

MICHIGAN'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993



# Transforming Minds with Photos of Transgender Trailblazers

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

## Brief Summary of Patient Information about ODEFSEY

**ODEFSEY (oh-DEF-see) (emtricitabine, rilpivirine and tenofovir alafenamide) tablets**

**Important: Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with ODEFSEY.**

There may be new information about ODEFSEY. This information is only a summary and does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

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

**ODEFSEY can cause serious side effects, including:**

- **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis may happen in some people who take ODEFSEY or similar 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
- **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems may happen in people who take ODEFSEY. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large and you may develop fat in your liver. **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
  - nausea
  - pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking ODEFSEY or a similar medicine for a long time.**
- **Worsening of Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection.** ODEFSEY is not approved to treat HBV. If you have HBV and take ODEFSEY, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking ODEFSEY. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.
  - Do not run out of ODEFSEY. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your ODEFSEY is all gone.
  - Do not stop taking ODEFSEY without first talking to your healthcare provider.
  - If you stop taking ODEFSEY, 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 ODEFSEY.

### What is ODEFSEY?

**ODEFSEY is a prescription medicine** that is used to treat HIV-1 in people 12 years of age and older:

- who have not received HIV-1 medicines in the past and have an amount of HIV-1 in their blood (“viral load”) that is no more than 100,000 copies/mL, **or**
- to replace their current HIV-1 medicines in people who have been on the same HIV-1 medicines for at least 6 months, have a viral load that is less than 50 copies/mL, and have never failed past HIV-1 treatment.

It is not known if ODEFSEY is safe and effective in children under 12 years of age or who weigh less than 77 lb (35 kg).

**When used to treat HIV-1 infection, ODEFSEY may help:**

- Reduce the amount of HIV-1 in your blood. This is called “viral load”.
- Increase the number of CD4+ (T) cells in your blood that help fight off other infections.

Reducing the amount of HIV-1 and increasing the CD4+ (T) cells in your blood may help improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or getting infections that can happen when your immune system is weak (opportunistic infections).

**ODEFSEY does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.** You must keep taking HIV-1 medicines 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 re-use 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.

### Who should not take ODEFSEY?

**Do not take ODEFSEY if you also take a medicine that contains:**

- carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®, Tegretol-XR®, Teril®)
- dexamethasone (Ozurdex®, Maxidex®, Decadron®, Baycadron™)
- dextansoprazole (Dexilant®)
- esomeprazole (Nexium®, Vimovo®)
- lansoprazole (Prevacid®)
- omeprazole (Prilosec®, Zegerid®)
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®)
- pantoprazole sodium (Protonix®)
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Dilantin-125®, Phenytek®)
- rabeprazole (Aciphex®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- rifapentine (Priftin®)
- the herb St. John’s wort or a product that contains St. John’s wort

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

**Before taking ODEFSEY, tell your healthcare provider if you:**

- have liver problems including hepatitis B or C virus infection
- have kidney and bone problems
- have had depression or suicidal thoughts
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ODEFSEY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking ODEFSEY.



**Pregnancy registry:** there is a pregnancy registry for women who take HIV-1 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.

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take ODEFSEY.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - At least one of the medicines in ODEFSEY can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in ODEFSEY 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.

Some medicines may interact with ODEFSEY. **Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.**

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with ODEFSEY.
- Do not start a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take ODEFSEY with other medicines.

### How should I take ODEFSEY?

- Take ODEFSEY exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it. ODEFSEY is taken by itself (not with other HIV-1 medicines) to treat HIV-1 infection.
- Take ODEFSEY 1 time each day with a meal.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking ODEFSEY without first talking with your healthcare provider. Stay under a healthcare provider's care when taking ODEFSEY.
- Do not miss a dose of ODEFSEY.
- If you take too much ODEFSEY, call your healthcare provider or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.
- When your ODEFSEY supply starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to ODEFSEY and become harder to treat.

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

ODEFSEY may cause serious side effects, including:

- See **"What is the most important information I should know about ODEFSEY?"**
- **Severe skin rash and allergic reactions.** Skin rash is a common side effect of ODEFSEY. Rash can be serious. Call your healthcare provider right away if you get a rash. In some cases, rash and allergic reaction may need to be treated in a hospital. **If you get a rash with any of the following symptoms, stop taking ODEFSEY and call your healthcare provider right away:**
  - fever
  - skin blisters
  - mouth sores
  - redness or swelling of the eyes (conjunctivitis)
  - swelling of the face, lips, mouth or throat
  - trouble breathing or swallowing
  - pain on the right side of the stomach (abdominal) area
  - dark "tea-colored" urine

- **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - feel sad or hopeless
  - feel anxious or restless
  - have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself
- **Change in liver enzymes.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus infection or who have certain liver enzyme changes may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening liver problems during treatment with ODEFSEY. Liver problems can also happen during treatment with ODEFSEY in people without a history of liver disease. Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with ODEFSEY.
- **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.
- **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 ODEFSEY. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking ODEFSEY if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take ODEFSEY. Bone problems may include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.

**The most common side effects of rilpivirine**, one of the medicines in ODEFSEY, are depression, trouble sleeping (insomnia), and headache.

**The most common side effect of emtricitabine and tenofovir alafenamide**, two of the medicines in ODEFSEY, is nausea.

**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 ODEFSEY. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about ODEFSEY. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about ODEFSEY that is written for health professionals.

For more information, call **1-800-445-3235** or go to **www.ODEFSEY.com**.

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

Issued: March 2016

**Odefsey**  
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## CREEP OF THE WEEK



**NC Lt. Gov  
Dan Forest**

So, according to Forest, even though the heart of the bill is to keep trans people out of public restrooms, a place that is already a focal point of discrimination and harassment against gender non-conformance, HB2 doesn't discriminate against anybody.

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## IN THE NEWS



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## HEAR ME OUT



## Reviewed: Gwen Stefani, Bonnie Raitt

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## ONLINE RESOURCES



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## THEATER



## Scaring Up Laughs at The Ringwald

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## NEWS

### LGBT Bookstore in Ann Arbor to Hold Fundraiser

Common Language Bookstore, one of the last remaining LGBT and feminist-identified bookstores in both the United States and Canada, is hosting a fundraiser billed as “The Last Bookstore Standing.” The reception and silent auction will run from 5:30-7 p.m. Thursday, April 14 at the store.

Keith Orr, co-owner of the store, says, “Our good friend Susan Horowitz at Between The Lines likes to point out that there is the for-profit world, the nonprofit world and the unprofitable world. Bookstores have belonged to that last category for a while now. And for some reason, LGBT and feminist bookstores have been hit particularly hard. There are 13 feminist-identified bookstores and about 10 LGBT-identified bookstores left in the U.S. and Canada. A few of them – like ourselves – carry both identities, so between the two there are only about 18 left altogether.

“We have held two ‘Last Bookstore Standing’ fundraisers in the past. They have helped us make it this far. In fact, things had been looking up a little bit. We haven’t held one in two years. While we limp along, we are unable to make any investments which will help us survive into the future. We are dedicating this edition of our fundraiser to improving our technology infrastructure.”

The funds raised will go specifically towards:

- A new computer (the store’s computer was last replaced when the owners moved into the current space in January 2005)
- New/upgraded point-of-sale software
- Website development (the current website

has a front-end designed on software from 2003)

Orr notes, “While it (the website) is dated, much worse is the backend with an ancient shopping cart system. Not only does it look dated, its functionality is limiting us. With the other upgrades in place we will be able to plug-in to a back-end designed for independent booksellers which will allow us to sell nearly any book online, as well as many e-books.”

A big part of the event will be the Literary Silent Auction. Orr and co-owner and husband, Martin Contreras, have contacted many authors who have some sort of connection to the bookstore to be included in the items (and concepts) up for auction. Current items include theater tickets from local author and actor Roy Sexton; three character names to auction from Greg Herren and Jessie Chandler; some editing from David Pratt; and of course, books.

“Authors believe in the value of independent bookstores in general,” says Orr, “and Common Language in particular. They have stepped forward and donated in a big way. We are so grateful. Now you can help us prepare for a long and sustainable future. Please consider attending. If you can’t attend, consider buying a ticket in absentia.”

*Tickets for the event are \$35; the event will include cocktails, hors d’oeuvres and more. Tickets may be purchased at Common Language or online at <http://gaybe.am/lbs>. Common Language Bookstore is located at 317 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 734-663-0036.*

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### Lesbian Couple Sentenced to 20 Years in Kuwait Prison Released Following Appeal

**KUWAIT** – Monique Coverson and Larissa Joseph, the lesbian couple who were detained and sentenced to 20-25 years to be served in a Kuwait prison, were released April 4.

According to a post dated April 4 on Change.org by Jasmine Coverson, the sister of Monique, Monique and Larissa will be released today following a March 28 ruling in the Kuwait appeals court.

“I cannot say thank you enough for the prayers, the well wishes, and for all who stood standing against all odds for both of our girls. My family thanks you so much for every part that everyone played in this situation, thank you!” Jasmine writes.

Monique, a former Detroit and Army veteran, was stationed in Kuwait during her service. She and Larissa later returned to Kuwait to work as military contractors.

On May 8 last year, shortly before they were scheduled to return to the states, their



home was raided by Kuwaiti authorities who allegedly found the couple to be in possession of an ounce of a tobacco-like substance, later found to be K2, a form of synthetic marijuana. Charges escalated and by the time they were tried in January 2016, the couple was found to be in possession of a pound of hash and were sentenced to 20-25 years in prison.



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## State Senator Wants to Ban Trans Students From Using Bathrooms of Their Choice

BY AJ TRAGER

**LANSING** – A Republican lawmaker from the Upper Peninsula wants to ban trans students from using bathrooms in accordance with their gender.

State Sen. Tom Casperson says once the Michigan Legislature reconvenes in mid-April he will introduce a bill requiring Michigan students to “only use bathrooms and locker rooms matching their birth” sex, unless they have “written consent from a parent or guardian.”

The proposed bill comes as a response to the Michigan Department of Education’s Draft Guidance document, “Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Students,” which seeks to provide Michigan schools with completely optional suggestions to support LGBT youth in schools. The MDE is currently seeking public comment on the proposed optional guidance at [www.everyvoicecountsmi.org](http://www.everyvoicecountsmi.org).

“We are disappointed that state Sen. Casperson is introducing or planning to introduce a bill that has already failed in state after state. The reality is that there are LGBT students in our schools and under federal law they have the right to attend those schools free of bullying and harassment,” said Deputy Director at Equality Michigan L. Michael Gipson. “The Michigan Department of Education is responding to requests from schools that are struggling to make sure that they are adhering to federal law. These are schools that are trying to do the right thing and address the rights of LGBT students and ensure that they have a safe and supportive educational environment.”

The completely optional guidance outlines recommendations for schools to adopt affirming LGBT policies that will protect LGBT youth from harassment, call for students to be addressed by their chosen name and pronouns that correspond with their gender, provide support for the formation of gay-straight alliances in middle and high schools, and prohibit students from being forced to use locker and bathrooms incompatible with their gender identity.

“It is hard to believe that a state board, which is clearly out of touch with Michigan residents, got assistance from equally out of touch unelected bureaucrats to develop such a document to fundamentally change Michigan’s public education system without

See Trans Students, next page

# Volunteering on The National Trans Lifeline

BY AJ TRAGER

*Descriptions of suicide could be offensive or disturbing to some readers.*

**YPSILANTI** – Kevin Werner, 35, has been an LGBT activist and advocate for 20 years, working with gay-straight alliances, Affirmations, Jewish Gay Network, Transgender Michigan, the Equality Research Center at Eastern Michigan University and now the National Trans Lifeline.

Werner was raised in a half-Jewish, half-Christian household in West Bloomfield and has one younger brother. His journey started in high school where he came out as gay, but later, after attending college for awhile, Werner realized that he was trans and needed to transition to living authentically as himself.

He says he isn’t the usual case of a person who is transgender. He has never once had to worry about being disowned by his family, or being denied access to healthcare and transition-related care. And he was fortunate to work for a company that covered his surgery.

“After I finished my transition in 2005, I started thinking that I wanted to help the trans community. I wanted to do what I can,” Werner told BTL. “I call myself Transpa, like a trans grandpa. I’ve helped several people in my personal life be able to transition. I’ve helped a family friend realize that she was first gay, and then she came out as trans. I helped two ex-girlfriends be able to transition as well. But I wanted to do more. I don’t want to necessarily say because of privilege guilt, but I figure I have the privilege to be able to be comfortable with myself, be able to speak openly and honestly with people, and listen to people to understand where they’re coming from. I’m able to help someone be able to come out or access care – (help them) figure out where they identify and if they need to transition.”

Werner was looking for ways he could help the trans community. He volunteered for the Jim Toy Community Center for awhile but decided to pursue another route and started volunteering on the National Trans Lifeline, working a few hours a week.

The National Trans Lifeline has been providing services since November 2014 and has well over 100 people answering calls across the country. Werner was ready to begin answering calls after attending an online training session in September provided by the National Trans Lifeline staff; he also met with people in Chicago who are roommates with



Volunteer Kevin Werner.

the co-creators of the Lifeline.

Werner enjoys the semi-anonymous nature of the Lifeline and recognizes that the Lifeline provides a lot of people with a service that is greatly needed for the trans community.

“I love it. There are some challenging calls. In the trans community there are more issues with mental illness than the heterosexual community, and many calls are if someone feels trapped and helpless and doesn’t have access to change. There’s a never ending circle of helplessness if someone doesn’t pass and tries to be seen as something that they know they are and feel they are, but everyone else sees them as something they’re not,” Werner said.

He takes into consideration his vocal tone and phrasing when answering calls. If the caller is a trans woman, Werner will raise his voice a little higher because he wants to make them feel comfortable and knows that a masculine voice can be seen as threatening. His history of theater and performance has helped him with voice alteration and articulation which he uses to make the caller feel more at ease.

On an average week, Werner will put in a minimum of two, possibly three hours of volunteer time. In a typical hour he’ll receive anywhere from one to four calls. All types of calls come into the Lifeline, Werner said. The topics that he covers range from transitioning and coming out to the more intense issues like self-harming and suicide. Some people are looking for resources in the area. Some people are looking to talk and

process what’s happening in their life. But some callers are at the end point in their life, having just swallowed a bottle of pills and wanting company.

“I’ve done support groups before, I’ve been a peer mentor at Affirmations and I’ve done speaking panels for the past 20 years. I can get resources. But talking to someone who is ending their life or thinking about it, those are the hardest calls. And you need to be in a good mental spot for those calls,” Werner said.

National Trans Lifeline policy states that operators are not permitted to intervene because that would be interfering with the caller’s process and could be stepping over the lines, even if its well intended, Werner told BTL. There’s also no way to guarantee what is happening from a remote phone call. Operators are trained to encourage the caller to hang up and dial 911, but sometimes people don’t want to hear even that. But even so, Werner’s heart breaks.

It’s at that point that Werner will stop and take a break.

“If I get one of those calls, no matter when that is, I’ll take myself off of trans lifeline. I need time to readjust and say, ‘I did everything I could, I did what I know how to do, I handled it the best I could,’” Werner said.

## Trans Visibility

Werner’s favorite trans celebrity is Laverne Cox and would like to see more famous trans people be role models for the trans community to follow. He believes visibility is paramount.

“To have a powerful, beautiful, intelligent trans woman of color, who plays a trans woman of color on a TV show that is getting rave reviews, is a sign of progress. That gives other trans women, in lesser positions of privilege, the ability to say, ‘If she can do it, so can I.’ Even if they don’t know her backstory, they see her face, know her name, know she’s openly trans and not ashamed of it and that hopefully will help so many people,” he said.

Werner has a very Harvey Milk philosophy and believes that if everyone were to come out, homophobia and transphobia wouldn’t exist. But of course, he recognizes that it isn’t safe for everyone to do so.

“I encourage people on the trans helpline: if the are in a position to come out, they should come out,” he said. “Not only because of the representation but also for mental health. If you don’t come out, you cannot transition. And coming out helps so many people have mental health improvements.”



## ► Trans Students

Continued from p. 10

the public's prior knowledge or consent," said Casperson in a March 29 release. "In the pursuit of social justice, this so-called draft guidance document creates numerous problems, from the elimination of parental authority and notification to threatening student safety and beyond. My bill would stop this policy dead in its tracks."

Casperson's bill has yet to be drafted but the proposed legislation would not permit trans students to use restrooms or locker rooms in accordance with their gender if the facilities are in use and would force trans students to use a staff bathroom or a single-occupancy restroom.

"The goal here is that the students feel affirmed and safe in schools, without the distractions. There's no distraction in calling a student what it is they want to be called and identifying as, so that they can go about the business of learning. But what we do know is that if you're targeting them with specific bathrooms or invading their privacy in doing gender checks, we know that is a distraction and in fact leads to youth dropping out of schools," Gipson told BTL.

ACLU of Michigan LGBT special projects attorney Jay Kaplan says that the legislation is unconstitutional and told MLive that, if passed, the state would potentially face a lawsuit by the ACLU.

"I think it's a mean-spirited, misguided piece of legislation, and it's clearly in violation of the law," says Kaplan. "This kind of legislation, it's built on lies that have been peddled by opponents of LGBT rights – that somehow transgender students engage in predatory behavior, and that somehow transgender students, just by their very being, are a threat to the public safety."

BTL left a message with Casperson's secretary but at press time had not received a call back.

## Online Public Comment to MDE Guidance Alarming

Some of the comments are positive, but a quick survey of the [www.everyvoicecountsmi.org](http://www.everyvoicecountsmi.org) page shows that an overwhelming number of Michigan citizens oppose the MDE guidance despite the benefits that can be obtained from affirming the lives of Michigan's youth. The MDE has extended open public comment until May 11. At press time nearly 6,500 comments had been submitted.

"By permitting all students to determine which sexual orientation they identify without intentional parental knowledge places their authority above their parents. Specifically permitting girls and boys to use each other's bathrooms 'at will' sets the stage for pervert actions galore," Peter VanderWel, a former teacher, wrote April 4.

“*This is an absolute waste of taxpayers' monies. Children need to be parented and not left to decide what sex they want to be. Schools have no business assisting the child in their confusion.*”

"I am horrified at the thought of this. My daughter goes to a huge public school and I will not stand for her to be placed in a situation whereby she goes into a restroom to change her tampon and there is a 'boy' who decides that he wants to be called a girl because he is confused, and he is in there using the same restroom. Single restrooms are fine in those situations, and I don't want my child to have to be 'forced' to deal with someone whose parents are letting him decide (who) he wants to be. This is an absolute waste of taxpayers' monies. Children need to be parented and not left to decide what sex they want to be. Schools have no business assisting the child in their confusion. I will not teach tolerance of this to my child. If forced in this situation, I will pull her out of the public schools as I cannot accept that this philosophy be shoved down her throat. She plays women's lacrosse and I expect only those with a true vagina will (be) allowed to be on her team, NOT someone who wishes that they had one. Utterly ridiculousness. Stay out of the gender conforming business and stick to teach(ing) reading, writing and arithmetic," Diana Barman, a parent, wrote April 4.

"1. You are opening the door for rapes to occur. Who will be in these restrooms, locker rooms, to police what is going on? Rapes happen at all ages, and by all ages. 2. When or if a rape happens, their (sic) will be law suits. 3. It will tell a child, it is ok to go behind your families back. Sneak, its (sic) OK. 4. Doing this will make a lot of people either home school their children or virtual school them. 5. You are putting so much responsibility on teachers, they have enough to do. 6. Also there is the out side activities to be addressed, who will police the sports bathrooms etc. NO this is wrong, they need their own bathrooms and locker rooms, and teachers need to not worry who is called what today," Peggy a mother, grandmother and preschool teacher wrote April 4.

"Let me make this very clear. If I find out my school has let some transgender sick bastard in the dressing room of my daughter people will lose their lives. I am done tolerating the twisted sick people of Obummer nation and now you want to violate my child too? Hell no...death will follow I promise you that," Brian said on March 31



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## Leading Experts To Answer Key Questions, Share Protocol on Trans Youth Healthcare

WEST BLOOMFIELD – Temple Israel, a Reform Jewish synagogue founded in 1941, will open its doors April 14 for a panel discussion on medical and mental health care for trans and gender nonconforming teens.

University of Michigan healthcare specialists from the Gender Management Clinic, Dr. Daniel Shumer, pediatric endocrinologist, and Sara Wiener, LMSW, will discuss gender and answer key questions about trans youth health care including hormone therapy, how to determine if a youth should transition and what kinds of therapy are available. Trans youth, young adults, their families, educators, school social workers, therapists and allies are encouraged to attend.

Wiener is a social worker at the U of M Health System who specializes in the assessment of gender dysphoria in youth and adolescents and serves as administrative manager of the Comprehensive Gender Services. She recently returned to her home state of Michigan after a decade in western Massachusetts where she provided psychotherapy to trans and gender expansive youth and their families and co-lead a pediatric gender clinic.

“Working with trans and gender expansive young people is a great. By helping young people affirm their gender identity, I’m able to play a small role in making our community a healthier, more supportive environment for all people, and that is very meaningful to me. On a daily basis, I am amazed and heartened by the strength and resilience of trans young people and their families,” Wiener said.

According to transstudent.org, only 15 percent of trans youth without parental support described their mental health as very good or excellent, compared to 70 percent of trans youth with parental support.

“Being a teenager is hard. Add concerns about gender identity, and adolescence can be extremely challenging. I have so much respect for transgender and gender non-conforming young people and their families. They inspire me every day. I feel blessed to be able to work with them, and learn from them, as a pediatrician,” Shumer said.

Shumer became interested in working with trans youth while he was a fellow in pediatric endocrinology at Boston Children’s Hospital. While training, he was mentored by Dr. Norman Spack, founder of Boston Children’s Hospital’s Gender Management Services, the first clinic of its kind in North America.

The panel discussion will begin at 7 p.m. at Temple Israel and is free and open to the public. RSVP to Laura Koziol at lkoziol@temple-israel.org. Temple Israel is located at 5725 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield.

# HIV Bias, Discrimination Alleged in Cass County

BY TODD HEYWOOD

Police in Dowagiac, Michigan say they were just investigating a “possible crime,” but advocates call it a “witch hunt” and a “fishing expedition.” The crime cops say they were investigating whether or not 29-year-old Corey Rangel failed to disclose his HIV-positive status to his sexual partners.

Steven Grinnwald, director of Dowagiac’s Public Safety Department, said his department was contacted on March 18 by officials from the probation program that Rangel was enrolled in asking them to conduct an investigation as to whether Rangel had disclosed his HIV status or not. The basis for the investigation? Sexually explicit photos and texts of Rangel and his partners.

“It’s the possibility of a crime we were looking into,” said Grinnwald. “It could have been a crime. We have investigated and we found nothing criminal happened. The criminal case has been closed.”

Rangel said he willingly handed probation officials his cell phone and passwords when they asked for them.

“I had nothing to hide,” he said in a phone interview. He was asked to turn over the phone to probation officials after being cited during a traffic stop for no proof of insurance and failing to wear corrective lenses.

That led to a probation violation and Rangel landed in the Cass County jail.

While lodged in jail awaiting arraignment on the probation violation, a Dowagiac police officer visited.

“He asked me whether or not I was disclosing to my sex partners,” Rangel said. “I told him I was. And he said he was going to contact them and ask them – to see if our stories matched up.”

That’s when things went awry. Rangel said Dowagiac Police Officer Andrew Hafler called contacts on his phone and discussed his sexual relations with them and whether or not Rangel had disclosed his HIV status.

He alleges the investigation resulted in a disclosure of his HIV status in violation of Michigan law.

But Grinnwald rejects that allegation.

“We took every precaution to not disclose an HIV status,” Grinnwald said in a phone interview.

Jay Kaplan, a staff attorney at ACLU Michigan, sent a letter to law enforcement and court officials in Cass County over the case.

“The fact that Mr. Rangel is HIV positive does not give your office, nor the Dowagiac Police Department, the legal authority to share that information with his cell phone contacts, regardless of whether you believe he has been involved sexually with anyone,” Kaplan



“The fact that Mr. Rangel is HIV positive does not give your office, nor the Dowagiac Police Department, the legal authority to share that information with his cell phone contacts.”

– ACLU Staff Attorney Jay Kaplan

wrote to the circuit court, Dowagiac Police and probation officials March 30. “The fact that a person is HIV positive does not create a presumption that they are not informing their sexual partners of their status or putting other people at risk for HIV transmission.”

Grinnwald said he and his department were aware of the Michigan law making it a criminal misdemeanor to disclose someone’s HIV testing information, except under limited situations. He said he was unaware of another part of the Michigan Public Health Code which empowers public health officials to investigate what is called a “Health Threat to Others.” That law gives public health officials broad police powers under civil law that can result in investigations and civil confinement for persons with infectious or contagious diseases.

The knowledge about Michigan’s confidentiality misdemeanor law may not have prevented it from being violated by Dowagiac police, said Kaplan.

“It doesn’t sound like they followed the law,” Kaplan said Monday evening in a phone interview.

Rangel is garnering support from advocates

for those living with HIV, both in the state and nationally.

“It is terrifying for people living with HIV involved in the judicial system to be living under the HIV disclosure law,” said Kelly Doyle, Manager of the Coalition for HIV Health and Safety. That group is spearheading efforts to update Michigan’s HIV-specific criminal law. “As shown in Corey’s case, the judicial system went on a fishing expedition to find a plaintiff to accuse of non-disclosure with no real evidence and no one accusing him of the crime. The HIV stigma and bias that Corey is dealing with in the judicial system in Cass County is a witch hunt and clearly criminalizes those people living with HIV.”

Sean Strub, executive director of Sero Project – a national organization working to repeal and modernize HIV-specific criminal laws – also condemned the situation.

“There is, unfortunately, too often an assumption of guilt when the accused is someone with HIV,” he said in a text message to BTL. “PLHIV are viewed by some – often treated by the criminal justice and public health systems – as an inherently dangerous

See HIV Bias, next page



## West Michigan Trans Activist to be Keynote Speaker at MI NOW 2016

DEARBORN – Mira Krishnan, current board member of Equality Michigan and co-chair for the American Association Committee for Transgender People and Gender Diversity, will deliver the keynote address in an upcoming equality conference.

The 2016 Michigan National Organization for Women Conference will begin at 9 a.m. on April 9. The conference will feature panel discussions with local social justice activists working for greater inclusion, representation and collaboration, as well as skills-based break-out sessions led by local activists. Participants in the conference will gain skills in leadership, messaging, grass-roots organizing and effective social networking that can be applied and implemented into their community.

The conference will recognize the Flint Five as recipients of the MI NOW Award for their work fighting for water justice in Flint.

Krishnan will provide the keynote address. In 2015, aside from her work as board advisor to the American Association of Children's Residential Centers, Krishnan was recognized as one of the Trans100, a list of 100 influential trans Americans. She is a social entrepreneur, feminist activist and board-certified neuropsychologist. Krishnan currently directs the Center for Autism, west Michigan's leading provider of early diagnostic and early intervention services for preschool-aged autistic children, teaching them to talk, listen, learn, play and prepare to chase their dreams. To learn more about Krishnan, visit <http://miracharlotte.com/about>.

Registration for the 2016 MI NOW Conference is open and provides a sliding registration starting at \$30 for low income earners and students. Standard conference price is \$70. To register online, visit [www.michnow.org](http://www.michnow.org).

MI NOW 2016 will be held at the University of Michigan Dearborn's Fairlane Center North located at 19000 Hubbard Drive in Dearborn.

## New Federal Housing Policy Aims to Eliminate Discrimination Against LGBTQ People With A Criminal Record

Washington, DC – On April 4, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released a new federal policy that aims to eliminate housing discrimination against people with a criminal history, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people with a criminal record. The new policy clarifies that using criminal history to justify a negative housing decision, such as the refusal to rent to or renew a lease for someone, or the refusal to sell to or to give someone a mortgage on a new home, may violate the Fair Housing Act (1968).

"HUD just made it significantly easier for people with criminal records to secure housing. Nearly a third of the adult U.S. population has a criminal record, including millions of LGBTQ people, who we know are disproportionately likely to be involved with the criminal legal system," said Meghan Maury, Criminal and Economic Justice Project Director, National LGBTQ Task Force. "A lack of stable housing exacerbates challenges for people who may also struggle with getting jobs, physical and mental healthcare, and other supports based on their criminal record. We look forward to seeing how providers change their standards to comply with this clarifying guidance."

The new guidance from HUD explains how current housing decisions may violate federal housing and civil rights laws. First, if a housing provider intentionally discriminates by treating people who have criminal records differently based on race or ethnicity, they are violating the Fair Housing Act. Second, restrictions based on criminal history may burden members of one race or ethnicity more than another, leading to liability under a "discriminatory effects" theory. The new federal guidance is not binding but it does put providers on notice that continuing to screen applicants for criminal history may subject them to legal liability.

Black and Latino people stand to benefit from the new policy as both groups are policed and incarcerated at greater rates than white people. For example, one in three black men is incarcerated at some point in their life, as are one in six Latino men. In comparison, only one in 17 white men is incarcerated in their lifetime. In part, this is a result of disparities in enforcement of our nation's drug laws. Though white and black people have similar rates of drug use, black people are 10 times more likely to be sent to jail or prison on drug offenses

### ► HIV Bias

Continued from p. 12

population."

He said because of this bias, and HIV specific laws, people living with HIV are "just one accusation – or one biased, ignorant or hateful cop or prosecutor – from finding themselves in a courtroom, their future thrown into the abyss of a justice system that increasingly fails PLHIV."

That matches the findings of Trevor Hoppe, an assistant professor of sociology at University of Albany, SUNY. Hoppe conducted his doctoral thesis work on Michigan's laws related to HIV, and in one study he produced, he found health officials carried bias related to how and whether people with HIV should have sex.

"In my research, I have often found that people have trouble understanding why anyone would have sex with someone who is HIV-positive – and are often quick to assume that any evidence of a sex life is evidence that an HIV-positive person isn't disclosing their status," he said via Facebook messenger. "I even found that some health officials in Michigan had that attitude, presuming guilt when they did not have the full story."

His research has also shed light on bias among law enforcement and the courts.

"I have seen countless cases in which HIV-positive clients are treated with contempt and prejudice under the law," he wrote. "Judges and prosecutors are often woefully uninformed about HIV, which would not be so upsetting except that they are routinely incarcerating HIV-positive people based on their outdated and prejudicial attitudes."

Rangel will be back in court in the weeks to come, facing down allegations he violated his probation. In the meantime, he said he feels "betrayed" by those he thought were there to help him.



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## Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

### If You See Me, Please Honk

Back in the days when closets were leased for a lifetime, it was SOP to go by a nickname. Some SOPs I recall are Little Bobby, Little Pat, Estralita, Marshmallow, T.D. (Tall Dick), Savoy, B.J. (Butch Jimmy), Miss Bruce, and, among Dykes Anonymous: Big Red, Skye, Petey, Speedy, Rusty, Drano, Big Birdie.

Long before the esophageal advent of gay porn stars, I was actually introduced to a guy – of dubious intellectual turpitude, to be sure – who went by the alias of Dallas Copenhagen. Cope for short. (I suspect he no longer holds dual citizenship, or turpitude of any kind, in this world.)

I debuted at 19 with the user-friendly SOP of Also-Ran. (I changed it to Brando when hitchhiking.) Our nicknames provided a protective distancing ‘til we found out whom we could trust as lover, friend or washroom towel attendant.

**Nicknames kept nasty people from calling our folks, employers, shrinks and parole boards and made blackmail (an ever-present danger) less likely.**

Nicknames kept nasty people from calling our folks, employers, shrinks and parole boards and made blackmail (an ever-present danger) less likely. Speaking of which: I was quite surprised to learn that the famous Stonewall Inn – where the Gay Lib movement began in 1969 – was the home base for blackmailers operating on a well-coordinated, profitable scale.

According to historian David Carter’s “Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution,” the Mafia-owned Stonewall Inn operated under a loophole membership license. Members were to bring their own booze for bartender pouring (with tips). In actuality, booze – watered down booze – was sold on the premises.

Prospective Stonewallers filled out index cards: name, address, telephone number. The usual scribble. Bartenders – gay-hating thugs, hand-picked for the blackmail sting – sized up new customers. Anyone who appeared well-dressed (even casually so) – who seemed several cuts above the usually impoverished street queens who regularly danced there – was fair game.

Cute waiters (all gay) were ordered to be friendly with these “scores.” Chat them up. Gradually – after a few drinks or bar visits – finding out where they worked, what make of car they drove, etc. Hustlers were also threatened to come on to these newcomers, tricking with them, getting them stewed, stealing their wallets.

According to Carter, the blackmail ring operated mostly in New York City and Chicago: “(The ring’s) scope and size were staggering: having operated for almost 10 years, the ring had victimized close to a thousand men (netting \$2 million) who were highly successful.

“Among those listed (in the police investigation) were the head of the American Medical Association, two army generals, Admiral William Church (suicide), a Republican member of Congress from New Jersey (\$50,000), a Princeton professor, ‘a leading motion picture actor,’ ‘a musician who made numerous appearances on television,’ heads of business firms, ‘a much admired television personality’ and ‘a British producer.’”

See Parting Glances, next page



## Viewpoint



BY MICHELLE E. BROWN

### Digging Deep, Pulling Together and Doing Whatever it Takes

The win for marriage equality was our high point, but we knew it would not be smooth sailing ahead with this victory. We knew there would remain opposition. We knew there would be push back, but I doubt anyone could have predicted the magnitude of the efforts to turn back the hands of equality.

Last year lawmakers introduced more than 85 anti-LGBT bills in 28 state Legislatures. There was the stunning defeat that crushed the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO), an LGBT nondiscrimination law. And as the race to the White House heats up, threats to our rights continue.

Trump, the GOP front runner, has been a consistent opponent of marriage equality and has expressed support for the so-called First Amendment Defense Act (FADA) which would expose us to more discrimination. His closest rivals, Cruz and Kasich, promise no brighter future for LGBTQ Americans if they are successful. Both have consistently opposed our equal rights. And just when it looked like things couldn’t get more toxic, onerous anti-LGBTQ laws were passed in North Carolina and Mississippi.

So here we are approaching the anniversary of the Supreme Court decision. While some are planning weddings, others are girding our loins to continue the battle – recognizing that it’s not enough to be able to wed on Saturday if we can still be fired on Monday, and even worse to see some, if not all, of our rights turned back come November.

Okay, so no one says “gird your loins” anymore, but you get the drift. We must get ready for perilous times. Unfortunately it seems that some folks, at least on the progressive/liberal side, still don’t see how serious this stuff is.

Unlike the scared, misguided and/or lunatic fringe on the right willing to overlook the hypocrisy; vote against their own best interests; hold their nose; and fall in line behind whichever one of the three stooges heads the GOP ticket, our team is still working things out.

Some who are feeling the “Bern” hint that they will sit it out if it is not their candidate. Even worse, some Sanders supporters, most notably actress and activist Susan Sarandon, say they don’t know if they can

See Viewpoint: Digging Deep, next page



## ► Viewpoint:

Continued from p. 14

bring themselves to vote for any candidate but Sanders. Sarandon went so far as to imply that Trump might be better for America than Hillary Clinton. Seriously?

Well, maybe in her world. Maybe in a wealthy, white, heterosexual world with the means and opportunities to seek refuge in greener pastures is that a good move, but for the other 99 percent, those of us in the LGBTQ community and especially those in communities of color, we need to be more thoughtful and strategic.

This does not mean a cakewalk, no matter how historic a Clinton candidacy might be. She has had her missteps and communication gaffs. There is too much information available, too many living witnesses to the past horrors, too many still suffering for ANYONE to be misinformed, misspeak or whitewash history.

Any candidate wanting progressive, LGBTQ and/or POC votes must be vetted fully and schooled on our issues like yesterday. We must ask more than, “What have you done for us lately?” but also, “What haven’t you done for us in the past?” and “Do you understand the consequences of your actions/inactions?” We need to ask them if they understand today’s world or are they still living with outdated values and views.

Having a social media presence and being on late night television might make you seem cool, but we need more than sound bites and slogans. We can’t hope that candidates will educate themselves – we must ask the hard questions and hold their feet to the fire to make sure they get it right and keep it right. That’s the relatively easy part. The pulling up not the girding up, the heavy lifting.

No politician, neither Hillary nor Bernie, can do that. They’re just the standard bearers. We must set and raise the standards which takes us back to the Them vs. Us reality.

**They** have done a pretty good job of raising a specter of doom and gloom, of portraying a scary future that only a return to **their** values can redeem – a message so powerful that many would vote against their own best interest to see fulfilled.

## ► Parting Glances

Continued from p. 14

The shaved-head arachnid behind the blackmail spider web was Francis P. Murphy, known among his cronies as “The Skull.” His criminal record began at conception. (His den was above the club.)

But Murphy proved a canny operator. He managed to sidestep indictment, time after time. For one important reason: a buddy-buddy photo with America’s Big Ms., er, Mr. Untouchable: J. Edgar Hoover, head of the F.B.I.

Writes Carter, “... investigation into the nationwide blackmail ring had turned up a

**Now it’s the time to gird up our loins, to man-up and flex our ovaries and do whatever we have to do to focus not on our differences but on what will make a better world for us all – black/white, gay/straight, everyone.**

Us – well, not so much. Despite the fact that 12 years after marriage in Massachusetts the state hasn’t fallen into the sea (or burst into flames), that the country survived the enactment of the Affordable Care Act and more Americans now have health coverage, and after seven years of an Obama presidency the economy is in a far better place. We/Us still can’t get people to the polls to vote. We/Us haven’t directly or indirectly influenced enough of our friends/neighbors to realize our equality does *not* mean inequality for them.

When we have come together and raised our voices we have changed the nation again and again. We did this not by holding hands singing “Kumbaya” but by raising our voices in a song for freedom.

Now it’s the time to gird up our loins, to man-up and flex our ovaries and do whatever we have to do to focus not on our differences but on what will make a better world for us all – black/white, gay/straight, everyone. So, to borrow the words of the immortal Bob Marley, “Won’t you help to sing these songs of freedom? It’s all we’ll ever have.”

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*Michelle E. Brown is a public speaker, activist and author. You can follow her writing and activities at <http://www.mychangeiam.com> and on <http://www.twitter.com/mychangeiam>*

photograph of Hoover ‘posing amiably’ (in drag?) with the racket’s ringleader, and had uncovered information that Clyde Tolson, Hoover’s lover, had himself ‘fallen victim to the extortion ring.’

“After federal agents joined the investigation, both the photograph of Hoover and the documents about Tolson disappeared.” Poof!

Oh, yes; Hoover’s SOP – Dick Tracy. Tolson’s: Tess Trueheart. (And, please remember when out driving: It’s Brando, not Also-Ran. Please honk. I’m a little deaf at 2 a.m.)

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*Charles@pridesource.com*

# Creep of the Week

## Dan Forest

BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

**D**id you hear the one about how North Carolina is a great place for women and girls?



Dan Forest

Because North Carolina just passed HB2, the most discriminatory anti-LGBT legislation in the country. To protect the ladies! Duh.

You see, as the state’s lieutenant governor, Dan Forest recently explained to Tony Perkins, professional

homophobe and hater, to protect the rights of LGBT people, especially those who identify as transgender, is to discriminate against women and girls. And the city of Charlotte was about to enact an ordinance that would have protected LGBT people, so it had to be stopped.

“We don’t like discrimination and that’s why we passed an anti-discrimination law, that’s what HB2 was,” Forest told Perkins. “(It’s easy to stand up and say, ‘We don’t like anybody being discriminated against.’ Well, our bill does not discriminate against anybody.”

Ah. So, according to Forest, even though the heart of the bill is to keep trans people out of public restrooms, a place that is already a focal point of discrimination and harassment against gender non-conformance, HB2 doesn’t discriminate against anybody. Which is another way to say that transgender people are nobodies. Huh, I guess all lives don’t matter after all.

Oh, but please go on about how icky discrimination is, Mr. Forest.

“The Charlotte ordinance was amazingly discriminatory against, especially, women and girls who no longer had the freedom to walk into a restroom and know that they would be safe and secure in that restroom without a man walking in or a pedophile or a predator walking into that bathroom. That’s really discriminatory if you want to talk about discrimination.”

Yeah, that’s the REAL discrimination. All of these cross-dressing rapists/molesters/perverts who, prior to the passage of HB2, were an inescapable menace in public restrooms and locker rooms across the state. In fact, the danger was so great that women and girls had taken to just squatting in the streets, you know, for safety.

**So Forest may say that he doesn’t “like” discrimination, but he clearly approves of it.**

Or not.

According to the North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault, the argument that HB2 prevents sexual violence is bullshit: “(T)he majority of sexual violence is perpetrated by someone the victim knows in a familiar place, rather than by a stranger in a public place. Two hundred cities across the nation have protections in place similar to the Charlotte ordinance, and none of them have reported an increase in sexual violence related to these protections.”

NCCASA continues, “On the other hand, physical and verbal assaults on transgender people in public bathrooms are not rare, and over 50 percent of transgender people have experienced sexual violence. We cannot end sexual violence unless we are committed to ending sexual violence for all people. What will actually prevent and end sexual violence is for us to create a culture in which respect for the identities and bodily autonomy of others is a deeply held value. Policies prohibiting discrimination based on one’s sexuality and gender identity, like the one passed in Charlotte, are a positive step toward ending sexual violence.”

In other words, HB2 actually increases the potential for sexual assault by legitimizing the dehumanization of people and devaluing their bodies. Of course, folks like Forest don’t see trans people as, well, people.

Now, some argue that laws like HB2 are only window dressing since they’re, in practice, near impossible to enforce. But honestly it doesn’t matter if a single person is apprehended for peeing while trans. The very culture of suspicion and fear it creates will put trans people, already a vulnerable population in terms of legal protections and public understanding, at risk of increased harassment and violence.

So Forest may say that he doesn’t “like” discrimination, but he clearly approves of it. If he was so worried about the health and safety of women and girls (and I include trans women and girls in that even if he doesn’t), he would be more concerned about protecting a women’s right to abortion and reducing the state’s high child poverty rate. I’m not holding my breath.



## CEOs, Governments Speak Against North Carolina Law

**RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)** – Company CEOs and municipal officials are joining other government and business leaders opposing North Carolina’s new law that prevents specific anti-discrimination rules for LGBT people for public accommodations and restroom use.

The Human Rights Campaign and Equality North Carolina released Friday the names of another 10 company executives that have signed on to a letter criticizing the law and seeking its repeal, bringing the number of names to more than 120. New executives include those from Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Qualcomm and EMC Corp.

The law, approved by the Republican legislature and GOP Gov. Pat McCrory, responded to a Charlotte City Council ordinance approved in February that would have extended protections to gays and lesbians as well as bisexual and transgender people while at hotels, restaurants and stores. Charlotte also would have allowed transgender people to use the restroom aligned with their gender identity.

Separately Friday, the venture capital arm of Google’s parent corporation confirmed it won’t invest in North Carolina startup businesses while the law is in place. GV spokeswoman Jodi Olson cited written comments by CEO Bill Maris in which he asked his firm’s partners to flag possible North Carolina investments because he’s “not comfortable deploying dollars into startups there until the voters there fix this.” The move was first reported by Re/code, a tech-focused news site.

The new law blocked Charlotte’s rules and prevented other local governments from approving similar ordinances. And government agencies of all kinds must now require people who use multi-stall public restrooms to use the one that corresponds with their biological sex.

District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser and Boston’s city council also this week banned government-connected travel to North Carolina as a sign of opposition to the law. Similar travel bans have been issued by the governors of Washington, New York and Connecticut and by other cities.

NCAA President Mark Emmert says he has spoken to North Carolina’s governor about the state’s new law excluding LGBT people from antidiscrimination protections, making clear if it remains in place it will affect the state’s chances to host major college athletic events.

A rally was held early Friday night in front of the Legislative Building to support transgender people and to oppose the law. Supporters of the new law held prayer vigils Thursday night in multiple locations in eastern North Carolina. One was held across from the Executive Mansion, where McCrory lives.

Supporters of the law say hundreds of businesses support the law and have signed on to their own letter praising McCrory and the legislature.

McCrory and a key lawmaker this week suggested some changes are possible to the law. But Senate leader Phil Berger, has no appetite for them because “an overwhelming majority of North Carolinians we’ve heard from support” the law, spokeswoman Shelly Carver said in a release. The General Assembly reconvenes April 25.

Extended briefs are available online at:  
>> [www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com)

## Massachusetts Court to Hear Gay Parental Rights Case

BY DENISE LAVOIE

**BOSTON (AP)** – The same state court that paved the way for same-sex marriage in the United States is now being asked to decide a complicated case about the parental rights of a once-partnered but unmarried gay couple.

The Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, the state that more than a decade ago became the first to allow same-sex marriage, will hear arguments Tuesday. The case seeks to determine whether Karen Partanen, whose former partner, Julie Gallagher, gave birth to two children through artificial insemination, should have the same parental rights as Gallagher.

Partanen helped raise the children, now 7 and 4. She and Gallagher split in 2013.

Gallagher acknowledges Partanen has been a good parent, and the kids spend half their time with Partanen under a shared custody order.

But Gallagher is challenging Partanen’s bid to be declared a full legal parent, which would allow Partanen to share in virtually every decision made about the children, including where they go to school, what doctors they see and what religion they practice.

“I am a biological mother. I wanted to have children. They’re my world, and it’s my right to make legal decisions for them,” Gallagher said in a recent interview.

“At no time have I – nor would I – attempt to remove the children from her life,” she said.

Partanen says she should have the same rights as Gallagher because they decided to have children together and raised them as a two-parent family.

“I love my children and have been their Mommy since they were born,” Partanen said in a statement.

“Julie and I have gone our separate ways, but that shouldn’t make any difference in the love, stability and legal protections our children have, and it shouldn’t take me away as their parent. Our family has changed, but our children should forever be able to count on their two parents.”

A judge dismissed a complaint Partanen filed in family court, finding she did not meet the requirements for legal parentage because she and Gallagher were not married when the children were born, and Partanen is not a biological parent.

Partanen appealed, and the state’s highest court agreed to hear the case.

The extent of Partanen’s parental rights is being disputed under two Massachusetts laws.

One law says that any child born to a married woman as a result of artificial insemination with the consent of her husband is considered the legitimate child of the mother and husband.

The other law says children born out of wedlock are entitled to the same rights and protections as children born to married couples.

But nothing in Massachusetts statutory law – written before same-sex marriage was legalized – specifically addresses children born to unmarried gay parents.

Case law made by Massachusetts courts, however, has recognized the rights of unmarried same-sex couples to jointly adopt children.

Partanen’s lawyers argue she and Gallagher presented themselves publicly and to family and friends as the parents and shared equally in parenting responsibilities. They say the Massachusetts Legislature passed the law to protect children born to all unmarried couples, including children who lack a genetic relationship with

one parent.

Two women must also be included within the scope of unmarried adults who have children together, they argue in their legal brief.

More than 35 states confer parentage on spouses who consent to assisted reproductive technology. Seven of those states and the District of Columbia give legal parentage to the person who consents to the procedure with the intent to parent the resulting child, without regard to marital status, according to fertility associations and attorneys who submitted written arguments supporting Partanen.

Court rulings in some states have recognized the parental rights and obligations of unmarried people without a genetic link to the children they agree to have.

Partanen is being represented by GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders, the same group that brought the lawsuit that led to same-sex marriage in Massachusetts.

GLAD lawyers argue that barring same-sex couples from receiving the protections of the laws for their children raises serious constitutional questions of sex and sexual orientation discrimination.

Gallagher, however, says the dispute between her and Partanen is being wrongly depicted as a gay-rights case.

GLAD does fight for equality (for gay people), but in this case, they’re asking for more than a heterosexual would get, Gallagher said.

Gallagher’s lawyer, Jennifer Lamanna, said Partanen is trying to obtain legal rights she would be entitled to only if she had married Gallagher, adopted the children or filed a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity.

She never took steps to do that, Lamanna said.

## Mississippi Gov. Signs ‘Religious Freedom’ Bill Into Law

**JACKSON, MISS. (AP)** – Mississippi’s governor signed a law on Tuesday that allows public and private businesses to refuse service to gay couples based on the employers’ religious beliefs.

Gov. Phil Bryant signed House Bill 1523, despite opposition from gay-rights groups and some businesses who say it enables discrimination.

The measure allows churches, religious charities and privately held businesses to decline services to people whose lifestyles violate their religious beliefs. Individual government employees may also opt out, although the measure says governments must still provide services.

“This bill flies in the face of the basic American principles of fairness, justice and equality and will not protect anyone’s

religious liberty,” Jennifer Riley-Collins, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi, said in a statement. “Far from protecting anyone from ‘government discrimination’ as the bill claims, it is an attack on the citizens of our state, and it will serve as the Magnolia State’s badge of shame.”



# Commemorating the 20th Day of Silence

BY AJ TRAGER

Students from around the world will take a vow of silence April 15 in an effort to encourage schools and classmates to address the problem of anti-LGBT behavior by illustrating the silencing effect of bullying and harassment of LGBT students and those perceived as LGBT.

Twenty years ago, over 150 students from the University of Virginia organized the first Day of Silence as a response to a class assignment discussing nonviolent protests. A year later, in 1997, organizers took the effort nationally and nearly 100 colleges and universities participated. Today, the vow has reached students in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and is even celebrated in countries with harsh anti-LGBT laws, such as Russia.

"The Day of Silence came to GLSEN in 2001 and had a different life form before that. The day started primarily in high schools, but once GLSEN took it over we focused on middle and high school students. Ever since then it's incredible how the momentum has stayed so strong even as we've seen progress in other avenues of LGBT rights in the last 20 years. We can have marriage equality and we can have Don't Ask Don't Tell struck down, but the numbers don't lie and LGBT youth still face abysmal levels of bullying and harassment in schools," said Camille Beredjick, Youth Engagement Associate at GLSEN.

Every year, more than 10,000 students ranging from middle school to college register their Day of Silence participation with GLSEN.

Those participating will be silent during non-instructional time: the breaks between classes, before and after the school day, lunchtime and any other free times allotted. Students do not have the right to remain silent during class time if a teacher asks for speaking participation. It is recommended that students speak to teachers ahead of time, inform them of what the silence entails and aims to do and ask if it would be okay to communicate via writing for the duration of the protest day. GLSEN provides printable info sheets that students can provide faculty and administration.

There is no single way to participate in the Day of Silence. The event is most successful when schools and students work together to show their commitment to creating a safe environment for all students in and outside the classroom.

"It's inspiring to see so many young people who want to speak out about anti-LGBT bullying and harassment and want to make that problem known," Beredjick said. "You see people get so into it. And for a lot of them it can be an entry point to doing more LGBT activism, the growth and steadiness of which the momentum has maintained over the last 20 years, even though the landscape for LGBT people in general is getting a little bit better. It's impressive."

According to GLSEN, 141 Michigan students have registered for the 2016 Day of Silence. Beredjick notes that that number is significantly lower than what the official numbers will be, as the majority of participating youth register two to three days before the protest day.

Many critics of the protest downplay the number of people who support addressing anti-LGBT name-calling, bullying and harassment. According to results found in the "GLSEN 2013 National School Climate Survey," nearly nine out of 10 LGBT students report verbal, sexual or physical harassment at school and more than 30 percent report having missed at least a day of school in the past month out of fear for their personal safety.

a group of students from Arts Academy in the Woods, a speciality arts high school located in Warren, hosted their own Day of Silence earlier in the year to protest negative treatment of trans students by certain members of the school faculty.

Luca, a trans sophomore from AAW, told BTL that a small number of faculty members were choosing to disregard the preferred pronouns and names of trans and gender non-conforming students. In response, a group of students planned a silent protest that garnered participation from one-third of the student body. Participating students placed duct tape on their mouths or clothes and handed out slips of paper describing why they were protesting.

"We had a few teachers who weren't listening and were being extremely rude to the gender queer folk and weren't respecting gender names and the like. So we thought, 'What if we wore duct tape for the whole day?' We had a bunch of people help us. At one point, I was standing in the hallway and there were people calling for me to give them some duct tape. It was really successful," he said.

The protest was so successful that the offending faculty have since amended their behavior and are respecting the names and pronouns of trans and gender non-conforming youth.

"I think the beauty of the Day of Silence is that students who participate can make it into whatever they want it to be. In the past we have seen that some students will cater the event to something particular that is happening at their school, like if there's an incident students have dedicated the Day of Silence to. Likewise, if there is an anti-LGBT bill that is up for consideration in their community, they'll use the Day of Silence to draw attention to that bill. When it comes to bullying on the basis of

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Please understand my reasons for not speaking today. I am participating in the Day of Silence (DOS), a national youth movement bringing attention to the silence faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their allies. My deliberate silence echoes that silence, which is caused by anti-LGBT bullying, name-calling and harassment. I believe that ending the silence is the first step toward building awareness and making a commitment to address these injustices.

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gender identity and expression, I think that a lot of students can do the exact same thing," Beredjick said.

While the Day of Silence provides an opportunity to start conversations on how to make school climate more accepting and affirming of LGBT identities and to reverse anti-LGBT harassment, not everyone shares the same values. Any student experiencing resistance to the Day of Silence is encouraged to stay calm, not react to the negative and often hurtful comments, and seek out their school's gay-straight alliance student president and inform them of the incident. If the resistance evolves into bullying and or harassment, the student should report it to school officials, parents and/or online authorities immediately.

Students are encouraged to register their participation for the 2016 GLSEN Day of Silence at <http://action.glsen.org/page/s/day-of-silence>.

To learn more, visit [www.dayofsilence.org](http://www.dayofsilence.org).

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The inclusive vendors on site showcased everything couples need to plan their upcoming celebrations, including weddings, anniversaries, vow renewals, graduations, bar and bat mitzvahs, adoptions, baby showers



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and more. But some vendors will look beyond, to services couples and families need in their daily lives.

“Now that marriage equality is here, people are looking at the next steps in their lives and we’re excited to be part of it,” said Tina McNeal-O’Brien, a real estate broker and president of BNI Biz.

Network. “As an African-American woman married to an Irishman, if

you look back 50 years that wouldn’t have been possible for me. It’s all about progress and change. It’s about love and it’s about family.”

For a complete list of all the vendors – jewelers, venues, caterers, limo services, invitations, photographers, florists and more – go to [www.BTLWeddingExpo.com](http://www.BTLWeddingExpo.com). They are ready year-round to help with any celebration or event for LGBT families and friends.

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Conne and Brenda met at the company fax machine roughly 20 years ago. They started dating 15.5 years ago and were finally married March 20 by Rev. Deb Cox on Belle Isle.

## Meeting at the Fax Machine

BY AJ TRAGER

**HIGHLAND** –“We got overwhelmed with the planning,” Brenda told BTL when discussing her March 20 marriage to Conne. They’ve been together for over a decade and recently planned a very small wedding with just their “Best of Honor” and Rev. Deb Cox presiding.

After they picked the Dossin Great Lakes Museum on Belle Isle as their venue and started working on other wedding plans, they became severely overwhelmed thinking about having to order caterers, send out wedding announcements and navigate the nitty-gritties of their upcoming wedding. As realtors, the early-spring is an extremely hectic time for them and Conne and Brenda didn’t have much extra time to throw around and plan their wedding. They quickly decided to have a (mostly) private ceremony near the shores of the Detroit River followed by a pub crawl throughout Downtown Detroit.

“Brenda cried throughout the whole thing,” Conne said. “Being able to get married validated who we are. It was weird how we felt once we did it. I didn’t expect it.”

They met at Real Estate One 15.5 years ago at the company fax machine. Conne was engaged at the time and Brenda was married. Despite the circumstances, they remained friends for a few years with Conne serving as Brenda’s “therapist” as she processed a dissolving marriage.

Three years ago on Valentine’s Day, Brenda and Conne went to Sweet Lorraine’s for dinner following a real estate conference. Conne brought an engagement ring and Brenda brought a six-pack of beer.

“When I gave her a ring, she screamed,” Conne explained.

For the wedding, Conne donned a mink coat owned by Brenda’s mother and Brenda wore, and learned how to tie, a bow tie.

“She was in front of the mirror for days until someone gave her a hint,” Conne said.

While family and friends were disappointed that they were not able to make it to the couple’s ceremony, Brenda and Conne have planned a 41-person reception in June to be held on the Ovation, a 138 foot luxury vessel that sails up and down the Detroit River.

“Marriage gave us validity,” Brenda said. “We were finally for real and it felt really good. I got mad because our insurance for our house and cars went up, and I decided to shop around for alternatives. I called some guy and put us both on the insurance and got to tell him, ‘No, she’s not my roommate – we’re married. She’s my wife.’ Telling people has been very fun and matter of fact.”

“We aren’t on the outside of society anymore,” Conne added

When they aren’t working together to sell and market property in the area, they head up to their lake house in Greenbush with their two dogs, Sophie, a 10-year-old mutt and Jody, their 1-year-old English Bull Dog.

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# Rising Star: Jess T. Dugan



## How the White House Honoree Is Transforming Minds With Portraits of Transgender Trailblazers

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

There's a photograph of Jess T. Dugan from 2005 with bandages over where her breasts used to be. She's standing nude beside her mother and the two are pillars. The photo is a powerful declaration of self – recognizing it, embracing it.

"I have always used photography to understand myself and my place in the world," Dugan says. "At that time I used my work to come to terms with my body and my gender. Those earlier pictures were very much about, 'This is my body, this is my gender, this is my mother, this is my community.'"

Community was a harder find in high school. And so were gay people, and so were butch women. Back then, Dugan found her people solely through photography books she sought out in stores throughout Boston's Harvard Square, where she first discovered the true power of portraiture. There, she immersed herself in "really influential" collections featuring images by Robert Mapplethorpe and Catherine Opie, a photographer known for exploring Los Angeles' leather-dyke community in her portraits.

Says Dugan, "I look back and think, 'My 16-year-old self was interested in the same exact thing I'm interested in now.'"

For a decade, Dugan's photographs have explored gender, sexuality, identity and community, capturing the essence of transgender men and women, with a focus on aging adults in the last few years. Her staggering breadth of work has been exhibited internationally at establishments such as the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, the Grey House Gallery in Poland, the Leslie/Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, and at many colleges and universities nationwide. In addition, her photographs have colored the pages of the New York Times, The Advocate and the Boston Globe.

And she's worked for it, earning her BFA in photography from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, an MFA in photography from Columbia College Chicago and also a Master of Liberal Arts in museum studies from Harvard University. In 2015, the fruits of her labor were recognized in a big way when the White House named Dugan a Champion of Change. The nomination came via Jennifer Levi, director of the Transgender Rights Project at Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders. Prior, Dugan took portraits of transgender people for a book that Levi co-edited called "Transgender Family Law: A Guide to Effective Advocacy."

"I am a huge fan of Jess' work," Levi says. "I helped to curate a show Jess did in western Massachusetts several



years ago and was impressed with how her art touched a wide range of people. It was especially important for transgender and gender nonconforming people to see their faces and bodies included in portraits. Jess' work captures the diversity and humanity of the community."

For Dugan, it's "because of my own identity and my community."

"Deeply, at the core," she continues, "I'm interested in people and identity and kind of how we each come to be who we are and then how other people perceive us as that person that we know ourselves to be."

At 13, Dugan came out as gay. Five years later, after questioning her gender throughout her mid teens, she underwent "gender-affirming chest reconstruction surgery" to remove her breasts. Currently, she identifies as queer.

Dugan is 29 now, and her artistic scope has broadened beyond herself, while also being "deeper and more subtle" in her approach to

identity and sexuality. "Those issues are still there," she attests, "but it's not always my primary need to assert my own identity over and over."

Instead, Dugan has turned the lens outward, using portraiture to spotlight a niche transgender demographic. Her photographs of transgender people over 50 are honest, empathetic, bold and beautiful. And in the case of Stephanie James, frighteningly real.

"I was a little shocked actually," says James, 66, of St. Louis, Missouri. "I've seen zillions of photos of myself since coming out, and I thought I looked pretty old and like a caricature of myself. Jess caught me just as I was."

Even before Dugan met her partner, Vanessa Fabbre, in 2012, her interest in portraying people's authentic self was evident in "Every Breath We Drew," a project she started in 2005 that examines masculinity in queer communities (a monograph of the project, her first, was published in 2015 by Daylight

Continued on page 25



Photos by Jess T. Dugan

  
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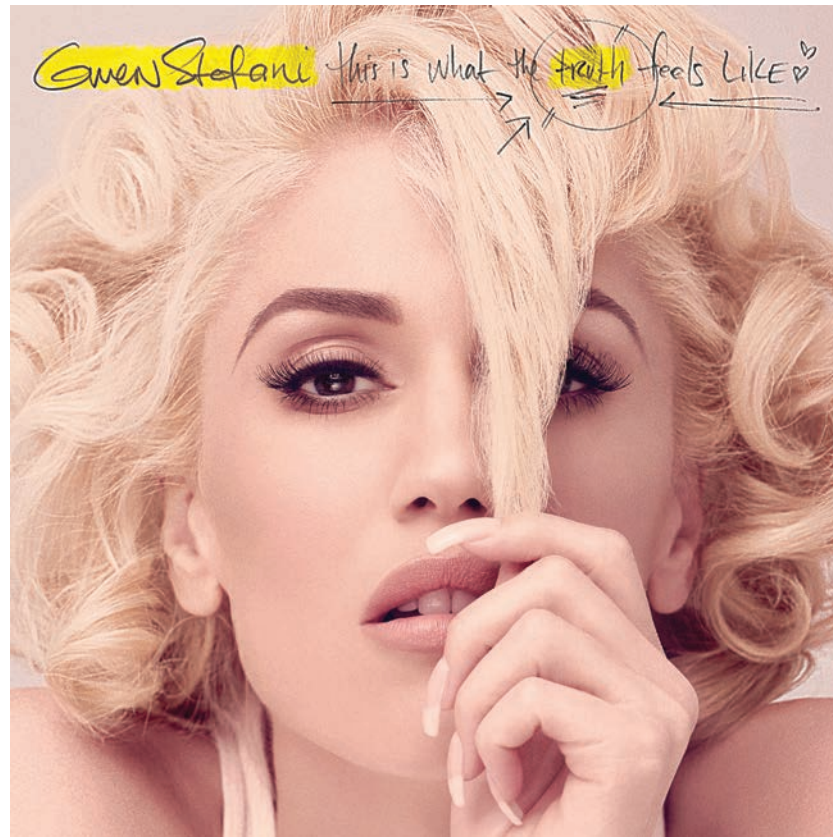


**SHOP LGBT**

# Hear Me Out

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

## Gwen Stefani, Bonnie Raitt



### Gwen Stefani, 'This Is What the Truth Feels Like'

Poor Gwen Stefani, all heartbroken on "Used to Love You," the launch single from her long-delayed album that set the stage for what seemed like a return to the rawness of her No Doubt days. Uncertainty and sadness and the rebuilding of her self-confidence – in just four minutes, the not-a-Hollaback-girl's face scaled the full scope of emojis. In fact, the single and its understated video said more than the album that would follow a few months later. No, "This Is What the Truth Feels Like" isn't the breakup confessional it wants you to think it is, and its truth-telling is only pop-star real, guised by indistinguishable trend chasers. With so few inspired offerings in its factory of store-bought Top 40 beats (among them, yes, a Gwen rap), what's good? Gwen and her moxie are on the mend thanks to Blake Shelton, her current beau, so there's that. She sings about it on the enjoyable "Make Me Like You," gushing like a little girl smacked by love's newness over a dizzying disco skate sound. In places, her feelings are raw and real. This is true of "Used to Love You," which channels vulnerability and anger-turned-defiance into a seam-busting chorus that turns a twinkle into a typhoon of woeful dramatics. Greg Kurstin produces

the folk-pop stargazer "Rare," which refreshingly flavors the album's predictable fare with some much-needed acoustic-guitar-assisted rawness before it reaches a dreamy Kylie-esque chorus wherein Gwen confesses she's "broken and insecure" and feels "worthless." It's the same kind of messy authenticity you wish was mirrored in more of this music. *Grade: C*



### Bonnie Raitt, 'Dig in Deep'

Imagine if Bonnie Raitt sang Donald Trump's tweets. The point is, Bonnie Raitt can make the ugliest things beautiful. And for the last four decades, the Rock and Roll Hall of Famer's soulful rasp has done just that, turning sadness into catharsis, all the while demonstrating such impressive and seemingly effortless guitar skills she could nail performances in her sleep. And because, yes, good things happen in this world too, she has a new album out. Cue the heartbreak, right? On "The Ones We Couldn't Be," a ballad you listen to with the lights out, Raitt's voice is Namaste for the soul, working over the delicate keys slowly, soothingly, resting in just the right places, aching with just the

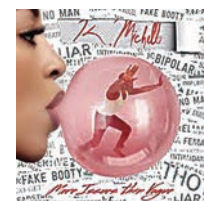
right amount of ache. It's a perfect ballad, but of course it is: Raitt knows her way around a tearjerker just as we know deep breaths and thinking happy thoughts won't block the pain of a Bonnie ballad (you're still recovering from Raitt's 1991 Grammy winner "I Can't Make You Love Me" and you know it). "I Knew" is good because it sounds like it should have already been included on a Best Of; the song is right within Raitt's bluesy '90s-era wheelhouse, and that chorus and its key change – during which she pleads "I would've run, but I couldn't run; I would've flown, but I couldn't fly" – is golden. All of "Dig in Deep," though, calls for repeated plays, unraveling its lyrical truths layer by layer and doing the blues as only Bonnie Raitt can.

## Also Out



### Zayn, 'Mind of Mine'

Ex-One Direction member Zayn Malik is damning his boy-band days with an act of rebellion that's apparently indicative of adulthood: random caps. Though the 23-year-old's solo debut goes to extremes to cut the 1D cord (like Cher, he calls himself, simply, Zahn), thankfully it's far less contrived than his grammar riot suggests. "rEaR vleW" builds into a warm, electro looped, vibing with a Frank Ocean-meets-Miguel chicness that masks any traces of boy-banding. But it's Malik's falsetto, offering plenty of coo-y eargasms, that's the most potent potion on "Mind of Mine." Mmmmm. Let freedom ring.



### K. Michelle, 'More Issues Than Vogue'

"Can I get back the f\*cks that I gave you?" R&B's song slayer K. Michelle knows she can't, but she can do the next best thing: Give even less of them now. Leaving no shade unshaded, the reality star puts it all on the line on her third album, blasting "all kinds of hos" on the guitar-tickled rap "Mindful." Even juicier is "These Men," when she gives a good tongue-lashing to the sleazy cheats in her life – over a sweet, swaying girl-group groove, naturally. It's true: K's out for blood (she even compares herself to Uma Thurman in "Kill Bill"), and throughout "More Issues Than Vogue," her greatest weapon is her voice.



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By Sam Potter

**IF YOU** suffer from low back pain and sciatica, you are one of over 20 million adults in the USA with this often crippling spinal condition.

Shooting, stabbing and burning pains from the low back, sometimes with additional pain through the buttocks and down the legs are all symptoms of a pinched nerves often called "sciatica".

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In Livonia, you can try Non-Surgical Re-Constructive Spinal Care at the Kramer Chiropractic – the office low back pain and sciatica relief expert Dr.Gregory Kramer.

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The Observer&Eccentric has teamed up with the spine therapy specialists at Kramer Chiropractic, to help readers find relief from their persistent back and sciatic pain.

All you have to do to receive a thorough diagnostic examination with the most advanced technology in the world and a comprehensive easy to understand report on your state of health is call 248-615-1533.

**Mention this article (CODE: BOS37SCID5) and Greg will happily reduce his usual consultation fee of \$195 to just \$37. But hurry, due to obvious reasons – this is a time limited offer – with only 100 reader consultations available at this exclusively discounted rate.**

My advice, don't suffer a moment longer...

Find out if Non-Surgical Re- Constructive Spinal Care can help you, book a consultation with Greg and his team now by calling 248-615-1533, they are waiting to take your call today.

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You can even call on the weekend and leave a message on their answer machine to secure your spot as they promise to return all calls; and during the week they are very busy, so if they don't pick up straight away do leave a message.



**Sciatica Relief Expert Greg Kramer, says:** In 20 years of practice, I've never seen a treatment as effective as Non- Surgical Re-Constructive Spinal Care for patients with sciatica or lower back pain. All Federal Guidelines Are Followed.



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# New Hitchcock Parody Scares Up Laughs at The Ringwald

BY BTL STAFF

**FERNDALE** – The Ringwald Theatre continues its “Season of Classics” with the world premiere of “The Hung Man” by Detroit playwrights Ian Bonner and Marty Shea.

The work has everything: murder, suspense, handsome New York bachelors hosting a dinner party, an icy dame who may not be what she seems, a psycho in a house dress, a rear window, and of course, a cameo by the Master himself -- Alfred Hitchcock. Based on Hitchcock's gayest film, “Rope,” the plot revolves around a steamer trunk that may or may not be hiding a dead body.

It is 1952 and New York bachelors Farley and John are hosting a dinner party for John's girlfriend Grace and his mother, Mrs. Collier. When a detective arrives unannounced investigating a potential suicide at the apartment building across the street, no one will escape suspicion from dastardly doings. While the boys try to hide the contents of a steamer trunk hiding in plain sight and everyone is dodging a strange bird infestation, the comedy comes fast, furious and as sharp as the blade of a kitchen knife.

Ian Bonner and Marty Shea, authors of last season's hit “Good Men and True” at Planet Ant, have crafted a hilarious, loving tribute to the Master of Suspense.

Dyan Bailey directs a cast that includes Joe Bailey, Christa Coulter, Vince Kelley, Joel Mitchell and Richard Payton.

Set design is by Pal Molnar, costume design is by Tanner Murray, and lighting design is by Brandy Joe Plambeck.



“The Hung Man” plays through Monday, April 25. Showtimes are 8 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Monday nights with 3 p.m. Sunday matinees. Ticket prices are \$20 for Friday and Saturday performances, \$15 for Sunday shows, and Monday nights are half off the original ticket price at only \$10 a ticket. All students can now receive a \$5 discount off normal ticket price on Friday, Saturday and Sunday performances (available at the box office the day of the show with valid student ID). Tickets can be purchased at [www.TheRingwald.com](http://www.TheRingwald.com) or at the theater box office. The Ringwald box office opens 45 minutes before performances and tickets can be purchased with cash or credit card.

The Ringwald opened their doors eight years ago on May 11, 2007 with

“Fatal Attraction: A Greek Tragedy.” Quickly, The Ringwald became a mainstay of Detroit's theater and LGBT communities. Past Productions include: “Mr. Burns, a post-electric play,” “Glengarry Glen Ross,” “Stupid Fucking Bird,” “Angels in America,” “Into the Woods,” “A Streetcar Named Desire,” “August: Osage County,” “The Bad Seed,” “Making Porn,” “The Book of Liz,” and “Evil Dead: The Musical.” The Ringwald was named 2009, 2012 and 2013 Best Theatrical Troupe by Real Detroit and Best Place to See Local Theatre in 2010, 2011 and 2012 by the readers of Metro Times.

The Ringwald Theatre is located at 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. For more information, call 248-545-5545 or visit [www.theringwald.com](http://www.theringwald.com).

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► **Jess T. Dugan**

Continued from p. 21

Books). But upon meeting Fabbre, a college professor whose research is centered on the intersection of aging and LGBT identity, Dugan narrowed her focus to older transgender and gender-variant adults. Dugan worried that concentrating only on transgender people of a particular age was too specific, but that concern was quelled when she made this surprising revelation: There are young trans people who've never seen a photograph of an older trans person.

"They didn't know what they'd look like as they got older," she says. "Because of the aging component, people who know nothing about the trans community or are not a part of the trans community relate to the images. People are talking about very universal ideas of wanting to authentically be themselves as they get older and wanting to have lived a life that feels true to them before they pass away."

Dugan has made 45 portraits in total, with seven more scheduled – so far anyway. Shooting across the United States, in cities like Atlanta, New York, Baltimore and Washington D.C., Dugan has met a melting pot of people she says she never would have otherwise. Her subjects share intimate identity stories. Their struggles. Their triumphs. On several occasions, she's photographed men who medically transitioned in the early 1970s,

“ I think just the whole experience has been moving and has been inspiring to me and really I'm kind of in awe of the strength that each person has. A lot of these stories would be untold or kind of invisible if we weren't trying to capture and preserve them. ”

– Jess T. Dugan

which, for her, was “amazing because I had never known anyone that had transitioned before maybe the late '90s or early 2000s.”

“I think just the whole experience has been moving and has been inspiring to me,” Dugan muses, “and really I'm kind of in awe of the strength that each person has. A lot of these stories would be untold or kind of invisible if we weren't trying to capture and preserve them.”

*Chris Azzopardi is the editor of Q Syndicate, the international LGBT wire service. He once made Jane Fonda cry. Reach him via his website at [www.chris-azzopardi.com](http://www.chris-azzopardi.com) and on Twitter (@chrisazzopardi).*

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## Editor's Pick

Catch the last shows of "If/Then" this weekend at Detroit's Fisher Theatre. The new musical comes from the Pulitzer Prize & Tony-award winning creators of "Next to Normal," the director of "Rent" and the producer of "Wicked."

The work stars Jackie Burns, Anthony Rapp, Tamyra Gray (of "American Idol") and Matthew Hydzik. The tagline for the work notes, "Life in a city is full of infinite possibilities. This is the musical about all of them."

The work runs through April 10 at the Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd, Detroit. Tickets are available through [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com), 800-982-2787 or at the box office.

# Happenings

## OUTINGS

### Saturday, April 9

**The Silent Epidemic: A Conference on Suicide Kevin's Song, Plymouth.** [www.kevinssong.org/conference](http://www.kevinssong.org/conference)

**Transgender Day of Visibility Art Show** Pittmann-Puckett Gallery, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. [www.Goaffirmations.org](http://www.Goaffirmations.org)

**Michigan National Organization for Women Conference** 9 a.m. Keynote speaker: Mira Krishnan. University of Michigan-Dearborn Fairlane Center North, 19000 Hubbard Drive, **Dearborn**. [www.Michnow.org](http://www.Michnow.org)

### Sunday, April 10

**National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NYHAAD)** NYHAAD, **Everywhere**. [YouthAidsDay.org](http://YouthAidsDay.org)

### Monday, April 11

**Happy Hour** 4 p.m. Come join us for happy hour and Man Crush Monday. Grenadier Club, 3101 McDougall, **Detroit**. 313-910-6867.

### Wednesday, April 13

**Vera Bradley Outlet Sale** 7 a.m. Attend the biggest Vera Bradley sale of the year. With Step On Bus Tours you get to skip the lines and have a private shopping time at this amazing sale. With Step On Bus Tours you beat the crowds and get first dibs. Shop for Vera Bradley handbags, purses, wallets, laptop bags, pajama pants, luggage and more. Due to capacity requirements of the venue, preregistration is required. Step On Bus Tours, 215 W. Troy St. Ste 2046, **Ferndale**. 248-619-6692. [steponbustours@gmail.com](mailto:steponbustours@gmail.com) <http://www.steponbustours.com/trips.html>

### Thursday, April 14

**OUTcasts: LGBTQ Homeless Youth Surviving in the South** 5:30 p.m. Equality Research Center, 329 King Hall, **Ypsilanti**. [nrichar8@emich.edu](mailto:nrichar8@emich.edu) [www.Facebook.com/events/258681631132777/](http://www.Facebook.com/events/258681631132777/)

**Panel Discussion on Medical and Mental Health of Trans/Gender Non-conforming youth** 7 p.m. Free and open to the public. Temple Israel, 5725 Walnut Lake Road, **West Bloomfield**. [lkoziol@temple-israel.org](mailto:lkoziol@temple-israel.org)

### Friday, April 15

**Annual Jim Toy Birthday Bash** Suggested Donation: \$10. Jim Toy Community Center, 720 Norris St., **Ypsilanti**. 734-995-9867. [www.Jimtoycenter.org](http://www.Jimtoycenter.org)

### Saturday, April 16

**Never Forget - Family Members of Victims and Victims Too One Mile Walk** 12 p.m. Spotting the nation's response to victims of crime; honoring the victims and their families. Part of National Crime Victims' Right Week. Detroit Police Department, 12800 Kelly Road, **Detroit**. 313-596-1023.

**Deuxieme Vie Productions** An evening of fashion, music, dancing and unexpected surprises. Tickets: \$25-55. Deuxieme Vie Productions, 2900 E. Grand Blvd, **Detroit**. [deuxiemevieproductions.com](http://deuxiemevieproductions.com)

### Sunday, April 17

**100 Years at Cass and Forest** Historic bus and bicycle tour tracing Unitarian and Universalist roots from the 1830s when free thinkers first began to dream of a liberal religious denomination in Detroit. TICKET PRICES: \$10-20. First Unitarian-Universalist Church, 4605 Cass, **Detroit**. 313-833-9107. [uudetroitcentennial@gmail.com](mailto:uudetroitcentennial@gmail.com) [www.eventbrite.com/first-unitarian-universalist-church-of-detroit-3290690712](http://www.eventbrite.com/first-unitarian-universalist-church-of-detroit-3290690712)

## MUSIC & MORE

### Classical

**UMS "Jerusalem String Quartet"** Tickets: \$26-\$60. Rackham Auditorium,

915 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. April 8. 734-764-2538. [ums.org/performance/jerusalem-quartet/](http://ums.org/performance/jerusalem-quartet/)

### Concerts

**UMS "Bavarian Radio Orchestra"** Tickets: \$12-65. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. April 16. 734-764-2538. [www.Ums.org/performance/bavarian-radio-orchestra/](http://www.Ums.org/performance/bavarian-radio-orchestra/)

**UMS "Mnozil Brass"** Tickets: \$10-42. Hill Auditorium, 825 North University Ave., Ann Arbor. 7:30 a.m. April 14. 734-764-2538. [ums.org/performance/mnozil-brass/](http://ums.org/performance/mnozil-brass/)

### Film & Video

**Michigan Theater "CineManga Film Series"** Different anime or Japanese film each Wednesday night. State Theater, 233 State St., Ann Arbor. Jan. 13 - April 27. 734-668-8397. [www.Michtheater.org](http://www.Michtheater.org)

### Other

**Pages in the Parlor Book Talk Series "Detroit in World War II"** Free admission. Live music at 6:45 p.m. Governor Warner Mansion parlor, 33805 Grand River, Farmington. 7 p.m. April 7. 248-474-5500 ext. 22. [www.Facebook.com/governor.mansion](http://www.Facebook.com/governor.mansion)

### Shows

**The Fillmore Detroit** "Welcome to Night Vale" Tickets: \$27.50. The Fillmore

Detroit, Detroit. 8 p.m. April 8. [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

## THEATER

### College/University Theater

**Thoroughly Modern Millie** Tickets: \$6-20. Western Michigan University, University Theatre, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. April 8 - April 17. 269-387-7222. [www.Wmu.edu](http://www.Wmu.edu)

### Professional

**If/Then** A new musical. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Through April 10. 313-872-1000. [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

**The Hung Man** Tickets: \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Through April 25. 248-545-5545. [www.TheRingwald.com](http://www.TheRingwald.com)

## ART 'N' AROUND

**DIA "Dance! American Art 1830-1960"** The exhibition is organized by the DIA and presents more than 90 paintings, sculptures, photographs and costumes brought together for the first time to celebrate and explain the important place of dance in American culture. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. March 20 - June 12. 313-833-7900. [www.Dia.org](http://www.Dia.org)

**Flint Institute of Arts "From Heart to Hand: African American Quilts from the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts"** Throughout history, quilts have held an important and cherished place in our culture, particularly in the American South. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Jan. 24 - April 10. 810-234-1695. [www.Flintarts.org](http://www.Flintarts.org)

**Lawrence Street Gallery "Exposures: Photography '16"** Lawrence Street Gallery presents its annual juried show. Categories for prizes include Best of Show, first place in color, black and white and experimental/alternative. Juror is Rob Kangas, Program Coordinator of the Photography program at Oakland Community College's Royal Oak campus. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. April 3 - April 30. 248-544-0394. [www.Lawrencestreetgallery.com](http://www.Lawrencestreetgallery.com)

**robert kidd gallery "Laurie Tennent"** Botanicals: Intimate portraits robert kidd gallery, 107 Townsend St., Birmingham. April 9 - May 6. 248-642-3909. [www.Robertkiddgallery.com](http://www.Robertkiddgallery.com)

## Editor's Pick

Head out to West Michigan this month to see Western Michigan University perform "Thoroughly Modern Millie" – the toe-tapping, Tony Award-winning musical. The show will play April 8-17. Based on the 1967 film of the same name, "Thoroughly Modern Millie" opened on Broadway in April 2002.

It's the Roaring Twenties, and young Millie Dillmount has just arrived in New York City, a place filled with frisky flappers, dashing leading men and a dragon lady of a villainess. Millie has dreams of being a successful, modern woman in Manhattan -- and then she meets Jimmy, a handsome man making his way through the Big Apple on his wits.



Performances of The University Theatre's production of "Thoroughly Modern Millie" will be held 7:30 p.m. on April 8, 9, 14 and 16; 8 p.m. April 15; and 2 p.m. April 10 and 17 in Shaw Theatre located inside of the Gilmore Theatre Complex on WMU's campus. Tickets are \$6-20. For more information, visit [www.wmutheatre.com](http://www.wmutheatre.com)



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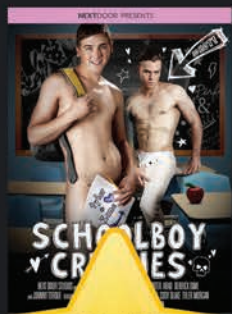
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## Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

### Bella Thorne's all grown up and ready for 'Babysitter' action

Modeling since the age of 6 weeks and acting since the age of 6 years, Bella Thorne was never going to let a Disney Channel sitcom define her. She was one of the stars of that network's kid-friendly "Shake It Up," but now she's 18 and ready to take on adult roles. And if the actor's own description of her upcoming thriller, "The Babysitter," is any indication, her career is going to get very adult very fast. According to Thorne, she will be involved in a same-sex encounter in that film, a project she calls "controversial." And when that's wrapped up, she's taking a role in the new movie from queer Canadian auteur Xavier Dolan. In "The Death and Life of John F. Donovan," she'll play Jessica Chastain's sister and co-star alongside Kit Harington, Nicholas Hoult, Kathy Bates, Thandie Newton, and Natalie Portman. The story involves the dark side of fame, fandom and scandals that arise from both, a subject most actors know plenty about.



Bella Thorne

### Viola Davis takes 'Custody' to Tribeca

Writer-director James Lapine is a man with three Tony Awards, one of them for Best Book of a Musical for "Into The Woods." But he hasn't directed a theatrically released feature film since 1993's Michael J. Fox vehicle, "Life with Mikey." No matter, he stays busy, most recently as a co-director of the HBO documentary "Six by Sondheim." And now his next film, "Custody," will take a bow at the Tribeca Film Festival. Starring Viola Davis as a family court judge, the cast includes Hayden Panettiere, Ellen Burstyn, and Catalina Sandino Moreno as women whose lives intersect in the context of various custody battles. There are some men here, too, like Raul Esparza, Tony Shalhoub and Dan Fogler, as well as a bit of currently unspecified queer content, but you'll have to watch the movie to learn about all that. It should open sometime later this year.

### Coming soon: 'Check It,' the LGBT gang documentary

The idea of "bashing back" is often more of a wish than a reality, especially when individual queer people find themselves outnumbered, experiencing violence at the hands of more than one non-LGBT abuser. But in Washington, D.C., a group of young friends between the ages of 14 and 22 decided that enough was enough. They formed Check It, which may be the first organized LGBT gang, a crew of young queer people of color who keep each other safe. They aren't afraid of fighting back against their attackers with the same aggression they've been victims of themselves; nor are they afraid of the camera, cooperating with documentary filmmakers Dana Flor and Toby Oppenheimer ("The Nine Lives of Marion Berry") for their project also known

as "Check It." The movie, which premieres soon at the Tribeca Film Festival, explores the family dynamic of the gang and follows them as they build their own fashion business in the hopes of moving up and out of poverty and violence. Watch out for this one; it's sure to start a few heated debates.

### Russell Tovey makes 'The Pass'

We assume the title of the new movie, "The Pass," refers to several of that word's definitions. In the British production, "Looking" star Russell Tovey plays a professional footballer ("soccer player" to you) struggling to come out of the closet and failing. So basically, he's passing balls on the field, making passes at guys off the field and, since his character is afraid to deal with his own sexuality and would prefer not to be known as gay, he's also passing for heterosexual. The debut feature from filmmaker Ben A. Williams — one that knows its target audience very well and does not neglect to put the actors in their underwear, so thanks, movie — "The Pass" also stars "EastEnders" regular Arinze Kene. It's already available to be seen across the Atlantic, which means we'll get it over here, eventually.

Romeo San Vicente bends it like (Victoria) Beckham. He can be reached care of this publication or at [DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com](mailto:DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com).



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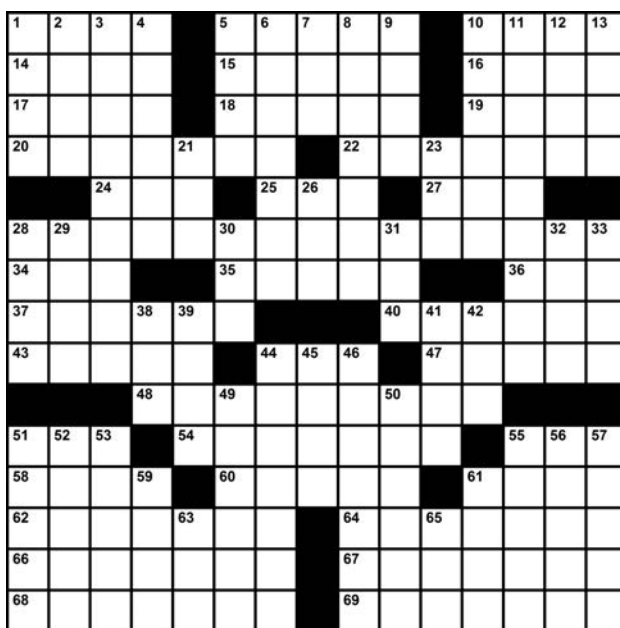
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## Q Puzzle



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### Across

- 1 With 28-Across, TV series with explicit lesbian content that NBC hopes to reboot  
5 With 62-Across, actress of this puzzle's theme  
10 With 64-Across, actress of this puzzle's theme  
14 Club for Spencer-Devlin  
15 Pisa place  
16 Tennis stadium in Queens  
17 Zips  
20 Cause lingering anxiety  
22 De-balls  
24 Composer Rorem  
25 "The Name of the Rose" writer  
27 Title for Derek Jacobi  
28 See 1-Across  
34 Tarzan portrayer Ron  
35 Pears of a gay pair  
36 Pro partner  
37 Amanda of "Married...With

18 Hot to trot

19 Tobacco wad

20 Cause lingering anxiety

22 De-balls

24 Composer Rorem

25 "The Name of the Rose" writer

27 Title for Derek Jacobi

28 See 1-Across

34 Tarzan portrayer Ron

35 Pears of a gay pair

36 Pro partner

37 Amanda of "Married...With

Children"

40 Em or Mame

43 "John Brown's Body" writer

44 Lending letters

47 Witherspoon of "Cruel Intentions"

48 Sidekick of 1-Across

51 "J. Edgar" org.

54 Moby Dick, to Ahab

55 Female flyer

58 Be deficient in

60 You wait for him to come on stage

61 Facetious "I see"

62 See 5-Across

64 See 10-Across

66 Elton John's "You Got to Love

"

67 Makes potent

68 Looked like Rupert Everett in "Inspector Gadget"

69 Firing point for neurons

12 Burn a bit

13 Bow source in "Robin Hood - Men in Tights"

21 "Big Daddy" Amin

23 Org. for your first mate

26 Von Trapp's rank

28 Jim who wrote "MacArthur Park"

29 Protected, to seamen

30 Not closed, to Shakespeare

31 "Got a Rainbow" lyricist Gershwin

32 Frida's half-dozen

33 Opponent of Tinkerbell

38 Gas station abbr.

39 Ollie's partner

41 [LesbianNation.com](http://LesbianNation.com) and [Gay.com](http://Gay.com)

42 Born, in gay Paree

44 With thick plates

45 Like a Piper in a fairy tale

46 Puts a new bottom on

49 "Out!"

50 Tedious list

51 Clean with string

52 Painter Francis

53 "\_\_\_ to bury Caesar ..."

55 Impudent kid

56 Boobs or butts

57 Choreographer Bob

59 Trick joint, maybe

61 "Dark Angel" star Jessica

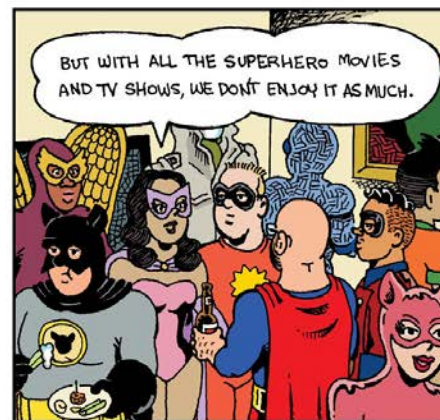
63 Edvard Grieg's land (abbr.)

65 Chinese AIDS activist \_\_\_ Yan Hai

Find solution to this puzzle at  
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