to this day. I feared failing to meet societal and religious standards of masculinity. While adjusting to the new normal, I began to realize that I was comfortable being myself around these people and didn't have to worry about not being the “right kind” of man.

The world has changed greatly since the days of non-air-conditioned cars. But then, so have I. Coming out as a middle-aged man had its own set of issues, but life has greatly improved since that first night when I cried anxious tears about what might lay ahead. I have a courteous relationship with my children. My extended family is one with which I can be myself. I have a solid relationship with my parents, and a partner whom I love and who loves me, even with my baggage from the sixties and seventies.

I hope Bobby Sherman has that, too, and that he still has good hair. ●



Brad grew up in Iowa, while his “coming out” story mentioned here occurred in the Cleveland, Ohio area. He has four adult daughters, and enjoys learning, singing, history, hiking, and travel. He has a BS and BME in Music, and an MA in Intercultural Management. His work has included education, youth/music ministry, and he's currently with Sprint Accessibility. He and his partner, Tim, moved to Boston in 2018. This is his first year as a volunteer for Boston Pride, as Accessibility Manager and Pride Guide contributor. Brad is also a member of the Boston Gay Men's Chorus.

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Art: Shane Rooks, *Pride Cocktail* (2013).

“It All Began at Stonewall”

And Other Fairy Tales

By Jared Kaden Markowitz



If there's one thing you know about the Stonewall Uprising of 1969, it's probably the fact that Stonewall is where it all began.

Problem is, that's false.

There's no question that the Stonewall Uprising is a watershed moment in our history that forever changed everything. As for the separate question of what, exactly, is being commemorated at this fifty-year milestone, the answer seems to turn largely on who you ask, as well as which version/portion of the following story that person happens to know:

Once upon a time, in a faraway land, the police executed an openly homophobic raid of a popular queer bar at a hotel called the Stonewall Inn. Although the bar staff tried to comply with police orders, the patrons revolted, immediately resulting in a night of rioting. This was the birth of the Gay Rights Movement. To commemorate the historic significance of that night, President Obama granted national landmark status to the building housing the Stonewall Inn. And the people lived happily ever after, the end.

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This is The Stonewall Fairy Tale (as we'll call it), because it is exactly that: almost entirely fictional. But before we get to our comprehensive, sentence-by-sentence breakdown of *all* the falsehoods in The Stonewall Fairy Tale (happen to catch any?), let's focus on the big one: the claim that Stonewall is where it all began.

Although we could quibble over the definition of a “movement”—movements are complex social events with nebulous, sometimes subjective, boundaries that are difficult to pinpoint precisely in time and scope—the Gay Rights Movement, in the broad sense, did not begin at Stonewall.

Before Stonewall, there were a number of gay rights-related efforts in America, including both violent and nonviolent protests. Notably, three years before Stonewall, at a bar just a block away, activists staged a protest against the then common practice of refusing to serve gay patrons, an event now dubbed the great “Gay Sip-In” at Julius'. According to David Carter, historian and author of the most comprehensive account of Stonewall to date, without Julius', there could not have been a Stonewall: “It was actually the challenge to [State Liquor Authority] policy that led to private clubs like the Stonewall Inn being open.”

Around the same time (pre-Stonewall), there was a riot in San Francisco when police tried to arrest patrons of Compton's Cafeteria in the Tenderloin. There were also a number of large, peaceful demonstrations, including Philadelphia's “Annual Reminders” that freedom had not yet been obtained by gay Americans on July 4, 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968 (and 1969). Stonewall was neither the first nor only instance of political protest—or even violent revolting/rioting against the police—in the name of gay rights. Stonewall, as a matter of pure historical reality, is not the birthplace of the Gay Rights Movement.

And yet, this part of the Stonewall Fairytale persists. Even now, it comes up with frequency, credibility, and ease.

The *New York Times*, for example, erroneously and repeatedly has suggested that it all began at Stonewall. In June 2011, the Times issued this online-only correction: “An article in some copies ...referred imprecisely to the uprising at the Stonewall Inn in

Greenwich Village in 1969...[N]ational gay rights organizations had existed for decades before that.” Yet, in June 2015, the *New York Times* published the exact same false claim about Stonewall twice more, then had to correct them both: “The Big City column... overstated in some editions the significance of an uprising in 1969 at the Stonewall Inn [which] is not the birthplace of the gay rights movement.”

In a recent interview with the Associated Press, a key New York City Councilperson—the one whose geographic district includes the Stonewall Inn—said, “there are few locations that can be cited as the birthplace of a global movement. One such location is the Stonewall Inn.” *Wrong*.

As it turns out, there are a number of other Stonewall-related falsehoods that are regularly presented as “fact.” Earlier this year, on

Drag Race All Stars, RuPaul made this claim: “Fed up with police harassment, the patrons of the Stonewall used their grief over Judy [Garland]’s death to rise up and fight back, and the Gay Liberation Movement was born.” Although there is plenty of evidence for a number of short- and long-term causes of the Stonewall Riots, there is little, if any, evidence that Judy Garland’s death was among them. More importantly, the movement was not “born” at Stonewall.

Even the permanent plaque affixed to the Stonewall Inn building itself fails to get the facts straight. The

plaque features a black-and-white photo of a part of the building to which it is affixed, and it states that the Stonewall Riots began on June 27, ended on June 29, and occurred at 53 Christopher Street. Unfortunately, the first date is wrong, as is the second, as is the address, as is the photo. The Stonewall Riots were from June 28 to July 2, and the Stonewall Inn of 1969 was at 51-53 Christopher Street. The main bar, the main dance floor, and the iconic external vertical sign affixed to the structure, all were a part of a larger section of the building that did not make it into the plaque’s black-and-white photo which, by the way, was taken in 2003.

In short, it is beyond debate that we, as a community, have allowed the actual facts of Stonewall to be outshined by the story of its impact and legacy.

[I]t is beyond debate that we, as a community, have allowed the actual facts of Stonewall to be outshined by the story of its impact and legacy.

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The mechanisms by which we have allowed this to happen exceed our present scope, but they have been the subject of scholarly inquiry and research. A sociological study of collective memory, for example, examines the so-called “Stonewall Myth” and explains how a given social group (such as a bunch of gays and lesbians) may engage in the collective acts of selecting an “image of the past” (such as Stonewall), reproducing that image (such as by calling everything Stonewall), then commemorating it through a particular set of practices (such as an annual parade and festival).

From a non-scholarly perspective, it’s simpler: the facts and details of the riots themselves just aren’t as important to us as Stonewall’s impact and legacy. So, we shrug off the details, if we ever even learn them in the first place. And it is Stonewall’s impact and legacy that we are commemorating during this fifty-year milestone.

So, what, exactly, is Stonewall’s impact and legacy?

Although it is indisputable that members of the community were rioting and organizing for rights for over a decade prior to Stonewall, after Stonewall, everything changed, and measurably so. There was an explosion in the number of gay rights-related organizations around the country, going from 50 to 60 at the time of Stonewall to at least 2,500 just two years later.

Moreover, these newly formed, energized groups were far more radical and activist in nature than their predecessors. The relatively tame and conservative Mattachine Society quickly formed the brand new Mattachine Action Committee, which held public forums on the topic of “Gay Power.” Those forums, in turn, quickly led a faction of that group to break away and establish their own new organization: the famously radical Gay Liberation Front. And all of that was within just one month of Stonewall. By the end of that year, many other major, radical organizations had formed, notably including the Gay Activists Alliance.

To commemorate the movement’s newfound energy, activists staged a political protest march exactly one year after Stonewall, beginning almost exactly in the same location as Stonewall itself. They called it Christopher Street Liberation Day and, to the

organizers’ surprise, thousands showed up to participate. This purely political march, in hindsight, is now globally recognized as the world’s first Pride parade, though the organizers to this day continue to honor its legacy by calling it “The March.”

At least three other simultaneous marches were organized around the country and took place on that same day. One was in Chicago, one in San Francisco, and one in Los Angeles. The one in Los Angeles was, by far, the largest of the three, and involved an hour-long processional down Hollywood Boulevard. Its organizers dubbed the event “Christopher Street West” (a reference to the street of the Stonewall Inn) that, to this day, remains the name of the entity charged with organizing the annual LA Pride events.

Annual Pride events held worldwide, including parades, festivals, rallies, and protests, all represent individual pieces of the enormous impact and ongoing legacy of Stonewall itself.

In the abstract, few among us would be inclined to cheer on,

or otherwise memorialize, any acts of arson, assault, property destruction, or rioting. That, however, is not what we are celebrating in the case of Stonewall, either. What we are celebrating is the *legacy* of Stonewall, the watershed historic moment that jolted our movement and jump-started something seemingly new.

Although Stonewall does not mark the beginning of the Gay Rights Movement, Stonewall does mark the end of a previous tamer and smaller iteration of that very same movement. People went from feeling oppressed to empowered, and from silent to loud. Instead of asking for rights, folks began demanding them. Stonewall inspired, invigorated, and forever changed the nature, size, and strength of the entire movement.

In this sense, Stonewall is the birthplace of the *modern* Gay Rights Movement—and that is why we commemorate and celebrate it. The Stonewall Fairy Tale (and our collective inability to get all the Stonewall facts right) is, as it turns out, largely irrelevant.

That said, for those of you playing at home, here it is: your detailed breakdown of every falsehood in every sentence of The Stonewall Fairy Tale.

What we are celebrating is the legacy of Stonewall, the watershed historic moment that jolted our movement and jump-started something seemingly new.

WE MARCH IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US.

TO ALL THOSE WHO FEARLESSLY TOOK UP THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY, AND TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTINUE THE FIGHT TODAY, WE THANK YOU.

-Maura Healey

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FIRST SENTENCE: Police raids at Stonewall occurred regularly, not merely “once upon a time,” and Manhattan is not exactly a “faraway land.” Albeit not exactly an “openly homophobic raid” (insofar as the publicly declared basis for the police raid was that the bar served liquor without a license), the so-called Public Morals Squad of the police department was present on that first day as well, and there’s no doubt homophobia played at least some role in the decision to execute the raid. Although it is true that Stonewall was a popular bar among the locals at the time, they would have objected to characterizing the bar as “queer,” then a highly derogatory term. Finally, despite the establishment’s name, the Stonewall Inn is not, and never was, part of a “hotel.”

SECOND SENTENCE: In 1969, the Stonewall Inn was a Mafia-owned speakeasy, and the bar staff did not all readily “try to comply with police orders”; to the contrary, some of these mobsters helped spurn violence, at one point lighting trash on fire and inserting it into the bar after the police temporarily had retreated back into it. It also wasn’t only “the patrons” who revolted, as a crowd had formed from nearby residents and passersby, famously including a then-popular folksinger. Although the raid immediately resulted in rioting, that riot could not have been at “night,” for the raid did not even begin until the early morning hours of June 28, 1969.

THIRD SENTENCE: Stonewall was not the “birthplace of the Gay Rights Movement.”

FOURTH SENTENCE: Since the Stonewall Uprising of 1969 occurred over the course of six days, we now commemorate the historic significance of all of it, not just “that night.” President Obama did not make Stonewall a “national historic landmark” for the simple reason that it already had been a national landmark since 2000. Although President Obama did designate Stonewall the first national *monument* honoring the history of our community, that designation was afforded more broadly to the surrounding area, including all of Christopher Park, rather than simply to “the building housing the Stonewall Inn.”

FIFTH SENTENCE: It is only after we reach “the end” of the fight for full equality that we may “live happily ever after.” Though, technically, that last one’s more of an opinion. ●

Jared Kaden Markowitz is a New York City-based sightseeing tour guide, SCOTUS-admitted attorney, voting member/volunteer for NYC Pride (Heritage of Pride, Inc.), and currently serves as Parade Director for Rhode Island Pride. Jared has volunteered at various Pride-related functions around the country for over fifteen years, and he recently began developing and leading workshops at regional conferences for fellow Pride organizers. On non-Pride days, Jared is a professional magician and Britney Spears enthusiast.

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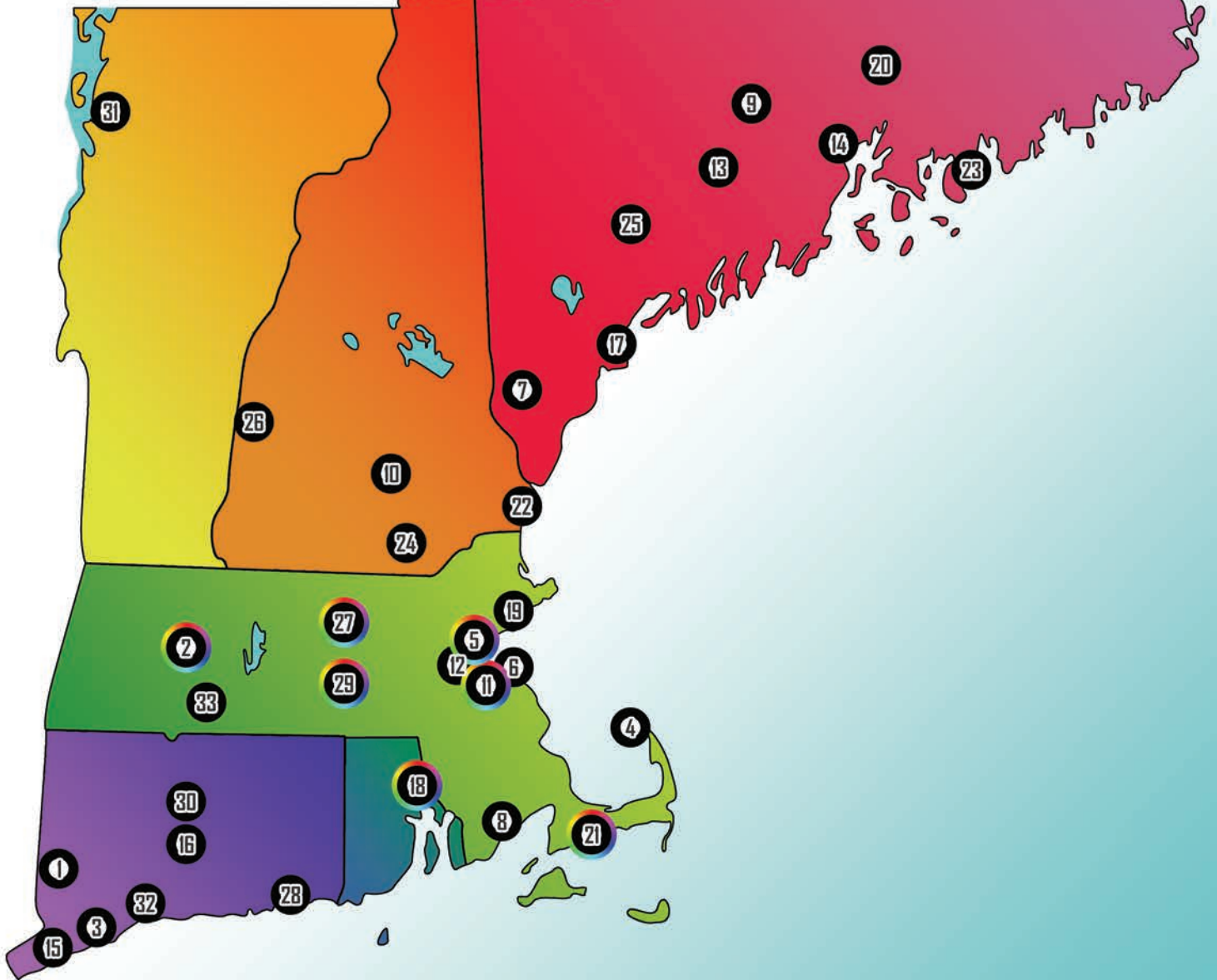


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As the Concert attendees thank Committee members for planning Pride, Sylvain (center) takes a photo of the crowd.
 Credit: Hurley Event Photography.



The Festival team prepares for the opening of the 2018 event.
 Credit: Hurley Event Photography.



Members of the Boston Pride team gather for the 2018 Concert. Credit: Hurley Event Photography.



The Parade team organizes the staging area in preparation for kick-off. Credit: Marilyn Humphries.



Boston Pride Board and Committee members settle in to enjoy the first annual Family Movie Night. Credit: Hurley Event Photography.



Committee member Henry announces the High Heel Race winners at Pride Day @ Faneuil Hall. Credit: Marilyn Humphries.



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Love, Ayanna 

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