

ISLAND TRAVEL FOR FALL: MAUI, CUBA, NEW ZEALAND

# THE ADVOCATE

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# T R A N S G E N D E R M O V E M E N T

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THE SEARCH FOR FOCUS

## What is STRIBILD?

STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. STRIBILD combines 4 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. STRIBILD is a complete single tablet regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

**STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.** To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking STRIBILD. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

STRIBILD can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.

- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking STRIBILD, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. STRIBILD is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

### Who should not take STRIBILD?

Do not take STRIBILD if you:

- **Take a medicine that contains:** alfuzosin, dihydroergotamine, ergotamine, methylergonovine, cisapride, lovastatin, simvastatin, pimozone, sildenafil when used for lung problems (Revatio®), triazolam, oral midazolam, rifampin or the herbal supplement St. John's wort.
- **For a list of brand names for these medicines,** please see the Brief Summary on the following pages.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection,** or the medicine adefovir (Hepsera®).

### What are the other possible side effects of STRIBILD?

Serious side effects of STRIBILD may also include:

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do regular blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with STRIBILD. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD.
- **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking STRIBILD.

**The most common side effects** of STRIBILD include nausea and diarrhea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don't go away.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?


- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take hormone-based birth control** (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc).
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in STRIBILD can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with **important warnings** on the following pages.

\*STRIBILD is a combination of the medicines TRUVADA (emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate), TYBOST (cobicistat), and VITEKTA (elvitegravir).





STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.

# I started my personal revolution

Talk to your healthcare provider about HIV-1 treatment.

**STRIBILD** is a complete HIV-1 treatment in **1 pill, once a day** that combines the medicines in TRUVADA + TYBOST + VITEKTA.\*

Ask if it's right for you.

**STRIBILD®** 

elvitegravir 150mg/ cobicistat 150mg/ emtricitabine 200mg/ tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets

[www.STRIBILD.com](http://www.STRIBILD.com)

## Patient Information

### STRIBILD® (STRY-bild)

(elvitegravir 150 mg/cobicistat 150 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

### What is STRIBILD?

- **STRIBILD is a prescription medicine** used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also be used to replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood), and have been on the same HIV-1 medicines for at least 6 months and have never failed past HIV-1 treatment, and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- **STRIBILD is a complete HIV-1 medicine** and should not be used with any other HIV-1 medicines.
- **STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

#### STRIBILD can cause serious side effects, including:

1. **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take STRIBILD or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**

- feel very weak or tired
- have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
- have trouble breathing
- have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
- feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
- feel dizzy or lightheaded
- have a fast or irregular heartbeat

2. **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take STRIBILD. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**

- your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
- dark “tea-colored” urine
- light-colored bowel movements (stools)
- loss of appetite for several days or longer
- nausea
- stomach pain

**You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time.**

3. **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take STRIBILD, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking STRIBILD. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.

- Do not run out of STRIBILD. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your STRIBILD is all gone
- Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider
- If you stop taking STRIBILD, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking STRIBILD

### Who should not take STRIBILD?

#### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take a medicine that contains:

- adefovir (Hepsera®)
- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- midazolam, when taken by mouth
- pimozone (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John's wort

#### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain elvitegravir, cobicistat, emtricitabine, or tenofovir (Atripla®, Complera®, Emtriva®, Truvada®, Tybost®, Viread®, Vitekta®)
- Other medicines that contain lamivudine or ritonavir (Combivir®, Epivir® or Epivir-HBV®, Epzicom®, Kaletra®, Norvir®, Triumeq®, Trizivir®)

**STRIBILD is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.**

### What are the possible side effects of STRIBILD?

#### STRIBILD may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?”**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking STRIBILD. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take STRIBILD. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system** (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.



**The most common side effects of STRIBILD include:**

- Nausea
- Diarrhea

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.**

- These are not all the possible side effects of STRIBILD. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?****Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

- If you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B infection
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take STRIBILD.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in STRIBILD can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in STRIBILD can pass into your breast milk.
  - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:**

- STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Hormone-based birth control (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc)
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD
  - Medicines to treat depression, organ transplant rejection, or high blood pressure
  - amiodarone (Cordarone®, Pacerone®)
  - atorvastatin (Lipitor®, Caduet®)
  - bepridil hydrochloride (Vasacor®, Bepadin®)
  - bosentan (Tracleer®)
  - buspirone
  - carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®)
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin®, Prevpac®)
  - clonazepam (Klonopin®)
  - clorazepate (Gen-xene®, Tranxene®)
  - colchicine (Colcrys®)
  - medicines that contain dexamethasone
  - diazepam (Valium®)
  - digoxin (Lanoxin®)

- disopyramide (Norpace®)
- estazolam
- ethosuximide (Zarontin®)
- flecainide (Tambocor®)
- flurazepam
- fluticasone (Flovent®, Flonase®, Flovent Diskus®, Flovent HFA®, Veramyst®)
- itraconazole (Sporanox®)
- ketoconazole (Nizoral®)
- lidocaine (Xylocaine®)
- mexiletine
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®)
- perphenazine
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- propafenone (Rythmol®)
- quinidine (Neudexta®)
- rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
- rifapentine (Priftin®)
- risperidone (Risperdal®, Risperdal Consta®)
- salmeterol (Serevent®) or salmeterol when taken in combination with fluticasone (Advair Diskus®, Advair HFA®)
- sildenafil (Viagra®), tadalafil (Cialis®) or vardenafil (Levitra®, Staxyn®), for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). If you get dizzy or faint (low blood pressure), have vision changes or have an erection that last longer than 4 hours, call your healthcare provider or get medical help right away.
- tadalafil (Adcirca®), for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension
- thioridazine
- voriconazole (Vfend®)
- warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®)
- zolpidem (Ambien®, Edlular®, Intermezzo®, Zolpimist®)

**Know the medicines you take.** Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.

**Keep STRIBILD and all medicines out of reach of children.**

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about STRIBILD. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about STRIBILD that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.STRIBILD.com](http://www.STRIBILD.com).

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Our Houston is scenic.



Location: Buffalo Bayou, Downtown. Photo Credit: Spencer Harrison

Learn more about Jaime and Joey and  
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My Gay  
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# Editor's Letter

It came to light in May that Josh Duggar, the eldest child of the family depicted in TLC's *19 Kids and Counting*, had years ago thrice confessed to his father Jim Bob Duggar that he'd sexually abused four of his sisters and a family friend when he was a teenager.

The abuse was appalling, to be sure. But it matters to you and me that Duggar was working as executive director of the Family Research Council's lobbying arm FRC Action, the hate group that routinely defames LGBT people and parrots lies and discredited research calling gay and lesbian parents child molesters; the goal is to foment public opinion against pro-equality legislation. It also matters that the Duggars continually waded into GOP politics to wage war against LGBTs. In August of last year Josh's mother, Michelle, recorded a robocall that went out to voters in Fayetteville, Arkansas, arguing against an LGBT civil rights ordinance, claiming that transgender people are child predators coming after little girls; the family donated tens of thousands of dollars to the repeal effort, which was ultimately successful—a setback for LGBT Fayetteville residents.

The temerity and rank hypocrisy is maddening on so many levels. Josh Duggar's profession was to proclaim to the world that *you and I as LGBT people* are a danger to children, when he—a straight, patriarchal, Christian man—was an actual danger to children. The Duggars are the most prominent family proponents of the retrograde and isolating Quiverfull philosophy that rejects birth control and women's free agency. They didn't say whether Josh's abuse victims were offered therapeutic help (beyond counseling that blames the victims and tells them God compensates abuse victims with enhanced spiritual powers). Maybe in Quiverfull houses girls don't warrant it. This is sanctimonious and dangerous garbage.

Meanwhile the fall of Dennis Hastert continues. Hastert was selected to be speaker of the House of Representatives and to preside over the Clinton impeachment proceedings, after having allegedly forced himself on more than one male high school student when he was a wrestling coach. This came to light when it was discovered he was being blackmailed for hush money. (Hastert was chosen as speaker when Newt Gingrich had to step down for cheating on his second wife and runner-up Bob Livingston was threatened with a *Hustler* exposé for his own extramarital activities.)

As speaker, Hastert twice tried to get the House to pass a constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage, including retroactively dismantling marriages already legally performed—and all the while after having had same-sex relations. The hypocrisy is twofold: there's the attempt to hold



President Clinton accountable for a consensual affair while having perpetrated a non-consensual act on a student; and there's his alleged participation in gay sexual activity (notably, in his case, in a distinct power imbalance).

And in Ireland, which is a nominally Catholic country (though that's changing quickly), the Catholic church, up until the historic election in which an entire nation chose overwhelmingly to enact marriage equality for queer people, was spelling out gloom and doom, threatening voters in its capacity as an arbiter of morals. But a series of clerical pedophile scandals has certainly brought an end to the church's iron grip over social affairs in Ireland. The church has ceded the moral high ground, not by choice, but certainly via its own actions.

We must beware those snake oil slingers who proclaim to all the world that they alone hold the keys to a virtuous or holy existence—one that does not include LGBT lives. They are hypocrites and not to be trusted, and it is my hope that America wakes up to this, like Ireland has.

Matthew Breen, EDITOR IN CHIEF



# OUT

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**Dana Beyer, M.D.**, a retired eye surgeon and mother of two adult children, is executive director of Gender Rights Maryland, board chair at Freedom to Work, and writes a weekly column for the *Huffington Post*. She is a member of the Montgomery County Human Rights Hall of Fame. She ran for the Maryland state senate in 2014. Find her on Twitter @DanaBeyerMD.



**Jen Richards** is a writer, NPO consultant, and advocate. Her original series about the dating lives of trans women, *Her Story*, is due out in fall 2015. She created the website WeHappyTrans.com, and was the co-creator and director of "The Trans 100," an annual list of 100 out trans activists. Her website is SmartAssJen.com.



**Cristy C. Road** is a Cuban-American illustrator, graphic novelist, and punk rock musician whose posters, music, and autobiographical works explore themes of punk, queer culture, and social justice. See more of her work at CRoadCore.org.



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## [ ERIC HOLDER ]

The outgoing attorney general on marriage equality, the progressive agenda, and the future of civil rights in America

BY EDWARD WYCKOFF WILLIAMS

**I**f politics is the art of the possible, there too should be the art of what is necessary. Eric Holder, the first African American to hold the office of attorney general of the United States, made history by codifying what is both possible and necessary.

When Holder took office in 2009, the U.S. military had "don't ask, don't tell" was still firmly in place, and only two states, Massachusetts and Connecticut, allowed same-sex couples to marry. But during President Obama's tenure, in the attorney general's own words, there has been "a seismic shift."

As Holder prepares to leave office this year, gay and lesbian Americans can now marry in 37 states (and counting). We can serve openly in the U.S. military and are protected against hate crimes under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the first pro-LGBT federal law in U.S.

history. The number of openly gay judges on the federal bench has increased exponentially. And in part because of Holder's decision in 2010 to ease defending the constitutionality of Section 1 of the Defense of Marriage Act, following the landmark Supreme Court decision in *United States v. Windsor*, gay and lesbian couples can now receive federal marriage benefits.

The Obama administration's legacy on LGBT rights is historic, as are the often complicated struggles created by this attorney general that were needed to solidify these achievements.

Holder has been the architect of a difficult plan to place LGBT rights at the forefront of the administration's civil rights agenda. As the nation's foremost legal advocate, he is tasked with ensuring that all Americans are treated equally under the law. And this is a responsibility he does not take lightly.

But for Holder, the work is not just political, it's personal.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY CASSELL A. FERRE



## THE BACKLASH

Contributor Chadwick Moore's article examined the Christian conservative ideological roots of the anti-LGBT legislation in Indiana, Texas, Oklahoma, and many other states. Commenter Sjekke Bruhl noted, "How ironic that in a country founded in part to escape religious discrimination, the bigots use their religion to justify discrimination." Kevin Jacobson wrote, "**This was a very good article, however, it's not fair to lump all conservative Christians into the mix with crazy, right wing, fundamentalists.** I am a conservative Christian, and I am gay. I know hundreds and hundreds of others that fall into this same category (yes, you can be both). I also have many, many straight friends, also conservative Christians, who love me, and support me, and are standing on the right side of history in their support of marriage equality—and against discrimination of LGBT people." Mary Morrison added, "**Religious freedom is really freedom to practice your religion as you wish, or**

**to not practice any religion. It definitely is not the right to force your beliefs on other people.** I'm a devout Christian, however, I have no right to impose my beliefs on anyone, and would never attempt to do so." J.P. Cordill said, "And they wonder why people are leaving their churches in droves."

## A STUDY TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

From contributor Brenden Shucart: "Recently I received word from my editor at *The Advocate* informing me that a study I had written about ["First Contact," April/May 2015] was exposed as a fraud. Michael LaCour has been accused of falsifying data [in the study "When Contact Changes Minds: An Experiment on Transmission of Support for Gay Equality," published in *Science*]. His partner, Donald Green, has publicly renounced its findings. It's hard not to feel a little bit like a fool, not because I didn't see the fraud for what it was (few did), but because I had wanted to believe it so badly, I wasn't even suspicious. The notion

that people could be won over to tolerance and compassion through the power of a single heartfelt conversation with a sincere homosexual sounds too good to be true when you break it down, and it is, but it meshed so neatly with the way I want humans to work—compassionate and rational. It's like finding out there is no tooth faerie all over again."

## GIVE 'EM THE BUSINESS

Editor-in-chief Matthew Breen reported on the business community's response to Indiana's "religious freedom restoration act." Reader Donna Young commented, "Not only do businesses need to make it clear that bigotry hurts the vendor, customers need to make their voices heard. **If a place of business is visibly asserting its religious views, run don't walk, and find a more inclusive place to shop.**" Sheldon Glass wrote, "Christians have boxed themselves into a legal corner. Either being gay is a lifestyle choice and deserves the same protection under something like a religious freedom law, or homosexuality is a natural

expression of human sexuality and can be protected under the same laws used for age, race, etc."

## ERIC HOLDER

Contributor Edward Wyckoff William's interview with former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder published the same week his successor, Loretta Lynch, was confirmed for duty. William McGregor, responding to Holder's thoughts on marriage equality, wrote that it "doesn't really matter if the nation is ready or not. It's going to happen, like it happened for interracial marriages." An unsigned letter from Santa Clarita, Calif., read, in part, "**I was disgusted at your decision to run... a sucking-up article about that dirtbag Eric Holder.** Why do you give ink to a bigoted, hatred-spewing, racist, white-hating, lying piece of garbage? Are you changing your name to *The Democratic Party Advocate*?" Dominic A. Rolla was more pleased with our decision to interview him: "**Thank you, Mr. Holder! What you and the president have done will go down in history.**"



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## CHANGING THE T FOR LGBs

The nationwide discussion surrounding trans visibility is essential for other queer people, too.

BY DANA BEYER

**W**hile there has been much ferment in the political arena recently, with marriage equality oral arguments at the Supreme Court and Caitlyn Jenner's public coming out to 17 million viewers as a trans woman, there has been significant change going on beneath the surface in the evolution of the cultural landscape. This has occurred in the context of the changing perception of trans women from both the lesbian and gay male perspectives. I'll begin with the lesbian side.

Recently Smith College—the grande dame of women's colleges, the first female college founded by a woman, and the leader among the Seven Sisters—voted to admit trans women. The board of trustees stated:

"The board's decision affirms Smith's unwavering mission and identity as a wom-

en's college, our commitment to representing the diversity of women's lived experiences, and the college's exceptional role in the advancement of women worldwide."

Smith had ceded the lead to Mills College, then Mount Holyoke and a string of others, and dithered in terms of welcoming trans women as applicants, even while students who came out as trans men after admissions were allowed to stay. Such a differential within Smith's policy had made it seem to trans activists that Smith was mired in a trans-exclusionary radical lesbian separatist philosophy, which views trans men as deluded cisgender lesbians and refuses to see trans women as real women. This very welcome action doesn't simply add Smith to the list of the other women's colleges; it kills that separatist argument in administrative aca-

demia once and for all.

Smith's decision followed very closely on the decision to end the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, a venerable lesbian institution for the past four decades, held annually on "The Land" in upper Michigan. MichFest has been mired in conflict regarding trans women since 1991, when a trans woman was escorted off the land for the first time.

The festival, like Smith, often hosted trans men who had once been lesbian women, but officially asked out trans women to stay home. While many women, including trans women living under the festival's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, experienced life-changing and life-affirming weeks during 40 Augusts past, the larger LGBT community last year had finally spoken out **CONTINUED ON PAGE 19**

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

against the discriminatory admissions policy with a petition, created by Emily Dievendorf (then executive director of Equality Michigan), calling for a boycott of MichFest until its exclusionary policies were changed.

Maybe as a result of fatigue and the simple passage of time, or the behind-the-scenes efforts of Dievendorf, Kate Kendell of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and Rea Carey of the National LGBTQ Task Force, as well as from trans advocates nationwide—or most probably a combination of all of the above—Lisa Vogel, the co-founder and lifetime executive director of the MWMF, chose to signal this summer's festivities as the last. Unfortunately, rather than going out on the right side of history, Vogel has remained defiant until the end. Surviving intact as a separatist movement will be a Pyrrhic victory, and the demise of the festival, along with the increasingly public recognition by prominent national cisgender lesbians that trans women are women, is another signal that lesbian society is growing in its understanding of the meaning of gender identity and the lives of trans persons.

**F**rom the other end of the gay divide, the male side, I have reported on the long-held philosophical beliefs of some gay men, rooted in the '70s, that trans women were really just extremely gay men who were so ashamed of their homosexuality that they were willing to undergo surgical and social transition to have sex with men. The man most closely associated with this philosophy is Jim Fouratt, a founder of the Gay Liberation Front in New York following the Stonewall Uprising.

Over May Day weekend in Washington, D.C., I had the honor of attending a reunion of people involved with the Vietnam War peace movement on the 50th anniversary of the escalation of the war with ground troops. Titled "Vietnam: The Power of Protest," the event brought together for the first time anti-war luminaries such as Marcus Raskin, Arthur Waskow, Tom Hayden, Cora Weiss, Dave McReynolds, Richard Fernandez, Staughton Lynd, Judith Lerner, George Regas, Peter Yarrow, Todd Gitlin, Mark Rudd, Frances FitzGerald, Julian Bond, Heather Booth, Ron Delums, and Daniel Ellsberg.

Many of the attendees not only had been active in the anti-war movement but had been Freedom Riders as well. One of the purposes of the conference was to highlight the absence of any official markers of the movement that helped end the Vietnam War, an absence that is starkly contrasted by the growing industry of civil rights movement recognition and its resultant tourism.

One highlight of the conference was a walk to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial a mile and a half away from the conference center, during which time I met, for the first time, Jim Fouratt. As is often the case, my in-person experience of the man was nothing like the caricature that had been built up in my mind over the years by rumor and innuendo. I wasn't interested in refighting old battles or determining the truth of what was said or wasn't said back in the '70s; I was concerned with the here and now and what I



Dana Beyer  
with Jim  
Fouratt

I came away with an understanding of his concerns, as a feminine gay man who had often been thrown under the gay bus by a community that feared its own feminine side.

believed was the persistence of those old transphobic theories that had been attributed to Jim.

We listened to each other and I came away with an understanding of his concerns, as a feminine gay man who had often been thrown under the gay bus by a community that feared its own feminine side, and who was determined to maintain the image that every gay man is a masculine top. I explained that while there are straight men who cross-dress for erotic or sensual pleasure, the trans women who are fighting for recognition as women, both legal and social, are truly women, and we have always been women. That we all have a gender identity, including gay men such as him, and that his gender identity is male, while mine is female. Where we differ is on the spectrum of gender expression. We agreed on the need for mutual respect from both sides, and the need for gay men to overcome the inherent misogyny that denigrates and marginalizes feminine gay men as well as trans women.

We are all fighting for recognition, understanding, and acceptance, and we have a tendency to disparage one another, particularly when we are fighting for media exposure. I sense that slowly, with the promotion of different aspects of the gender expression rainbow as manifested in Laverne Cox, RuPaul, and Caitlyn Jenner, that mainstream America, as well as LGBT America, is beginning to understand our differences as well as our similarities. I am encouraged when I see Bill Maher admit his confusion as to why the T organizes along with the LGB, and former congresswoman Jane Harman calmly explains to him that all sexual minorities have the need to stick together to increase our numbers and influence. The process feels glacial at times, but it is actually proceeding at an accelerating pace.

Jon Stewart, in speaking with George Stephanopoulos about Caitlyn Jenner's coming out, asked, "For the people who are upset about that, it's got nothing to do with you. Why do you care?" George responded, "Let him be." And Stewart answered, "Thank you. Yes. That's right." Let us all be. ♦



U.S. Army Sgt.  
Shane Ortega

## A NO-FAIL MISSION

How the U.S. Army's first and only actively serving transgender soldier is risking everything in his fight to serve as the man he is. **BY CHRIS GODFREY**

**F**ailure is never an option in the United States military, but for Sergeant Shane Ortega, the first openly transgender soldier still on active duty, the price of imperfection got much higher after his transition became public.

Since enlisting in the Army in 2005, Ortega has been on over 400 combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and he currently serves as a helicopter crew chief. But last summer, when medical tests highlighted Ortega's elevated testosterone levels, he was removed from flight duties. Were it not for the intervention of the American Civil Liberties Union, he would have likely been discharged altogether.

"My only saving grace was the fact that I'd been transparent in logging everything and that I'd already involved my chain of command and had everything documented up to that point," he says. "I knew at some

point being in the military that this was going to happen. I'd been on testosterone for four years, and transgender people aren't allowed [to serve]. I am not by principle protected from discharge; if any commander does not want me to continue to serve, they can press the issue higher."

The Williams Institute estimates there are currently 15,000 transgender people in military service, but Pentagon rules dictate that transgender troops be discharged on medical grounds, a result of dated regulations that recognize transgenderism and transsexualism as psycho-sexual disorders.

With the help of the ACLU, Ortega presented military chiefs with a 200-page letter, detailing why he should be allowed to serve. He completed a three-day psychological evaluation to prove he didn't suffer from gender dysphoria and challenged the notion that transgender people

automatically suffer from mental illness. He also ensured his physical condition is flawless, exhibiting the male standard for his age bracket.

"It's a no-fail mission. I have to be perfect," says Ortega, who's currently stationed in Hawaii on administrative duty. "The microscope of expectation is so much stronger now. I had to make internal peace with the fact that...it could really cause me to lose my job. So strategically I'm just doing little incremental things as proof."

Despite his being legally male in the civilian world, the military still sees Ortega as a woman. The outdated Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System has no precedent for changing an active service member's gender marker. The only times Ortega is not presenting as male are at official occasions, when he is compelled by current regulations to wear women's "dress blues." It may be restricting for Ortega, both physically and mentally, but it hasn't impaired his pragmatism.

"I'm going to do what the Army wants me to do until that gender marker is changed," he says. "It's definitely socially awkward...the uniform doesn't fit very well. Obviously having a male frame in a female-cut uniform is difficult because the arms don't fit. But I can't challenge it until I have the political grounds. I also deeply believe in using the pillars of the chain of command and working within the existing structures."

The Pentagon has stated that its ongoing review of regulations on the labeling of transgender troops will likely last 12 to 18 months, which is when Ortega's current contract with the military expires. Depending on the outcome, it could leave him with a difficult choice.

"Ideally I'd like to serve authentically and to the best of my abilities," he says. "If I decide to re-enlist and go forward, then the Army has a position where you train new basic recruits and...I would volunteer for one of those positions. It's definitely something I'm eligible for."

Ortega is also trying to bring legislative allies on board, a move that previously helped repeal the "don't ask, don't tell" policy for gay and lesbian military personnel.

Though his activism keeps him busy, he's still found the time to sing baritone in the Gay Men's Chorus of Honolulu and begin training to participate in a men's physique contest, as the first transgender man to do so.

"I like to take calculated risks," he says. "You can go through a bit of suffering if it's beneficial to other people." ♦



# LGBTS AND THE NATIONAL PARKS

The gay ranger who is helping make the National Park Service a little more queer

In the summer of 1916, Woodrow Wilson signed into law the National Park Service Organic Act and, with the stroke of a pen, the National Park Service was born. In the century since, national parks have become the backbone of American conservation and recreation. Now, with its centennial on the horizon, the NPS has the opportunity to use this milestone as a chance to move forward by looking back.

Ranger Michael Liang, a Detroit native who works as a visual information specialist for the NPS is working on the Centennial Campaign, which heralds the National Park Service's 100th anniversary on Aug. 25, 2016. "We are really trying to reach to create and connect with the next generation of park visitors, supporters, and advocates," he says. "I get to help inspire people to care about the national parks through visual media. I went to art school, and I like to use publications, photography, video, and social media to help connect visitors to the national parks."

Liang, who is gay, recognizes that some people don't necessarily see themselves represented in the National Park Service's marketing and media. "I'm very conscious of making sure that we have people of color, people of different backgrounds, and LGBT people represented in our photographs on our websites and our publications," he says. "It's a federally funded agency and everyone deserves to have a national park that resonates with them."

In 2014 the NPS announced an LGBT-themed study as part of its LGBTQ Heritage Initiative with the aim to include important queer sites into the National Register of

Historic Places.

"This is the first step to having a National Park Service that is dedicated to telling the stories of our community," Liang explains. "The National Park Service is officially thought of as being an agency that protects our most special physical places—the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite—but the National Park Service also preserves our cultural heritage."

As a child, Liang became enamored with the outdoors. His uncle was a park ranger, and he invited Liang to visit him at his park and participate in an environmental day camp when he was in elementary school. "Every day we got to go outside, working with the scientists, getting muddy, catching turtles," he explains. "It was much later that I realized that what was fun and childlike play was also part of what people can get paid for when working for the park service." After a college internship at the NPS through the Student Conservation Association, Liang worked at the North Cascades National Park in the Pacific Northwest, which he describes as "love at first sight."

As more sites are being added to the National Register of Historic Places, the NPS is trying to engage with the LGBT community through queer-targeted programs. "In the near term, we are seeing more public programming, particularly during Pride Month. One of my favorites has happened in Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia. They had pre-Stonewall protests that happened right in front of Independence Hall, and so the park rangers give programs telling that story."

—ALEX PANISCH



Michael Liang



A 1907 political cartoon depicting sex-researcher Magnus Hirschfeld drumming up support for the abolition of Paragraph 175 of the German penal code that criminalized homosexuality.

## THE LOST PINK TRIANGLES

An exhibition of Nazi persecution of homosexuals goes on display in NYC.

A traveling exhibition produced by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933–1945," is now on view at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City.

The show tells the story of Nazi persecution of homosexuals during World War II: Hitler's genocide resulted in the death of 6 million Jews and millions of other people, with an estimated 5,000 to 15,000 sent to concentration camps because of their sexual orientations—the vast majority of them being gay men.

The story of these victims, commonly known as the Pink Triangles, has begun attracting attention relatively recently. Despite noted works like the play *Bent*, which was adapted into a film starring Clive Owen in 1997, and memoirs by former camp prisoners Gad Beck and Pierre Seel, gay stories have largely failed to become part of mainstream Holocaust narratives.

"The exhibition explores why homosexual behavior was identified as a danger to Nazi society and how the Nazi regime attempted to eliminate it," says exhibition curator Edward Phillips.

"The Nazis believed it was possible to 'cure' homosexual behavior through labor and 're-education,'" Phillips says. "Their efforts to eradicate homosexuality left gay men subject to imprisonment, castration, institutionalization, and deportation to concentration camps."

Between 1933 and 1945, more than 100,000 gay men were arrested for violating Nazi Germany's ban on homosexuality. The exhibition includes personal accounts, photographs, and detailed information spanning this dark period of LGBT history. [MJHNYC.org](http://MJHNYC.org), through October 2, 2015.

—JAMES McDONALD



Ian Reisner,  
Ted Cruz, Mati  
Weiderpass

# PARADISE ALMOST LOST

The fallout from the Ted Cruz dinner, hosted by a pair of gay real estate magnates, washes onshore at the Fire Island Pines.

BY CHADWICK MOORE

**T**his spring, following a particularly brutal winter, residents and business owners in the Fire Island Pines were jolted into a deep panic as, by Memorial Day weekend, a Facebook page calling for a boycott of 80% of the businesses there swelled to nearly 12,000 “likes.”

“I love what I do, and I was scared shitless,” said Erin Black, a new mother who’s been a part of the Pines community for 20 years and owns a flower shop, Beachscapes, in the harbor commercial district.

“In that one dinner, he could have ruined what this community has overcome in the last five years. It made me sick to my stomach,” she said.

Business has been sluggish in the Pines for some time. In 2011, just after the tourist season ended, a massive—some say suspicious—blaze took down much of the commercial district, starting at the Pavilion nightclub. The fire also consumed Black’s flower shop. A year later, superstorm Sandy pummeled the tiny barrier island, and since then visitors, unsure of the precarious situation regarding housing and amenities, have been wary of making the journey to the gay oasis.

Then, on April 23, *The New York Times* ran a story about millionaire gay real estate scions Ian Reisner and Mati Weiderpass hosting a dinner for anti-gay Texas sena-

tor and presidential hopeful Ted Cruz in the Manhattan penthouse they co-own. In January, in partnership with longtime Pines businessman P.J. McAteer, Reisner purchased the newly rebuilt Pavilion, which includes a hotel, two bars, and two restaurants—it comprises 80 percent of all the commercial real estate in the Pines—at a distress sale for \$10.1 million, \$7 million below what the previous owner paid. He was the only bidder.

After news of the dinner with Cruz broke, the outrage from LGBT activists was thunderous and steady. Protests were organized outside The Out NYC hotel and XL nightclub in Hell’s Kitchen owned by the men. Broadway Cares, an AIDS charity, announced it would cancel an annual fundraiser at 42West, a property they own. And just three days after the *Times* story broke, a Facebook page titled “Boycott Fire Island Pines Establishments & Out Hotel NYC” had already garnered some 8,200 “likes.”

Reisner issued a mea culpa on Facebook. “I am shaken to my bones by the e-mails, texts, postings, and phone calls of the past few days. I made a terrible mistake,” it read. “I’ve spent the past 24 hours reviewing videos of Cruz’s statements on gay marriage and I am shocked and angry. I sincerely apologize for hurting the gay

community and so many of our friends, family, allies, customers, and employees.”

The apology was rebuked. Comments like “Yeah right, douchebag,” and “TRAITOR” flooded Reisner’s wall. Weiderpass reiterated his business partner’s apology on his own Facebook page, “I share in Ian’s remorse. I, too, lay humbled with what has happened in the last week.”

The men cited Cruz’s unwavering support for Israel as the reason for meeting the senator. Cruz, who supports turn-away-the-gays bills and is staunchly against gay marriage—that is to say, in public, anyway—has a virulently conservative grassroots fan base. Yet while at the intimate, 18-person dinner and “fireside chat” at the palatial Central Park South penthouse co-owned by Reisner and Weiderpass (they used to be a couple), Cruz softened his rhetoric, telling attendees he thinks gay marriage is a states’ rights issue and that if his daughter were gay he would love her nonetheless.

The controversy might have died until Reisner, in an interview with *New York* magazine, called gays “cheap” and “entitled,” and Weiderpass wrote a column in the *New York Observer* labeling the boycotters “gay extremists” and identifying himself as a “longtime leader of my community.” And while the two maintained that the event was not a fundraiser, news broke that Reisner donated \$2,700—the maximum amount allowed for pre-nomination candidates—to Cruz’s campaign immediately following the dinner.

Jay Pagano, president of the Fire Island Pines Property Owners Association, convened an emergency damage-control meeting on May 2 where 300 residents showed up to discuss the boycott.

“The general view was that while [residents] were offended by Ian hosting Senator Cruz, they were aware of the adverse impact the boycott would have on innocent people and other merchants in the harbor,” Pagano told me while sitting on the patio of his sleek, airy, oceanside second home on the Sunday before Memorial Day. “There was no way to conduct a boycott without that collateral damage, and that was too unacceptable.”

But plenty of homeowners were fuming, though wary—due to the nature of small-town politics—to identify themselves as boycotters. “I was at a dinner party last night and people were livid,” said a man from Manhattan who asked to be identified as P.F. “A friend of mine usually gives about \$25,000 to the health center but chose not to this year.”





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The Facebook page, like the rest of the Internet, is an echo chamber that has a kind of Occupy Gay Street mood, perhaps fueled by a more general disgust for the homosexual one percent. Some with knowledge of business affairs in the Pines speculate that the Facebook page—run by anonymous moderators—is actually a plot by a competing real estate mogul who saw an opportunity to squeeze Reisner out.

Still, earlier that Sunday morning, business was booming at the Canteen, a counter-service restaurant now owned by Reisner. The 19-room hotel next door, called the Hotel, and also owned by Reisner, had been sold out for weeks. A flock of meticulously worked-out men, crawling out from hangovers with Gatorade and Red Bull in hand, remarked how the food at the Canteen is better this year, and the service friendlier. “No comment,” one of them said, when asked about the boycott.

Vito Fun, a New York-based DJ, has a summer residency at the Pavilion. “So many people on Facebook were like, ‘Don’t go there,’ ” he said. “But that’s not the be-all end-all of Fire Island. It’s such a community. We like to cook dinners in our home, sit down, grab a protein shake,” he said. “This is my home.”

“I say, let’s bring in all of the Repub-



There was no way to conduct a boycott without that collateral damage, and that was too unacceptable.”

—Jay Pagano, president of the Fire Island Pines Property Owners Association

lican candidates, give them a nice dinner with a bunch of gays and maybe they’ll evolve,” said Jacob Ellwanger on the deck at the Sip ‘n’ Twirl Sunday afternoon, visiting for the week from Washington, D.C., and a gay Republican himself. “Even if we were able to put the owners out of business, which we wouldn’t be able to, then what? There’s nothing to be gained from this boycott,” he said.

I sat down with McAteer, Reisner’s business partner in the Pines, in his office below the Sip ‘n’ Twirl nightclub, which

he owns. It’s his first business venture with Reisner, though they have known each other for almost a decade.

“The Hotel has not looked this good in 50 years. The Pavilion opened last night, and we had a packed crowd at 8 p.m. Low Tea has been packed every day. The Canteen is doing an amazing business. Those are the only four pieces of that business we have opened so far,” he told me.

At the Blue Whale, now owned by Reisner and McAteer and which hosts the Pines-staple event Low Tea, a stream of gay men began waddling in at 5 p.m. and the house was packed an hour later.

I approached a group of friends in town for the weekend about the boycott.

“No comment,” said one of them, wearing oversize sunglasses and a black leather baseball hat, with the nose-up bravado of a diva breezing through paparazzi.

“I’m not getting involved,” his friend said. “No comment.” They walked away.

At Low Tea I spotted Mo Rocca, the CBS news correspondent and former *Daily Show* personality, huddled with a group of friends. “I’m not surprised that the boycott hasn’t taken hold,” he told me. “Most of the younger gay guys think Ted Cruz is a DJ. To be fair, it is a really good DJ name.” ♦



## GUAM GETS MARRIED

Circuit court decisions are having a positive effect in territories beyond the 50 states.

**K**athleen M. Aguero and Loretta M. Pangelinan, both 28, could have traveled to any of the closest U.S. states to get married (a 3,700-mile trip at minimum), but they wanted their friends and family on Guam to be part of the ceremony cementing their nine-year relationship. Despite the fact that the Pacific territory falls under the ninth circuit court of appeals, which has extended marriage equality to all nine states within its jurisdiction, the couple's initial request for a marriage certificate in April was denied. They then filed suit and, ignoring calls from Gov. Eddie Calvo to suspend the case until the Supreme Court's verdict in June, Guam attorney general Elizabeth Barrett-Anderson immediately ordered officials to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex applicants. The district court's decision to not only hear the case but to rule in favor of marriage equality shows that—from state to territory, Guam to Puerto Rico, Americans haven't needed the Supreme Court's backing to move forward with same-sex marriage.

—JAMES MCDONALD



## IRELAND GOES PINK

An on-the-ground report from Dublin on the day in May when Ireland became the first nation to enact marriage equality in a nationwide referendum

"When the official result was announced, when it became known that 1,201,607, or 62% of voters, had voted Yes, the city erupted. Rainbow flags rained down as the streets flooded with people.... Everywhere you looked there was joy. Preteens danced in the streets, stealing sips from hidden bottles of alcohol. The Irish Garda (police) warned drivers to avoid central areas, but the cars and buses that made their way through streets dense with people honked their horns in solidarity, some waving rainbow flags out their windows." —J.M.

## PRIME MINISTER OF LUXEMBOURG WEDS

The no-media-invited wedding of the only gay "first couple"



Luxembourg's openly gay prime minister, Xavier Bettel, married his longtime partner, Belgian architect Gauthier Destenay, on May 15, making them the world's only openly gay "first couple." Following the ceremony at Luxembourg City Hall, the couple waved to approximately 250 well-wishers.

Bettel, 42, and Destenay were among the first men to marry under the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg's new marriage equality law, which went into effect in January.

Bettel's election a year and a half earlier ended decades of conservative rule in the small Catholic nation with a population of just over 500,000. While hugging his new husband, Destenay said, "Luxembourg can set an example."

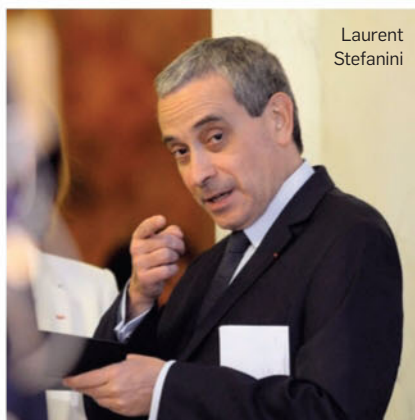


# FRANCE FORCES POPE'S HAND OVER GAY AMBASSADOR

Diplomatic dispute calls Francis' openness to LGBTs into question.

The first two years of Francis' papacy have been marked by a convoluted series of mixed messages to the LGBT community. While his much quoted "who am I to judge?" approach to homosexuality has been buoyed by significant moves—such as his publicly dining with gay and transgender prison inmates, demoting the virulently homophobic Vatican Chief Justice, Cardinal Raymond Burke, and stating that "homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer the Christian community"—other actions have repeatedly undermined progress in the highest ranks of the church. In addition to likening trans people to nuclear weapons, Francis encouraged Slovaks to vote against marriage equality, and he has persistently and robustly defended traditional marriage. Most recently, the diplomatic tussle over the appointment of Laurent Stefanini, the 54-year-old, openly gay nominee put forth by France to serve as its ambassador to the Holy See, has called into question the pope's true stance.

The celebrated diplomat, who served as the French deputy chief of mission at the Vatican from 2001 to 2005, was not confirmed within the first month of his appointment, as is customary. This sparked anger in France and among LGBT activists worldwide. Despite the usual discretion surrounding diplomatic appointments, it has been widely speculated that Stefanini, who is unmarried and a practicing Catholic, was being resisted because of his sexuality. Reports that Francis held a personal meeting with Stefanini—lasting anywhere from 15 to 40 minutes—in which he assured



Laurent Stefanini

the Frenchman that he had no personal issues with his appointment, only serve to further confuse the situation.

It is possible that Francis is sincere in his intention to extend Catholic acceptance of LGBT people. Regardless of his personal views, there are limits to the effects one man, even the head of the Catholic church, can have against the entrenched interests and forces of the Vatican. The true test of Francis' intentions, and the lengths to which the Vatican is willing to go to meet its LGBT followers, will be at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia this September. The pope announced his intention to attend in the midst of a synod addressing the church's attitude towards sexuality, and as it is hosted in a state with same-sex marriage, in a city with some of the best workplace protections for LGBTs, many will be looking for signs. —JAMES MCDONALD



## BLAME IT ON THE QUEERS

Catastrophes caused by LGBTs, according to the professional outrage brigade

### Riots in Baltimore

"You look at what's going on in Baltimore today, you see issues that are raised there. And healthy marriages are the ones between a man and a woman because they can have a healthy family and they can raise children in the way that's best for their future, not only socially but psychologically, economically."

—BILL FLORES, U.S. CONGRESSMAN FROM TEXAS

### Gomorrah Redux

"We in North America and Europe are not simply 'slouching towards Gomorrah,' as Judge Robert Bork warned in his best-selling book; we are hurtling toward it. The old earthen dam that has held and protected the reservoir of Judeo-Christian values since the days of our Founding Fathers has given way. Traditional marriage is the last bulwark to fall."

—JAMES DOBSON, EVANGELICAL AUTHOR

### Capitalism? Communism? Apiculture?

"Public schools these days are busy teaching kids about the birds and the bees and whether they might be LGBT or Q...How can we hope to form a more perfect union—when kids can't tell the difference between capitalism and communism?"

—TODD STARNES, FOX PUNDIT

### Extinction of Humanity

"If we all woke up tomorrow morning and decided that our sexual preference is homosexual [and] we shall have nothing to do with the opposite sex, [it would lead to the extinction of humanity]."

—ALAN KEYES, POLITICAL CANDIDATE



## @CAITLYN\_JENNER

Caitlyn Jenner continues to break records, beating Barack Obama's time for earning one million Twitter followers. Jenner did it in just four hours.

# WHERE ARE 1.5 MILLION MISSING BLACK MEN?

Census data of male-female ratios by race underscore disproportionate homicide and incarceration rates and reveal HIV infection disparities

BY BRENDEN SHUCART

One and a half million black men are missing. For every 100 black women between the ages of 25 and 54 living free in the United States, there are only 83 men. By contrast, for every 100 white women from that age group, there are 99 white men according to a recent study conducted by *The New York Times* using data found the 2010 Census.

The gender gap stretches back at least 50 years, but it took on new dimensions in the 1980s when deindustrialization, deurbanization, and the War on Drugs gutted the economic coherence of black communities and turned black men in America into what the *Times* calls an “underclass,” lacking sufficient opportunities for employment and operating under an expectation of criminality.

## 1.5 Million Missing Black Men

Justin Wolfers, David Leonhardt and Kevin Quealy, *New York Times*, 2015

“Obviously some of those missing men are also a part of [the gay] community,” laments Mister Wallace, a member of the Chicago-

based artist collective Banjee Report. “If they were here it would mean more black gay men making art and holding positions of leadership, more magazine covers featuring black artists, more black writers writing articles, more opportunities for a black perspective to influence the gay community.”

Approximately 600,000 of these missing men are behind bars, the majority of whom are serving time for nonviolent drug crimes. Of the remaining 900,000 missing black men, it is impossible to state with certainty how many have died, but it is without a doubt a very large number. Many were claimed by violence: Homicide is the leading cause of death among young black men in America. And many more will be claimed by heart disease, respiratory infections, and complications related to HIV, all of which black men are both more likely to acquire and to be killed by than either black women or whites in America. The *Times* study has surprisingly little to say about HIV, considering that of

the 1.1 million people living with the virus in the United States, more than 506,000 are black. Though the black community makes up 12% of the national population, it suffers 44% of new infections, 49% of AIDS diagnoses, and nearly half of HIV-related deaths.

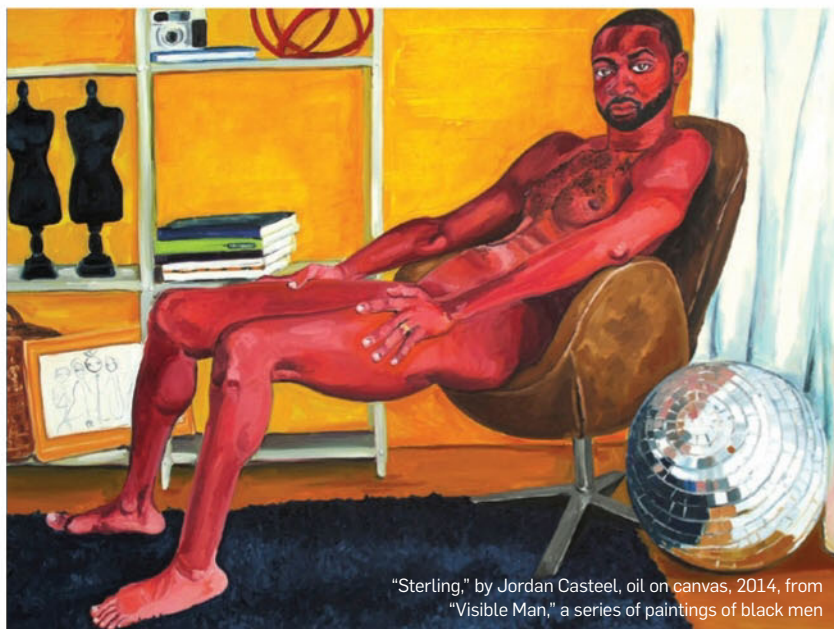
“One in three black gay men will contract HIV,” says Alex Garner of the National Minority AIDS Council. This is despite evidence that black men—and especially gay black men—are more likely to have fewer partners, to use a condom with those partners, and to have gotten tested within the past year than their non-black counterparts. “Compare that to the one in six white gay men who will become infected,” Garner continues. “The high rates of infection among black gay men are because the incidence within the community is so high. It’s been left unchecked for decades.”

Knowing and understanding numbers like these are important early steps in addressing the HIV crisis, but they can also contribute to the stigma against black men that already hangs all too heavily over both the digital and real-life spaces where gay men congregate to meet and cruise. “Statistics about black men being more likely to be infected by HIV make black men less desirable,” notes Wallace. “Black boys growing up want to date other black boys, but when 1.5 million black boys are missing, interracial dating becomes a necessity.”

Gay culture is, at its best, a space where many seemingly contrary ideas and identities intersect, mingle, and find some measure of harmony. It’s a space on the Venn diagram where each of America’s varied regional, racial, and religious subcultures intersect; the gay bar, the Pride parade, even the bathhouse present opportunities to interact with people who come from backgrounds that many of our straight siblings will never have the privilege to experience. At our best, these encounters teach us compassion and empathy for those born into different tribes. Sadly, with every victory the gay rights movement wins, it has begun to feel that we get a little further from that ideal.

Does mainstream acceptance come at the cost of queer compassion?

Oakland-based artist Brontez Purnell isn’t sure. “I want to say that the gay world is a place where all of that shit could be fixed or worked on, but I don’t know. I’d like to believe that your average gay is less likely to harbor racist feelings, but I feel like we’ve become estranged. That’s the only word I can think of which fits.” ♦



“Sterling,” by Jordan Casteel, oil on canvas, 2014, from “Visible Man,” a series of paintings of black men

© JORDAN CASTEEL, “STERLING,” 2014, OIL ON CANVAS, 54 X 72 INCHES



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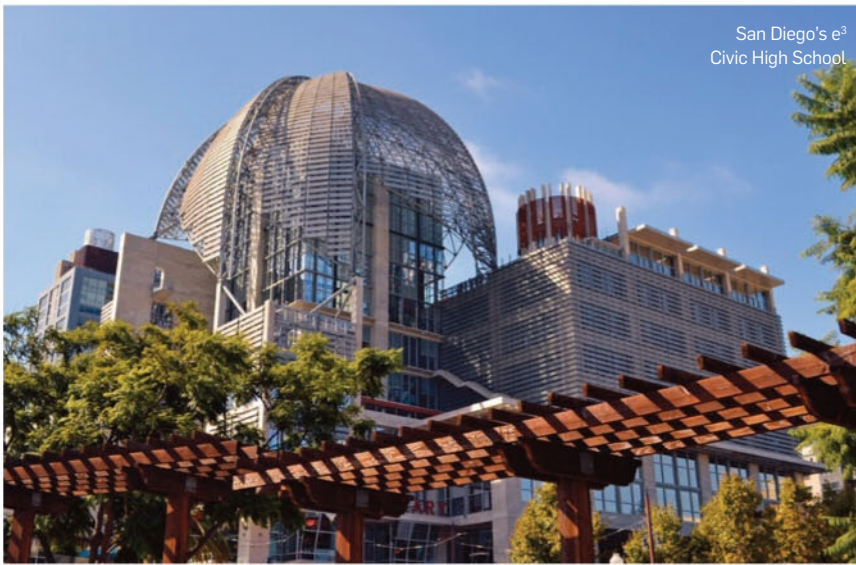
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[gaycenter.org](http://gaycenter.org)



San Diego's e<sup>3</sup>  
Civic High School



Dr. [Helen] Griffith's open bigotry and homophobia is detrimental to our students and our school."

—Valerie Stewart in a letter to the ACLU

## BULLYING FROM THE TOP?

Accusations that the principal bullied the gay-straight alliance at San Diego's so-called most progressive high school

BY THOM SENZEE

**A**s San Diego mourned the bullying-related suicides earlier this year of a transgender boy named Sage and 16-year-old Taylor Alesena, who was also trans, another story of alleged bullying—by the principal of the region's most progressive new high school—was unfolding.

"It was the most heartbreaking thing I've seen in fifty years of activism," City Commissioner Nicole Murray-Ramirez says just hours after attending what has been described as "a school board meeting from hell." The topic was the school's gay-straight alliance.

"Here you had these kids, some gay, some straight, all coming together to explain to a school board how they were being bullied by the principal," Ramirez says. "You even had parents complaining."

Situated in the city's sparkling new downtown library, an acclaimed architectural and public-use achievement, e<sup>3</sup> Civic High School aims to teach civic engagement with a college preparatory curriculum, as well as social and cultural literacy. Yet according to critics, until very recently, its top administrator has been openly hostile to LGBT students.

"I am afraid for my job," says teacher Valerie Stewart, who is also the school's gay-straight alliance faculty advisor. "I feel I've already been retaliated against."

According to Stewart, e<sup>3</sup>'s executive director, Dr. Helen Griffith, initially thwarted the formation of the GSA, called the Spectrum Club, allowing it only after Ramirez and the American Civil Liberties Union got involved.

"Dr. Griffith's open bigotry and homophobia is detrimental to our students and our school," Stewart wrote in a letter to the ACLU.

Stewart wrote in the letter that Dr. Griffith told her that "children do not have those kinds of feelings" and that clubs like Spectrum "encouraged children to question their identity when they shouldn't."

She also alleges that Dr. Griffith banned the word gay and forbade the GSA from talking about homosexuality or gender identity. Stewart even alleges that one student was told by Dr. Griffith that being gay "isn't OK" and that the student "needed to find God."

Dr. Griffith denies the accusations.

"I'm very proud of our students," Griffith says during a phone interview. "I love them all and they know that. I'll be attending the Harvey Milk Equality Breakfast with our Spectrum Club gay-straight alliance."

Asked if she believes homosexuality is a sin, Dr. Griffith demurred.

"That's not for me to say," she says.

"What I believe or don't isn't relevant and isn't part of the conversation. I have been a victim of discrimination as an African American. I know the pain of being yelled at by someone who has hatred in their heart."

But Dr. Griffith admits there have been "misunderstandings."

"Yes, this has been a growth experience," she says. "But I never meant to give the impression that our LGBTQ students are anything but loved, valued, and accepted for who they are."

Out gay San Diego Unified School District board president Kevin Beiser says that although e<sup>3</sup> Civic High's status as a charter school limits his power to influence school policy, he's been keeping close tabs on the problems there.

"There will be a stronger response if the gay-straight alliance and LGBT students are not given the same respect and opportunities as everyone else at e<sup>3</sup>," Beiser says. Still, Ramirez accuses him of being "asleep at the wheel." While Ramirez says he supports Beiser as school board president, he questions why the ACLU had to come to e<sup>3</sup> Civic High School twice to ameliorate LGBT issues.

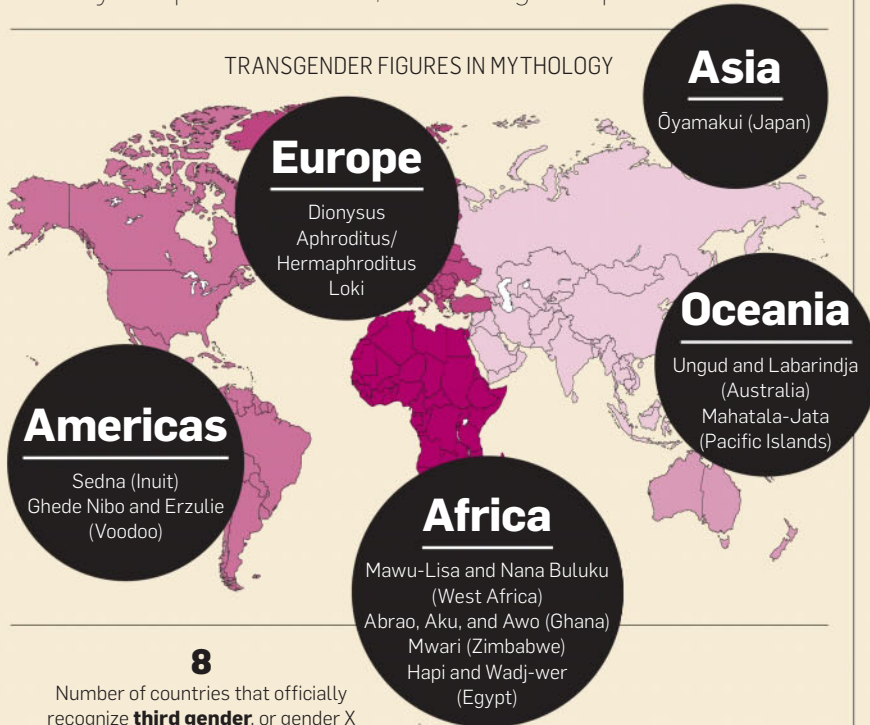
"We had constructive conversations with the executive director and school board president following recent incidents," said David Loy, legal director at American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of San Diego and Imperial Counties. Loy wouldn't say if legal action might follow should the alleged discrimination continue. "As a policy, I don't ever say we're going to bring legal action before doing so because every case has specific legal issues and evidence that is needed specifically for each case," he said. "It is very surprising, because you even have GSAs in the reddest of states—and have had since the Nineties." ♦



## NUMBER CRUNCH: TRANSGENDER

The transgender experience is neither a modern nor Western invention. From mythology to legal acknowledgement to military and political service, trans is a global phenomenon.

### TRANSGENDER FIGURES IN MYTHOLOGY



8

Number of countries that officially recognize **third gender**, or gender X

**Australia**  
**Bangladesh**  
**Germany**  
**India**  
**Nepal**  
**New Zealand**  
**Pakistan**  
**Thailand**

### Populations of Hijra (third gender)

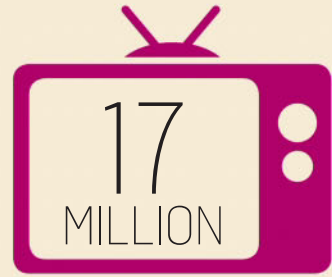
INDIA: 5,000,000–6,000,000

BANGLADESH: 10,000

PAKISTAN: 80,000–300,000

### TRANSGENDER POLITICIANS

<b>Jenny Bailey</b> (Mayor, UK)	<b>Althea Garrison</b> (Representative of Massachusetts State Legislature, USA)	<b>Vladimir Luxuria</b> (Member of Parliament, Italy)
<b>Georgina Beyer</b> (Mayor, Member of Parliament, New Zealand)	<b>Anna Grodzka</b> (Member of Parliament, Poland)	<b>Stu Rasmussen</b> (Mayor, Oregon, USA)
<b>Sarah Brown</b> (Councilwoman, UK)	<b>Adela Hernández</b> (Councilwoman, Cuba)	<b>Shabnam Mausi</b> (State Legislator, India)
<b>Camille Cabral</b> (Councilwoman, France)	<b>Kim Coco Iwamoto</b> (Commissioner, Hawaii, USA)	<b>Lauren Scott</b> (Commissioner, Nevada, USA)
<b>Joanne Conte</b> (Councilwoman, Colorado, USA)	<b>Aya Kamikawa</b> (Municipal Officer, Japan)	<b>Nicole Sinclair</b> (Member of European Parliament, UK)
<b>Petra De Sutter</b> (Senator, Belgium)	<b>Madhu Kinnar</b> (Mayor, India)	<b>Manuela Trasobares</b> (Councilwoman, Spain)



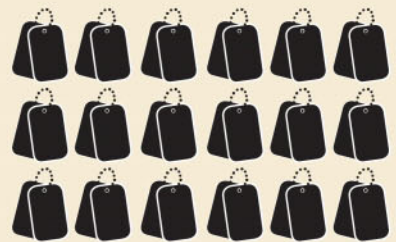
Audience for Caitlyn Jenner (then Bruce)  
TV interview with Diane Sawyer on ABC

1980

year American  
Psychiatric Association  
codifies **"gender identity  
disorder"** (renamed  
"gender dysphoria" in 2012),  
making hormonal  
treatment and reassignment  
surgery accessible

81

Age of **oldest person** to undergo gender  
confirmation surgery



Number of countries that allow for  
transgender **military service**

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia,  
Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark,  
Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Israel,  
the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway,  
Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom

15,000

Estimated number of transgender  
**U.S. military personnel**

## DAILY DOSE



# SEROSORTING IN THE AGE OF PREP

In the past, HIV+ and HIV- men often sought partners of the same status. Is it still, or was it ever, necessary?

BY JOSH KRUGER

Sometimes, I'll hear HIV-positive people talk about how the best way they can prevent HIV is to only date or have sex with other HIV-positive people. I can understand this line of thinking; I used to hold the same sentiment. Still, the longer that I live with HIV, and the more advances I see being made in science, I think we need to scrap this idea altogether.

After all, I don't want to limit my romantic and sexual relationships just because of antediluvian cultural practices that no longer serve anybody.

Serosorting, the idea that gay and bi men seek out partners of the same HIV status, has been around for decades. While it makes logical sense, like all other guesstimate-based sorcery, serosorting doesn't actually work. And it's not without negative cultural consequences, either. More to the point: Self-segregation isn't exactly the best way to foster communication and sharing—feelings or bodily fluids.

A study in 2012 found that while we all think it works, it's an "ineffective risk reduction approach," particularly in certain subpopulations of our community—like drug users. Another study released the same year indicated that serosorting works a tiny bit only when it's the only risk reduction strategy being used.

Yes, "only topping when barebacking" is a more effective HIV prevention strategy than serosorting.

This isn't terribly surprising. Late last year, the CDC reported that about 170,000 people think they're HIV-negative but are actually HIV-positive. In other words, when those folks serosort—and have unprotected sex only with HIV-negative people—they're not exactly preventing HIV.

"But," I can hear people say, "what about condoms?" People who use condoms perfectly and religiously aren't acquiring HIV via sex. And since we're still seeing people seroconvert, we must conclude that "condoms only" has reached its peak efficacy as a mass prevention effort.

There are people who usually use condoms but sometimes don't; there are people who never use condoms; and there are people who try their best to use condoms but often do not. We

need to talk about HIV prevention that works for those people, because it's those people who are seroconverting.

With that in mind, we need to be talking about PrEP and Treatment as Prevention (TasP) a lot more.

PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, entails an HIV-negative person taking a single pill once a day to prevent the acquisition of HIV. In fact, this pill is more effective than condoms at preventing HIV. TasP entails an HIV-positive person seeking treatment. By treating HIV, an individual, like me, can reach an undetectable viral load, like I have. This means that there are no measurable copies of HIV in my bloodstream. For me, TasP is sort of like PrEP but in reverse: I'm an HIV-positive person who takes one pill once a day (with no side effects) so I don't transmit HIV to others.

Anyway, I've had a lot of HIV-negative guys on the hookup app Scruff hit me up. It's weird because I thought I'm supposed to be outright rejected or relegated to posting "only other HIV+ guys!" On my profile, I have my HIV status and the fact that I'm undetectable in my bio; they have the fact that they take PrEP in their bios; and they enthusiastically want to get naked with me.

Crazy, right? Not really; it makes sense. I know the risks from my end—there really are none since I take ownership of my health and manage my virus.

From their end, those HIV-negative guys have actually taken ownership of their health and their bodies, too. They've researched what HIV is and what PrEP is. And they know how effective taking their PrEP precisely as prescribed is at stopping HIV. So they're not concerned, either, at least about HIV.

In other words, positive and negative partners can certainly mix nowadays "safely"—at least in terms of HIV. If everyone's being open and communicative about their status, we have plenty of tools at our disposal that needn't include self-segregation. ♦

*Josh Kruger is an award-winning writer and commentator in Philadelphia who uses his own experiences with drug addiction, homelessness, and HIV to discuss social problems, sex, and politics.*





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# SANTA MARIELA

*Mariela Castro, the Cuban president's daughter, has made the country safe for LGBT people on the island. Now that Americans hope to visit more freely, what's next?*

BY JERRY PORTWOOD

**“D**onde es la fiesta?” Patricio asked the cabbie at the corner. “Where’s the party?” We’d been in Havana for five days, and now it was time to find the gay party. Stationed at the top of La Rampa, people crowded the intersection, stopping traffic. The tropical foliage surrounding the Coppelia ice cream parlor across the street overflowed with voluptuous female bodies wrapped in skirts and animal prints, balancing on platform heels. Shirtless men emerged barefoot from shadows. Others dressed in warm colors open to their waists. They all packed sidewalks in front of the Cine Yara. The restaurant advertised pizza in neon, but its true window displays were the beautiful muscled boys radiant with the day’s tan.

“*Mariposas!*” a driver hurled from his window as he zipped away. And I understood it, not as an epithet for the queers but rather as the best description possible for the scene. It looked like we were in a field of exotic butterflies fluttering at that corner in Havana on a Friday night. I tried to imagine what this place used to conjure before the revolution: suits and dresses, flash and smile, money and sex. Now the scene is a faded facsimile of a once-rich tableau, but still vibrant and packed with life.

My partner, Patricio, a college architecture professor, and I last traveled to Cuba (his family’s homeland) in 2005 with a group of Spanish students from our temporary home in Barcelona. It was our second trip to the island together, and I remained shy in my beginner’s Span-

ish. It was three days before a massive hurricane would strike the island and thousands would be left without electricity and running water. But not us, the treasured foreign tourists—we wouldn’t lose water or power, nor would we really notice that the island’s inhabitants were limping along. But that was not on our minds tonight. Tonight was a party.

Patricio’s friend Mariluz had invited us to her home for the birthday party of her gay brother, Eric. We brought fancy bottles of rum, and they mixed it with Coca-Cola. We picked avocados from the backyard tree to make guacamole, and they cranked up a radio that blared American pop music (Madonna, naturally) until they wanted to get out of the house and go dancing. Since gay bars weren’t allowed to exist in Cuba at the time, we trekked to the spot near Cine Yara, where the locals knew to ask the taxi drivers for the party that evening. They would transport us to that weekend’s secret spot, an ever-moving party to keep the government from finding out.

**W**ith the recent easing of travel restrictions, and the hope that the embargo between the United States and Cuba will be lifted completely, this is the same sexy scenario Americans are hungry for—a chance to visit the island just 90 miles south of Key West, with all its exotic allure. But the common misconception that the country has been stuck in time, with no progress or evolution of thought, remains lodged in our imaginations.

Although gay sexual activity has been legal since 1979, a mere 10 years ago, during my last visit, people could still be jailed in Cuba for public displays of homosexuality. Gay clubs were nonexistent, and people had to meet in clandestine spots for fear of abuse. Now, regular gay pride parades (or *congas*, in Spanish) take place even in smaller towns and villages.

In 2014, a travel press trip was organized for gay media, organized by the government-owned and -controlled Havana Tours in cooperation with Pride World Travel. Although the itinerary is tightly overseen—writers weren’t allowed to prowl much on their own in search of an authentic experience—Pride World Travel plans to begin LGBT-focused tours of Cuba this year. It may seem like the latest round of “pinkwashing,” since Cuba

PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY ROSALINO  
RAMOS







Mariela Castro visiting  
La Sierra Maestra

still ranks high in human rights abuses, but it seems the revolution, which began in the late 1950s and promised equality to all, is finally trying to make amends for its macho maneuvers that persecuted countless men and women for over 50 years.

None of this progress would be possible without the activism of a straight woman with direct ties to the center of Cuban power: Mariela Castro.

The director of the Cuban National Center for Sex Education, known as CENESEX, Castro is the daughter of the current Cuban president, Raúl Castro, and the niece of the man who led the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro. In 2005, she advocated for allowing transgender people to have gender reassignment surgery and change their legal gender. Over the past decade she's campaigned against homophobia, with remarkable results. She marches in the front of those Pride parades. She drives to remote mountain towns searching out trans people, lesbians, and gay men who may need her assistance. She's become a queer icon on the island, a single-named saint, the name invoked whenever anyone needs help. "Are you being bullied or abused? Call Mariela."

"I was born into a homophobic society," Mariela Castro told the American filmmaker Jon Alpert in a documentary tentatively titled *Cuba's Sexual Revolution*. "I laughed at gays, made fun of them." She explained that one day as a child, a friend said she hurt his feelings, and her ideas about LGBT people began to change. "I was ashamed. From that moment I started to observe, to question, and to investigate. But curing prejudice takes time and work. At every level of society."

Alpert, who has been filming in Cuba for five decades, has made numerous films about the country and traveled there hundreds of times. For this film, which will air on HBO later this year, he captured some of those remarkable LGBT stories: lesbian pig farmers in a remote village, an LGBT baseball game in a tiny mountain town, a trans woman blind in one eye from acid thrown in her face, a new play that features the first same-sex love scenes on stage in 50 years, and a woman in her 70s coming out publicly for the first time.

"I admire the people in this film, their courage and creativity," said Alpert, 66, who is straight. "I like who they are. And every couple of months we call in to check to see if there's been any progress." How-



ever, he's still unsure what motivates Castro. She remains a savvy political agent, never revealing too much.

"One of the things Mariela did say that was really striking to me," Alpert said, "is that there are many forms of discrimination in Cuba—against women, against people of color, and she said: 'I'm working on this type of discrimination. When I challenge this and people realize you're wrong, it makes you question all the types of discrimination that you do.'"

At one point, Castro told the camera: "Sometimes my father is ashamed to support me. It hurts, but that's the way it is."

Six of us squeezed into the car. Niko sat up front with a boy on his lap. Eric was the last to get in, and I was sandwiched between him and the others. "Don't talk," he instructed. "Duck down when we see one of them. We don't want to get caught." I did as I was told, trying to hide my face from the police who passed by the car. This taxi was for locals, not tourists. Somehow we'd crossed to the other side. Anxious, I felt someone grope my inner thigh, not Patricio, and I yelped. "*Muy bien, guapo*," Eric whispered close to my ear. He then maneuvered a clothes hanger into a small black hole in the car frame and twisted, rolling down the window so their arms could spill out and they could get air. From my crouched position, I noticed duct tape patching a spot in the roof where rust had gnawed through.

We left the lights of La Rampa behind and passed through the fallen buildings of Vedado. No streetlights, just the glow of the headlights bouncing along the pockmarked road. Soon, any semblance of the city was behind us. The car pulled alongside the gravel where other taxis had ferried their passengers from the shambles of the city to the party. Patricio paid for the cab, and the driver told him: "Look for me. José. Call my name when ready. Remember. José. OK?" Not able to stop myself, I asked in broken Spanish what year the car was. The driver and the rest of our Cuban posse all turned and proclaimed in English: "56 Chevy." Of course; I should have known.

Draped on trees, strings of white lights illuminated the vacant lot. A swirl of bodies huddled together, populating the backyard (of some farm?) with laughs and wild gesticulations of conversation. Through their heads, I saw another structure across a field with a bare light bulb and a turntable. "A DJ! Way the hell out here," I stage whispered to Patricio, poking him in the rib to see what I saw. "How do they even have electricity?"

We approached the bar, bought a bottle of rum, and paid extra for the plastic cups



Clockwise from top left: Marta Yonfolk; Paseo de Marti and San Jose Calle; Jon and Rosalino filming in Havana with Marta, Reynaldo, and Hector; La Gruta nightclub in Havana; trans pioneer Juani Santos and his brother, Fernando; Mariela Castro during an activity in Ciego de Ávila; Pride parade in Ciego De Ávila







and chips of ice from a huge block that was slowly melting on the sandy ground. The field slowly became a party. The cabs transported their crews of boys and men dressed in tanks and sleeveless tees across the expanse of roads to their only space of communion.

I thought about how, only too recently, we could all be locked up like the writer Reinaldo Arenas at the Morro Castle, a fort-turned-prison at the mouth of the bay. I had seen the movie *Before Night Falls* and thought it would still be like that here: People died to escape Cuba for America. Especially the gay men, who weren't a part of the official party line and were known to be taken to work camps, or to disappear altogether.

"It's never a vacation for me when I visit Cuba," Patricio told me, explaining how his mother and father had fled after the revolution. Every time he came back, I noticed the sadness that seeped into his face. "I could have been born here, stuck here," he'd admitted one time, a rare confession. I nodded as if I understood, but it was something I could only try to empathize with, never having to feel perpetually exiled and guilty. But tonight we smiled, laughed, and danced with everyone—designer Italians, black and white Cubans, the few gringo Americans like me, Swiss, Spanish entrepreneurs building all the fancy new hotels. Everyone disregarded the risk for a surreptitious night designed to take advantage of the moment, to forget and enjoy, no questions asked. They left their tiny rooms carved from colonial mansions, their flats shared with grandmothers, mothers, uncles, lovers. They arrived to forget. They arrived to party.

**I**n a snippet of archival footage from 1963, Fidel Castro denounced the young people who strutted around in their "tight pants" for "taking too much liberty," claiming that their "effeminate displays" were destroying society. "A socialist society cannot permit this degenerate behavior." It was this macho attitude that began the persecution of countless LGBT people in Cuba that continued for generations. But that has changed.

In 2014, state TV finally aired the annual Gala Against Homophobia that takes place in the heart of Havana at the Karl Marx Theater. Exuberant dancers in feathered and glittery costumes recalled the joyful parties that the revolution had tried to quash.

Flamboyant singing and dancing also takes place openly on beaches around the island. "We would be in jail," one anonymous gay man replied when asked what it was like 10 years ago. "But we have a right

to be here."

Mariela Castro now organizes town meetings where people "testify" about stories of homophobia and transphobia. These sorts of events are common to Cubans, since the Communist Party used them for years to reinforce its ideology in the community and ferret out insurrectionists. "It's part college seminar, part pep rally, and part *Jerry Springer*," Alpert said, explaining that it's how Castro spreads her message against prejudice, hijacking the political apparatus for her own agenda.

In the film, there is also a panel of six people, including a trans woman who shared her story of hardship living in a small town. When the young woman's mother appeared from the crowd to hug her daughter, Castro facilitated the moment, which feels eerily similar to an evangelical Christian conversion, saying, "Please talk to other mothers to overcome prejudices and to support their children." It's hard not to be moved by such a moment of reconciliation.

It was at one of these meetings that an older man started to explain to Castro how he had been sent to forced labor camps for being gay. Luis Perez demanded that the state give him and others who had been persecuted and abused, some of them tortured and killed, an apology. Alpert's camera followed him into his humble apartment, where he was listening to a Verdi opera on a portable radio. As he ate a plate of rice, he explained how he had been disillusioned and nearly died.

"The revolution had an idea of a new man, and he couldn't be gay," Perez said. He was sent to one of the concentration camps for two years of forced labor. While there he saw a friend nearly blinded after he was punished by being forced to sit in a chair in the middle of the camp and stare at the sun for the entire day. When he confronted Castro about the atrocities committed by her father and uncle in the name of the revolution, she didn't blanch.

"We will remember it, so it will never happen again," she said. "I'm very sorry."

This conflict between the horrors committed in the recent past and a move toward a more inclusive and equitable future remains at the heart of today's Cuba. Travelers to the island may want to visit the Cuba of their imaginations, a place that has been untouched by progress—with its old Chevys and crumbling colonial mansions preserved in amber. But they must be reminded that such a place is a myth. Even now as Cuba opens up, there are stories that remain untold, and the futures of LGBT people are rapidly being written. ♦

# WHAT TRANS MOVEMENT?

Caitlyn Jenner's story is an important one. But stories like hers alone cannot sustain a movement of racially and culturally diverse trans men and women seeking community and visibility.



By Jen Richards

**THE OPEN SECRET** of trans activists and organizers is that we spend as much time navigating horizontal harassment and internal politics as we do on our proper outward-facing efforts. What is a steady state of affairs for those of us on the inside occasionally rises to public awareness, such as with the “tranny wars,” a fight over the use of a word that some claimed with affection and others saw as a vicious slur. Or the “no platforming” of feminists who are critical of trans people. Or the exclusion of trans women from the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival.

Anything done by or for trans people, or any issue that intersects with gender, is inevitably attacked. The battlefields are social media and op-ed sections, and the stakes are control of discourse and who gets to represent trans people.

Internal tensions are not unique to any group of people, but the feeling is more pitched among trans people than elsewhere, a feeling echoed privately by people in all corners of the social justice movement.

The vitriol is just as bad, if not worse, when aimed at fellow trans people. When 12 trans women were featured on the cover of *C★ndy* magazine, other trans women published essays on the cisnormative beauty standards it perpetuated. When Our Lady J became the first trans woman hired as a writer on a high-profile show, Amazon’s *Transparent*, another trans woman wrote that she was the worst possible choice because she’s not a “real, everyday trans woman.” When I started a website solely for sharing positive experiences, WeHappyTrans.com, one of the first comments I received was “Where is the site for those of us who aren’t happy?” And when the first Trans 100 was published, a list of 100 out trans activists, most of the emails I got from trans people were about how terrible I was for not including them.

Those of us working with trans people have come to expect it; we’re part of a traumatized and sensitive community. We often say “Hurt people hurt people” as explanation, but it increasingly feels like resignation. Most troubling of all, I know more and more people who are simply giving up, who no longer view trans-centered efforts as worth the inevitable attack. We are ceding space to the most destructive elements of our community just as trans visibility is reaching a crescendo, leaving an uninformed public to either accede to the reality being shouted at them by the loudest trans activists or simply cease engaging in these issues.

**IT IS POSSIBLE** to look at the sum total of activities aimed at advancing rights, protections, and visibility for trans people and call it a movement. It is a convenient narrative that is at once timely and easy to grasp.

With the battle for gay and lesbian rights on a seemingly inevitable path to victory in the United States, both the media and LGBT organizations have been in search of what’s next. And there are plenty of people to point out that no one has been treated less equally than trans people. To this day, hardly a conversation among LGBT organizers and trans people isn’t informed, implicitly or explicitly, by the decision to eliminate “gender identity” from the Employment Non-Discrimination Act offered up in 2007 in hopes of giving it a better chance at passing into law without the encumbrance of trans equality (it didn’t).

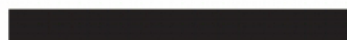
Year after year, anyone digging into the statistics regarding LGBT unemployment, HIV rates, lack of health care, police harassment, negative media portrayals, and violence would see that trans people are disproportionately represented in each and every category.

It was therefore only a matter of time before attention was turned to trans rights. Social media had allowed trans people to find one another like never before, build supportive communities, and become educated on their issues. In 2012, Janet Mock began using #girlslikeus on Twitter, and for the first time trans women were loving and supporting each other in a public space. The groundwork was laid, and the media seized on trans people, simply swapping out sexual orientation with gender identity. The number of trans people may be small, but the stories are nonetheless compelling.

Nearly 17 million people tuned in live to hear one such story, that of Caitlyn Jenner. Not since Christine Jorgensen stepped off an airplane in 1952, if ever, have so many been so interested in someone who does not identify as the gender the world had assumed them to be. The attention could not be attributed solely to celebrity and zeitgeist; Jenner’s story was digestible. The public had been primed for it with years of talk shows, news specials, articles, movies, and TV shows. By the time it came out, the contours of Jenner’s story were as familiar as the scale of attention was unprecedented. Hardly a year has passed when we haven’t heard some variation on the themes of “born in the wrong body” and “living a lie.” While none of these previous public performances had commanded as much interest, without them Jenner would have been too alien to comprehend. It was the steady, repeated articulation of a certain trans narrative over decades that allowed millions of people to listen to Jenner and feel empathy rather than bewilderment.

The media and their consumers have been particularly interested in one type of trans person, and one type of trans person has been best positioned to articulate their own stories and advo-

## Without a tuned ear, it's hard to know signal from noise. And right now, it's the loudest and most aggressive voices that get to be heard.



cate for their own rights: those whom the world once treated as straight white men. It may have been the inner turmoil and shame of being trans that drove Jenner to such incredible Olympic distances and heights, but it was a culture that centers the experiences of straight white men that made her an icon.

While the details of Jenner's story make it extraordinary, it's the commonalities the story shares with other similar trans people that have shaped the dominant narrative to become a de facto standard. In turn, it's this standard that has shaped what the public thinks of the trans movement and its needs. And here lies the crisis of what appears to be a trans movement. Those who benefited from moving through the world as straight white men truly most need empathy and understanding. Our purported tipping point is predicated on the newfound availability of just such sentiments.

Other trans people, however—those who did not benefit from such privilege—are not only in need of much more, they are dying from a lack of it.

**THE TRANS MOVEMENT** isn't just a convenient narrative, it is a dangerous lie.

There isn't a trans movement, or a trans community, but rather multiple movements and communities, divided not only by race and class but also distinct histories, leaders, resources, and needs. There are of course some goals, challenges, and victories shared by all. And though there are many exceptions, the lived experiences of most trans people fall into broad camps.

The Jenner story, the one the public is most familiar with, is that of the apparent straight white man, often in a masculine career, married with children, who reveals herself as trans at a later age. Trans women like Jenner often have years of private cross-dressing, and they meet one another through local support groups or weekend-long conventions where they can be *en femme* together without risking public exposure. Shared concerns include comportment, learning how to dress like women, makeup and hair, vocal training, the difficulty of finding or maintaining relationships with women, and surgeries. The ultimate goals for many of these women are "passing," being able to move in public space as an assumed female, and finding intimacy. Both are particularly difficult for people who begin the transition process late in life. These women are the source of one of the two tropes that writer Julia Serano discusses in her book *Whipping Girl*: the pathetic trans woman. *The World According to Garp* (John Lithgow), *Transamerica* (Felicity Huffman), and *Normal* (Tom Wilkinson) are popular portrayals of this type.

Many trans women have carved out a space for themselves. Writer Jenny Boylan, founder of the National Center for Transgender Equality Mara Keisling, surgeon Marci Bowers, artist Kate Bornstein, tennis star Renée Richards, computer scientist Lynn Conway, and countless others used the experiences and opportunities they enjoyed prior to transition to advocate for others. Perhaps due to the connective power of social media, or thanks to the visibility of these older women, many white, queer-identified trans women are transitioning at a younger age and becoming politically active online, many in opposition to the very women who preceded them.

While they vary widely in their particular stories and interests, all of these women share in the unique privilege of having occupied the intersection of identities most valued by contemporary Western society.

Another completely different set of experiences is shared by those who did not benefit from occupying such a privileged space. Black, Latina, and Asian Pacific Islander trans women, along with some white artists and performers who came from gay male communities, found one another on city streets, in nightclubs, and at underground balls. The clear lines between what we now distinguish as transsexuals and queens didn't exist. Total exclusion from mainstream society, reliance on sex work and underground economies, and the necessity of sharing limited resources put a greater emphasis on groups than on individuals.

Gender-nonconforming people were at the heart of spontaneous resistance and action against discrimination and police treatment at Cooper Donuts (Los Angeles, 1959), Dewey's (Philadelphia, 1965), Compton's Cafeteria (San Francisco, 1966), and Stonewall (New York City, 1969), but their individual names and stories are largely lost to history. It's only been through the conscious efforts of a small number of researchers, notably Reina Gossett in recent years, that the central role of trans women in the Stonewall Riots has become known. To the extent that Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson, and Miss Major are now icons of the movement, it is thanks to other trans women of color who sought out and shared their stories.

These women often transition younger. As a friend told me when we were discussing the differences in age of transitions, "We had nothing to lose." Kicked out of their homes and churches and left unprotected in schools, they often ended up on the streets. Barriers to conventional employment and the burdensome additional expenses of hormones and surgeries drive many to sex work, where stigmatization of male desire for trans bodies fuels insatiable demand. Those same factors also collide in a judicial system that is at best indifferent to their plight, and often hostile. With their HIV rates exceeding those of every other demographic, including gay men, a whole generation of trans women was lost in the AIDS epidemic. The entire situation conspires to give weight to the oft quoted, if unproven, statistic that the average life span of a trans woman of color is 35 years.

Despite these horrifying facts, the most obvious and abundant qualities of these women are humor, resilience, and creativity. I'll never forget laughing uproariously with a group of trans women (none white apart from myself), until we got the news of yet another murder. There was a quick discussion of the facts, and the conversation returned to its bawdy humor. It's not indifference or numbness but a necessary coping skill. Losing a sister to addiction, HIV, or violence isn't an *if* among these women, but rather *who* and *when*.

It'd be hard to find a trend in popular culture that didn't likely have its original source in black trans women. One oft cited example is Madonna, whose fame is very much built on the styles she picked up from New York City's ball scene. The body modifica-





Clockwise from top left: Caitlyn Jenner on the cover of *Vanity Fair*, Kate Bornstein, Dorian Corey and Pepper LaBeija in *Paris Is Burning*, Christine Jorgensen, Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, Bamby Salcedo, Jenny Boylan, Janet Mock, and Sylvia Rivera



From left: Jaye Davidson and Stephen Rea in *The Crying Game*, Jeffrey Tambor in *Transparent*, Felicity Huffman and Kevin Zegers in *Transamerica*



tions long done by trans women, often at great risk to their own lives and intended to increase their value as sex workers, have filtered out and become beauty standards for cisgender women celebrities. The gay men who intersect with the world of street and club girls become the stylists, artists, and tastemakers of an elite far removed from the root. The true source of the Kardashian aesthetic, from hair extensions to pumped lips and large butts, is black and Latina trans women's attempts at survival. One woman's armor becomes another's adornment, a dynamic that leaves the latter adored and the former no less vulnerable. *Paris Is Burning* may be the only true portrait of this community, and even it was made by someone from outside the community who exploited her subjects.

Straight culture's anxiety around sex is what turns these women into the other trope discussed by Serano: the deceptive transsexual. *The Crying Game* is the most obvious example.

Judging from TV shows and movies, there is a rash of trans women tricking straight men into bed with them. This lie has gone so far that in 49 states, "trans panic" remains a legally admissible defense for murder. The claim, which still gets repeated in news reports today when a trans woman is killed, is that a straight man didn't know the woman with whom he was intimate was trans, and in a panic turned violent. Putting aside the morally repugnant notion that murder is justified under any circumstances, the truth trans women know is that these men seek us out. Transsexuals feature in one of the most popular forms of pornography, and they comprise anywhere from 15% to 25% of the female escorts in U.S. cities. But media's insistence that trans women are essentially men challenges the masculinity of the straight men who desire them, which is then reasserted through violence. Make no mistake: each time a man plays a trans woman on screen, the end result is very real violence against actual trans women.

These two broad groups of transgender women, the once privileged and the non-privileged, each have a historical precedent that is particularly illustrative—the former, with Virginia Prince's Foundation for Personality Expression (FPE, later Tri-Ess); the latter, with Rivera and Johnson's Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR). Trans historian Susan Stryker sums up the differences succinctly in her book *Transgender History*:

[On FPE] "... explicitly geared toward protecting the privileges of predominantly white, middle-class men who used their money and access to private property to create a space in which they could express a stigmatized aspect of themselves in a way that didn't jeopardize their jobs or social standing."

[On STAR] "Their primary goal was to help kids on the street find food, clothing, and a place to live. They opened STAR House, an overtly politicized version of the 'house' culture that already characterized black and Latino queer kinship networks, where dozens of transgender youth could count on a free and safe place to sleep. Rivera and Johnson, as 'house mothers,' would hustle to pay the rent, while their 'children' would scrounge for food. Their goal was to educate and protect the younger people who were coming into the kind of life they themselves led."

**THESE DYNAMICS PERSIST** in only slightly modified form to this day. My own vantage point is relatively unique in my having been in both of these two very different worlds. My experience before transition was that of an invisible default. The world saw me as a straight white man, well educated and able-bodied, deserving of

all the privileges available in our society. I know firsthand what it's like to feel safe and valued wherever I go, to know that my opinion mattered and my voice would be heard. I could identify with every hero of literature, history, or film. Everything in school implicitly taught me that it was people like me who made the world great, and that any flaw I could have would only add to my depth, even be turned into great art. But I didn't consciously know any of this until I lost it, as if the air I had always breathed was suddenly siphoned from the room.

Going through transition, in middle age, while living in a city and taking public transportation daily, was a crash course in otherness. I had to suddenly become aware of my surroundings, tuned in to every look and mocking laugh, always on the lookout for the one who might turn violent. As my appearance changed, I learned that my talents and skills mattered less than my attractiveness to men. The world was no longer for me.

If I had stopped there, if I had made community with only other trans people who had experienced things similarly, I could perhaps have stewed in bitterness, resentment, and victimhood. I could have easily seen the world in terms of what it took away from me, and my indignation would have been righteous. Instead, I became friends with trans people of color and sex workers. My engagement in activism brought me into touch with survivors of violence, people living with HIV, addicts and young people turned away from their families and churches, kids bullied right out of school and onto the streets, and the elders working to help them. If my own early direct experiences cracked open the door to a different world, my new social circles blew it off its hinges.

I write this as a result of hundreds of conversations with hundreds of trans people over many years. Conversations with my elders, peers, and youth, people of every race and class, from across the United States and the globe.

Of course there are more than just these two comparatively visible movements of transgender people. Trans men share a rich history, with less extreme but analogous racial and class divisions. There is an emerging movement of people with a growing range of identities, including, but not limited to, genderqueer, nonbinary, bigender, and agender. Trans people who transition as children often have experiences nearly indistinguishable from their cisgender peers, and there are many people who live out their lives in a gender different than the sex they were assigned at birth without identifying as trans or engaging with advocacy efforts. All of these manifestations are equally legitimate and include both exceptions and overlapping aspects, and none are without some shared challenges. But their histories, their leaders, their needs, and their resources bear virtually no material similarity. Can any-





one look at these contrasting realities and maintain the illusion that a single trans movement is possible, much less thriving?

**THIS MAY SOUND CYNICAL**, but it's not intended to impugn the advance of trans rights; rather, it's to ensure them. There is usefulness in having the wider public presented with an accessible narrative, one that merely nudges them a step further rather than challenge them too aggressively. A sympathetic public will be less likely to oppose legislation, school policies, and cultural products that protect and center transgender people. Hearing Jenner tell her story, watching a news special on trans children, sympathizing with Maura Pfefferman (played by Jeffrey Tambor) on Amazon's *Transparent*—these help secure a passive acceptance until more challenging demands can actively be made. Those demands, even the minimal ones desperately needed to protect the health and safety of those trans people most at risk, won't be met unless current progressive leaders, journalists, editors, producers, the leaders and staff of LGBT organizations, HR directors, legislators, etc., invest directly in trans people. They need to hire trans people, train, mentor, and support them. They need to contribute to their projects and center their voices. All of which first requires clarity and understanding. Above all else, they need to listen.

But listen to whom?

Again and again I've encountered the anxiety and frustration of people, cis and trans alike, who wish to make a positive impact but are unable to hear a clear voice among the clamor to heed. Or when they do undertake an effort, it is met with virulent opposition. Without a tuned ear, it's hard to know signal from noise. And right now, it's the loudest and most aggressive voices that get to be heard. While there is still a very real external struggle with people who fundamentally deny the legitimacy of trans rights, there is an equally important conversation to be had with those who want to help but don't know how.

Who are the loudest and most aggressive voices? Unsurprisingly, it's those who have been taught to believe their voices matter. In the case of trans people, that means queer white women. Not all of them, of course, nor them exclusively, but consistently enough to constitute a clear pattern.

Part of the impotence is that few trans leaders wish to be seen as working against other trans people, and part is that the argument so well developed for other situations fails here: Any opposition to the abusive behavior of another trans person is dismissed as some combination of transphobic, homophobic, lesbophobic, classist, ableist, or misogynistic. Trans activists, particularly queer white ones, have picked up the rhetorical tools developed by people of color active in social justice, particularly

black women on Twitter, but wield them without the nuance, experience, or skill of their makers.

The norms of trans discourse have created an absurd situation where the actions of a straight white man can be heavily critiqued and objectively attributed to privileges stemming from multiple intersections of identity, but the moment they identify as a woman the exact same behavior is immune from such critique. Moreover, any implication that the behavior is related to maleness is considered transphobic. I've repeatedly seen queer white trans women trot out statistics about anti-trans discrimination and violence to prove that they are victims of hate and systemic oppression without ever mentioning that it is almost exclusively black and Latina trans women represented in those numbers.

The cost of this is paralysis, simmering resentment, alienation of peers, and a lack of unity. Too many people are increasingly distancing themselves from trans issues at exactly the time when they could have the greatest impact. They are doing so out of fear of and frustration with trans people—not the trans people who would most benefit from the support being lost, but rather those least in need of it. In the simplest terms possible, the bullies are winning, and the cost of others losing is too high to abide.

I've repeatedly observed that the people who had suffered the most were also the most generous, kind, bawdy, and engaged, while those who were the most angry, self-centered, and despondent had often enjoyed the most privilege. Experiencing otherness prior to transition equipped many trans people of color, and poor white former fags and dykes, with resilience, humor, and insight into intersectional dynamics. However, it's just as true that experiencing privilege before transition often granted white trans people access to resources, education, leadership experience, and an informed awareness of what true equality should look like. If there is a hope in the divisions within the trans community, it's that the widely varying experiences have made for an equally diverse range of skills. In the rare times we do all come together, we're capable of true greatness.

There is no simple solution to these issues. Which isn't the point. Truly supporting trans people will require education and patience. It will require an effort to know us and our issues well enough to make informed decisions. I hope it's true that Jenner's story has opened a door to trans issues, but I know that few who walk through it with the aims of helping are really prepared for the chaos they find inside.

There is a crisis facing trans people, and the response will need to be as intersectional, sophisticated, and persistent as the causes. There doesn't need to be a singular trans movement to rise to that challenge. ♦









# Five Days in Maui

A few days on Hawaii could recharge anyone, but at one particular oasis, the focus on inner peace made for a perfect escape.

BY MATTHEW BREEN

You shouldn't have to ask anyone twice to come to Hawaii. But for me, it was more like five or six times. To my ongoing chagrin, I tried in vain for a full two years to visit the most beautiful of the United States. But anticipation can be a wonderful thing, especially if the payoff is worthwhile. My time in Maui delivered on its promise so completely that the often-repeated motto of the island, "Maui nō ka 'oi" (means "Maui is the best" in Hawaiian), just dissolved into a law of nature.

## DAY 1

After a couple of energizing days on Lana'i, the smallest populated island in the archipelago, I took the ferry service to Lahaina, Maui. Lahaina and Kihei, further to the south, and Kahului (in the valley between the two mountainous cones that comprise the island) are the more developed regions with shopping and hotels, but my destination was the North Shore. I picked up my rental car in Kihei and drove past Kahului, past the beach town of Pā'ia. Two and a half miles up the Haleakalā highway is **Lumeria** ([LumeriaMaui.com](http://LumeriaMaui.com)).

I was introduced to the estate by Melinda, who showed me the 24-room compound on a lush and refined six-acre property. She described the history of the place: The structure of five lodge buildings, connected by a covered lanai, was originally built in 1910 by the Baldwin sugarcane family for a son who was sick with tuberculosis. It eventually housed aging plantation managers and laborers who had worked the cane fields, housed military personnel during World War II, was dorm housing for Maunaolu Women's College in the 1950s and '60s, and was later housing for Maui Land and Pineapple workers.

In one of the largest historic renovations on Maui in 2012, a century of use was stripped away. In its place an oasis was created, brimming with indigenous tropi-

cal flora and edible organic gardens (used in Lumeria's farm-to-table dining hall), meditation gardens, fire pits, a blessed lava stone labyrinth, a saltwater swimming pool, and a spa. The property also includes many spaces for Lumeria's essential programs: a large yoga shala, yoga/meditation rooms, and an outdoor yoga platform abutting a broad, picturesque lawn.

Melinda showed me the menu of options and activities that require booking in advance, as well as the week's schedule of group yoga and guided meditation programs (including hula—the real thing, I was assured—on Fridays). All of the programs are available to Lumeria guests, and also to non-guests for a fee. I selected a few that sounded intriguing to me.

My room was elegant and sparse, with high ceilings and many windows. *And no television.* A little trill of panic ran through me, followed by a sense of liberation; I'm too easily consumed by TV, and I was soon glad that that potential time-sucking diversion wasn't an option. The sound of the wind through the whispering pine forest just outside my window was a little hypnotic, and I instantly knew that a day spent on the grounds would be a fully,

wonderfully unplugged experience. As an inveterate fidgeter with a short attention span, I was determined to melt into the experience. I grabbed my Kindle, sat down on the bench outside my room that overlooked the great lawn, and read for a solid hour for the first time in a year.

The dinner on the lanai outside Lumeria's dining room included a vegan, gluten-free Caesar salad, and grilled chicken with pesto-like herb dressing, grilled fish skewers with onions and bell peppers, roasted squash, and sautéed kale; much of the produce is from the on-site garden, and the offerings change daily to take advantage of fresh, local ingredients.

## DAY 2

The big bonus that comes from jet lag is the opportunity to see a new place when few other people are awake to experience it. My first few days in Hawaii while still on New York time were like this: early mornings, sunrise, and the feeling of achievement that comes from even the most leisurely of activities completed before most others throw off their sheets.

My scheduled guided sunrise meditation with Karin Koepcke began at 6:45 A.M., but I'd been awake for an hour by then. We sat on the floor, cross-legged, and Karin asked about my experience with meditation: fleeting but interested.

As I lay on a mat, Karin guided me through a meditation from which I occasionally slipped away, beyond the reach of her voice (that was meant to happen, she said). Inner peace is a multi-step process, so I wasn't holding my breath for that, but nevertheless I remained calm and still, and my eyes remained closed throughout the experience—and I could not imagine doing that just days earlier. I opened my eyes at the end of the hour, relaxed and recharged, and feeling accomplished before breakfast.



Mid-morning I sat in the Jacuzzi outside the spa while a warm rain began to fall through the sunshine. My next appointment was with Melissa, who found me and invited me to one of the massage rooms for my Pohaku (sacred hot stone) Lomi Lomi massage appointment (90 minutes, \$200). It began with a traditional prayer of invocation of healing and thanks for the earth. After the prayer, the experience was a familiar—but very skilled—manipulation of my muscles and pressure points for relieving tension.

In the evening I dressed and drove the five minutes downcountry to Pā‘ia, and to **Mama’s Fish House** (MamasFishHouse.com), where the drinks are colorful, the fish is fresh and consummately prepared, and the menu includes the name of the fisherman who caught it. The restaurant is nestled into a tiny cove all of its own, so the views from all tables are of palm trees, torches, and waves. Our waitress was wearing a vintage band-collared floral muumuu—all the waitstaff were clad in authentic Hawaiian attire, the women all with fresh flowers in their hair. The décor was a fantasia of bamboo, sea glass, rattan, palm leaves, ukuleles, surfboard sculptures, and odes to Hawaiian art from the traditional to kitsch. After a copious sashimi, beef Polynesian (served in a papaya), Opakapaka (Hawaiian pink snapper fish) steamed with ginger, and lots of drinks served with umbrellas, I headed back upcountry to Lumeria.

The air came in warm and rain-scented through the open windows, and I fell immediately asleep.

## DAY 3

My yoga experience began with kundalini (meditation, mantras, and a focus on breathing) yoga in college, long before there were group classes in every gym chain, at a time when it was still generally considered a bit woo-woo. But I loved it and I continued it sporadically, including hot-yoga classes in Santa Monica that promised a glimpse of regular participant David Duchovny in yoga pants (unfulfilled promise, alas).

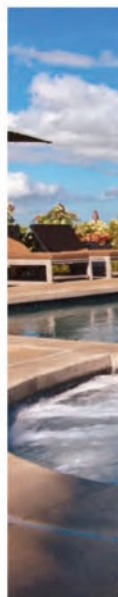
I was excited to try again—and a touch anxious about what postures my body would agree to. Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga with Ashley was a series of beginner-to-moderate positions, including some rather advanced jump-throughs, and a slight growling technique called hot breath. It was invigorating and challenging, and, as with the meditation, I was inspired to reintroduce it to my life upon returning home.

After lunch I met Douglas Drummond, Lumeria’s general manager. He’s a tall, broad-shouldered man with a baby face

and a distinct New Zealand accent untempered by his years in Manhattan before his move to Maui six months ago.

“It’s a bit choppy for windsurfing today. Feel like a hike instead?” he asked. Sure, I answered. “I’ll meet you at 3 p.m. and we’ll go to the bamboo forest. You’re going to get wet!”

We took the winding road toward Hana to the 6½-mile marker spot, parked his truck, and climbed through a small gap in the bamboo thicket at the side of the road. Inside was a dense, tall bamboo forest, almost concealing a narrow, muddy path leading down a hiking trail to a river’s edge. We scrambled over boulders and up a rickety ladder about eight feet tall to a place where it was possible to step again into footholds in the rock, climbing up over a waterfall. On the walk Drummond told me more about Lumeria’s history,







Clockwise from top left: Bamboo forest, saltwater pool at Lumeria, fresh local papaya, grounds at Lumeria, Hawaiian plumeria flowers, the macnut ono dish at Mama's Fish House, yoga lawn at Lumeria



COURTESY OF MAMA'S FISH HOUSE, MAGNUS TONG, COURTESY OF LUMERIA (OTHERS)



noting that the renovation included carting out five full truckloads of beer bottles left by sugarcane workers. Since his arrival there, Lumeria has done workshops with injured soldiers and their spouses as part of the Wounded Warrior Project, as well as other community events.

"Were you into the esoterica before coming to Lumeria?" I said, trying to ask in as neutral a way as possible. "Oh yeah," he said. "I grew up with it." Drummond's father was a lawyer, and his mother was a longtime practitioner of yoga and alternative therapies.

The New Age atmosphere at Lumeria is evident from the menu of offerings—particularly the metaphysical therapies including Reiki healing, shamanic acupuncture, and quantum healing hypnosis therapy sessions. I'm a nonbeliever, just generally—but specifically in most things that cannot be studied and quantified. God, spirit guides, crystals—they have no inherent magic for me. Whatever they do for us—or to us—is our own doing. But I don't believe that alternative therapies are wasted effort or imaginary. Those who know my skeptical nature might have guessed that Lumeria and I would be fundamentally at odds: energy fields and vibes versus a cynical editor. But no one at Lumeria attempted to indoctrinate or convince. And while we don't have a complete scientific understanding of how meditation affects the mind, it doesn't mean there's nothing there.

"We can leave our shoes here," said Drummond after about a mile and a half of hiking.

He stashed our shoes in some underbrush, just hidden from view, then led the way again. He was quick, so I momentarily lost sight of him. Another few dozen yards through the sodden path, and suddenly he was gone, and I heard a splash from below. He'd jumped off a rock ledge about 12 feet into a beautiful swimming hole in the river, flanked by verdant cliffs. "Don't worry, it's deep here." I closed my eyes and jumped into the cool water. Swimming upstream just a bit, we encountered another waterfall crashing down into another pool. Hikers can climb to the top of that waterfall too, but for me that would have to wait for another trip.

Back at the hotel I cleaned up, not sure how to dress for a Maui benefit for earthquake victims in Nepal. "It'll be a real Maui Wowie experience," Drummond promised.

I parked outside the **Temple of Peace Maui** ([TempleOfPeaceMaui.com](http://TempleOfPeaceMaui.com)) in Ha'iku, a modest-looking metaphysical center with a façade strung with prayer flags. I spotted Drummond inside the front building, sitting on a folding chair. I kicked





Pā'ia Beach



Pā'ia

off my slippers into a pile of sandals and walked in. I shouldn't have worried about what to wear. Though we seemed to be on the early side, soon people of all ages, all very casually dressed, came in to sit on the floor. The event began with chanting from a quartet who sat cross-legged on the low stage, as images of Nepalese children flashed behind them in a slideshow. Several longhaired women with jangly bags released small children into the room to run about; gray-ponytailed men and women smiled blithely when a

little girl got her hands on a set of maracas and joined in the performance. Outside in the courtyard, a silent auction was underway, featuring woven scarves and rugs, carved chimes and bells, some patterned wall hangings and other goods. Total Maui Wowie. We stayed to listen to Drummond's soul singer friend, then met just up the road at **Nuka restaurant** (Nuka-Maui.com) for some wonderfully fresh sushi including the house signature roll, with jalapeño, snapper, and ponzu.

## DAY 4

The next morning's Anusara guided yoga with Chrissy was more strength-oriented, with rigorous poses including a headstand. I opted for an assisted wall-stand in which my hands were on the floor and my feet up on the wall at a right angle. Another class member sat on the floor supporting me by pressing her heels into my shoulders. I know it may be difficult to find such good classes again at my local Manhattan gym, but I recommitted myself to trying.

After a quick shower I met Elisha in the spa for my shamanic acupuncture (90 minutes, \$250) session. "Wow, you've got...seven, eight spirit guides in here with you already," she said, a little startled, as I sat on the massage table, "and I haven't even invited them in yet." Elisha and I focused on a goal I'd like to have for the session—I silently chose writerly inspiration—and she ushered me into a guided

meditation, after formally inviting my spirit guides into the room. A "crap-ton" (her words) more of my spirit guides joined our session that culminated in my first, tingly experience with acupuncture.

That evening I drove upcountry to **Makawao**, a town on the slopes of Haleakalā Crater with clothing boutiques, art galleries, and a history of ranching that comes out in the art and the July 4 rodeo and parade. I stopped for fish tacos at a stand at the top of the main drag, and finished the day with a guava *malasada* (doughnut) from the bakery.

## DAY 5

My departure day had one item on the agenda: the beach. **Pā'ia Bay** has a nice long stretch of quiet beach—until the waves roll in, and then surfers and bodyboarders quickly fill your view. To the east of the parking lot at Baldwin Beach Park were dozens of bearded drummers, tight-rope walkers, and tumblers, and it seems to be a regular scene there. East through a pine glade was a silent, empty stretch of sand where I lay my beach towel. The water was warm and clear, with gentle swells rising five or six feet. I saw only occasional passersby, some couples with dogs, and one or two solo swimmers.

I considered whether it was feasible to call in sick to work for the next month, and decided I'll simply have to make the trip again as soon as time will allow. ♦



A photograph of two men standing on a beach. The man on the left is wearing a white button-down shirt and has his arm around the shoulder of the man on the right. The man on the right is wearing a blue V-neck shirt and has his head tilted down, smiling. They are both looking towards the left side of the frame. The background is a bright, hazy beach scene.

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# New Zealand's North Island

Renowned for their vistas and world-class LGBT-friendliness, Auckland, Wellington, Hawke's Bay, and Waiheke Island charm visitors. **BY MATTHEW BREEN**









# Auckland

There's a reason boat ownership here is (probably) the highest per capita in the world: Auckland is a water lover's paradise. The city lies between two busy but picturesque harbors, Waitemata and Manukau. Home to stunning skylines and beautiful beaches, the city is a gorgeous destination, and an exceptionally LGBT-friendly one. Soak in the views from atop Auckland's Sky Tower, the tallest freestanding structure below the equator, or from the summit of Mount Eden, the highest point in the city. ❶

## High Street

In the heart of the city, High Street and the Chancery shopping area are home to New Zealand (including Karen Walker) and international designer stores. Vulcan Lane, O'Connell, and Lorne streets are small but great for spotting street-wear trends from outdoor cafés and pub tables.

## Ponsonby Road

Auckland's hippest strip is packed with furniture, design, and fashion shopping, plus cafés and dining. Fussiness fine dining isn't a big thing in Auckland (plenty of great restaurants are B.Y.O.B.), so don't let the absence of a white tablecloth put you off. [ILovePonsonby.co.nz](http://ILovePonsonby.co.nz)

## Queen Street

Abutting High Street, this neighborhood runs along the eponymous main business thoroughfare; national bank, shopping, and restaurant chains are represented here, making it a popular shopping destination.

## ❷ The Big Foody Tour

Jump in your tour guide's car and be whisked off to sample the grassy olive oils, pungent cheeses, fresh produce, and cured meats of the area's gourmet markets; the coffees and baked goods on Ponsonby Road; and abundant fresh seafood and wine on offer in the scenic Viaduct area. (That's also the location of the Auckland Seafood Market and Auckland Seafood School, where making your dinner under a chef's guidance is a great alternative to table

service, and you take the skills home with you: [AucklandSeafoodSchool.co.nz](http://AucklandSeafoodSchool.co.nz)). A highlight of the food tour was Miller's Espresso Bar and Roastery ([Millers.net.nz](http://Millers.net.nz), pictured above), an unassuming hybrid space with cinderblock walls, a pair of small tables, a gorgeous vintage espresso machine—in operation—and a giant roaster in plain view at the rear of the shop. Don't be surprised if you vow to give up your day job to become a roaster on the spot. [TheBigFoody.com](http://TheBigFoody.com)

## ❸ Browns Island Sunset Kayak Trip

Auckland Sea Kayaks offers all kinds of tours, including transport to the beaches. They provide all the necessary gear, instructions, and refreshments for an evening on the water with a guide.

While no experience is necessary, kayaking is a rigorous workout, even in the relative calm of a sheltered bay. The tour from Mission Bay around the volcanic Browns Island was perfectly timed for a radiant sunset, made all the sweeter knowing we'd worked to see it. [AucklandSeaKayaks.co.nz](http://AucklandSeaKayaks.co.nz)

## ❹ Hotel DeBrett

This 25-room boutique hotel has a bold, chic design and is populated with eclectic furniture and art all hand-selected by Michelle Deery (co-owner with John Courtney). Nothing cookie-cutter here, just vivid color in common areas and spacious, serene guest rooms. Deery hosts guests for happy hour daily in the drawing room, where one can also find some old-school board games.





PREVIOUS SPREAD: COURTESY OF THE FARM AT CAPE KIDNAPPERS. THIS SPREAD: NZBWMV/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM (AUCKLAND VIEW); JULIAN APSE (KAYAKING); COURTESY OF HOTEL DEBRETT; COURTESY OF AUCKLAND SEAPLANES; JULIAN APSE (WAIHEKE VINEYARD); NASKA RASPOPIA (WAIHEKE ISLAND VIEW); COURTESY OF THE OYSTER INN

It's an excellent location in the heart of the city on High Street, surrounded by shopping, parks, galleries, and restaurants. Hip is the word, but without a hint of pretentiousness.  
*HotelDeBrett.com*

#### 5 Auckland Seaplanes

Half Moon Bay is pretty from the surface of the water, but from a height the view of lush island green and ocean blue is spectacular. And wading barefoot onto the beach at Waiheke Island's Oneroa Bay after deplaning from a just-landed seaplane is about as *Fantasy Island*-awesome as an experience can get. Offering tours and charters, and easily accessible from Auckland city center in the harbor, Auckland Seaplanes is the coolest way to island-hop.  
*AucklandSeaplanes.com*

## Waiheke Island

A short ferryboat (or seaplane) ride from Auckland Harbor is an island oasis of calm. Many locals have vacation homes on the island of farmland, forest, and vineyards, and many others visit from far afield for the wine, solace, mountain biking, and beaches. It's a must-visit for oenophiles; the island is renowned for its acclaimed artisanal wines. **6**  
*AucklandNZ.com/discover/waiheke-island*

#### 7 Ananda Tours

Waiheke is the "island of wine," but if you've never been, you can't be faulted for not knowing where to start. Enter Ananda Tours, which can pick up your party for a trip along the wine trail to sample the award-winning fruits of the grapevines and olive trees. Gourmet food tours (think oysters, wild honey, herb-

and-cheese boards) are available as well.  
*Ananda.co.nz*

#### Mudbrick Vineyard & Restaurant

The sea and vineyard views at Mudbrick are impressive. Chief winemaker Patrick Newton is convivial and generous with his time, and the wines are excellent, particularly the stunner,

a 2013 Velvet red.  
*MudBrick.co.nz*

#### Batch Winery

Named for the small batches it produces—hence the number on each label—the winery has a wonderful array of whites and "Fizz" sparkling wines (and, apropos of nothing, winemaker Daniel Struckman bears a striking resemblance to *Avatar* actor Sam Worthington).  
*BatchWinery.com*

#### 8 The Oyster Inn

The cute and casual bistro with views of Oneroa Bay from the veranda is owned by a gay couple (Jonathan Rutherford Best and Andrew Glenn) and is a can't-miss dining experience on the island. And it's truly an inn, with several minimalist—but warmly appointed—rooms designed

by Katie Lockhart, available for romantic long-weekend getaways. The raw food bar features local catches, including, as the name suggests, great oysters shucked to order. During an unannounced pop into the kitchen, head chef Anthony McNamara was making a Japanese-style fish print (rubbing a sack cloth with the back of a spoon over a fish painted with a washable black ink to make an image) with an old-timer fisherman who'd brought in a massive and beautiful specimen.  
*TheOysterInn.co.nz*

#### EcoZip Adventures

Three zip lines, each over 200 meters, give awesome views of Waiheke. The 35-minute hike back is an educational walk through the 300-year-old forest.  
*EcoZipAdventures.co.nz*





9



10



11



10

## Hawke's Bay

The east coast of New Zealand's North Island is home to a beautiful and robust food and wine region, Hawke's Bay. The region is especially known for award-winning chardonnay (though sauvignon blanc, bordeaux varietals, and syrah thrive here as well), wide-open vistas, and a relaxing pace. The town of Napier is a destination known worldwide for its profusion of Art Deco architecture, art, and a festival dedicated to the style and design movement.

### 9 Tākaro Trails

The scenery—from vineyards to beaches—is wonderful, the biking gets the blood moving, and Jenny can tell you where to find an excellent local beer, coffee, ice cream, or a bottle of wine to take home. The Hawke's Bay Trails include hundreds of kilometers of great bike-only paths, all year round.

[Takarotrails.co.nz](http://Takarotrails.co.nz)

### 10 The Farm at Cape Kidnappers Lodges

Countryside accommoda-

tions that showcase the natural environment are a grand tradition in New Zealand. And this stunner is the ultimate luxury lodge. Poised atop 6,000 acres of rolling pastureland, including a working sheep and cattle farm and a renowned golf course, The Farm is all refined rusticity and modern, lavish comfort. Suites and the Owner's Cottage can accommodate up to eight guests. Dinner (jackets required) features lamb, beef, local produce, and seafood. Hikes and tours

of the remarkable estate—land's end is dramatic cliffs over remote Pacific beaches—are available to guests. This is a grand escape worth saving up for. [Capekidnappers.com](http://Capekidnappers.com)

### Gannet Safaris

On The Farm is the largest, most accessible mainland gannet colony in the world. Birders from all parts flock to watch the 20,000-plus gannets (members of the Booby family) that nest on the cliffs at Cape Kidnappers. [GannetSafaris.co.nz](http://GannetSafaris.co.nz)

### 11 Guided Art Deco Walk and Vintage Car Tour

The Art Deco Trust was formed to preserve and showcase the unique architecture that arose after Napier's devastating earthquake in 1931. A local guide in 1930s attire will meet you for a walk through the city's landmark buildings. The vintage car tour takes place in a gorgeously restored 1930s car and goes to landmarks like the National Tobacco

Company building, among the most photographed buildings in New Zealand. [ArtDecoNapier.com](http://ArtDecoNapier.com)

### F.A.W.C.

The Food and Wine Classic highlights the region's finest food and wines. An event in November 2014 (springtime) featured Nadia Lim, winner of 2011's *MasterChef New Zealand*, serving her signature "Aromatics" dishes while Black Barn winemaker Dave McKee poured a tasting flight, accompanied by striking sunset vistas. [FAWC.co.nz](http://FAWC.co.nz)

### John's House

The pastoral setting of this private and secluded holiday home for rent (next to an actual alpaca pasture) is a 20-minute drive from Hawke's Bay's vineyard, and a 10-minute walk along the Karamu stream to the shops of Havelock North. [JohnsHouse.co.nz](http://JohnsHouse.co.nz)

### Mister D's

This diner-style restaurant,

in the heart of the Art Deco district in Napier, has a big wine list and serves up neatly prepared dishes of fresh ingredients in a bustling environment. They make their own bread, pasta, and pastries daily—and guests can inject filling (quince, chocolate, or custard) into their famous donuts. [MisterD.co.nz](http://MisterD.co.nz)

### Elephant Hill Winery

A modernist architectural stunner. Classic techniques, local ingredients, and attentive service are paired with outdoor dining table views of a reflecting pool, grapevines, and a hint of the sea beyond. [ElephantHill.co.nz](http://ElephantHill.co.nz)

### MTG Hawke's Bay

The museum is home to an earthquake exhibit and a nationally significant collection of fine art and historical artifacts, including the Taonga Māori collection and costumes and textiles from the 18th to 20th centuries. [MTGHawkesBay.com](http://MTGHawkesBay.com)



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NOV  
White Party

2017  
World  
Outgames





12



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14



15



16

## Wellington

Wellington is significantly smaller than Auckland, with more winding roads than wide boulevards. Nestled between a stunning harbor <sup>12</sup> and forested hills, Wellington is picturesque, cosmopolitan, and walkable—be prepared for some hills, though. But wildlife, mountain biking, and hiking are just a short drive from the city's innumerable restaurants. [WellingtonNZ.com](http://WellingtonNZ.com)

### <sup>13</sup> Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Home to exhibits that range from the island nation's formation in the geological wayback to its first inhabitants from east Polynesia: Māori cultural treasures, the remarkable changes brought by the 20th century, diversity and civil rights advances (including LGBT rights), and many rotating exhibits. [TePapa.govt.nz](http://TePapa.govt.nz)

### <sup>14</sup> Museum Art Hotel

Located in the heart of Wellington city opposite the beautiful harbor and Te Papa, the 165-room hotel is overflowing with massive

paintings and sculptures—and not anodyne, hotel-y pieces for the faint of heart. The rooms are well-appointed, but be sure to ask the staff about how the entire building was moved 120 meters from its original spot. [MuseumHotel.co.nz](http://MuseumHotel.co.nz)

### Charley Noble

The seats at the seafood bar are recommended, so one may watch the cooks working at the wood-fire grill. The atmosphere is lively, the raw seafood selection (oysters, clams, ceviches, crudo) is copious, and the cuts of aged meat are all pasture-fed. [Charleynoble.co.nz](http://Charleynoble.co.nz)

### <sup>15</sup> Garage Project

Their auspicious launch in 2011—releasing a different beer each week for 24 weeks—showcased their bold creativity, as do non-traditional ingredients like chili, mango, golden syrup, and *kumara* (sweet potato). These brewers opened Cellar Door in a former auto mechanic's garage, and there they brew, pour tastings, and sell their rotating selection of distinctively named beers for takeaway. [Garageproject.co.nz](http://Garageproject.co.nz)

### <sup>16</sup> Cuba Street

Kitsch and vintage boutiques sit side by side with emerging artists and designers, cafés, and buskers. Wakefield Hotel (WakefieldHotel.co.nz) stocks high-quality menswear from New Zealand and international labels. Mandatory (Mandatory.co.nz) custom-makes suits and sells a selection of work and casual wear. Ziggurat (ZigguratShop.co.nz) sells classic clothing and accessories from 1900s to contemporary designer labels. Good as Gold (GoodAsGold

.co.nz) sells youthful street style in a treehouse.

### Bike Wellington

The trails that rise above the harbors on the wooded hills of Wellington offer some of the best mountain biking in the world. Amazing scenery and friendly guides make for a biking adventure. Bike Wellington's tours are full or half day and include a full-suspension bike, a helmet, snacks, and transportation. [BikeWellington.co.nz](http://BikeWellington.co.nz)

### Gay Nightlife

The bartenders at S&M's (for Scotty and Mal's, [ScottyAndMals.co.nz](http://ScottyAndMals.co.nz)) pour cocktails on the street-level lounge, while a DJ keeps the small downstairs dance floor thrumming. Club Ivy ([IvyBar.co.nz](http://IvyBar.co.nz)) calls itself "camper than a pair of tits" and is a little slice of hedonism in the excavated basement of the old James Smith Department Store.

### Zest Food Tours

Getting a handle on Wellington's food offerings requires a pro's touch. The

Capital Tastes walking tour was a great introduction to hidden alleys of craft soda pop makers, craft chocolatiers, craft coffee, burgeoning farmers' markets, an array of dining options, and samples of fruit, chocolate, cheese, and wine; it's a must for foodies. [ZestFoodTours.co.nz](http://ZestFoodTours.co.nz)

### Air New Zealand

One of the world's stellar airlines, Air New Zealand offers premium economy seats with nifty features. The Spaceseat design is hard-shelled, so others' reclining seats never tilt into your space. Seats along the center of the plane are good for couples, with a shared bit of room between the seats, while those along the cabin edge are staggered for greater privacy. The 17,000 hours of movie and TV content, full meal (with New Zealand wines) and snacks available for order made a quick and easy trip of a long-haul flight. [AirNewZealand.com/777-300-premium-economy](http://AirNewZealand.com/777-300-premium-economy)

COURTESY OF WELLINGTON RESOURCE HUB (BEACH); COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND TE PAPA TONGAREWA; JESS SILK (CUBA STREET); COURTESY OF GARAGE PROJECT; COURTESY OF MUSEUM ART HOTEL



# Spectator



PROGNOSTICATION / MICHAEL MUSTO

## The Gay Future

The world will be brighter in years to come, but we'll still have Liza.

**W**e've made gigantically fabulous strides in terms of visibility, rights, and acceptance over the last several decades, but that's mere pocket change compared to what awaits in the gay future. Sometime in the great beyond, all the things we still struggle to attain will be achieved and taken for granted, and stuff we never even dreamt of will also be served, as we enjoy a delicious reversal of the way things were traditionally known to be.

First of all—let's start with the important stuff—there will be drastic changes in pop culture. Even with all the advances

we've seen in terms of showbiz's gay inclusiveness, romantic plot lines in TV shows and movies today are still overwhelmingly straight, and the mass audience generally doesn't question that, accepting it as the status quo and a fair reflection of reality. But that point of view is a bit presumptuous, since so many other gay plots could permeate the big and small screens and still not shake up the hetero-majority rule. Alas, old-school alarmism prevents people from realizing that. Too often, when new gay premises and characters pop up (whether it be on shows like *Modern Family* or on HBO), you continue

to hear the old “They’re taking over!” moans, along with cries that the LGBTs are seizing the world by force, as if we were on some tyrannical crusade aimed at world domination.

Well, in the future, none of these arguments will have to be shot down, because they won’t even be made in the first place. People will just accept LGBT stories as easily as they will straight ones. (We’re already halfway there, but we’ll get all the way to the finish line.) At some point in tomorrowland, audiences won’t equate attempts at increased visibility with some kind of dictatorial agenda. As a result, no one writing a script will feel forced to assume that a man-woman scenario has to be the main thread of it, let alone the only thread of it. What’s more, proposed movies will no longer be short-circuited by studios because they’re “too gay,” entertainment reports about dating will actually cover some same-sex couples, and game shows will welcome a much broader spectrum of contestants to come onstage and thank their loved ones. (Also, 99% of the songs you hear won’t be a *he* singing about a *she*, or vice versa. “Love song” won’t automatically equal heterosexual love song. And we still won’t be seizing the world by force!) In fact, thanks to evolving ideas and dissolving prejudices, things will become so enlightened that when one more husband-and-wife sitcom turns up, the masses will start squealing in outrage, “This is ridiculous! The straights are taking over!”

It will also be a wacky reversal when *real* people turn out to be gay, and no one will care enough to bat a lash about it. When someone comes out to their mother, the feared response will turn out to be either “Duh,” or “Thank God.” (Or maybe even “Join the club!”) When you hear that the guy you just met at a networking event—who didn’t “seem gay”—is indeed gay, you’ll just go, “Oh, OK.” And eventually, everyone will drop their presumptions about what might or might not signify gayness. Things will actually go so far in the other direction that in the gay future, people will assume that everyone is gay, and they’ll be completely thrown when it turns out someone isn’t. *If* someone isn’t.

And these sweeping changes of attitude won’t limit themselves to gay men, mind you. In the future, all queer types will be accepted—even by the community itself. Trans people, lesbians, and bisexuals won’t be greeted with popping eyes of disbelief or arched eyebrows of disdain. They will mix, banter, marry, and carry on, and all kinds of people will have no problem dealing with it. Trans people won’t even be called trans people—they’ll be “men,” “women,” or anything else they want to be called. And bisexuals will also be free of pigeon-holing attempts, just as lesbians will be happy to see gay men, and vice versa, in a world where it’s realized that the community that loves itself gets the most approbation from others.

Perhaps most shockingly of all, no one will have to get hitched in order to keep up with their community. There will be more wiggle room to establish an individual identity and not cloak it in ceremony, if you don’t feel like it—though there will be plenty of gay rice to toss at those who opt for a more traditional route. And those altar dwellers can procreate in ways that won’t be looked down on or considered to be somehow inauthentic. People will be people, families will be families, and if gays want to play roles that were in the past only allowed for straights, they won’t be demonized for



**Things will actually go so far in the other direction that in the gay future, people will assume that everyone is gay, and they’ll be completely thrown when it turns out someone isn’t. *If* someone isn’t.**

grabbing at the chance.

Gay rights will keep coming, along with the gay rice, and shockingly enough, eventually it will be OK to be unfashionable. Your tinted lenses will no longer have to match your handbag, and your ensemble won’t have to even match itself, as you parade around, a proud “trashionista” with no idea of what the *de rigueur* thing is to wear. You might not even have to have the slightest affinity for Broadway musicals or piano bars—though I realize that I am now getting into truly credibility-stretching territory here.

The future might actually be a bit boring for gays, because—when you put all my above expectations together—there will be very little element of surprise left. Everyone will assume you’re gay and be OK with it, and you can all sit around and watch your gay media together. But what media! Anderson Cooper and Andy Cohen will be in charge of all network programming, Laverne Cox will appear on every single channel, and Neil Patrick Harris and David Burtka will talk about their family on every... Oh, they already do? Never mind. I guess the future has come sooner than expected. But there isn’t a Liza channel yet, so we definitely still have some ways to go. ♦



**Michael Musto** is the author of *Manhattan on the Rocks*, *Downtown*, and *Fork on the Left, Knife in the Back*, and a weekly columnist for OUT.com.



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SEX / DIANE ANDERSON-MINSHALL

## LGBTs and the Oldest Profession

Rather than ignore the centuries-long relationship between sex work and queer liberation, we should embrace it.

**W**hen I was 8 years old, my mother got divorced from Bob Number 1. (There were three Bobs in succession; my father was her only non-Bob husband, and they divorced when I was 2.) It was the 1970s, and my mother and I moved into an apartment complex a few doors down from my aunt Sam, in East Los Angeles. My aunt Sam's real name was Gladys, but nobody called her anything but Sam. Sam was a sex worker. Not a thousand-dollar-a-call-out escort, but a poor, plain working woman, out on her own

as a young street walker. She used drugs, she went to jail for prostitution, and she was the black sheep in a family of black sheep. She was bisexual and seemed in charge of her own life. She'd been in prison for prostitution, and by the time I knew her she was dying of cervical cancer, the result of HPV transmission from one of her clients.

What sounds like a bleak life didn't seem so sad to me. My aunt Sam was the only financially independent woman I knew. My mother couldn't manage life without a man, but even though Sam had a boyfriend, it was clear she could take care of herself. I admired her, and before I had any other role models, before I fell in love with the printed word, I had often imagined I'd become a sex worker too. In sixth grade, I had a plan to run away, live like the chick in the '80s movie *Angel*, a teenage honor student by day but a miniskirted street walker working Hollywood and Vine at night. I had a plan, but life intervened. Within months my aunt was dead and I was living in Idaho with my father's white, middle-class family, and I never had to fulfill that childhood plan.

But still, a decade later, I found myself in sex work of a different kind: what I thought of as lesbian sexual liberation and



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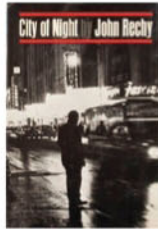
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**At a time when we should be decriminalizing sex work, there's a movement in the LGBT world to pretend sex work doesn't exist, isn't a queer and trans issue, isn't something we've historically embraced.**



**1963**  
Gay classic *City of Night* by John Rechy is published



**1984**  
*On Our Backs* founded by Debi Sundahl and Nan Kinney



**1996**  
*Hustler White* film by Bruce LaBruce and Rick Castro



**1997**  
Lusty Lady workers unionize

others thought of as porn.

The first day I showed up to my new job at *On Our Backs* in 1993, it dawned on me that I was officially doing sex work. I mean, I knew that *On Our Backs*, the first lesbian erotic magazine, which was started in 1984 by a sex-positive butch-femme couple, Debi Sundahl (who helped raise money to start the magazine by stripping) and her partner Nan Kinney, featured photos of naked women and lesbian couples and reviews of sex products. I knew the company, under the auspices of Blush Entertainment, sold the only real for-lesbians-by-lesbians adult films on the market (like the classic *Suburban Dykes*). The magazine, started at the peak of the sex wars, had a list of contributors that included many of my idols, including Dorothy Allison, Joan Nestle, Patrick Califia, and Susie Bright.

When I arrived at the office, there were life-size posters of women having sex—blow-ups from the magazines and the videos—and the realization hit me while looking at the sparse staff in the room that the photos included women I would be working with. It may be hard for some to imagine working with a colleague whose pierced labia is hung on the wall, but to me, this was a queer woman's sexual revolution taking place.

Sex work as a means of support is centuries old, and LGBT men and women have both been well represented. Male sex workers are on record as early as 346 B.C. in Greece. In the 19th century sex workers and lesbians, both socially marginalized groups, banded together as the world began to pathologize them as sexual deviants. (Leslie Feinberg's *Stone Butch Blues* illustrates the strong relationship between femme lesbian sex workers and stone butches—or reading between the lines: transgender men.)

Gay culture has a long history of sex work, from 1950s "hustle" bars where "straight" guys paid a commission to the bartender in order to hook up with gay johns, to 1990s go-go bars where queer dancers were often there to display their wares to potential clients, either as porn actors or other types of sex workers. Dozens of gay icons from Andy Warhol to Christopher Isherwood and Samuel Delany have admitted to (and boasted about) picking up hustlers, and John Rechy's 1963 book *City of Night*—his story of working as what they used to call "straight trade" for gay clients—is a bona fide gay classic.



**Diane Anderson-Minshall** is an editor-at-large for *The Advocate* and editor-in-chief of *HIV Plus* magazine.

In the 1970s, gay liberation included gay men having sex with gay hustlers, and as Kerwin Kaye writes in the new book *Male Sex Work and Society*, "The shifts in male prostitution associated with gay liberation led to a significant reworking of the meanings associated with prostitution...for the first time it became a possible means of affirming one's sexual identity. Indeed, for a brief time, the gay-identified prostitute came to represent the new spirit of gay liberation."

Amber Hollibaugh, the award-winning lesbian filmmaker, journalist, and activist, was quoted in Svati P. Shah's academic essay "Sex Work and Queer Politics in Three Acts," calling sex work her act of radical liberation as well. "People configured their lives in a way that allowed them economic survival, and if you wanted a radical life, you had to configure a life that was unstructured, because you couldn't go to a nine-to-five job and go to a demonstration during the day. It just didn't configure...I didn't do sex work because I wanted to have nontraditional work hours...I didn't have other employment choices that were at all acceptable. I mean they were just miserable... The job that worked the best for me, when I could make it work well, was sex work or something in the sex trade."

Gay literature celebrated sex work in the '80s and '90s, and even today books like R. Talent's anthology *Pay for Play: Men Paying Men for Sexual Favors* (Bold Strokes) become gay best sellers. Plenty of gay men have written memoirs of their sex work, including Craig Seymour's *All I Could Bare: My Life in the Strip Clubs of Gay Washington, D.C.* (Atria) and Rich Merritt's "don't ask, don't tell"—era *Secrets of a Gay Marine Porn Star* (Kensington). Queer women too are celebrated in sex-work literature. The venerable *\$pread* magazine, an indie sex-worker magazine edited largely by lesbian and bisexual women, is now defunct, but we're reminded of its 2000-era impact in the new collection, *\$pread: The Best of the Magazine That Illuminated The Sex Industry and Started a Media Revolution*.

Trans women have fought hard to be portrayed on television and film as anything other than sex workers or victims, but sadly that makes it so we often don't talk about the extraordinarily high rates of sex work trans women are forced into for economic security and to pay for medical care, especially when it's nearly impossible to get a job during transition.





**2005**  
Spread magazine  
in publication  
2005-2010



**2012**  
Sex and Justice  
Conference



**2015**  
International Women's  
Day in Berlin

A disproportionate number of trans and queer youth end up homeless, which means many of us have done sex work for survival, sometimes as basic as trading sex for a place to sleep—informal arrangements that they may not have even considered sex work, but it is.

Right now there's a fight in Chelsea, a gay neighborhood in New York. The fifth gay sex shop opened up earlier this year within a five-block stretch of Eighth Avenue. Guess who wants them shut down? Gay parents. Gay men who probably once patronized those stores in their 20s are now wanting them shut down for the sake of the children. It's a chilling indictment of what many LGBT folks think of sex work. At a time when we should be decriminalizing sex work, there's a movement in the LGBT world to pretend sex work doesn't exist, isn't a queer and trans issue, isn't something we've historically embraced.

But back in 1993, there I was, working at a lesbian sex magazine. And loving it. The thing I realized then is that the LGBT world has a long history of sex work, only now there seems to be a divide in the community, half of us proud of its history and the role sexual liberation played in our early rights movement. The other half want it all squelched.

During my time at *On Our Backs*, I knew a ton of queer sex workers. Girls who would strip at the Lusty Lady at night, guys who advertised themselves in magazines (including *The Advocate*, once a premium place for sex ads) as escorts or erotic massage therapists. In fact, as LGBT media evolved, those sex ads blossomed, filling the pages and paying the bills until many—including this one—purged their pages of sexual

content in a late-1980s bid for mainstream advertising.

But that's our history, and fighting it or covering it up so we can have marriage equality is a tough price to pay for the LGBT folks who are still doing sex work, either by choice or coercion. We create a world where those folks are marginalized, isolated, invisible—and much more at risk for HIV, not just because they are having multiple sex partners but also because they are criminalized for carrying condoms, their clients know they can be violent with impunity because police don't take sex-worker assault seriously, and since sex work is illegal it forces those men and women into unsafe territory to do their business.

Over 50 countries have decriminalized sex work, making it safer for the folks who do it. At a time when millions in this country are getting their sex information from schlock like *50 Shades of Grey*, it's not a surprise that straight, cisgender people don't get why that's important. But LGBT people really should. It's our cultural history. It's time the LGBT community get behind legalization of sex work and embrace rather than distance ourselves from the unique role LGBT people have historically played in the sex industry. Legalization actually makes a safer world for the women and men who do sex work, and it destigmatizes something as old as time. Yes, especially now, in this new age of marriage equality and post-gay parenting and our happy white-picket-fence lives, there's a need for us to stand up for the least-protected class of people, LGBT sex workers, and demand their rights now, too. ♦

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Radclyffe Hall,  
by Charles Buchel  
(Karl August Büchel),  
oil on canvas, 1918



ART / JUNE THOMAS

## Master Curation

A queer sensibility can be found in London's National Portrait Gallery. You just need to know where—and how—to look.

**L**ondon's Trafalgar Square is famous for its profusion of pigeons, Nelson's Column (don't get excited—it's a statue of an 18th-century British naval commander perched on a high plinth), and great British art. It's home to the National Gallery, which houses the nation's painting collection, and the National Portrait Gallery. Well, technically speaking, the portrait gallery isn't exactly on the square; its entrance is around the corner on St. Martin's Place.

There's something appropriate about this not-quite-prime placement. Portrait galleries are to art what pub quizzes are to information: They reward trivia over deep knowledge, identification over appreciation. In a portrait gallery, the goal is not to marvel at the artist's skill in evoking his or her subject but, rather, to recognize the sitter. Whenever I'm wandering around one, I'm mentally keeping tabs on how many of the famous faces hanging on the walls I know, the way I might tot up the number of questions I get right on an episode of *Jeopardy!*.

But this running pop quiz isn't the only reason I love to visit portrait collections. They're essential stops on any tourist itinerary because, painting for painting, they're the gayest galleries you can find. I don't imagine that their curators consciously set out to achieve this distinction, but building and displaying a collection of portraits that represent a nation's great men and women tends to put gay and lesbian citizens right where they deserve to be: on museum walls. (Transgender subjects are still vastly underrepresented in the portrait collections on both sides of the Atlantic, however.) And since gallerists often organize their collections by occupation, it would take a concentrated effort to exclude queers from certain traditionally, some might say stereotypically, gay-friendly fields, such as the arts.

Of course, that doesn't mean it's always easy to find the queers in these august galleries. There's no special pink sticker next to their portraits; and while the National Portrait Gallery's impressive online database does group some



artworks together—paintings that feature interesting carpets and textiles or eye-catching jewelry, for example—it hasn't created a thematic tag for out gay, lesbian, and bi subjects. No matter. The stately homos of England can be located using the tools our people have used to find each other since time immemorial: by *reading* them—and in certain rooms of the London gallery, my gaydar was pinging like Grindr on the Provincetown ferry.

Allow me to share a few time-tested tips for locating our gay brothers and sisters.

**Learn from the labels.** In London, the wall tags that provide information about the works on display rarely give any indication of the subject's sexuality. However, I received a history lesson from at least one caption. Next to a striking Cecil Beaton portrait of a young man looking away from the artist, his eyes slightly downcast as if to avoid notice, the label indicated that William John Christopher Vassall was a junior diplomat in Moscow who was "blackmailed by the KGB for his homosexuality" in the 1950s. Other display text is less helpful, however: Though the word *queen* appears many times on the National Portrait Gallery's walls, disappointingly, it is always in connection with female heads of state. Similarly, while the mention of composer Frederick Delius' male amanuensis made me wonder, the history books suggest theirs was a platonic relationship.

**Gays sometimes come in pairs.** Since portrait galleries focus on outstanding individuals, subjects are rarely painted or photographed with their significant others. Nevertheless, I spied two gay couples in London. Tenor Peter Pears is gazing lovingly at his "life-long companion," composer Benjamin Britten, in Kenneth Green's 1943 double portrait; and a picture of Gilbert & George, the dress-alike artistic collaborators who have been a couple for nearly 50 years, hangs in a special exhibition of Lord Snowdon's photography.

**Gays hang out together in galleries, as in life.** Gilbert & George weren't the only homosexuals in the Lord Snowdon exhibit—by my very informal count, at least five of Snowdon's subjects were queer, including bisexual writer and jazz singer George Melly and writer-gardener Vita Sackville-West. And in Room 31, where the Bloomsbury set is gathered, you can't turn around without finding a gay man, his bisexual wife, and the woman she was crushed out on. Nearby, there are enough portraits of Sackville-West's female lovers to fill a small gallery—from Lady Ottoline Morrell, painted with her teeth bared by her onetime lover Augustus John, to Violet Trefusis, insouciantly crossing her legs in Jacques-Emile Blanche's 1926 oil.

**You don't always need help to figure out that someone is gay.** Sometimes further study is required before you can comfortably categorize a subject as one of us. But not always. Some are obvious: A person who had never heard of *The Well of Loneliness* would have no problem clocking Radclyffe Hall, who sports short hair, a masculine suit, a cravat, and a monocle in Charles Buchel's 1918 portrait. Others are famously, notoriously, spectacularly gay: I found Paul Hamann's bronze of Noël Coward disturbingly cold, but

**The stately homos of England can be located using the tools our people have used to find each other since time immemorial: by reading them—and in certain rooms of the London gallery, my gaydar was pinging like Grindr on the Provincetown ferry.**

that didn't prevent me from forging a queer connection with its subject.

**Gay artists often portray gay subjects.** Prolific queer artists like Cecil Beaton, who has more than 1,000 photographs in the National Portrait Gallery's collection, worked with all kinds of subjects, but seeking out the work of artists who chose to ignore the conventions of their times frequently leads to sexual-minority subjects. Dora Carrington (portrayed by Emma Thompson in the 1995 biopic *Carrington*) has a 1920 portrait of E.M. Forster that shows the then-closeted novelist in a slumped posture that suggests he is carrying a heavy burden on his shoulders. And, of course, sometimes out artists are drawn to unconventional subjects who may or may not have been heterosexual. Lesbian painter Dame Ethel Walker, who famously disliked makeup and form-obscuring clothing, found a Modigliani-like beauty in actress Flora Robson, who was conventionally considered "plain."

**Read the room.** Sometimes you just have to go with your gut and look it up later. I confess that my familiarity with 18th-century British statesmen isn't everything it could be, but while in the "Expansion and Empire" gallery, I scribbled down the names of a few fellows in uniform who caught my eye. There was something in the jaunty way Sir James Brooke, an Army officer and the "first Raja of Sarawak," was posed that sent me to a search engine—and sure enough, I found rumored relationships with princes and stories of a taste for rough trade. And don't even get me started on Boy Scouts founder Robert Baden-Powell and his clone mustache.

**Don't be fooled by fashion.** A jaunty scarf or a particularly well-tended beard might sometimes serve as an indicator that the subject was not 100 percent straight, but remember that style signals can get crossed. Mystery writer Dorothy L. Sayers is wearing a suit and tie in Sir William Oliphant Hutchison's portrait, but that reflects her academic leanings and down-to-earth style rather than a Sapphic sensibility.

Of course, LGBT gallery visitors aren't only interested in seeing portraits of gay and bisexual subjects—judging from the crowd rapt by Sam Taylor-Johnson's video of David Beckham taking a nap, the straight soccer player has quite a following among our people. ♦



**June Thomas** writes about culture for *State* and edits *Outward*, the magazine's LGBTQ section. A native of Manchester, England, she now lives in Brooklyn.



A LIST / BRANDON VOSS

## Sex Appeal

Lizzy Caplan can always sit with us. Sure, she scored an Emmy nomination for playing sex research pioneer Virginia Johnson in Showtime's *Masters of Sex*, which returns July 12 for a third season, but it was Caplan's performance as snarky outcast Janis Ian in *Mean Girls* that earned her a special place at our lunch table.

**You grew up in Los Angeles. What was your introduction to the LGBT community?** I can't remember a time in my life without gay people. My uncle [publicist Howard Bragman] is a power gay, and I spent so much of my childhood at his house. I'd never even think twice about why his pool parties were all guys with amazing bodies in really tiny bathing suits. It wasn't an issue. My dad is this very liberal Jewish guy, but one time he was at one of these parties, reading a book in the sun, when this guy brought out a big boombox, sat it beside my

dad, and did a full flag dance right next to him. Seeing my father just sitting there, trying to read his historical biography, is one of my favorite memories ever.

**Was your high school experience anything like Janis Ian's in *Mean Girls*?**

I went to a performing arts high school where being odd or different was appreciated. It was actually cooler to be gay than straight. If I were a lesbian, I would've been so much more popular. Remember the Delia's catalog? I used to get a bunch of clothes from Delia's because it was the bomb, and there was this one model in the catalog who was so beautiful and seemed very cool. I decided that in order to fit in with the older musical theater guys, the coolest guys in school, I would try really hard to fall in love with this girl. I'd cut out her pictures, paste them on my binders, and tell all the gay boys I had a thing for this chick.

**What do you recall about playing a lesbian teen in ABC's *Once and Again*?** It didn't enter my mind that it might be risky or strange to people. It was just another role, and that girl happened to like girls. It's important to tell those stories, especially in a high school setting. I feel like I've played a bunch of other lesbians, but I guess I've just played a bunch of characters that everyone assumes is a lesbian.

**Like Janis, who was actually Lebanese.** Exactly. She wasn't the norm, so it was the emotional terrorist plot of the popular girls to spread the rumor that she was a lesbian, which was clearly an insult at that school.

**If you were to play another lesbian, whom would you want as your onscreen love interest?** Julianne Moore. She's so beautiful and amazing. And she was a great lesbian in *The Kids Are All Right*.

**When you did an "Ask Me Anything" on Reddit a few years back, a lot of female fans professed their girl crushes on you. What do you make of that?** It's very flattering. Early in my career I definitely had moments of wishing I fit more into the straight-up ingénue type—face, body, attitude, whatever. But the truth is that the majority of girls aren't like that, and most young girls are doing their own thing, trying to figure out who they are. I'm in my early 30s and maybe just starting to have a handle on who I am. So I'm not interested in playing the girls who get the boy and then everything's great. I want to play people who are struggling with their identity and who don't fit into the world around them. A lot of girls feel that way, so they get excited when they see that portrayed onscreen.

**You'd hear more nice things from fans if you joined social media.** Yeah, but the definition of my job is to effectively convince people that I'm somebody else. A big part of me feels like my job becomes harder if you know what my cat looks like and what I had for breakfast. I like writing funny texts with friends, so I'd probably get a kick out of Twitter, but I also know that I'd get in a lot of trouble. I don't want to start Twitter feuds and have to apologize for shit. ♦



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