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Handel	Concerto Grosso in B-flat Major, Op. 6, No. 7 ("Hornpipe") HWV 325 (1739)
Telemann	Suite in a minor for Alto Recorder, Strings, and Basso Continuo, (b. 1681)
Sammartini	Concerto in F Major for Soprano Recorder and Strings (b. 1700)
Geminiani	Concerto Grosso No. 12 in d minor, "La Folia" (after Corelli) (1726-29)
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Francesco Tristano piano
Daniel Landau filmmaker
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Mozart	Three Arias from <i>The Marriage of Figaro</i> (1786)
Stravinsky	Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo (1918)
J.S. Bach	French Suite No. 5 for Two Clarinets and Basses Horn (1723)
Mozart	Divertimento No. 1 for Three Basses Horn, K. 439b (1783)
C.P.E. Bach	Duo for Two Clarinets in C Major, Wq. 142 (b.1714)
Mozart	Four Arias from <i>Coeli fan tutte</i> for Three Basses Horns (1789)

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Out filmmaker directs Meryl Streep, who talks gay icon status – of herself and Margaret Thatcher
Photo: Alex Bailey

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Gov. Snyder refuses to talk with BTL, draws fire from leaders across state

Update on Troy Mayor Janice Daniels and her latest screw-up

Talk Back's Eric Rader looks at the Republican Presidential field

SW Detroit: Family upset with charges in violent death of gay man



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Michigan ministers sue to stop US hate-crime law

CINCINNATI (AP) – A three-judge panel of the 6th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati is taking up the claim of three Michigan ministers that a federal hate crime law infringes on their First Amendment rights and should be declared unconstitutional.

Oral arguments are scheduled Wednesday.

The law expands federal hate crimes to those committed against people because of sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

The ministers say they could be targeted for their sermons against gay behavior. The law's supporters say it's aimed at acts of violence, not speech by clergy.

A lower court judge dismissed the lawsuit last year.

The ministers are Jim Combs of Waterford, Rene Ouellette of Bridgeport and Levon Yuille of Ypsilanti. Another plaintiff is Gary Glenn, head of the American Family Association of Michigan who is also running in the GOP primary for U.S. Senator.

Perceptions open house showcases new facility

SAGINAW – Perceptions Saginaw Valley, the LGBT community organization in the Midland Saginaw area, will hold a special open house and fundraiser for its new facility on Jan. 21 at The Alderton Building, 301 Cass Street, in Old Town Saginaw. This free event will take place from 7 - 9 p.m. and includes complimentary hors d'oeuvres and beverages.

"We are very grateful to local supporters, Bill Giorgis and Russ Inman, owners of The Alderton Building, who donated the use of meeting and storage space for Perceptions," says Tim Atkinson, chair of the non-profit organization.

Perceptions' open house is also a fundraiser to encourage donations to the facility fund which supports the purchase of furnishings, equipment, and supplies for Perceptions new facility. In lieu of a financial donation, donors can also choose to gift an item from a "wish list" which Perceptions features on their website www.PerceptionsSV.org/donate and in their donor materials.

In 2012, Perceptions will mark the 10th anniversary of its founding. Perceptions offers social activities, support groups, educational programs, advocacy, and an annual student scholarship. The charitable organization also holds fundraisers for other local non-profit organizations and engages in volunteer activities. For information on the open house, please contact Thomas@perceptionsSV.org, or call 989-891-1429.

Initiative launches to full house

BY CRYSTAL PROXMIRE

FERNDALE – After centuries of oppression by church leaders of all faiths, believers in God and equality in Michigan are organizing and striking back. "If I don't stand up for my God-given right, by any means necessary, then I can't expect someone else to stand up for me," Darlene Franklin said to the packed community room at Affirmations Community Center. "You need gay people to stand up in their own churches and say 'no more.'" Franklin, who co-founded Agape Spirit Life Ministries with her partner Rev. Deacon Glenda Wyatt-Franklin, was a speaker at the first community dialogue of the LGBT Faith Initiative, which took place Jan 12.

The initiative gives a chance for people of all faiths, or even no faith, to work together towards changing oppressive attitudes in their respective church communities.

"Faith gets a bad rap because of the attitudes of those who fear change, but there are so many people of faith that are supportive," said Affirmations Executive Director David Garcia. Garcia and other speakers focused on the "movable middle" in the faith community, those who do not hate gays, yet also don't seem to have reason to stand up for them in their church environments.

"A lot of churches say they are open to all, but what are they doing to embrace the gay members of their congregation? Can two women hold hands and feel comfortable? Do they feel welcome to be themselves or do they have to hide when they are there?" Franklin said.

The initiative will focus on organizing gay and transgender people, as well as encouraging allies to deliver messages of acceptance and equality to their congregations.

Retired Catholic Bishop Thomas Gumbleton became a spokesperson for the gay community after his brother came out of the closet.

"There was a piece in the paper I read recently about Joan of Arc, and it made me think. They condemned her and burned her at the stake, but later she was canonized. So the Catholic Church can change," said Gumbleton, who was one of four featured speakers at the event, along with Franklin and PFLAG Manistee founders Linda Carley Nelson and Tom Nelson.

The Nelsons are a Catholic couple, each with a gay child from a previous marriage.

"When my son came out to me, I woke from



Above: Affirmations Executive Director David Garcia speaks on faith to a full house. Left: Retired Catholic Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and Reverend Darlene Franklin address faith and the LGBT community. BTL Photo: Crystal Proxmire

Things change slowly. I try to keep a sense of humor about the Catholic Church. That's how I get through."

Social and structural change has come about when individuals stand up, with others following once the path has been cleared. Each speaker on the panel had different approaches to the conflicts within their faiths. The Nelsons have kept a light hearted, loving attitude, while providing resources for other parents and loved ones of those who come out. In addition to starting PFLAG Manistee, they are part of Fortunate Families, a network of 140 Catholic parents in 29 states who are available to talk to other Catholics dealing with their children's sexual orientation or gender expression.

Bishop Gumbleton described the conflict people may feel when their personalities conflict with religious teachings. He noted that Catholics have a doctrine that can help them overcome this conflict. "The saving factor in Catholic teaching is we have, above everything else, primacy of conscience. That means that I must understand my own heart. I make the decision, is it right for

See Initiative, page 9

National: Church leaders blast gay marriage

BY CHUCK COLBERT

A group of nearly 40 conservative religious leaders released an open letter Jan. 12 that seeks to reframe the battle over same-sex civil marriage as a threat to their freedom of religion.

And in a new tactical twist, the signatories

say their concern is not that their ministers will be forced to preside at same-sex weddings. Rather, they say, allowing gays to wed would end up "forcing or pressuring both individuals and religious organizations - throughout their operations, well beyond religious ceremonies - to treat same-sex sexual conduct as the moral

equivalence of marital sexual conduct."

The signatories include New York Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, president of the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, H. David Burton, presiding bishop of the Church

See Church leaders, page 11

Michigan cities could lose inclusive ordinances if HB5039 passes

BY CRYSTAL A. PROXMIRE

Over twenty Michigan cities, including Ferndale, Ann Arbor, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Lansing and Detroit, could be stripped of their local human rights ordinances if Michigan House Bill 5039 passes.

The bill, introduced by Rep. Tom McMillin (R-Rochester Hills), would amend the state's 1976 Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act to limit protected classes to those outlined in that law. HB 5039 states, "A state agency or unit of local government shall not adopt any ordinance, rule, regulation or policy that includes as a protected class, any classification not specifically included as a protected class under this act. Any existing ordinance, rule, regulation, or policy that includes, as a protected class, any classification not specifically included as a protected class under this act is void." The amendment goes on to state this would apply to any state agency or unit of local government including school districts and cities.

The bill was introduced Oct. 5, 2011 and was sent to the House Judiciary Committee. On Nov. 28, 2011 the committee discussed the bill but no vote was taken.

McMillin told citizenlink.com, a Focus on the Family affiliate, "I've been somewhat active throughout the years in trying to stop some of these special-rights ordinances for homosexual behavior, and notice they're often used to discriminate against Christians. ...They [local officials who oppose the bill] say we're taking away their rights, but they're required to abide by all kinds of laws at the state level they can't change. This is just pointing out the need for one more."

McMillin has a long history of anti-LGBT campaigns. From 1994 to 1997, he was field director for the anti-LGBT Michigan Christian Coalition. In 2000, McMillin was treasurer of Oakland County Residents for Equal Rights Not Special Rights, the group that opposed Ferndale's LGBT-inclusive Human Rights Ordinance.

McMillin did not return BTL's request for comment by press time.

Reactions have been heated and swift against HB 5039. Numerous city councils have passed resolutions condemning the bill, and civic leaders have been outspoken in their concern that the state is overreaching its authority by attempting to limit localities' ability to govern themselves.

On Nov. 15, the City Council of Ypsilanti unanimously passed a resolution in opposition to the HB 5039, which stated in part, "Article VII Section 22 of the Michigan Constitution guarantees each city and village the 'power to adopt resolutions and ordinances relating to its municipal concerns...The City of Ypsilanti recognizes that respect for diversity is a vital component of successful economic development and talent retention."

Many city councils and commissions across the state have passed similar resolutions against

HB 5039 and forwarded them to representatives at the state level, including Lansing, Kalamazoo, Ferndale, Ann Arbor, Traverse City, Saugatuck Township and East Lansing.

Rep. Ellen Cogen Lipton (D-Huntington Woods) opposes HB 5039. "I do not intend to support this bill because I believe that local units of government have the right to adopt ordinances which reflect the values of their communities. More importantly, I do not believe it is my role as a state representative to vote to limit protections of Michigan citizens against discrimination," said Lipton.

Lipton also questioned the consistency of conservatives who claim to want local control and less government interference, yet are happy to use an arm of the government to take away the rights of others when it suits them. "How much more local can you get than a community decision to be open and pass anti-discrimination ordinances about housing and public spaces? And then for a state legislature to step in and say 'forget about the will of the people, we know what is best' is just ironic."



Rep. Ellen Cogen Lipton (D-Huntington Woods) opposes HB 5039 and questioned the consistency of conservatives who claim to want local control and less government interference, yet are happy to use an arm of the government to take away the rights of others when it suits them. "How much more local can you get than a community decision to be open and pass anti-discrimination ordinances about housing and public spaces? And then for a state legislature to step in and say 'forget about the will of the people, we know what is best' is just ironic."

Lipton pointed out that local ordinances do more than make a statement about civil rights; they can be good economic tools.

"Think about a community like Ferndale that made a decision at a time when it wasn't the most popular. People make decisions about where they want to live based on where they feel comfortable. The people of Ferndale knew that, and they branded themselves as a welcoming community. And look how they have weathered the economic storm. They did the right thing for the right reasons, and they were rewarded economically for it."

Ann Heler, one of three chairs for the 2006 Human Rights Ordinance Campaign in Ferndale was shocked to hear of the bill. (Craig Covey and Mary Schusterbauer also co-chaired the committee.) "This ordinance was passed by

citizens. We already voted on this. It is morally incorrect to do this. It is ethically incorrect and contrary to democracy. We campaigned as a community. We made posters, got signatures, went door-to-door. CFF (Citizens for Fair Ferndale) held a forum. This was all done by the will of the people, and for it to be undone by one bill is not right," Heler said.

Mayor of Saginaw, Greg Branch, credits inclusive ordinances with revitalization in his city. In 1984 the city passed broad housing legislation that includes protection for gays. "The effect of that for us was the final death blow to mortgage redlining, which was still a problem in Saginaw right up until the early 1980s. I think it also sent a pretty strong signal that we were a community that understood diversity - in all its forms - as an important element in breathing new life into a struggling city.

"I don't want it to be legal for a mortgage lender to be able to refuse a home loan to some of the members of our Historic District Commission, or a local college professor, or a local architect, or anyone else who wants to invest in Saginaw, 'I'm

sorry, but I'm not going to lend to you because you're gay.' I don't want an agency distributing CDBG home improvement funds to say to an older couple of long-time teachers, 'sorry, we're rejecting your application because you're dykes.' I don't want landlords to be able to legally tell young artists 'I don't rent to queers.'"

Michael Gregor of Equality Michigan said, "Regardless of reported complaints, local nondiscrimination ordinances send an important message to employers that it's not okay to fire someone just because they're gay or transgender. A statewide law has the same effect. These policies allow communities to set the expectation that all people should have a fair chance at a job and the same opportunity to rent a home."

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What's at stake: Michigan ordinances in jeopardy

Across the state at least 1,582,000 people live in cities that are protected by local ordinances that include sexual orientation. Go to [PrideSource.com](http://www.pridesource.com) to read about the current ordinances in place; the language and the enforcement of these policies.

How to oppose HB 5039

Rep. Lipton (D-Huntington Woods) said that the best way to oppose HB 5039 that would strip cities of their local ordinances is for residents to contact their state representatives along with those who serve on the Judicial Committee. "When you contact your Representative about a piece of legislation, they are required to pass on your communication to the Representative who introduced the bill. So if people in many districts are writing to their Representatives it can prompt conversations that wouldn't be had if they just contacted the one introducing it. We listen to our constituents, and if multiple people are contacting us about an issue it tends to get noticed."

HB 5039 sponsor MI Rep McMillin's legislative website is {URL <http://www.gopohouse.com/welcome.asp?District=45>}, which includes multiple methods of contact.

The Judiciary Committee Representatives are listed below, with the emails linked to their names online at BTL.

John J. Walsh (R), Committee Chair, 19th District

Kurt Heise (R), Majority Vice-Chair, 20th District

Judson S. Gilbert II (R), 81st District

Kenneth B. Horn (R), 94th District

Kurt Damrow (R), 84th District

Paul Muxlow (R), 83rd District

Bradford C. Jacobsen (R), 46th District

Peter Pettalia (R), 106th District

Pat Somerville (R), 23rd District

Kevin Cotter (R), 99th District

Mark S. Meadows (D), Minority Vice-Chair, 69th District

Bob Constan (D), 16th District

Stacy Erwin Oakes (D), 95th District

Lisa Brown (D), 39th District

Jeff Irwin (D), 53rd District

Phil Cavanagh (D), 17th District

John Olumba (D), 5th District

Another way to get involved is to be part of Unity Michigan's Don't Change Yourself, Change the Law campaign to mobilize people interested in making Michigan a place where any citizen can live without fear.

Find our more at <http://dontchangeyourself.com/>.

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Thinking Out Loud



Joel Osteen and feel-good homophobia

BY ABBY DEES

When the Michelle Bachmanns or Glenn Becks of

the world do their public rants about rampant homosexual perversion and the decay of American values, I'm happy to let them talk.

As painful as it is to keep the free flow of ideas going, it is important to let people fly their colors. This way you know where they stand and you get to fly your own big neon flag in response. When activists called to have Mormon Church's tax-exempt status yanked for its role in California's Prop 8, I took the church's side – not because I approved of their bully tactics, but because I didn't want to see other churches lose their right to fight for us one day.

So you'd think I'd be OK with Mega-Pastor Joel Osteen's remarks last week to Oprah Winfrey: "I believe that homosexuality is shown as a sin in the scripture. I do." I'm so not OK with this I almost foam at the mouth whenever I think about that nuclear white Osteen smile.

True, Osteen was just sick about having to say that we're sinners, and almost apologized for it. He went out of his way to opine that Christians make too big a deal about homosexuality and that it's about as sinful as being prideful or fibbing. I'm glad that my marriage only offends God somewhat.

I've heard that Osteen has a big gay following, and I know one of those fans well. Once I emailed him to report that Osteen called homosexuality "not God's best" on Larry King. My friend wrote back, "Well, nobody's perfect. You take what's good and leave the rest." He continues to be inspired.

This all sounds reasonable, and you could argue that my friend was reminding me of my own professed philosophy about free speech and religion. And yet I shrieked out loud when I read his email.

The reason Fox News gets a pass but Osteen has incurred my wrath is because his message is so insidious. It's feel-good

homophobia, so couched in God-loves-you talk that Osteen avoids all responsibility for the fact that real people take his words to heart. Not everyone can "leave the rest" as my friend does.

Whenever Osteen answers the question

It's feel-good homophobia, so couched in God-loves-you talk that Osteen avoids all responsibility for the fact that real people take his words to heart. Not everyone can "leave the rest" as my friend does.

about homosexuality he hems and haws, but always comes to the apparently painful conclusion that the Bible is unambiguous about it. He's quick to add that he does love gay people, welcomes them in his church, doesn't judge, that there are worse things to be, etc. The message that it's still a sin to be gay gets quickly obscured by smiley faces and glitter glue for hope.

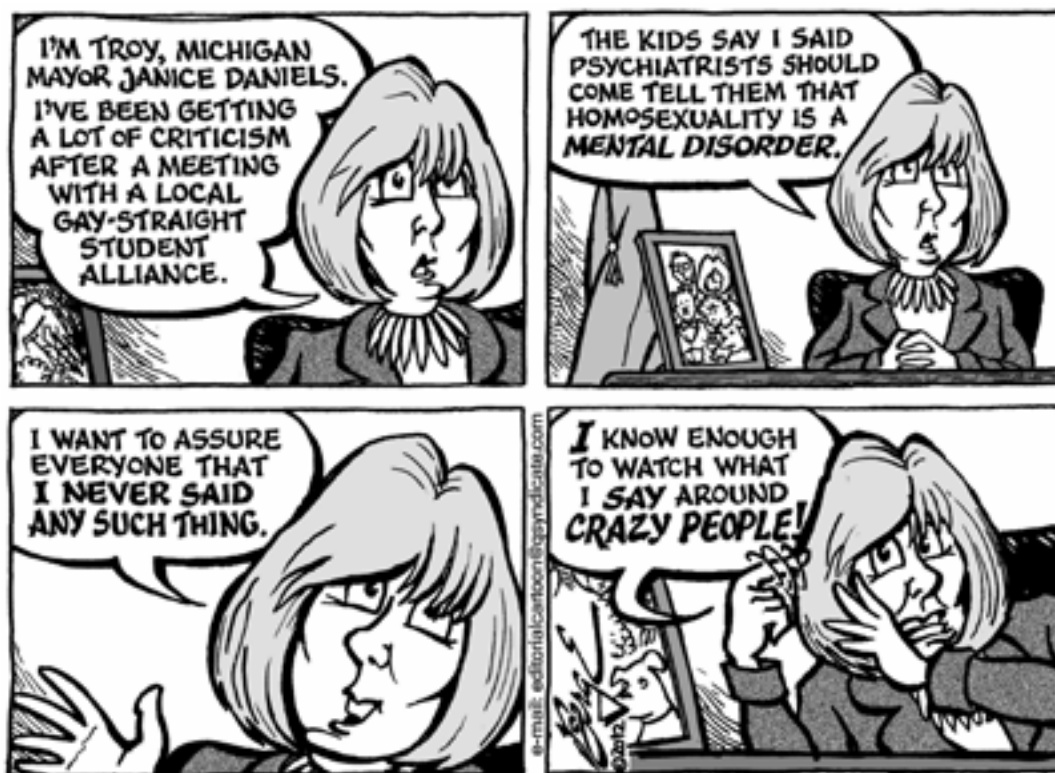
Curiously, Osteen is rarely willing to take a stand on any other issues. He's gotten criticized by the religious right for staying out

of politics and being unwilling to talk about sin as much as he talks about positivity. It's all about being "the best you can be" – God's plan for you. When Mike Wallace asked Osteen if he thought Mormons were true Christians, he humbly responded, "I haven't really studied them or thought about them...I just try to let God be the judge of that. I mean, I don't know" and "I'm not one to judge the little details of it."

Hmm. Why so vague about the folks who have an entirely different set of scriptures, but so damned clear on the disappointing truth about homosexuality? Perhaps some serious reexamination is in order.

Another pastor whose language and selective choice of issues is spookily similar to Osteen's is the purpose-driven Rick Warren. Also a proclaimed political abstainer, he encouraged his flock to vote against same-sex marriage and has

disturbing ties to the recent wave of anti-gay policies in Africa. Warren still insists that he loves gay people and works closely with "a number of gay organizations," though no one ever asks which ones. These men are entitled to their opinions, but it's time to call out the hypocrisy of this new breed of influential pastors who want us all to bathe in the light of God's forgiving love. Except that LGBT people must still deny how God made them if they want "God's best" for themselves.



Parting Glances



Keep those seams straight!

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

“As the President of the United States holds the highest official rank in political life, so he is also by virtue of that office, awarded precedence in social life. He may be addressed as Mr. President or Your Excellency.”

Your Ex-cel-len-cy! Says who?

So says “A Guide to the Manners, Etiquette, and Department of the Most Refined Society,” an 1879 best seller devoted to rules that “make social intercourse more agreeable, and facilitate hospitalities, when all members of society hold them as binding and faithfully regard their observance.” Indeed. Social intercourse! How agreeable.

Rutherford B. Hayes - winner of an election not unlike the Gore/Bush 2000 contest - was president. Our 19th and a Republican (1877-1881). He was also the darling of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. No hootchy, no cootchy in D.C.

“Guide” - written by manners maven John H. Young - though 130 plus years old, is still a useful springboard (or pirate’s plank) for establishing retrograde Rebiblican pomp and circumcision in the White House. (Say, if Santorum wins; or, when kneeling before God as god in the Oval Office, if Mitt wins.)

Of Refined Interest #1: (Prospective Visitors): “If the caller has no business, but goes out of curiosity, he pays his respects and withdraws to make room for others. It is better in making a private call, to secure the company of some official or some friend of the President to introduce you.” Pat Robertson, perhaps.

Item #2 (Proper Attire): “At the New-Year’s receptions, the most ceremonious occasion of the executive mansion, it is the custom of the ladies who attend to appear in the most elegant toilets suited to a morning reception.” (Note: Toilet is fashionable attire. GOP men’s room stalls back then were gaily festooned in red, white, and blue.)

“Members of foreign legations appear in the court dresses of their respective countries on this occasion, in paying their respects to the President of the United States.” (Update: Air Force jumpsuits and/or burkas optional.)

Social arbiter Young offers a caveat: “In this country, where everybody possess one and the same title, that of a citizen of this Republic, no one can claim a superiority of rank and title” (Update: unless he or she is a born-again Christian.)

The Guide’s protocol rules - originally applicable to the Queen of England and the Court of St. James - just might add a glow-in-the-dark aura to the excellency presidential kiss-kiss and offer a protocol of elbow-rubbing possibilities.

“The person to be presented to the President must provide himself or herself with a court costume, which for men consists partly of knee-breeches and hose for women of an ample court train.” And keep your seams, er, straight, girls.

“Those of more democratic professions, such as solicitors, merchants and mechanics, have not as a rule that right of White House presentation, though wealth and connection have recently proved an Open Sesame.” To Wall Street, no doubt.

Question for research: Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. Was Ali an Open Sesame Democrat or a Rebiblican? More to the point: could he tell a pickle fork from a pitch fork? (And use it?)

Charles@pridesource.com

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Heard on Facebook **Gov. Snyder doesn't want to talk to the LGBT press - do you think he ought to?**

Another politician that needs to resign. Hopefully he'll take the Mayor of Troy with him.

—James Dee

Maybe these questions should have been asked before the elections?

—Nikki Gasko

The governor needs to be reminded that there are many LGBT persons in this state whose concerns are just as important as those of their straight cousins.

—Ellen Acton

He should. Everyone is a citizen of our great state!

—Linda Tryon Bierlein

Shame on the Michigan voters for electing this man. When the LGBT population makes a mass exodus from Michigan and the already fragile economy falls apart, they will have gotten what they deserved.

—Jason Mc

Yes! Keep it up! He said he wants to retain the brightest and best, but he signed disputed legislation that will block offering health insurance to domestic partners. Governor Snyder, how can you proclaim to be a progressive governor when you signed this discriminating legislation?

—Michael Lary

Comments may be edited for grammar and length.



Join the conversation ...

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S/he Said

Marriage and parenting

BY HOWARD ISRAEL



Abbie Goldberg

“(Gay parents) tend to be more motivated, more committed than heterosexual parents on average, because they chose to be parents... Gays and lesbians rarely become parents by accident, compared with an almost 50 percent accidental pregnancy rate among heterosexuals... That translates to greater commitment on average and more involvement.”

—Abbie Goldberg, psychologist at Clark University in Massachusetts who researches gay and lesbian parenting in an article titled “Gay Parents Better Than Straight Parents? What Research Says,” www.huffingtonpost.com, Jan. 16. Goldberg recently published “Lesbian and Gay Parents and Their Children,” which looks at gay parenting from the 1970s to the present and concludes Gay parents and straight parents are pretty much the same in terms of child-rearing.



Pope Benedict XVI

“(P)ride of place goes to the family, based on the marriage of a man and a woman. This is not a simple social convention, but rather the fundamental cell of every society. Consequently, policies which undermine the family threaten human dignity and the future of humanity itself. The family unit is fundamental for the educational process and for the development both of individuals and States; hence there is a need for policies which promote the family and aid social cohesion and dialogue. It is in the family that we become open to the world and to life and openness to life is a sign of openness to the future.”

—Pope Benedict XVI, in his ‘State of the World’ address to diplomats from nearly 180 countries, quoted in an article titled “Gay marriage a threat to humanity’s future: Pope,” www.reuters.com, Jan. 09.



John C. Nienstedt

“It is my expectation that all the priests and deacons in this Archdiocese will support this venture and cooperate with us in the important efforts that lie ahead. The gravity of this struggle, and the radical consequences of inaction propels me to place a solemn charge upon you all - on your ordination day, you made a promise to promote and defend all that the Church teaches. I call upon that promise in this effort to defend marriage. There ought not be open dissension on this issue. If any have personal reservations, I do not wish that they be shared publicly. If anyone believes in conscience that he cannot cooperate, I want him to contact me directly and I will plan to respond personally.”

—John C. Nienstedt, Catholic Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, in a speech and letter to Minnesota’s priests, in an article titled “Archbishop orders Minnesota priests to support or stay silent on anti-gay-marriage amendment,” <http://washingtonindependent.com>, Jan. 05.



Michael Bayly

“The Archbishop’s letter is problematic in many ways. As a gay man, I find it particularly offensive that he can’t even bring himself to name gay and lesbian people. We’re simply a ‘minority’ seemingly out to destroy the church and civilization. Such an absurd caricature would be funny if not for the hurtful and damaging consequences to individuals, couples and families resulting from the Archbishop’s anti-marriage equality activism.”

—Michael Bayly, editor of the Progressive Catholic Voice, a Minnesota group working for reform within the Catholic church, about a speech and letter by John C. Nienstedt, Catholic Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis to Minnesota’s priests, in an article titled “Archbishop orders Minnesota priests to support or stay silent on anti-gay-marriage amendment,” <http://washingtonindependent.com>, Jan. 05.

Marriage equality: A busy 2012 is off and running

BY DANA RUDOLPH

Pro-active efforts got underway this month to establish marriage equality in at least three more states.

Democratic leaders in the New Jersey Senate and Assembly on Jan. 9 announced their intention to introduce a marriage equality bill. Washington Gov. Chris Gregoire (D), a long-time supporter of rights for same-sex couples, announced Jan. 4 that she will introduce such a bill in her state. And in Maryland, where a marriage equality bill passed the state Senate but not the House in March 2011, Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) has said he will sponsor marriage equality legislation in 2012 and will take an active role in moving the bill forward this year. And Maryland Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. (D-Calvert) has indicated his chamber will shortly take action on such a measure.

After a 2011 that saw marriage equality become reality in the most populous state yet and the Obama administration issuing a major statement against the Defense of Marriage Act, 2012 could do even better.

Evan Wolfson, president of the national Freedom to Marry group, said progress towards marriage equality in 2012 will be "fueled by the extraordinary, transformative wins we racked up in 2011."

At the same time, he said, "We definitely have our big challenges in 2012 and we're not going to win every battle."

On the positive side, the three states above could see legislative success toward achieving marriage equality in 2012.

Both Governors O'Malley and Gregoire seem to be following the example of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D), who was actively involved in successfully pushing through marriage equality in his state's legislature in 2011.

But the road will be much harder in New Jersey, where Republican Governor Chris Christie has said he would veto any marriage equality legislation passed in his state. Supporters will have to gain enough votes to override that veto.

Other states may not get that far. West Virginia Delegate John Doyle (D-Jefferson County) told WEPM Radio News Dec. 22, 2011 that a marriage equality bill has "no chance" of passing his state's legislature. But Doyle said he would introduce a civil union bill.

Colorado State Senator Pat Steadman (D-Denver) introduced a civil union bill in the

Colorado legislature January 11. The bill is expected to pass the Democrat-controlled Senate but will face a tougher path in the House, which the Republicans control by one vote.

One state could lose marriage equality this year. The New Hampshire House will likely vote this month on a bill to repeal marriage equality in the state. If it passes, the bill would then go to the state Senate, which under normal procedure would not vote on it until at least April. Governor John Lynch (D) has said he would veto the bills, allowing marriage equality to remain, although the legislature could override the veto.

Wolfson noted that marriage equality advocates "continue to be vigilant" in Iowa, where same-sex couples gained the right to marry in 2009. The state House last year passed a bill that would have started the process of putting an anti-marriage equality measure on the ballot, but Democratic leadership blocked the bill in the Senate.

November referendums

Two other states — North Carolina and Minnesota — will be turning the matter over to voters in 2012. The legislatures passed bills in 2011 for ballot measures that seek to ban marriage for same-sex couples under the state constitutions.

Minnesota's ballot measure will appear in November. North Carolina's, however, will appear on the May 2012 primary ballot — not in November as originally planned — a move that may make it more likely to pass.

House Speaker Thom Tillis (R-Mecklenburg) told a press conference that the date change was made to "remove politics." Some Democrats had accused Republicans of using the bill to draw conservative voters to the polls in November. But the major contested primaries in May will be the Republican ones for president and governor, meaning the spring turnout to vote on the marriage measure will likely be largely Republican.

Elsewhere, Indiana and Pennsylvania started the process in 2011 for anti-marriage equality ballot measures, and those could see further action in 2012. Both states require two legislative sessions to pass ballot measures that would amend the state constitutions.

In Maine, LGBT advocates collected enough signatures to place a measure in favor of marriage equality before voters on the 2012 ballot. A spokesperson for the effort, Ian Grady, said the

more community discussions this year, featuring other religious leaders and giving attendees a chance to share feedback and ideas about how to spread acceptance. Attendees filled out surveys that organizers will use to coordinate efforts and meet needs of the community.

Judy Lewis, Affirmations' volunteer coordinator of the initiative, said, "The best part, in my humble opinion, about the launch was the diversity - gay and straight, men and women, multi-denominational, Abrahamic and beyond! Wow, it was awesome," she said.

For more information about the initiative, call 248-398-7105.

Evan Wolfson, president of the national Freedom to Marry group, said progress towards marriage equality in 2012 will be "fueled by the extraordinary, transformative wins we racked up in 2011."

advocates have not yet decided whether to submit the signatures and proceed with the effort. Their deadline is the end of January.

Federal level

Some marriage equality advocates also believe 2012 could see progress at the federal level.

Richard Socarides, a longtime Democratic activist and former White House aide under President Clinton, wrote in the New Yorker December 19 that he foresees "a strategically timed (if low-key) pre-election announcement" of the President's support for marriage equality.

Socarides said he believes two federal cases seeking to secure marriage equality — Gill v. Office of Personnel Management (the DOMA challenge) in the 1st Circuit and Perry v. Brown (the equal

protection challenge) in the 9th Circuit—will be decided this year in favor of marriage equality. If so, he says, they will put pressure on President Obama to announce his support.

"Having a Democratic President, an African American at that, on the 'wrong' side of federal-appeals-court rulings on civil rights is an untenable situation," he wrote.

But the cases are being decided by three-judge panels in each circuit, and could be appealed further to the full circuit courts or directly to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Wolfson made no predictions about the president's stance but said Freedom to Marry will call on the president "to follow through on the really important and great steps he's taken" in 2011 — especially Attorney General Eric Holder's letter to Congress stating that the administration believes Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional and would no longer defend it.

Section 3 of DOMA states that the federal government will not, for any federal purposes, recognize the marriages of same-sex couples.

Both Wolfson and Socarides agree that supporting marriage equality is no longer the political suicide it once was.

"The remarkable new reality for Obama in this election," said Socarides, "is that supporting marriage equality is smart politics."

See Marriage Equality, page 10

► Initiative

Continued from p. 4

me? The church's teaching does provide conflict, but it is solvable in this way."

He also noted that standing up isn't always easy, but that's how change happens. "Jesus paid a terrible price for standing up for what he believed in. He paid with death," he said. "But most people don't go that far. Most people back off. They get to a certain point and they just back off. Jesus didn't do that."

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Creep of the Week

Pope Benedict XVI

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

You know, whenever I'm in the market for marriage advice, the only person I trust is an unmarried guy in a dress. It also helps if he was once a Hitler Youth. So you can imagine that whenever Pope Benedict XVI starts dishing out the marriage talk, I am all ears.



Pope Benedict XVI

In a New Year address to a bunch of folks at the Vatican, the pope made it clear that 2012 is still the Year of the Queer, at least if we're categorizing each year by whatever the Catholic Church considers to be the most urgently pressing issue. Which means it's been the Year of the Queer for over a decade now. Past issues have included poverty, world hunger, abortion, and other things that have been long since resolved.

Speaking of the best place for children to be educated, the pope said that "pride of place goes to the family, based on the marriage of a man and a woman." In other words, one penis + one vagina = happy, well-adjusted kids.

"This is not a simple social convention, but rather the fundamental cell of every society. Consequently,

policies which undermine the family threaten human dignity and the future of humanity itself," he said.

Oh, my. "Humanity itself," eh? *Somebody* loves himself a little melodrama.

In case it's not clear what exactly the pope means by "policies which undermine the family," he's talking about gays being allowed to marry. Each other. Granted, from what I understand that whole gay man marrying a straight woman or lesbian

marrying a hetero dude thing doesn't work out very well. But at least it doesn't threaten all of humanity.

I love how the pope makes clear that marriage isn't a "simple social convention," as if anyone were saying otherwise. As if gays and lesbians just want equal marriage rights because marriage is such an inconsequential institution and wouldn't it be fun and ironic to walk down the aisle and said, "I do."

Nor are gay and lesbian families with kids taking that responsibility lightly. Don't tell the pope, but there is just no evidence that kids with same-sex parents are in any way being harmed by their family structure. In fact, one week after the pope made his remarks Live Science's top story was, "Why Gay Parents May Be the Best Parents."

Granted, where the pope gets the balls to even *talk* about what's best for children is beyond me. As John Aravosis put it, "(W)hy should we care about the moral pronouncements of people who aid and abet the

rape of small children?" Ha. That Aravosis. He's such a kiddier. I mean, that whole child abuse scandal is so 2002, right?

Um, not so much, actually. Child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church has by no means gone away and anyone who claims otherwise either hasn't done their research or is lying.

So, yeah, I think gays and lesbians are more than entitled to be outright disgusted with the pope's continued gay bashing and homophobia. Let's face it, if a man with as much power and influence as the pope uses his voice to tell an audience of people representing countries worldwide that homosexuals are destroying humanity, then this is not a man who actually cares about human beings, gay or straight.

Washington now two votes shy on same-sex marriage

BY RACHEL LA CORTE AND MIKE BAKER

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — A measure to legalize same-sex marriage in Washington state was introduced Friday in the Senate, where the measure was just two votes shy of having enough support to pass.

The bill, requested by Gov. Chris Gregoire, is sponsored by Sen. Ed Murray, D-Seattle, a gay lawmaker who has led the fight for gay civil rights and domestic partnerships. While the House is widely expected to have enough support, the Senate is still short of the 25 votes needed for passage there.

Even though 22 other senators signed onto the bill in support, including two Republicans, Murray played down expectations.

"I am two votes short," he said. "This is as likely not to happen as to happen. At this point, it's a very personal decision for the members."

Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, D-Bothell, committed her vote Friday to approve the measure after initially saying she was leaning in favor of support but unwilling to commit to it.

McAuliffe, who is one of the co-signers on the bill, said that the legislation is long overdue.

In a tally by The Associated Press, three Democratic members who have previously cast votes against expanding options for gay couples — Sens. Brian Hatfield of Raymond, Jim Kastama of Puyallup and Paull Shin of Edmonds — have said they're weighing the issue but haven't yet decided how to vote.

Hatfield said Friday he is willing to support a vote of the people on same-sex marriage but is still torn on

how he would approach a vote in the Legislature.

Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen, D-Camano Island, issued a statement Thursday saying she was listening to all sides and keeping an open mind.

"I feel the best option is to send it to the voters on a referendum, but I'm still hearing from constituents and I want them to have full opportunity to make their views known," she said in a written statement.

Murray has insisted that he will not support adding a referendum clause to the bill, saying minority rights should not be decided at the ballot.

The two Republican senators who support gay marriage are Steve Litzow of Mercer Island and Cheryl Pflug of Maple Valley. Two first-term Republicans representing suburban districts — Sens. Joe Fain of Auburn and Andy Hill of Redmond — left open the possibility of supporting the bill, saying they want to discuss the issue with constituents. They have declined to say whether they were leaning in any direction.

The first public hearing on the bill is expected on Jan. 23.

Joseph Backholm, executive director of The Family Policy Institute of Washington, said he expects thousands of people to show up at the public hearing in opposition.

"The idea that there is no difference between a heterosexual relationship and a homosexual relationship and that the law should recognize no difference, assumes there is no difference between men and women," he said. "This would

be the state taking a position and saying 'We will no longer encourage arrangements that will give children both a mother and father.'"

Washington state has had a domestic partnership law since 2007. The measure benefited from momentum from a gay civil rights law that passed the previous year.

A so-called "everything but marriage" bill was passed in 2009, greatly expanding that law. Opponents later challenged it at the ballot box, but voters upheld the law. Nearly 19,000 people in Washington are registered as domestic partners.

One opponent already has filed an initiative seeking to clarify the definition of marriage.

On Monday, Everett attorney Stephen Pidgeon filed a proposed ballot initiative that seeks to change the current state statute, which says marriage is a civil contract between a male and a female. Pidgeon previously worked with groups that unsuccessfully tried to overturn the state's domestic partnership law. He wants marriage to be defined being "between one man and one woman."

Backholm declined to comment on whether his group was supportive of or working with Pidgeon on the initiative.

To qualify for the November ballot, sponsors of the latest initiative must submit at least 241,153 valid signatures of registered voters by July 6.

Same-sex marriage is legal in New York, Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont and the District of Columbia.

to marry have changed dramatically, as has public support."

But Freedom to Marry is also working in communities to spread the message about "why marriage matters and who gay families are" and "painting real pictures through stories and conversations," said Wolfson.

That, he said, "is how you build the support that creates the climate for political and judicial change."

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► Marriage Equality

Continued from p. 9

Polls

Wolfson noted that a July analysis of over a decade of polling data by Joel Benenson, President Barack Obama's lead pollster, and Dr. Jan van Lohuizen, President George W. Bush's lead pollster, showed that support for marriage equality nationwide rose about one percent per year between

1996 and 2009, but jumped to five percent per year in 2010 and 2011.

The analysis also concluded that, since 2006, support has risen 8 percent among Republicans and 13 percent among Independents. The study was commissioned by Freedom to Marry.

Wolfson said his organization has been delivering that information to both Democratic and Republican elected officials and party operatives "to propel that momentum and have the political types stop acting as if this were 1996. The politics of the freedom

► Church leaders

Continued from p. 4

of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and Leith Anderson, president of the National Association of Evangelicals. It also includes the Bishop of Oakland, California, the Most Rev. Salvatore J. Cordileone

“There is no doubt that many people and groups whose moral and religious convictions forbid same-sex sexual conduct will resist the compulsion of the law and church and state conflicts will result,” the leaders caution, in the letter, entitled “Marriage and Religious Freedom: Fundamental Goods That Stand or Fall Together.”

The signatories say that faith-based adoption agencies would be required to place children with civilly married same-sex couples and that religious employers would be required to extend medical health care benefits same-sex spouses.

The letter, posted on the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, holds out marriage between heterosexual couples as the “true definition” that “must be protected for its own sake and for the good of society.”

The religious leaders also assert that, in opposing same-sex marriage, they and their followers have been “marked” as “bigots, subjecting them to the full arsenal of government punishments and pressures reserved for racists.”

Nationwide, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church has been at the forefront advocating against equal civil-marriage rights for gay couples. One leading opponent is Archbishop

Dolan, whom the pope will elevate to cardinal next month.

Days before conservative religious leaders released their letter, Pope Benedict said same-sex marriage posed a threat to “humanity” adding, “Pride of place goes the family, based on the marriage of a man and a woman.”

“This is not a simple social convention, but

but in opposition to it,” he added in a New Ways Ministry blog posting.

In e-mail correspondence, DeBernardo said, the open letters’ threat of “compulsion is a fantasy that exists in the conservative religious leaders’ heads.”

“No one is going to be compelled to do anything,” he said. “If religious organizations

to change the narrative,” he said. “And the best way to do this is to fabricate injustices against them. Ergo, we have their new ‘religious liberties’ campaign.”

Catholics for Equality is a national LGBT advocacy organization.

The use of public funds by faith-based organizations is a key, say advocates and legal experts, not religious freedom. Privately funded, religious-based, charitable and social services programs are exempt from non-discrimination laws. But such taxpayer-funded faith-based programs are required to comply with state non-discrimination laws.

“Religious freedom does not include a right to special exemptions from the laws that bind all citizens,” said professor Tobias Wolff at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. “Neither does religious freedom include a right to avoid criticism for one’s beliefs. Adherents to religions that preach discrimination against LGBT people have a right to explore their beliefs. They do not have a right to turn those beliefs into law, and they do not have a right to pursue their beliefs free from the disapproval of their fellow citizens.”



“Politically, it’s imperative for the bishops to change the narrative, and the best way to do this is to fabricate injustices against them. Ergo, we have their new ‘religious liberties’ campaign.”

- Phil Attey, executive of Catholics for Equality

rather the fundamental cell of every society,” he said. “Consequently, the policies which undermine the family threaten human dignity and the future of humanity itself.”

Catholic advocates for LGBT equality reacted swiftly to the Pope’s harsh words and the open letter.

“The pope has it wrong, but this time he has it diametrically wrong,” said Francis DeBernardo, executive director of Mount Rainier, Md.-based New Ways Ministry, a gay positive ministry of outreach with LGBT Catholics, their families, and friends.

“The threat to ‘human dignity and the future of humanity’ comes not from marriage equality

do not follow government regulations, they will simply not receive government funding,” he said.

“We are not going to see bishops going to jail over this,” DeBernardo said.

Interestingly, DeBernardo said, “At least for the Catholic bishops who signed this statement, there was never any uproar over providing benefits to divorced, remarried, but not annulled people. The same Catholic principles of marriage apply in that case. Why is there only an uproar when gay and lesbian people are involved?”

Phil Attey, executive of Catholics for Equality, said the Catholic bishops are recasting themselves from “bullies” to “victims.”

“Politically, it’s imperative for the bishops

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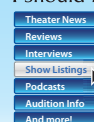


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Meryl Streep and director Phyllida Lloyd on the set of "The Iron Lady." Photo: Alex Bailey

The Iron Ladies

Out filmmaker directs Meryl Streep, who talks gay icon status – of both herself and polarizing prime minister Margaret Thatcher

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Nothing can stand in the way of the almighty Meryl Streep – except on this particular afternoon. At a New York City hotel, in front of a room full of journalists from mainstream press, she braces herself for what could be the ultimate career challenge. The mission? Answer a “gay” question.

With mock surprise, Streep dramatically throws her arms up and whips back in her chair, pretending it’s something she – Oscar winner, recent Kennedy Center honoree, the “devil” herself – isn’t sure she can pull off.

“OK,” she says, sarcastically, “let me get ready. All right, go.”

And so we do, citing mentions of the fierce Margaret Thatcher, whom Streep doesn’t just play but becomes in “The Iron Lady,” as a gay icon. So, is she?

Streep deliberates, working out the answer in her head before she lets go of it: “You know, I... I don’t know. I just recently found out that I am a gay icon. It’s flattering, of course,” she says, noting the all-male tribute “Streep Tease” in West Hollywood (of which she says, “I haven’t gotten the nerve to go”). “But I think (Margaret) stirs very strong feelings even today, 20 years after leaving power. And she remains divisive. The film will enter a landscape of a world where she continues to cause controversy. I can’t answer the question about whether she’s a gay icon. That’s a difficult one for me.”

Look at that: something Meryl Streep *can’t* do. The recent Golden Globe winner for Best Actress in a Drama, for “Iron Lady,” is supposed to be the Queen of *Can*, the thespian superwoman who can effortlessly slip into character: head-turner in “Death Becomes Her,” doubtful nun, Julia Child

(she’s so remarkable, in fact, that she can work those chameleon skills within just one movie, as she did with 2003’s “Angels in America”).

She’s such a persona-transcendent pro that when she’s sitting right in front of you, you’re asking yourself: Is that really Meryl Streep? At this point, even Meryl Streep doesn’t look like Meryl Streep. Heck, after being so outside herself, does Meryl Streep even know Meryl Streep?

She’s the rare actress who never plays herself in a movie. “Iron Lady,” then, is a made-for-Meryl movie, from the prosthetics that afford an uncanny transformation into Britain’s first female prime minister to the heart that she finds among all that, well, iron.

“The biggest challenge for me was accomplishing the long lines of thought that she would launch into without taking a breath,” Streep recalls. “Even with all the drama school that I’ve

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► Iron Ladies

Continued from p. 13

had, I had a lot of trouble managing that. Just the galvanizing energy and the drive and the capacity to follow through with a conviction all the way through to the end of your breath until you can't go any further," she says, breathlessly in character, "and *not* to let anybody interrupt!

"It was masterful the way she could manage these interviews." She lets out a hearty laugh. "I'm taking notes on that."

Thatcher was a strident figure of polarizing effect, a loved-and-hated political icon admired not necessarily for her ideas but for the way she was able to execute them – in the face of class and gender prejudice.

"The array of obstacles that stood before her in England at that time were enormous," Streep notes, "and I think she did a service for our team (women) by getting there – even though you might not agree with the politics. Her determination, her stamina, her courage to take it on. Anybody that stands up and is willing to be a leader, who is as prepared as she was and as smart as she was, is admirable on a certain level, because you really sacrifice a great deal. All of our public figures do."

The film spans three days in Thatcher's post prime, well into her 80s, after dementia wipes out her memories and she tries to capture whichever ones she has left. For as political-minded as she was, the film isn't very political at all. And it wasn't meant to be.

"All of us understood what we were wanting from this piece," Streep says. "It was not going to be chronicling Margaret Thatcher's political life; it would be a particular look back through her own eyes at selected memories – not in chronological order, but in a jumble of memory, regret, glory days. It would all be a part of a reckoning."

The film is facing intense scrutiny for breezing past the political turmoil that Thatcher stirred and, instead, focusing on her personal life. "We have come under criticism for portraying someone who is frail and in delicate health," Streep admits. "Some people have said it's shameful to portray this part of a life, but if you think that debility, delicacy and dementia are shameful, if you think that the ebbing end of life is something that should be shut away – if you think that people need to be defended from that, from those images – then yes, it is a shameful thing. But I don't think that. We are naturally interested in our leaders, and we tell stories about ourselves through the stories of important people."

Out director Phyllida Lloyd elaborates: "We thought of the film as something of a 'King Lear' for girls, a Shakespearean story – not a political story. So, in that sense, we spoke to a number of Margaret Thatcher's closest associates, who described her story in Shakespearean and operatic terms. I'd worked in opera a lot and to me, this did have some of the elements of a tragic opera. The movie is a combination of the political world and pure imagination. It's two very distinctive worlds."



This isn't the first time Streep and Lloyd have bridged two worlds. 2008's "Mamma Mia!" united the actress' singing and dancing, with Lloyd directing.

"I think it's always easier the second time working together," the filmmaker admits. "In fact, you should start with the second time."

Looking at her, pretending to be offended, Streep laughs: "What do you mean?"

"I loved working with her... the first time," the actress razzes. "We had shorthand (on 'Iron Lady'), and we had to – because we had \$14 million to shoot a movie that takes place over the course of six decades. And that's basically no money. That's less than a 10th of what 'Hugo' cost."

She hands it to Lloyd for strongly conveying her vision prior to shooting, which allowed Streep a sense of security in knowing just how to find Thatcher's mind, body and spirit.

"I'm playing a Margaret Thatcher no one has seen or really knows, and we can't know – it's an imagined journey that we were taking – so I felt a lot of freedom. I did," Streep says. "I felt completely free, and that's a testament to the director."

But it wasn't all Lloyd. Though she's never met Margaret Thatcher, Streep wore the prime minister's many hats, learning that the woman wasn't a slacker and that her father saw Thatcher as the man of the house. "He discovered, of his two daughters, one was uncommonly bright and uncommonly curious, and maybe this could be his boy," she says. "That's what I think. She fulfills a promise, and he infused in her the courage to get up and out. She had a lot of promise, and she wanted to live up to it."

When did Streep realize the same for herself? "I never really decided. I'm still ambivalent." She laughs at the notion. "But no, being an actor lets me be a million different things, so I don't have to decide."

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Hear Me Out

Graffiti6 duo shows true 'Colours.'

Plus: Rumer recalls classic sound



BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Graffiti6, 'Colours'

Everyone's talking about the hotness of Jamie Scott, frontman for breakout duo Graffiti6. And sure, the boyish-cut fella could probably get away with slapped-together crap as long as he sang it in that pudding-smooth bluesy tone of his. But thankfully that's not a concern – he sounds as good as he looks. He's British, so there's that. Except what's really at work here is his coat of many "Colours": an intoxicating melting pot of funk, soul, psychedelia and sturdy Maroon 5 pop melodies. Scott and his distractingly fine everything only makes the sultry slow-burn of "This Man," an R&B grinder that reaches a masturbatory climax, that much more erotic. His voice (think Stevie Wonder and Justin Timberlake singing through a medical mask) is a sex toy, but it's also alluring in bunches of ways: charming on the retro "Free," entrancing on the exhilarating "Stare into the Sun" and devastatingly beautiful on "Over You," stripped of anything but some subtle keys and a broken heart. "Calm the Storm" doesn't work with much – a chill-out mix and the title lyric looped throughout – but he taps out every nuance from those three words to captivating effect. The only real misstep is "Lay Me Down," a self-indulgent Kings of Leon wannabe. Otherwise, this debut is this year's benchmark for pop music. *Grade: B+*



Rumer, 'Seasons of My Soul'

Rumer, the 32-year-old English songstress whose old-soul voice sounds like it came from the same strand of DNA as Karen Carpenter, is getting all kind of kudos. And not just from anyone: Elton John, Carly Simon and Burt Bacharach are all thumbs-up for the vocal extraordinaire, born Sarah Joyce, from Pakistan. High praise is deserved. With a hypnotic, hush-hush elegance that's unheard of these days, Rumer is an anomaly in today's music market (her famous adoring fans aren't exactly spring chickens, after all). Her voice on "Slow," the right word for the song, caresses the dreamy gentleness of simple instrumentation like liquid chocolate. How Sade of her. "Seasons of My Soul," though, is made for the moment and not the mind; it doesn't linger long after its loveliness plays out. And it really is lovely. She finds comfort in "Aretha" – the Queen – when nobody else gets her, and the song is another ear-melting pleasure. "Thankful" is life-affirming, "Am I Forgiven?" strikes up a summery sweetness and "Come to Me High" moves you into a magical trance. That timeless quality extends to the end with a heartfelt cover of "Goodbye Girl." But for Rumer, this isn't the end. It's the beginning of something big. *Grade: B*

Also Out



Darren Hayes, 'Secret Codes and Battleships'

It doesn't take any code-cracking to figure out that half of defunct

duo Savage Garden is truly, madly and deeply brokenhearted. Hayes, the gay one, paints his unabashed pop with wallowing sentiments of pain and loss post-breakup, but with minimal SG schmaltz. The beats boom, the synths rave and his soaring melisma is as glorious as ever. "Black Out the Sun," then, is a triple threat, honing his hookiest song in years. Empty and lonely, he's painfully straightforward: "Love doesn't want to hang around." You, however, will.



The Little Willies, 'For the Good Times'

Good times? If Norah Jones throwing a punch on "Fist City" is your idea of such fun,

then sure – this is a real romp. Especially compared to Jones' previous output, generally so sleepy it should come with a built-in alarm. With The Little Willies, a country fivesome who also play for the blues and jazz team, there are moments of musical comatose on their second covers disc. "Remember Me" is Jones to the core, but "I Worship You" unearths a toe-tappin' hoedown and her take of "Jolene" does Dolly proud.

Reach Chris Azzopardi at chris@pridesource.com.



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'Bright Room' engages the mind, but not the heart

BY JENN MCKEE

If nothing else, Tony Kushner's "A Bright Room Called Day," now playing at the Ringwald Theatre, re-affirms how foolhardy it is to engage in hypothetical discussions about how you would respond when faced with a difficult, life-threatening set of circumstances.

Say, for instance, you were living in Berlin in 1932. Knowing what we know now, it's all too easy to presume that you'd be part of, or at least help those in, the resistance. But in "Bright Room," middle-aged Weimar movie actress Agnes Egging (Jamie Warrow), while intellectually aligned with the Communists, never manages to commit to the party, and yet also harshly judges those who flee the country out of fear.

But before Agnes and her friends are forced to make this choice, they gather regularly at her apartment in a kind of salon, including her live-in lover, a Hungarian filmmaker named Husz (Jon Ager); opium-addicted film actress Paulinka (Christa Coulter); homosexual psychologist Baz (Richard Payton); and Communist artist Annabella Gotchling (Melissa Beckwith). As Hitler quickly amasses power, and suspicion and fear take hold, each member of this salon must make a choice, and Agnes is mysteriously haunted late at night by the hungry ghost of an old woman (Connie Cowper).

Meanwhile, a contemporary Long Islander, Zillah Katz (Lisa Melinn), fed up with the policies and attitudes of the Reagan/Bush era, goes abroad seeking out ghosts, and lands in Agnes' former apartment.

If this last link sounds a little forced and unnecessary – well, you're right. For while it's compelling to see one of Kushner's early, pre-"Angels in America" works – which, not surprisingly, shares many things in common with the playwright's masterpiece – Kushner

REVIEW

A Bright Room Called Day

The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Saturday-Monday through Jan. 30. \$10-\$20. 248-545-5545.

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Jamie Warrow and Rob Pantano in Tony Kushner's "A Bright Room Called Day" at Ferndale's Ringwald Theatre. Photo: Colleen Scribner.

fails to make his trademark elements work together all that affectingly in "Bright Room."

Yes, being a Kushner play, there is impassioned, intellectually rigorous philosophical discussion among the characters; there are ghosts that collapse time while also demonstrating how history repeats itself; and the collision of the political and the personal forces characters to make tough, life-altering choices. And by the time Kushner wrote "Angels," he was capable of marshaling these forces into an epic piece of theater that engaged the heart as well as the mind; but with "Bright Room," the heart remains largely untouched.

This is not for lack of effort or talent on the Ringwald stage. Warrow is the fulcrum of the show, appearing in nearly every scene, and she skillfully elicits sympathy for Agnes' painful predicament. Perhaps my favorite performances on opening night, however, were those of Coulter and Payton – supporting players who provided some much-appreciated spice and spark whenever they appeared on stage.

Warrow designed Agnes' spare-but-functional apartment on the Ringwald's stage; Vince Kelley's wonderful Weimar era costumes place us more viscerally in the play's historical time; and Joe Plambeck's lighting – particularly when suggesting that the Reichstag fire is happening outside Agnes' windows – adds another subtle, but important,

layer to the production.

As much as possible, director Joe Bailey keeps the two and a half hour production moving (including quick scene changes) while never sacrificing clarity, and the show, as a whole, looks and feels polished. My main quibble with the direction concerned the staging of the play's most heated exchanges – moments when the tone seemed self-consciously overwrought.

Kushner had based "Bright Room" on Bertolt Brecht's "The Private Life of the Master Race," and Brecht's influence is on display by way of "Bright Room"'s illusion-shattering projections, which act as connecting tissue between scenes and provide the audience with contextual information for the next scene; and by way of its apparent intention to undercut the audience's emotional involvement in the story, thus leaving the audience, in theory, more tightly focused on the political and ethical questions raised by the play.

But – in my humble opinion, anyway – important arguments that are conveyed within the context of a play have more impact when you care about the people making them.

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1515 Broadway, a unique and popular institution in downtown Detroit, might soon shut its doors – not because its popularity has waned, but because of an unfortunate situation many Metro Detroiters are facing today.

For 25 years, 1515 has operated as a multi-use, flexible black box theater to facilitate expression among diverse Detroiters. It's a theater, cafe, studio, coffee house, sound stage, bodega and meeting hall. It's a salon where Detroiters can come to interact in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. From 1987 with "Demolish by Neglect" to the recent "Occupy Movement," 1515 Broadway has opened its doors to community activists to meet and gather.

1515 Broadway has also been the residence of Chris Jaszczak since 1987 (and now his son resides there too). Chris, as owner and proprietor of 1515, has used his personal funds to keep this community space alive and functioning.

However, in the years 2008-2010, Chris, like many Michiganders,

encountered financial hardship. He reached out to numerous local economic loan and development entities for assistance to no avail. 1515 Broadway was placed in foreclosure.

Jaszczak's income has recovered. He has made a reasonable offer to Citi Bank to pay down the arrearages if they would restore his mortgage at a standard interest rate. But Citi, a bank that has received tens of billions of dollars in federal taxpayer bailouts on express condition that they aid borrowers, would rather destroy a community institution than deal equitably with Chris. 1515 Broadway is now facing an imminent eviction.

A rally has been planned for Thursday, Jan. 26 at 6 p.m. at 1515 Broadway to help keep this wonderful community center open. All are invited to attend.

"Chris has been a major force in the community – not only for his contributions to numerous theater groups and performers who have him to thank for giving them their first home to perform in, but also for the development that's

taken place in 1515's neighborhood," said Donald V. Calamia, editorial director of EncoreMichigan.com and a longtime visitor to the downtown venue. "When most people were abandoning downtown Detroit, Chris made a major commitment to it – and the result can be seen by anyone who visits the Michigan Opera Theatre, the Boll Family YMCA, Small Plates and the Detroit Beer Company. Once can only wonder what that neighborhood would look like today if Chris hadn't moved in – or how many of the theater groups that got their starts there would be around today? One person can make a difference – and Chris is living proof of that."

"I hope anyone who has ever benefited from Chris Jaszczak's hard work and dedication will come together to help save one of the industry's best-known institutions," Calamia said. "Now it's our turn to show Chris just how important he's been to us and to the city he loves."

For more information about the rally, call 313-744-7912 or e-mail bonnieabh@aol.com.

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Horoscopes

Rise to the occasion, Taurus!

BY JACK FERTIG

Still in Capricorn, Sun squares Saturn, which can feel limiting; turn that "limit" into focusing on goals. Entering Aquarius on the 20th Sun squares Jupiter in Taurus offering brilliant opportunities. Some are good, but be skeptical. If it looks too good to be true it is.

ARIES (March 20 – April 19): New friends could tempt you to do things you'd never expect. That could get expensive. Be careful of your wallet, but otherwise be open to adventure. Opening your mind to new possibilities can lead to financial opportunities.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20): Mirror, Mirror on the wall/Vanity leads to a fall. You've nothing to prove. Those who don't love you as you are don't really matter. Those who do may seem demanding, but rise to the occasion. The challenge will make you stronger.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20): Some things are better left unsaid or talked around rather than directly addressed. Much as you prefer full frontal frankness, stop and think a bit about what the best strategy really is. However apt, sexual analogies can be more disruptive than helpful.

CANCER (June 21- July 22): Re-affirm (or take a late start on) any New Year's resolutions about quitting a habit or losing weight. To prioritize and simplify your relationships make three lists: important professional contacts; friends you really care about; the few you'd take on a long retreat.

LEO (July 23 – August 22): Harsh words with colleagues will come back to haunt you. Putting what needs to be said nicely or handling blowback effectively can be a huge boost to your career. Accept an invitation to something you'd normally never do.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22): Your first ideas are likely to be extravagant and wasteful, but don't let disillusionment stop you. Accept scarcity as a challenge to your creativity. At least you'll never run out of ideas.

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22): A beautifying regimen could cause your baby to wonder who you're prettying-

up for, or it could arouse envy among the other singles on the make. Focus on your health and your natural beauty will shine.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21): A break from your past might seem liberating, but remember a tree stands tallest when it has strong roots. You need to criticize and innovate, but build on your past. Even negative examples and painful lessons serve a purpose.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20): If you really want to do something nice for your darling, housework is always appreciated. Showing off will just mess it up. Just do with humility whatever's needed. The less you draw attention, the more it will be appreciated.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19): It's too easy to feel beat down thinking of where your hard work has not gotten you. Focus instead on what you have accomplished despite tough times. That can lead you to better strategies and more effective use of your resources.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18): Some quiet down time can do you good, but you'll soon come out swinging. Starting or joining a provocative family discussion can be very educational; go ahead, stir it up! Bruised feelings will quickly heal.

PISCES (February 19 – March 19): You could be a big hit at a dungeon party. Hitter or hittee? That's up to you. Personal insights are better explored with a friend you can really trust. You may uncover inner resources you'd never dreamed of.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available for personal and business consultations in person in San Francisco, or online everywhere. He can be reached at 415-864-8302, through his website at www.starjack.com, and by email at QScopes@qsyndicate.com.

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Solution to puzzle from page 24

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63					64				65		

- Across**
- 1 Pre-kiss insert
 - 5 Like the Indy 500?
 - 9 "Exotica" director Egoyan
 - 13 Unwelcome obligation
 - 14 "Showboat"'s "Nobody ___ But Me"
 - 15 "___ Hai" of "South Pacific"
 - 16 Start of a quip
 - 19 "Peter Pan" penner
 - 20 Hangouts for Natalie Barney
 - 21 Like the top of the world
 - 24 More of the quip
 - 32 Rub the wrong way
 - 33 One of Martina's serves
 - 34 Branding tool
 - 35 "Spartacus" or "Ben-Hur"
 - 36 Go down on a hill
 - 37 What you do to loins
 - 38 GI mail drop
 - 39 Harper and Trueheart
 - 41 Sign of a Broadway hit
 - 42 More of the quip
 - 44 More of the quip
 - 46 Co-creator of "Spamalot"
 - 51 End of the quip
 - 57 Alternatives to asses

- 58 Place for Proust
 - 59 Bugs Bunny's Broadway musical?
 - 60 Italian well
 - 61 Gaza Stripper, e.g.
 - 62 "East of Eden" director Kazan
 - 63 Something the nose knows
 - 64 Lesbian couple with children
 - 65 Vibrator in a mouthpiece
- Down**
- 1 Honey holder
 - 2 "Lord of the Rings" singer
 - 3 German industrial valley
 - 4 Peter the Great, for one
 - 5 Like a doctor's patients
 - 6 Jarreau and Jolson
 - 7 CBS show in which semen may be evidence
 - 8 "You bet!"
 - 9 His brother laid him in his grave
 - 10 Starch source
 - 11 "Brothers & Sisters" producer Ken
 - 12 Piggy's title
 - 17 Neeson of "Kinsey"
 - 18 South-of-the-border order

- 22 Above-average grade
- 23 Hoods
- 24 'Hoods
- 25 "Fantasia" ballerina
- 26 George, who was Mary Ann
- 27 Camcorder abbr.
- 28 Understand, Ginsberg
- 29 Like Emma Donoghue
- 30 Joe of baseball
- 31 Biblical witch's home
- 39 Hatcher of "Desperate Housewives"
- 40 Like sex for one
- 43 Bunny's boss
- 45 Restraining rope
- 47 Religion of Allah
- 48 Where "Aida" premiered
- 49 Erection supporter
- 50 Defeats decisively
- 51 Judy Garland concert persona
- 52 Took a bough?
- 53 Jay of TV
- 54 In the pink
- 55 Buffalo's lake
- 56 Enjoy Capote

Solution on page 23

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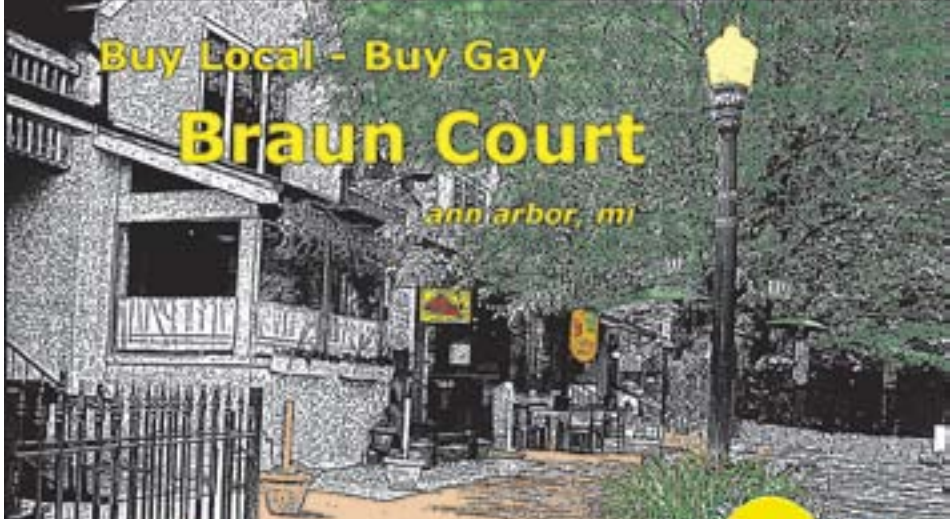
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Deep Inside Hollywood



Amanda Seyfried. Photo: Myles Aronowitz

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Linda Lovelace gets her men

It takes a village to tell the story of '70s porn sensation Linda "Lovelace" Boreman, and acclaimed filmmaking team Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman, the guys behind "The Celluloid Closet" and the James Franco-starring "Howl," are quickly putting the finishing touches on the cast list for their upcoming biopic, "Lovelace." The project already has its lead in Amanda Seyfried as the world's first erotic superstar and her troubled rise to fame in the crossover porn hit "Deep Throat." And Peter Sarsgaard, Sharon Stone, Wes Bentley and Juno Temple have also

signed on. But now comes a wave of men to flesh out the roster, including Hank Azaria, Bobby Cannavale, Chris Noth and Robert Patrick as members of the porn world, so all systems are go. Lava lamp mood lighting is set and the cameras are rolling right. More more more to follow.

Viola Davis helps Dee 'Pariah' Rees

Currently in theaters and generating a lot of critical praise is Dee Rees's debut feature, "Pariah." Featuring rising star Adepero Oduye, it's the moving story of a teenage lesbian struggling to bridge her family life with the one

she secretly shares with a group of new lesbian friends. This kind of worthwhile debut often generates Hollywood interest and Rees's next project will probably raise her profile even more. Viola Davis, herself receiving Oscar buzz for her role in last summer's "The Help," is in talks to work with Rees on an HBO series she'll produce and probably star in through her own newly formed production company. The untitled project will focus on the morally ambiguous headmaster of a private school and the corruption that follows her. Sounds intriguing and, best of all, a great step for both Davis – who, up until "The Help," was often the best minor character in mediocre films – and for Rees. May the resulting series, whatever it becomes, catapult them both to even greater success.

Zachary Quinto: Mogul

Branching out from acting and turning producer might not possess the same cool-factor as, say, investing in a hot new restaurant or joining an indie band, but it keeps you busy and ratchets up your power quotient in Hollywood. That's why it's good news to see Zachary Quinto cashing in on his newfound industry mojo by helping J.C. Chandor, director of last year's Wall Street meltdown drama "Margin Call" (in which Quinto co-starred), get his next project off the ground. Titled "All Is Lost," it's an environmental-themed drama written by Chandor with one actor in mind, Robert Redford. The director is currently in talks with the 75-year-old film legend to take the lead role and given Redford's well-documented environmental activism over

the course of his life, it seems like a perfect fit. It'll also probably wind up having a negative carbon footprint.

Queer now, what next?

The multiplex is extra gay at the moment as a trio of high profile actors – Glenn Close, Rooney Mara and Michael Fassbender – are busy captivating audiences in the films "Albert Nobbs" (where Close plays a transsexual man), "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" (with Mara as a tough, brilliant bisexual computer hacker) and "Shame" (starring Fassbender as a bisexual sex addict). Coming off these acclaimed roles, look for the legendary Close next in the ghostly drama "Therese Raquin," alongside "Martha Marcy May Marlene" star Elizabeth Olsen. Meanwhile, Next Big Thing Fassbender will make his third film with British art-film sensation Steve McQueen (he also directed "Shame") and co-star with Brad Pitt in "Twelve Years a Slave," a period film about a man (Chiwetel Ejiofor) kidnapped in the northern United States and sold into slavery in the south. Finally, Mara, whose transformation into cult heroine Lisbeth Salander was so chameleon-like as to render the actress unrecognizable, will appear in "Tree of Life" director Terence Malick's latest film, "Lawless," with Ryan Gosling. In other words, don't worry about any careers around these parts.

Romeo San Vicente is generally law-abiding, depending on which state he's visiting. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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