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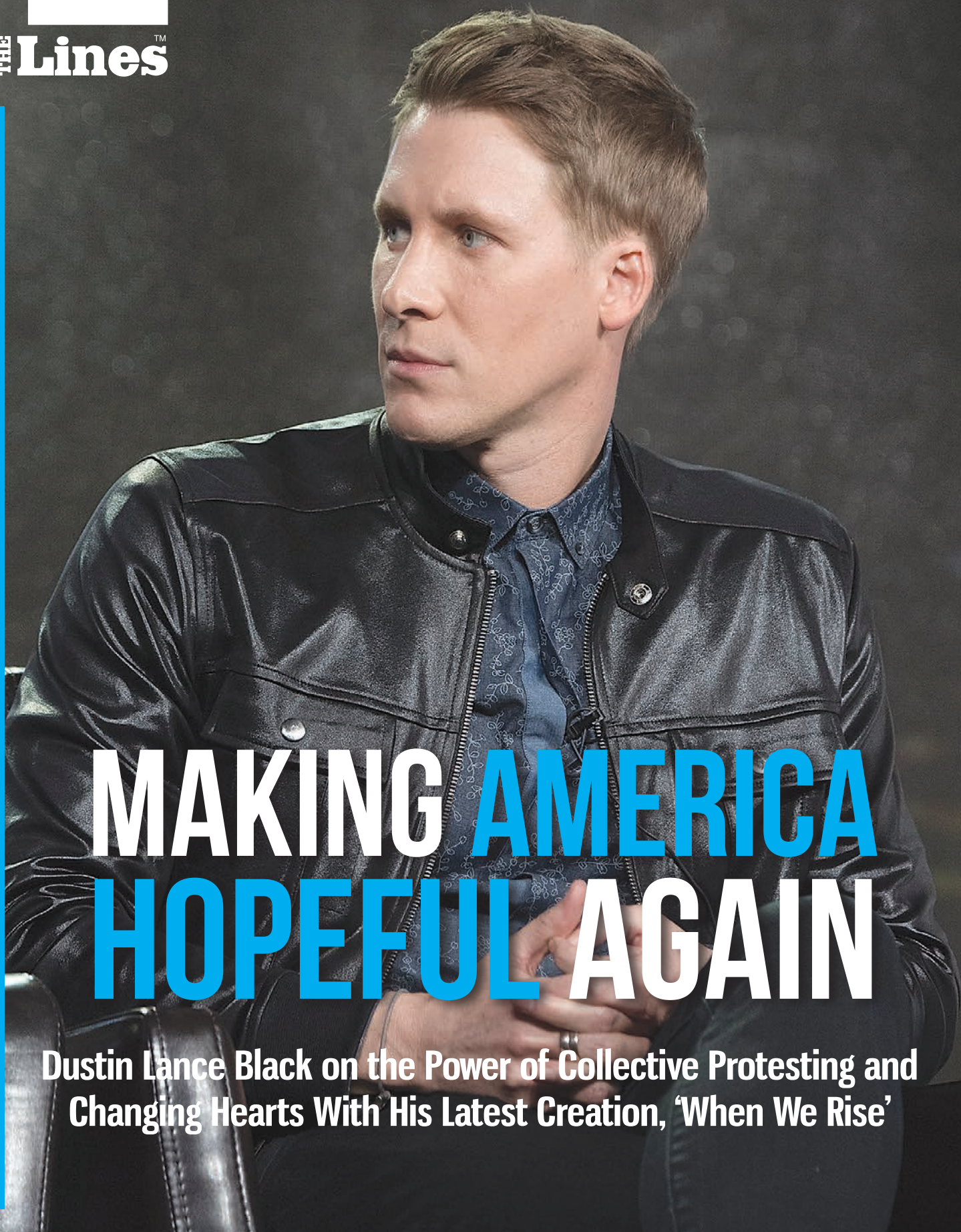
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# MAKING AMERICA HOPEFUL AGAIN

**Dustin Lance Black on the Power of Collective Protesting and Changing Hearts With His Latest Creation, 'When We Rise'**



## YOU MATTER AND SO DOES YOUR HEALTH

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DESCOVY is a prescription medicine that is used together with other HIV-1 medicines to treat HIV-1 in people 12 years and older. DESCOVY is not for use to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection. DESCOVY combines 2 medicines into 1 pill taken once a day. Because DESCOVY by itself is not a complete treatment for HIV-1, it must be used together with other HIV-1 medicines.

### DESCOVY does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.

To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses, you must keep taking DESCOVY. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

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

DESCOVY may cause serious side effects:

- **Buildup of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold (especially in your arms and legs), feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large and fatty. Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turning yellow (jaundice); dark "tea-colored" urine; light-colored bowel movements (stools); loss of appetite; nausea; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight, or have been taking DESCOVY for a long time. In some cases, lactic acidosis and serious liver problems have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** DESCOVY is not approved to treat HBV. If you have both HIV-1 and HBV and stop taking DESCOVY, your HBV may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking DESCOVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health.

Ask your healthcare provider if an HIV-1 treatment that contains DESCOVY® is right for you.

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

Serious side effects of DESCOVY may also include:

- **Changes in body fat**, which can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking DESCOVY.
- **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking DESCOVY if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems**, such as bone pain, softening, or thinning, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.

The most common side effect of DESCOVY is nausea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don't go away.

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

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or have had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take**, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Other medicines may affect how DESCOVY works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Ask your healthcare provider if it is safe to take DESCOVY with all of your other medicines.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if DESCOVY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking DESCOVY.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk.

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

Please see Important Facts about DESCOVY, including important warnings, on the following page.



# LOVE

WHAT'S  
INSIDE



(des-KOH-vee)

## IMPORTANT FACTS

This is only a brief summary of important information about DESCOVY® and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and your treatment.

### MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT DESCOVY

**DESCOVY may cause serious side effects, including:**

- **Buildup of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms: feeling very weak or tired, unusual muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold (especially in your arms and legs), feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Severe liver problems**, which in some cases can lead to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms: your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark “tea-colored” urine; loss of appetite; light-colored bowel movements (stools); nausea; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** DESCOVY is not approved to treat HBV. If you have both HIV-1 and HBV, your HBV may suddenly get worse if you stop taking DESCOVY. Do not stop taking DESCOVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months.

You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight, or have been taking DESCOVY or a similar medicine for a long time.

### ABOUT DESCOVY

- DESCOVY is a prescription medicine that is used together with other HIV-1 medicines to treat HIV-1 in people 12 years of age and older. DESCOVY is **not** for use to help reduce the risk of getting HIV-1 infection.
- **DESCOVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.

### HOW TO TAKE DESCOVY

- DESCOVY is a one pill, once a day HIV-1 medicine that is taken with other HIV-1 medicines.
- Take DESCOVY with or without food.

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF DESCOVY

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

- Those in the “Most Important Information About DESCOVY” section.
- Changes in body fat.
- Changes in your immune system.
- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.
- Bone problems.

**The most common side effect of DESCOVY is nausea.**

These are not all the possible side effects of DESCOVY. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking DESCOVY.

**Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with DESCOVY**

### BEFORE TAKING DESCOVY

**Tell your healthcare provider if you:**

- Have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- Have any other medical condition.
- Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:**

- Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that should not be taken with DESCOVY.

### GET MORE INFORMATION

- This is only a brief summary of important information about DESCOVY. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- Go to [DESCOVY.com](http://DESCOVY.com) or call 1-800-GILEAD-5
- If you need help paying for your medicine, visit [DESCOVY.com](http://DESCOVY.com) for program information.



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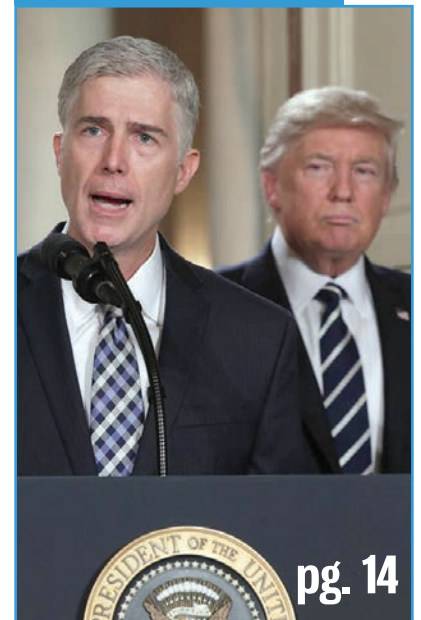
### TRUMP'S CABINET



### CREEP OF THE WEEK



### SUPREME COURT



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## NEWS

### Charges Filed in Murder of 69-year-old Holt Man

BY TODD HEYWOOD

INGHAM COUNTY - Ingham County Sheriff Scott Wrigglesworth announced that charges have been filed against Thomas Wayne Densmore Jr. of Holt in the murder of David Fluke, 69. The 39-year-old suspect was arraigned on an open murder charge in 55th District Court in Mason Tuesday afternoon.

"This has been going on for four months now. Several of our detectives have lived, breathed and eaten this case. We're very happy to have the suspect in custody," said Wrigglesworth.

Fluke's body was found in his apartment in Holt in October. Investigators ran into in their search for suspects and motive. In November, they turned to the press, including Between The Lines, seeking information on a person or persons thought to be suspects.

At the time, authorities said they were seeking an individual who may present as either masculine or feminine. They've

released a composite sketch of the suspect, whom they describe as being white, in their 20s and between five foot eight inches and six foot tall. Officials said when the suspect presents as masculine, the suspect has short blond hair. When presenting as feminine, the suspect wears a blond, shoulder length wig. They said the suspect drives a black Pontiac car.

Investigators turned to the LGBT community because they had information Fluke was in contact with the community.

"The investigation has revealed that Mr. Fluke had contact with the LGBT community and homeless/transient people in the Lansing area," a press release from the department reads. "Mr. Fluke used various social media outlets seeking male companionship."

Investigators are not releasing motive or details of the murder. Wrigglesworth said, "We do not have any other suspects in the death of Mr. Fluke at this time."

### Trump Vows to Repeal Political Limits on Churches

BY CATHERINE LUCEY

WASHINGTON (AP) - Declaring that religious freedom is "under threat," President Donald Trump vowed Feb. 2 to repeal a rarely enforced IRS rule that says pastors who endorse candidates from the pulpit risk losing their tax-exempt status.

"I will get rid of and totally destroy the Johnson Amendment and allow our representatives of faith to speak freely and without fear of retribution," Trump said during remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast, a high-profile event bringing together faith leaders, politicians and dignitaries.

Trump also defended his recent executive order on immigration, decrying "generous" immigration policies and arguing that there are people who seek to enter the country "for the purpose of spreading violence or oppressing other people based upon their faith." He also pledged to take more immigration action in the name of religious liberty.

"In the coming days we will develop a system to help ensure that those admitted into our country fully embrace our values of religious and personal liberty and that they reject any form of oppression and discrimination," Trump said.

He did not detail how he might scrap the IRS rule, which he has previously pledged to do away with. The rule, named after then-Sen. Lyndon Johnson, has been in place since 1954, but it is very rare for a church to actually be penalized. And while some conservative Christians would like to see it abolished, others, especially the younger generation, support a clear separation of church and

politics.

Repeal does not appear to have widespread public support. Eight in 10 Americans said it was inappropriate for pastors to endorse a candidate in church in a poll released last September by Lifeway Research, a religious survey firm based in Nashville.

For many religious conservatives, whose overwhelming support helped propel Trump to the White House, a more pressing issue they hope he will address is protection for faith-based charities, schools and ministries who object to same-sex marriage and abortion.

The president made no mention at the prayer breakfast of other steps he may take, saying only that religious freedom is a "sacred right."

During his remarks, Trump also took a dig at Arnold Schwarzenegger, the new host of "The Apprentice," the reality TV show Trump previously headlined. Trump said that since Schwarzenegger took over, the show's ratings have been down, and he asked the audience to "pray for Arnold." Schwarzenegger tweeted in response that he and Trump should switch jobs and Americans would sleep better.

LGBTQ groups have been anxious that the president could use his executive powers to curb legal advances they have made.

"We think it is entirely possible there could be an executive order that creates religious exemptions," said James Esseks, LGBT project director for the American Civil Liberties Union. He added that the "narrative" that Trump won't harm the LGBTQ community was "not correct."

Earlier this week, the Trump administration

See Trump Vows, page 20

*Finally, it is Time*



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# Pence Dodges on Anti-LGBT ‘Religious Freedom’ Executive Order

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

Vice President Mike Pence on Sunday began an exchange on ABC’s “This Week” with an effort to affirm support for LGBT people, but subsequently dodged on whether he thinks a religious freedom executive order is needed that could undermine LGBT rights.

Pence said the Trump administration would reject discrimination under questioning from George Stephanopoulos about a White House statement affirming the president would leave intact an Obama-era executive order barring federal contractors from engaging in anti-LGBT workplace bias.

“I think throughout the campaign, President Trump made it clear that discrimination would have no place in our administration,” Pence said. “I mean, he was the very first Republican nominee to mention the LGBTQ community at our Republican National Convention and was applauded for it. And I was there applauding with him. I think the generosity of his spirit, recognizing that in the patriot’s heart, there’s no room for prejudice is part of who this president is.”

Turning to the social conservatives whom Trump addressed last week at the National Prayer Breakfast, Pence recalled Trump’s pledge to repeal the Johnson Amendment, a 1954 law that prohibits non-profit organizations, including churches, from making political endorsements. The law, Pence said, has “put a chilling effect on free speech in religious institutions around the country.”

The words in favor of LGBT rights are striking for Pence, who has long anti-



Vice President Mike Pence on whether anti-LGBT religious freedom executive order is necessary. Photo by Gage Skidmore; courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

LGBT history that includes signing into law as Indiana governor a “religious freedom” bill that would have enabled anti-LGBT discrimination.

But Pence declares support for LGBT rights as a draft executive order – apparently from Trump administration – is circulating among federal advocacy groups that would enable anti-LGBT discrimination in the name of “religious freedom.” White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer denied last week Trump would sign a “religious freedom” executive order – at least for the time being – as media outlets reported Ivanka Trump and Jared

Kushner had a role in quashing it.

Asked by Stephanopoulos whether a “religious freedom” order is necessary, Pence deflected and said the president “made it clear that he wants to take action on the Johnson Amendment.”

“Back in the 1950s, the Congress passed a law that essentially threatened the tax-exempt status of churches and synagogues and religious institutions if they were seen to be involved in political expression,” Pence said. “And I have to tell you, I don’t think we’d have ever made it to these hallowed halls back in 1790 if the pulpits of this country had

been silenced from speaking about what they thought was right and wrong.”

Pence alluded to possible executive action on the Johnson Amendment, saying Trump “directed the administration to begin to look at ways, both legislatively and through executive action” to undo the law.

When Stephanopoulos asked whether no “religious freedom” order would be forthcoming aside from possible action on the Johnson Amendment, Pence dodged and said “that’ll be the purview of the president to determine whether any of that’s necessary.”

“But I will tell you for our part,” Pence said. “The focus of this administration will continue to be to have a safer America, to have a more prosperous America, and to continue to advance the president’s agenda, both on Capitol Hill and through executive action and carry that message all across the country.”

Eliel Cruz, a New York-based bisexual activist and faith organizer, said Pence is “engaging in double speak” by saying the Trump administration will support LGBT rights, but won’t rule out a “religious freedom” executive order.

“They claim they want to protect the LGBT community but then they say they want to promote the religious freedoms of evangelicals,” Cruz said. “The issue, of course, is that these so called religious freedoms impede on the rights of LGBT Americans. The two cannot exist at the same time as one infringes on the other. The Trump administration will always choose the beliefs of anti LGBT evangelicals over the dignity and rights of LGBT people.”

## Pro-LGBT Adviser Already Axed from Trump’s White House

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

A New York hedge fund manager who supports LGBT rights won’t get the previously announced role for him at the White House as a liaison to the business community, according to The New York Times.

Anthony Scaramucci, an investment firm founder who supported Trump during the presidential campaign, was tapped to take on the outreach role at the Office of Public Engagement & Intergovernmental Affairs. Initially, the role was reported as being similar to that of Valerie Jarrett, who handled LGBT issues for the Obama administration, although Scaramucci said the role would be different.

According to The New York Times, White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus and Trump’s chief strategist Steve Bannon informed Scaramucci on Wednesday he



Anthony Scaramucci. Photo by Jdarsie11, courtesy Wikimedia Commons

wouldn’t get the job, but told him they would find another role for him in the administration in the future.

It was never clear whether Scaramucci’s job would have consisted of LGBT outreach

like Jarrett conducted during the Obama administration. That seems unlikely given his role would have focused on outreach to the business community.

A Trump fundraiser, Scaramucci is a founder and co-managing partner of Skybridge Capital hedge fund and a former employee at Goldman Sachs. No stranger to plugging Trump on cable news, Scaramucci is the host of Wall Street Week on the Fox Business Network and is a regular contributor to Fox News.

In November, Scaramucci criticized the progressive movement for instituting political correctness, which he said “the average person” rejects, but nonetheless insisted he’s

a supporter of LGBT rights and has donated to the Human Rights Campaign and the American Unity PAC, a pro-LGBT Republican group.

“I’m also a gay rights activist,” Scaramucci said. “You can look it up. I’ve given to American Unity PAC, I’ve given to the Human Rights Campaign, I’m for marriage equality. And by the way, this’ll be the first American president in U.S. history that enters the White House with a pro-gay rights stance.”

On Twitter, Scaramucci also criticized North Carolina’s House Bill 2, which bars cities from enacting pro-LGBT ordinances and prohibits transgender people from using the restroom in schools and government buildings consistent with their gender identity. Scaramucci called it “shameful” and “a bill to address to non-existent problem.”



# Ryan Cites Obama's LGBT Refugee Priority to Justify Trump Policy

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) justified the portion of President Trump's refugee policy that institutes a priority for religious minorities by asserting the Obama administration prioritized refugees facing anti-LGBT persecution – an assertion one LGBT advocate says is totally wrong.



Ryan made the comments Thursday during his weekly news briefing when defending Trump's controversial executive order, which has been criticized as a Muslim ban because it prohibits people from seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States.

"This is not a Muslim ban," Ryan said. "If it were, I would be against it. We are a tolerant, pluralistic country. We are and we will be. It's really important."

Ryan recalled a bill the Republican-controlled Congress passed in 2015 that would have banned Syrian refugees from entering the United States amid civil war and atrocities committed by the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq. Forty-seven House Democrats voted in favor of that legislation, including gay Reps. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Sean Patrick Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.), who's bisexual.

"The bill we passed last year, if you recall, after the Paris shooting, it became clear to us that one of the terrorists infiltrated the refugee population coming from Syria," Ryan said. "So, we wanted to make sure that that didn't happen in this country. That's just sort of National Security 101."

Ryan said the bill came about after lawmakers asked government officials if they could vet Syrian refugees to ensure terrorist attacks like the one in Paris wouldn't happen in the United States and they said, "No. We Can't." Despite Ryan's words, the Obama administration insisted refugees go through an extreme vetting process removing anyone with potential ties to terrorism.

"And so that's why we passed legislation with 289 votes – a big, bipartisan bill saying let's this pause this program until we can figure out how to get it right," Ryan said. "That's effectively what this is about."

The Trump order bars Syrian refugees indefinitely and more generally places a 120-day ban on refugees entering the United States pending review, but when the review is completed institutes a preference for refugees seeking asylum from religious persecution.

Ryan asserted that policy isn't a religious test – which may be unconstitutional – by

asserting the Obama administration made a priority for refugees facing anti-LGBT persecution.

"Presidents always and often put preferences in refugee populations," Ryan said. "I think President Obama had one for sexual orientation. They didn't call that a sexual-orientation test. He put a preference in for sexual orientation."

Ryan made the case a priority for refugees facing religious persecution makes sense because religious minorities, such as Christians in the Middle East as well as Sunni Muslims in Shia countries are being targeted.

"So there's nothing wrong in saying we're going to take into account minority religious persecution with our refugee situation," Ryan concluded.

In 2015, then-White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest indeed stated LGBT people facing persecution overseas would be a priority for refugees coming into the United States, but one of many priority classifications of people, including race and religion.

Earnest made the remarks in response to a request from LGBT advocates led by the Organization for Refuge, Asylum & Migration, or ORAM, to set aside 500 slots for LGBT people facing persecution in the 10,000 additional Syrian refugees former President Obama wanted in the United States.

"There are no quotas that are set aside, but the process that we have implemented does prioritize the cases of those who have been subjected to torture, including like the torture that you described, or might have been singled out for their status as a minority, whether that's a racial minority or an ethnic minority or a religious minority, or even somebody – an LGBT person," Earnest said.

Neil Grungras, executive director of ORAM, said "there is no fact" in Ryan's remarks defending Trump's immigration order because LGBT people never in fact received a priority.

"It is true that the Obama administration's 2011 memorandum on LGBT rights worldwide set out several areas of focus including LGBT refugees and asylum seekers," Grungras said. "However the administration never gave priority of any kind to LGBT refugees. The State Department's refugee bureau consistently declined to set out a special category for this extremely vulnerable group and also declined to set out a quota or target number. Such was the response to ORAM's petition calling for admission of 500 LGBT refugees."

Of the more than 70,000 refugees the Obama administration admitted to the United States last year, Grungras estimated fewer than 200 came in under the LGBT social group category.

**SATURDAY**  
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# National LGBT Radio Program Finds a Home at MSU

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

If you ask Marc Sophos what his favorite episode of OutCasting is, he'll have trouble picking just one.

"There are a couple," Sophos said, OutCasting's executive producer. "In 2013 The Boy Scouts of America were considering a partial listing of their ban of gay scouts and we did a documentary. It was some of the deepest journalism that anybody did on that subject."

That episode, number 17, was the first that came to Sophos' mind, but hardly stands alone on the list of his top picks.

"We also did a first-person account by an asexual teen, in the late summer of 2015," Sophos said.

"We did another program, I think it was in 2014, about binational couples ... the way we were using the term, binational couples referred to a same-sex couple, one member of which was a citizen of the United States, and the other was not."

OutCasting is a nationally distributed LGBT radio program founded in 2011 by Sophos. Affiliated with The Pacifica Network, it is syndicated on over 45 public radio stations, and has since covered dozens of topics relating to everything from marriage equality to 'debunking the "ex-gay" movement.' It has also featured prominent members of the LGBT community like Michelangelo Signorile of The Huffington Post and Olympian Greg Louganis. What is arguably most impressive however, is that until recently it was produced exclusively by New York high school students.

Sophos eventually expanded production into New York City to include college-aged contributors, but found that he wanted to grow the program even further; in terms of content production and demographics.

"We realized that we were presenting LGBTQ youth experiences and perspectives, only from the suburban New York City area, where the experience of growing up LGBTQ can be very different from how it is to grow up LGBTQ in other parts of the country," Sophos said. "With the show now heard all over the country, we wanted the show



MSU OutCasters pictured left to right: Jay Artemis Hull, Lucy Angers, Kayl Black. Photo courtesy of Eve Kucharski

in essence, to be sourced more nationally, from a greater number of places."

And so, it was last February, that OutCasting officially came to Sophos' alma mater, Michigan State University. The ultimate goal being to not only teach students real-life journalistic skills, but to open up a public, accessible discourse about LGBT issues. Something that Sophos feels is too seldom discussed openly, especially by youths who might feel unable to discuss them at home.

"It's rare, and it's unfortunate that it's rare," Sophos said. "As we all know, growing up LGBTQ and isolated can be one of the most horrible things to happen."

Fortunately, the MSU OutCasting bureau seems far from it. It has managed to draw a steady stream of volunteers across a variety of majors in the months since its inception, and currently sits comfortably at four main contributors. One of these members is 20-year-old linguistics and Spanish major Lucy Angers.

"I joined OutCasting a couple of months ago. I was really interested in getting involved because I'm very into podcasts and public radio and that kind of thing, and I wanted to see how that worked, what goes into that and learn some new skills," Angers said. "I'm also interested in queer issues and learning

about that as well. I like meeting new people and gaining new skills."

Though production began last fall, both LGBT MSU students and allies are encouraged to join.

Sophos stressed that options to contribute exist for even those individuals who are wary about revealing their sexual orientation on air through the use of pseudonyms, allowing members to produce content off-air and more.

Episodes of OutCasting airing locally can be found through The Pacifica Network's weekly, decentralized radio program "Sprouts: Radio from the Grassroots." OutCasting produces anywhere from six to eight episodes annually, but seeks to become a monthly program.

"Which is one of the other reasons that we want to have these other bureaus, because we need to increase the number of programs we do so that we can expand beyond Pacifica into NPR type stations," Sophos said. "What I hope eventually will happen, is that the MSU bureau will thrive to such a degree that you can start bringing area high school students."

*OutCasting is also available as a Podcast which can be listened to directly at MFPG.org. Information on becoming an OutCaster can be found at outcastingmedia.org/msu.*

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# Help Restore Freedom House Detroit Funding

BY MICHAEL ODOM, VICE PRESIDENT,  
MARX LAYNE & COMPANY

**DETROIT** – As the nation reels from President Trump’s recent immigration ban, a decades-old Detroit organization providing critical services to refugees risks closing its doors after the loss of funding from the federal government. Freedom House Detroit is the only organization in the U.S. providing shelter, legal services and comprehensive social services at no charge and all under one roof for asylum seekers – refugees from around the world who are fleeing violence and persecution due to their political beliefs, religious affiliation, nationality, race or sexual orientation.

Located in a former convent near the foot of the Ambassador Bridge, Freedom House has served asylum seekers from across the globe since 1983. Last year, Freedom House served 136 men, women and children from 26 countries, mainly from sub-Saharan Africa, as well as Latin America and the Middle East. They arrive at all times of the day or night, often with nothing more than the clothes they are wearing and a few belongings. The situations they are escaping are unspeakable - indeed, one of Freedom House’s services is intensive counseling to help residents deal with the trauma they have endured.

“It begins with a knock on the door,” says Deborah Drennan, Freedom House’s executive director. “It may be a man, a woman or an entire family. We invite them in, feed them, give them a place to sleep. In the morning, we begin the long process of applying for asylum in a country where they can find safety and begin a new life.”

For 20 years, more than half of Freedom House’s budget has come through funding from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. In December 2016, Freedom House was informed that its HUD grant would not be renewed due to shifting priorities. The organization’s current HUD grant expires March 31. Freedom House is appealing the decision, but must find alternative sources of funding while the appeal

moves forward - and in the event that the rejection still stands.

The rejection comes despite the fact that Freedom House is one of Detroit’s most successful HUD grantees - 93 percent of Freedom House’s clients exit the program into permanent, independent housing. Applicants are carefully screened to verify eligibility for political asylum. An exceptional 86 percent of Freedom House Detroit clients are able to achieve political asylum status - much higher than the national average. Gainfully employed, they move into the community and build a new life where they can live safely or, as Freedom House’s motto says, “where they can breathe free.”

Detroit has long been a beacon for asylum seekers due to its proximity to Canada. Services provided by Freedom House include temporary housing, food, and clothing; medical and behavioral health services; employment training, English as a Second Language and educational classes; and legal assistance in achieving political asylum status.

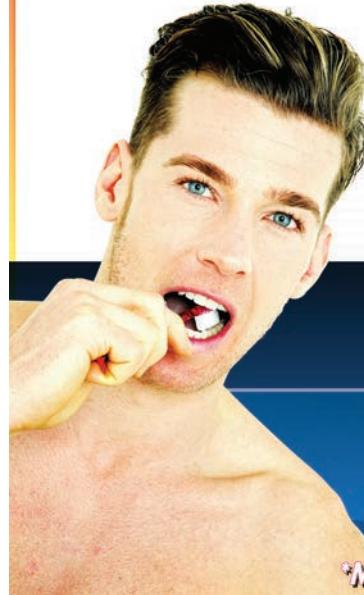
Freedom House is calling on the community for support so they can continue these critical services. Their goal is to raise \$260,000 in the next three months. They are also in need of gift cards to local retailers such as Target, Meijer, Kroger. Freedom House will continue to provide full services to current residents but have stopped accepting new U.S. cases until their financial situation is stabilized and, sadly, have already had to turn away refugees in search of a safe place to stay.

Organizations that believe in the Freedom House mission are stepping up. Freedom House recently received a \$25,000 contribution from the HOPE Fund (Helping Others through Partnerships and Education) in Southeast Michigan. Members of the community can help by signing the Petition to HUD: Restore Freedom House Funding <http://bit.ly/savefreedomhouse> launched to appeal the decision.

To make a contribution or for more information about the Freedom House, visit their website [www.freedomhousedetroit.org](http://www.freedomhousedetroit.org).

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## Detroit's Black History Month Celeb

# Parting Glances

OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

When Detroit-born, Cass Tech graduate Bernard Johnson died, age 60 in 1997, the New York Times carried a quarter-page obit celebrating his life as “a Renaissance man in dance.”

Little bigger than a metronome minute – at 5-foot-4 – he started dancing at age 11. We became friends during our CT senior year, and were part of an integrated black/white circle of gay art and music students who often gathered after class to “dish” and let our hair down at a nearby Dunkin’ Donuts Shop in downtown Detroit.

(As art students we were free to roam all seven floors, freehand drawing in pencil and charcoal, mastering the intricacies of one- and two-point perspective. During warm weather we sketched, painted watercolors, socialized in shady nearby Cass Park.)

Bernard Johnson majored in fashion design, and was much admired for renderings of furs, fabrics, dresses and accessories. In the late-1950s there were few black CT students majoring in fashion design.

He was also known as an interpreter of ballet and modern dance, invited by our senior art/design instructor Donald Thrall to perform for an all-school talent extravaganza.

**Bernard Johnson and I became friends during our Cass Tech senior year, and were part of an integrated black/white circle of gay art and music students who often gathered after class to “dish.”**

Bernard wore a discreetly brief costume, and his body was painted a shimmering gold. When he stepped stage center into the spotlight, there was an expectant hush among the 1,500 students gathered in the balconied auditorium.

He paused. Struck an elegant pose. Smiled expectantly. Snapped into stunning. Full! No-let-up! Choreographic mastery!

Music was Les Baxter’s LP recording of “Le Sacre Du

Sauvage.” Live bongo drummers drummed Bernard through each flashing movement. Performance was primitive. Limber. Elastic. Gleamingly muscular! When he took several well-deserved bows, sweating glitter from an energetic and orgiastic cadence, everyone stood, whistled, applauded.

Though we didn’t know it then, this was a preview performance for a long and successful career in dance, choreography, film set and costume design, stretching over 40 wonderfully creative years.

“I believe in the power of metaphysics,” he once confided to friends. “Be the best. Associate only with the best. These are the principles I was raised on.” He was fun company. Just a bit “swish” and campy. He carried his books like a well-bred debutante.

But he was not to be trifled with, as a classmate who called him “Miss Thing” during bell change soon found out.

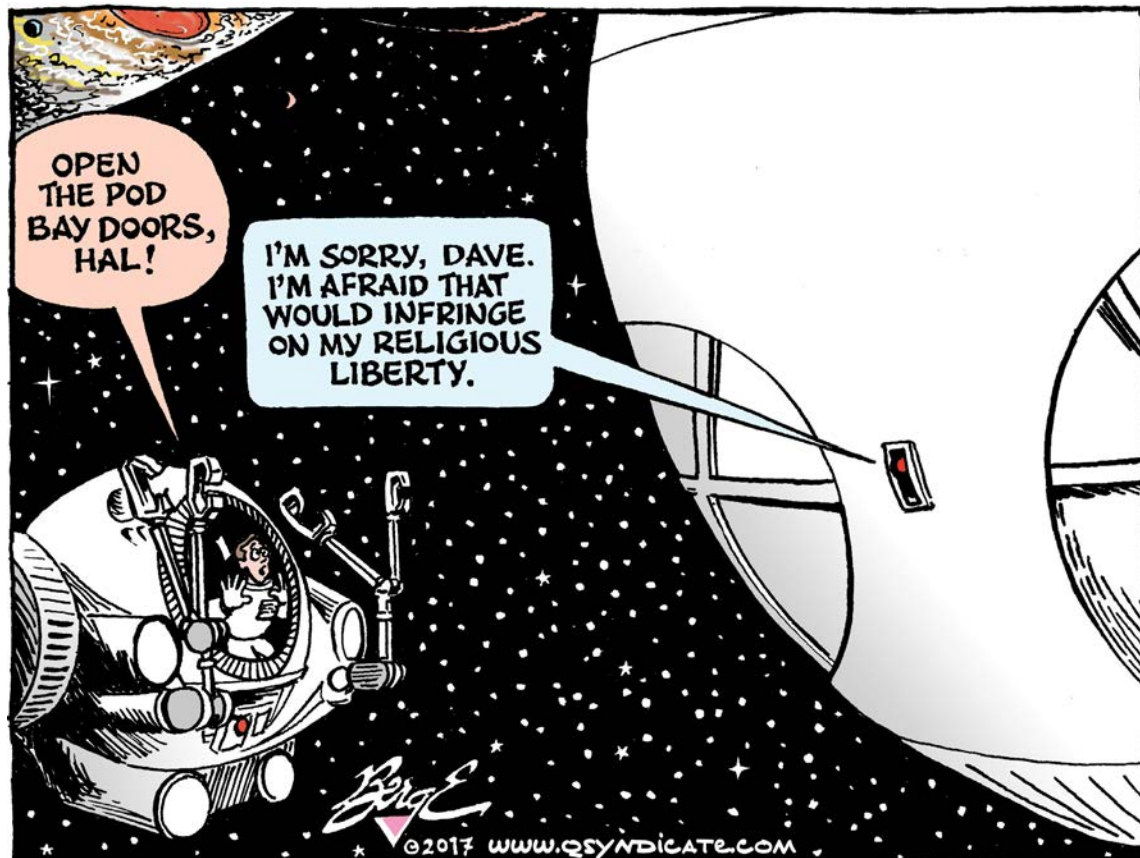
Bernard – who had an impeccable sense of timing – knew just when, where and how to settle a score. In the midst of our design class he loudly confronted the offending dimwit. “If it’s not too much trouble to put that brain you’re sitting on in gear, I’d like words with you.”

We held our breath. One by one he read the guy’s beads. We savored every delicious put down.

His accolades are many: fantasy costume designs; many Broadway musical performances; teaching at the University of California at Irvine; induction into the Black Film Makers Hall of Fame; close friendships with Josephine Baker, Judy Garland, pre-controversial Bill Cosby, Lena Horne, Harry Belafonte, Aretha Franklin; international tours, command performances for King Hassan II of Morocco.

For us CT art students – straight, gay, questioning – Bernard Johnson, though short of stature, was someone we all looked up to.

Charles@pridesource.com



## Viewpoint

# Rebuilding a Life in One's True Gender



BY VAL BRALT

In the spring of 1949, a doctor examined a newborn baby and proclaimed “it’s a boy”. That simple statement defined the games and toys I ought to play with, the friends I ought to have, the way I ought to talk, dress, walk, the jobs I ought to have and who I ought to marry.

Growing up I learned all I knew about masculinity from my dad, teachers and church. On TV, in books and in movies they were cowboys, soldiers and cops. They were rugged, stoic, brave and unfeeling. My behavior was based on my internalized concept of a “real man.”

I tried hard to meet that concept but it was phony. I was just impersonating a man. Very few of those manly qualities were natural to me. Instead I always thought “What would a “real man” do in this situation? I would do what I ought to do, not what was in my heart.

I suffer from gender dysphoria. It is defined as a strong, persistent feelings of identification with the

opposite gender and discomfort with one’s assigned sex resulting in significant distress or impairment. It is manifest in feelings of depression, anxiety, isolation, tremors and churning stomach.

Outwardly, I had a man’s beard, mustache, short hair, flat chest & big belly and I suppressed those feelings that society deemed feminine. Internally, I was quite a mess. I had great anxiety, depression, a constant feeling of dread, panic attacks and suicidal thoughts.

My case is late onset, not beginning until I was in my late 50s. Prior to that I was too busy with family, career and activities to think about it. When life slowed down I had time to ‘connect the dots’ and eventually realized that I was something other than a man. I would go on to discover that my self image, my gender is that of a woman who happened to be born with male sex

See next page

## ► True Gender

Continued from p. 13

organs. My gender is not congruent with my sex. I would go on to transition from masculine to feminine.

My transition brought new thoughts and many conflicts as I struggled with internalized transphobia and self-loathing.

Many talks with my therapist Elana Gottfried, my close friend and trans woman Michelle Fox-Phillips, and the pastor of Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow helped me to understand that this is who I am. It's how my brain is wired. I cannot change it. The way that I am is unusual though not uncommon. It is perfectly okay - I am okay - I'm not sick - I'm transgender.

I believe that in some ways the transgender experience is similar to the homosexual experience. They are police to parolees, wealthy to welfare, in the closet to in the community, school kids to senior citizens.

Many trans women had or have hyper-masculine jobs and hobbies. They get married, have children and live a manly life to prove to others and themselves that "I'm a manly-man, not a woman." This self delusion helps in suppression of true feelings.

All have suffered greatly from gender dysphoria, some are still suffering. The lifelong exposure to society's negative attitudes toward people who are gender non-conforming develops similar attitudes within those gender non-conforming people. They internalize those attitudes and struggle with feelings that they are sick, abominable, perverted, delusional, sinful, dirty and weak. The internal conflict between their sense of gender and their internalized self-loathing is unrelenting. They may additionally suffer from social ostracism and micro aggression, to assault and death. They try to deny their gender identity and become 'normal' but fail time after time, reinforcing their feelings of weakness and worthlessness.

Alcohol or drugs are a common way to cope and may lead to addiction and additional social problems. The national rate of attempted

Many trans women had or have hyper-masculine jobs and hobbies. They get married, have children and live a manly life to prove to others and themselves that "I'm a manly-man, not a woman." This self delusion helps in suppression of true feelings.

suicide is about 3 percent. For those who are transgender it is forty-two percent, fourteen times the national average. The rate among adolescents without family support is higher.

Common difficulties for those who accept their gender identity and transition include: Marital discord which often leads to separation or divorce. Losing their home due to a landlord's legal right to evict them. Homelessness, which is bad enough for adults, is tragic for adolescents who lack the skills to survive on their own. Lost jobs and ruined careers. These too are legal consequence of employers who object to employing transgender people. The jobless adults and even adolescents may turn to survival sex.

**THOSE WHO CLAIM IT IS A CHOICE, LIFESTYLE, OR REVERSABLE ARE SADLY UNINFORMED**

Counseling and transition are the only effective cures for gender dysphoria.

Those who successfully transition then go on to recover from their losses and rebuild their life in their true gender. They are much happier than they were before they began transition, and claim it is something they should have done long before.

*Val Bralt frequently attends MCCDetroit where she is a personable resource of inspiration and information on issues concerning the trans community. This BTL op-ed is taken from a Sunday talk she gave recently.*

# Creep of the Week

## Milo Yiannopoulos

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI



"Free speech" doesn't mean that organizations or institutions have to give you a platform to amplify your voice. Especially when you are basically a hateful dick sneeze.

We're all about free speech here in America. Well, kind of. So let me amend that: we like to think we're all about free speech here in America. As a friend put it, "I'm proud to live in a country where Donald Trump can say the things he says, but I'm ashamed to live in a country that, after hearing those things, elected him President."

But he is. President. As disgusting as that is. And he, like a lot of racists and bigots, says a lot of terrible things under the guise of "free speech." But he, like many others with hateful ideologies, seems to think that his words don't warrant scrutiny or consequences. But that's not how this whole free speech thing works.

Which brings me to Milo Yiannopoulos, who is, essentially, a professional hate-tumor. He's young, handsome, white, and gay and says super outrageous hateful shit. And conservatives love him. College conservative groups love to invite him to come spew invective at their campuses across the country.

And that hasn't been going very well lately. He was slated to speak at UC Berkeley on Feb. 1 but protests, during which some protesters became violent, forced the school to cancel.

Now, if you're a Republican, you'll likely point to the violence (broken windows and fire at a Bank of America, for example) and dismiss the reason for the protest all together while also bemoaning the loss of respect for "free speech."

But here's the thing. "Free speech" doesn't mean that organizations or institutions have to give you a platform to amplify your voice. Especially when you are basically a hateful dick sneeze.

You don't have to do much digging to find racist and sexist shit Yiannopoulos has said. But a very good example is a speech he gave at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee in December of

2016 where he showed the crowd the name and photo of a specific transgender student at the school and proceeded to mock her. "He got into the women's room the way liberals always operate, using the government and the courts to weasel their way where they don't belong," Yiannopoulos said. He then declared that this student wasn't succeeding in being a "passing tranny."

"The way that you know he's failing is I'd almost still bang him," Yiannopoulos said, purposefully using the incorrect pronouns.

His argument, essentially, is that this student was a threat to women on campus because she was trans and used the same locker rooms. Not exactly a new argument from the right, but this time it was, literally, personal.

Imagine that you are this student for a minute. Well, actually, let's look at her words: "I did not anticipate being specifically targeted and called out in the way he did. I hadn't said anything or made even the slightest disruption: he had his harassment of me planned out well in advance," she wrote in a letter to the school's Chancellor. "I have never, ever, ever been more terrified in my life of being outed. Ever."

Nope. Free speech doesn't mean that you get a free pass to terrorize a trans student on campus because you happen to have a "differing viewpoint" about whether her life is worth anything or not.

Free speech is a fundamental right, sure, but the fact that student conservative and Republican groups are paying Yiannopoulos to spew his fascist garbage says an awful lot about what it means to be a conservative Republican these days. And by the looks of the protests against not just Yiannopoulos but also against Donald Trump, Americans will choose equality and justice over those who speak out against them.

## Michigan Non Profit Resource

### Have You Experienced Discrimination?

If you or someone you know has experienced discrimination, intimidation, harassment or violence because of sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity,

contact Equality Michigan's Department of Victim Services at :

**report@equalitymi.org or call 1-866-962-1147**

Equality Michigan is working with state legislators to update the Ethnic Intimidation Act to include proper protections for the gay and transgender community.

To get involved in the movement for better hate crimes law, contact [policy@equalitymi.org](mailto:policy@equalitymi.org).

**Hundreds more resources can be found at**  
**[www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com)**

# LGBT Activists: 'Grave Concerns' About Gorsuch

BY LISA KEEN

Of the three judges President Trump was said to be considering for the current vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, he chose the one who is the most conservative and least likely to be concerned about equal rights for LGBT people.

Trump on Jan. 31 introduced federal appeals Judge Neil Gorsuch, 49, as his choice to fill the seat left vacant since last February by Justice Antonin Scalia's sudden death.

Gorsuch has argued that supporters of equal rights for same-sex couples should not be a matter of law but an issue for "elected leaders and the ballot box." As a judge on the 10th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, he wrote a concurring opinion in favor of allowing the owners of a non-religious commercial business to claim their personal religious beliefs should warrant giving their company an exemption to the Affordable Care Act's mandate that employers' health insurance plans cover contraception.

The nomination drew an historic response from Lambda Legal, which announced within minutes of Trump's announcement of Gorsuch that it would formally oppose his nomination.

"This is the first time Lambda Legal has opposed a Supreme Court nomination before a confirmation hearing," noted the Jan. 31 press release.

"We absolutely must not confirm a Supreme Court nominee who has ruled that the religious beliefs of employers can trump the law," said Lambda Chief Executive Officer Rachel Tivlen. "It is a short hop from birth control restrictions to restrictions on the intimate relationships and health care needs of LGBT people."

"Through his decisions, Judge Gorsuch has promoted a vision of a society where some religions prevail over others, and are invited to flout the law," added Tivlen. "Judge Gorsuch's judicial record is hostile toward LGBT people and his nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court is unacceptable – we oppose."

The National Center for Lesbian Rights also announced its opposition to Gorsuch Jan. 31.

"Gorsuch has embraced extreme positions far outside the mainstream of most jurists, including a dangerously radical view of religious liberty that would undermine anti-discrimination protections for LGBT people and others," said Shannon Minter, NCLR legal director. Minter said Gorsuch's views "pose a real threat to our nation's core principles of equality and freedom for all."

Janson Wu, executive director of GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders, said his organization has "grave concerns" about



Trump on Jan. 31 introduced federal appeals Judge Neil Gorsuch, 49, as his choice to fill the seat left vacant since last February by Justice Antonin Scalia's sudden death.

Gorsuch.

"Judge Gorsuch has expressed skepticism about the judiciary's role in defining and protecting constitutional liberties and freedoms that are central to LGBTQ lives, in ways that could undermine established Constitutional protections such as marriage equality and access to reproductive health care," said Wu. "He has wrongly and anemically interpreted the Constitution to make it harder for individuals to seek equal protection under the law. And he has expressed hostility to progressive movements' use of the judicial process to safeguard constitutional liberties and protections for all."

Gorsuch has been a judge for only 10 years, having been nominated in 2016 by President George W. Bush to the 10th Circuit. That circuit hears appeals from federal district courts in six states: Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Nebraska and Kansas.

Before becoming a judge, and while working as an attorney at the Washington, D.C.-based law firm of Kellogg Huber Hansen Todd Evans & Figel, Gorsuch penned an article for a conservative political magazine. In the article, published in 2005 by the National Review, Gorsuch argued that social activists, such as those who support marriage for same-sex couples, should rely on "elected leaders and the ballot box" rather than judges to secure "their social agenda."

"Liberals may win a victory on gay marriage when preaching to the choir before like-minded judges in Massachusetts," wrote Gorsuch. "But in failing to reach out and persuade the public generally, they invite exactly the sort

**Gorsuch clerked at the U.S. Supreme Court for both the author of the most notoriously hostile opinion on the rights of LGBT people and the most supportive.**

of backlash we saw in November when gay marriage was rejected in all eleven states where it was on the ballot."

Massachusetts began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples in 2004 after a state supreme court ruling and action by the state legislature.

In that same article, Gorsuch also claimed that Democrats had failed to win "a majority of the popular vote in nine out of the last ten presidential elections." He blamed this in part on Democrats having "Litigation addiction." However, he failed to explain why Republicans had also failed to win a majority of the popular vote in seven out of the previous ten presidential elections, according to Roper Center data.

## Hobby Lobby Decision

As a judge, Gorsuch wrote a concurring opinion in the 10th Circuit's ruling in favor of Hobby Lobby, a chain store that wanted exemptions to the Affordable Care Act's requirement that employer health plans cover contraception. Hobby Lobby's owners said they should have the exemption not because their store was a religious institution but because the owner held personal religious beliefs that regarded contraception as objectionable.

The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the 10th Circuit's ruling in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, allowing the store to deny coverage for contraception to their employees. Gorsuch didn't write the 10th Circuit's ruling but wrote a concurring opinion that illustrates his tendency to paint with a very broad brush followed him to the bench.

"All of us must answer for ourselves whether and to what degree we are willing to be involved in the wrongdoing of others," he wrote. And, in a sentence that today rings with considerable irony, Gorsuch added, "The [ACA] doesn't just apply to protect popular religious belief: it does perhaps its

most important work in protecting unpopular religious beliefs, vindicating this nation's long-held aspiration to serve as a refuge of religious tolerance."

Lambda Legal says Gorsuch also joined a 10th Circuit opinion in 2015 that rejected arguments made by a transgender woman prisoner who sought the right to wear clothing consistent with her gender identity and to receive medical hormone treatment related to her gender identity.

The Williams Institute said Gorsuch joined an unpublished opinion while sitting temporarily on a 9th Circuit case involving a transgender person who sued her employer for refusing to allow her to use a restroom for females until after she completed gender surgery. The 9th Circuit decision, which Gorsuch joined, said the employer's concern for "restroom safety" did not constitute discrimination.

In another irony, Gorsuch clerked at the U.S. Supreme Court for both the author of the most notoriously hostile opinion on the rights of LGBT people and the most supportive. He first clerked for Justice Byron White, who, in 1986, wrote the *Bowers v. Hardwick* decision that upheld state laws banning sexual relations between adults of the same sex. When White retired in 1993, Gorsuch began clerking for Justice Anthony Kennedy. Kennedy went on to author the high court's most historic pro-LGBT decision, including *Romer v. Evans* (1996), *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), *U.S. v. Windsor* (2013), and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015).

Gorsuch is widely considered a staunch conservative in the spirit of the late Justice Scalia and, like Scalia, prefers to read the constitution in a very narrow and strict manner. Such readings often lead to the conclusion that, because the founders of this nation never contemplated the widespread acceptance of LGBT people, then the constitution could not be read to include protections for the rights of such people.

Anti-LGBT Senator Ted Cruz called Gorsuch "a home run."

But even before President Trump announced his choice of Gorsuch, U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) vowed to filibuster the nomination. Merkley, who has introduced bills seeking protections for LGBT people, said the Supreme Court seat Trump has nominated Gorsuch to is "a stolen seat." He said President Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, should have been given a confirmation hearing and vote last year. And he said Democrats "will use every lever in our power to stop this."

Senate rules require a vote of at least 60 senators to break a filibuster. Republicans hold 52 seats.

# DeVos Confirmed Despite Concerns Over Anti-LGBT Donations

BY CHRIS JOHNSON, WASHINGTON BLADE

Despite efforts from Senate Democrats and LGBT advocates to block the confirmation of Betsy DeVos as education secretary, the U.S. Senate narrowly confirmed on Tuesday President Trump's pick to the head the Department of Education with no margin for dissent.

After the Senate was evenly divided 50-50 over the confirmation of the nominee, Vice President Mike Pence had to cast the deciding vote to confirm DeVos. Observers say that marks the first time in history a vice president has had to cast tie-breaking vote to confirm a nominee to the president's Cabinet.

As expected, Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) dissented from the Republican ranks to vote "no" on DeVos. The entire Democratic caucus voted against her, including many who spoke throughout the night prior to the confirmation vote.

Forming an alliance with Democrats and teachers unions who objected to DeVos over her longtime support for school vouchers, LGBT advocates opposed DeVos based chiefly on major donations from her family's foundations to anti-LGBT groups, including Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council and the National Organization for Marriage. These groups support widely discredited "ex-gay" conversion therapy.

Among the Democrats on the Senate floor Monday criticizing DeVos was Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), who expressed concern about the DeVos family's ties to anti-LGBT organizations.

"Mrs. DeVos and her family have contributed to anti-LGBT causes and anti-women's health efforts, which are in direct conflict to the one who is supposed to lead the Department of Education," Leahy said. "How can a nominee disagree with the mission of the Department of Education and be fit to oversee that agency and promote the civil rights of schools and college campuses?"

During her confirmation hearing, DeVos rejected anti-LGBT views, saying she's "never supported" conversion therapy and the anti-LGBT donations were from her family, not her or her husband. (According to the American Federation of Teachers, a foundation run by DeVos and her husband contributed \$100,000 to the Institute for Marriage and Public Policy, which opposed same-sex marriage.)

However, she stumbled over other questions on education policy, said localities, not federal law, should govern policy for disabled students and was ridiculed for suggesting guns may be necessary in school to defend them from grizzly bear attacks.

Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) said DeVos wasn't being truthful during her confirmation hearing when she said she took no part in the

donation from her mother's foundation to Focus on the Family.

Asked about a family foundation that has donated millions of dollars to an organization promoting conversion therapy for LGBT youth, she claimed she had no involvement, which is ridiculous," DeVos said. "Even if Mrs. DeVos' own role as vice president of that foundation was a 13-year clerical error, as she now claims, she herself has donated approximately \$75,000 to support that anti-LGBT organization's work."

Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), the only out lesbian in Congress who declared her opposition to DeVos before the confirmation vote, said on the floor she's "troubled" by the DeVos family's contributions to anti-LGBT organizations.

"While she told me and several of my colleagues at her hearing that she believes all students should be treated equally, I really remain concerned about how this long history of support for these anti-LGBTQ organizations will influence a department which, over the last 8 years, has shown some tremendous leadership in supporting LGBTQ students and parents in the education system," Baldwin said.

At the helm of the Education Department, DeVos could rescind guidance from the Obama administration that interprets federal law to prohibit schools from discriminating against transgender students or denying them access to the restroom consistent with their gender identity. On the campaign trail, Trump said he'd rescind the guidance, which is currently facing legal challenges in court from conservative states.

Sen. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) narrated the story of Wendy Walsh, a mother of a gay teen named Seth who hung himself after enduring anti-gay bullying at school. After Walsh filed a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Education, the school was forced its policies to prohibit anti-gay harassment, Booker said.

Booker said DeVos expressed insufficient support for the Office of Civil Rights during her confirmation hearing, which is a factor in why he opposes her confirmation.

"Given the fears and concerns that have been expressed, I would have hoped she would have spoken directly to the work of the Office for Civil Rights to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender teens who are factually experiencing some of the highest levels of hate crimes and violence and bullying of any children in America; that she would have made some affirmation that she would be a champion for their equality, for their dignity, and the Office for Civil Rights would continue its needed work, but she didn't," Booker said.

Despite opposition from LGBT advocacy groups, DeVos has expressed support for LGBT people in the past. As former chair



The U.S. Senate narrowly confirmed Betsy DeVos as education secretary. Photo courtesy of Michael Key, Washington Blade

of the Michigan Republican Party, DeVos denounced publicly anti-gay rhetoric from Dave Agema, a fellow Michigan Republican and member of the Republican National Committee. A recent article in The New York Times revealed she aided a gay friend and his partner in adopting a child, attended a same-sex wedding and made accommodations for a transgender woman to use the woman's restroom at a Michigan Republican Party call

center.

Log Cabin Republicans stood out from other LGBT advocates during DeVos' confirmation process and supported the nominee based on this support for LGBT people.

Gregory Angelo, president of Log Cabin Republicans, said upon confirmation he's "encouraged by her confirmation and looks forward to the fresh perspective she will bring to the Department of Education."

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# Making America Hopeful Again

## Dustin Lance Black on the Power of Collective Protesting & Changing Hearts With His Latest Creation, 'When We Rise'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

**W**ith an emotionally resonant acceptance speech, Dustin Lance Black accepted the Oscar for Best Original Screenplay in 2009 for “Milk,” a powerful tribute to gay political hero Harvey Milk. Could an Emmy be next?

It's possible, even if the 42-year-old Sacramento native is too modest to admit that his latest screen ambition, “When We Rise,” the accomplished filmmaker's tremendous seven-part undertaking chronicling the progressive uprising of the '60s and '70s (premiering Feb. 27 on ABC), is certainly golden statue-worthy. Partly inspired by LGBT rights activist Cleve Jones' memoir, “When We Rise: My Life in the Movement,” the miniseries sheds light on our foremothers and -fathers who raised hell – working to combat misogyny, homophobia and racism – to create a changed world for future generations of, as the show declares, “others.”

“With this show, I measure success by whether I get a phone call from one of my Southern family members who have never talked about being gay,” Black says. “When that happens, and that conversation is started, it will have succeeded.”

And should that conversation stretch beyond Black's own parochial loved ones, its influence could be life-changing for those in the queer population who now find themselves trying to resist the oppression of Trump's America.

For that reason, “When We Rise” is shockingly relevant, especially considering its half-century-old history isn't just history – it's our current reality.

During this intimate conversation with Black, the filmmaker gets candid about the beginning of his activism at age 7, the importance of “we” in any resistance movement, and how sharing a story is the first step in changing a mind.

**Tell me how this miniseries ended up on a commercial network like ABC.**

This project started for me four years ago, when I heard a rumor that ABC was looking at optioning LGBT history properties, and I called my agent and was like, “Is that true?” Just four years before, I had to charge the development cost of “Milk” on my credit card because no one wanted to pay for it – no one was interested! So, I had made my agent book a meeting with the powers that be at ABC, to look them in the eye and see if it was true – and it was. The funny thing is, they said, “We can't afford you, but who do you think would be good to write and create something like this?” and I just laughed (laughs). Like, come on!

So, I thought, “Boy, this is an incredible opportunity to tell our LGBT story, or a part of our LGBT story, and not be preaching directly to the choir.” I had other networks that had been interested for a long time in something of this nature, and I thought, “They're gonna spend more money, they're gonna give me all the time in the world, it'll be a great experience and we'll get it absolutely right... and we're gonna turn around and preach directly to the choir and we might not change a single mind.” Here, I had a chance to tell our stories on the network that I watched as a kid, because as a kid, I grew up in the South, I grew up in the military, I grew up in a conservative home, in a Christian home, and we trusted ABC because ABC told family stories. I thought, “Well, here's a chance to finally be able to tell the story of my LGBT family to my actual family,” and that's what I set out to do. That's why I think it's remarkable that it's on ABC. We've come to a place where we can perhaps talk the same language of family between these two Americas, and perhaps change hearts and minds in a time when that seems absolutely, critically necessary.

**Did you go to the recent Women's March? And having shot a similar march for “When We Rise,” did it feel like history repeating itself?**

I'm living in London, and we certainly walked through Trafalgar Square, which was jammed with thousands of people. I have to say, I've heard the rallying cry at many marches that says, “Gay, straight, black, white, same struggle, same fight.” But usually it's either mostly black and a little white, or mostly gay and maybe a few straight, even though we chant that chant. This is the first time it truly seemed gay, straight, black, white. It was diverse. And that was, frankly, heartening.

The reason I designed this show the way I designed it was because four years ago, I was concerned that social justice movements were



Photos: ABC



becoming incredibly myopic and self-interested, forgetting that we need to work together if we're gonna get anywhere. Not understanding the intersections of our movements, losing sight of where those intersections are, and certainly forgetting the great power that we can gain by working together. So, I was worried. We were becoming divided, and it's why I insisted when designing the show that I find real people who came from other movements, not just the LGBT movement – people who came from the women's movement, the black civil rights movement, the peace movement, and the series eventually touches on immigration and healthcare.

The most important word in the struggle for equality is "we." It's why I told ABC right from the beginning when we designed the title: "We" has to be the biggest word in it. It's a word we've forgotten, and it's the answer to beating back a backlash. The key is that we have to struggle together. So, I was heartened, frankly, by the diversity I saw, not just in the march that I was physically present for here in London, but the ones I paid careful attention to on TV and online. It gives me a little bit of hope.

"When We Rise" touches on this glancingly, but I want to remind gay men that the Gay Liberation Front (of 1969) started as a group of men who were feminists because feminism says loud and clear that "gender ought not determine destiny," and that means one thing to women, but it certainly means that gay men ought to be able to love who they love regardless of gender. So, gay men need to examine why we haven't been more vocally feminist.

#### How was the idea for "When We Rise" first conceived?

I toyed with the idea for a long time. After "Milk" was over, I started to think about other stories that need to be told, and I'm doing other LGBT-themed history projects, but I always wondered, "Was there something bigger, and how would I go about doing that?" As I met people – activists – along the way, I would sort of catalog their names in my head in case I ever got the chance to do something like this, and it was ABC saying they would actually pay for a year of research to really figure out who to depict that set it in motion.

So, it was always something I wanted to do, and I thought ABC was the right home for it. So then, at great personal expense, I set out on a journey. Let me just say nobody made any money off this thing. If anything, my poor agent and business manager were sweating it as we got it to year four.

**You have Rachel Griffiths, Mary-Louise Parker and Guy Pearce, and then a terrific cast playing them in their youth. How did the casting process work for this? Did you have any of these actors**

#### in mind while researching the real-life person they're playing?

I never think about who will play the parts while I'm writing if it's based on a true story because I'm working so hard to get the real people right. Certainly, by the time I was writing the finale, I started brainstorming, and I had one dream for (lesbian women's rights activist) Roma Guy and that was Mary-Louise Parker, and I had one dream for Cleve Jones and that was Guy Pearce.

Then, I got this very emotional, beautiful phone call from Michael K. Williams (who plays Ken Jones, African-American community organizer) while I was at the airport scouting locations in San Francisco. He told me how personally meaningful the scripts were to him, and he talked about the people he lost – his friends and fellow artists in New York – when he was growing up, and I could just tell it was coming from a very personal place, so you can't beat that personal connection.

The young cast – we went out searching, and we just wanted to cast the very best people. (Transgender civil rights leader) Cecilia Chung was a really interesting one to me. I had said to my casting director that I only wanted to cast trans actors and actresses in the show to play the trans roles, and they brought up Ivory (Aquino) to play Cecilia Chung. I got a little upset with him and said, "You know, I told you it's important we make an effort and cast trans actors and actresses for these roles," and he said, "We think you need to get on the phone with Ivory," and Ivory came out to me as trans on the phone call. She's now come out to the world.

#### Why was it important for you to include actual trans actors in the trans roles?

First and foremost, when I'm casting any role, I'm gonna look for somebody who can bring a part of their experience to the role. They still have to be a great actor, so if I can't find anyone in the world who shares some experience that they're about to portray in this character, who's also a good actor, then I'll happily go for someone else. And the big surprise is, it was *not* hard to find amazing trans actors and actresses to play these parts. What was difficult was deciding who to cast because so many great tapes came in. So, I call bullshit on Hollywood if they say it's difficult. And if they think it's difficult, then they should call our casting directors because they found unbelievable trans actors and actresses, and it was actually tough to decide *who* to cast.

#### I think people have the impression it is difficult based on what they've heard from directors and casting agents, so this is refreshing to hear.

It's not true. I'll tell you what was difficult: Years ago, it was difficult to find openly gay actors to play openly gay roles – *that* was difficult. When we were doing "Milk," that's what we said we wanted to do, and the studio

See Dustin Lance Black, page 18

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“When We Rise” creator Dustin Lance Black with actors Jonathan Majors and Julian Christopher. Photo: ABC/Eike Schroter

## ► Dustin Lance Black

Continued from p. 17

gave us full permission to do that. So, we called agents and manager friends and they all said they didn’t have any gay actors or actresses, which is funny since I knew some of their clients *were* gay! (Laughs)

It was very frustrating, but thankfully that’s begun to change as well, particularly in this young generation of actors and actresses who, in one way or another, have come out on social media when they were kids and there’s no putting them back in the closet in today’s social-media age.

An interesting tidbit to share is, they also worked incredibly hard with the real people when that was possible. For both the young cast and the old cast, on my own dime, I flew up the real people to wherever we were shooting so they could be there to work with the costume department, the set design department and the actors, just to make sure we were as close to truthful as possible.

### Do you remember the first time you stood up for something you believed in?

(Ponders) My mom was paralyzed from polio since she was 7 years old. She had the use of her arms, but that was about it. So, I grew up with a severely disabled mom, and I didn’t quite know that or realize that until I was probably 7 years old, somewhere in the early years of elementary school when we started having to be out in public with strangers. The way they looked at her and the way they treated her, it ate at me.

I was an incredibly shy kid. I rarely said a word in school. But there was this student named Anthony who was severely mentally disabled, and he would get bullied constantly. I remember the time I finally stood up for him. I was very afraid, because I was a tiny little thing (laughs). And I remember trembling, but the bullies backed down. I told that story to my mom, and my mom looked me in the eyes and said, “You have a strong sense of justice – where does that come from?” And

the answer is pretty obvious: I was hiding a pretty big difference of my own, and I knew at that point that I had crushes on my guy friends and not the girls in school. Certainly, having watched my mom being treated so differently because of her difference, those sorts of moments of witness instilled a sense of justice in me.

### And now you are one of our most recognized activists.

Well, your job’s incredibly important right now. I can’t overstate how much we depend on journalists right now to stand up for the truth, so good on you.

### We both tell stories about LGBT people, and I imagine, like me, you hope that non-queers see your work and come away with a sense of just... humanity.

That’s the key, isn’t it? Listen, this show is for ABC. As a kid who grew up watching ABC in the South in a Christian, military home I knew I could show up at the dinner table with all the laws and facts and science I wanted and I wouldn’t change a single mind. You want to change a mind in that other America? You gotta lead from the heart, and you do that by telling stories, not by arguing facts or the Constitution.

So, that’s what I came armed with for “When We Rise.” I went out and did my best to find true stories – in particular, stories of families, because the family story transcends these two Americas. There’s not a lot we think we have in common right now, but both Americas have family stories, and we can both be moved by each other’s family stories. That’s why I mine family stories: the families we lost when so many of us were outed or came out, the makeshift families we had to build to survive, and eventually the families we were able to build and raise.

So, by that design, you tell an emotional story, you can change a heart; if you can change a heart, you can change a mind; you change a mind, you can change the law. But it goes in that order, and so this is the first step of that. Let’s try and change some hearts.



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## Detroit LGBT Chamber Business Academy Enrollment Opens

**DETROIT** - In an effort to continue its mission to promote and empower their metropolitan Detroit LGBT, allied business members, non-profit members, corporate partners and their employees through leadership, advocacy, and education, the Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce their Mature Business Academy.

This four-month, four-course, four-hour training series is of the most up-to-date and pertinent business information within our market and globally. Topics are specifically focused on retail and small B2B businesses. Classes start Feb. 25 for which enrollment is open.

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Last year, at the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce's 2016 International Business & Leadership Conference in Palm Springs, California the chamber was awarded a \$2,500 grant to support this program.

Funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation and administered by the NGLCC, this grant will expand capacity and offer technical assistance to the Detroit MBA program, which fosters development, growth, and sustainability of certified LGBT business enterprises.

"The program has become a vital resource to our members as they develop their businesses and engage in networking," said Kevin

Heard, DRLGBTCC president. "The program supports our mission of supporting our members through business leadership, advocacy, and education. We are thrilled to receive this generous grant, which will allow us to expand and enrich our program."

The MBA will become the standard training program for all LGBT and ally professionals in the region.

"Wells Fargo is a proud, long-time supporter of NGLCC, and we share their commitment to helping small business owners succeed financially," said Lisa Stevens, head of small business for Wells Fargo. "We are dedicated to providing funding that will support their entrepreneurship and leadership training programs, along with educational tools and resources to help diverse-owned business in communities across America grow and thrive."

"We are excited to see the DRLGBTCC grow as an organization and a voice in the LGBT-owned and allied business community. They have shown tremendous growth in the size of their business membership and outreach programs, embodying the mission that NGLCC has continuously strived for," said Sam McClure, NGLCC senior vice president.

*The cost is \$250 for the program, but is complimentary with a small business membership. Individual classes are \$75. The classes will include professional speakers from Michigan.com, the City of Detroit Mayor's Office, Well Fargo Advisors, ATS advisors, and Pridesource Media Group. Enroll at <http://gaybe.am/YM> or visit DRLGBTCC online at [www.detroitlgbtchamber.com](http://www.detroitlgbtchamber.com).*

## Texas 'Bathroom Bill' May Pose Big Test for Sports Leagues

BY PAUL J. WEBER

**AUSTIN, Texas (AP)** - Texas knows how to throw a party, and for the Super Bowl in Houston, a new 29-story luxury hotel with a rooftop pool shaped like a meandering "lazy river" is the kind of glitzy welcome mat that keeps big events coming back. But that status may soon be put to the test.

Undaunted by the NCAA and NBA punishing North Carolina over bathroom laws that target transgender persons, powerful Texas Republican lawmakers are pushing to pass similar measures by June, and in doing so are daring leagues to boycott some of the biggest cities and stadiums in the U.S.

The stakes are bigger than Texas: other GOP-controlled states that watched the economic fallout in North Carolina could grow newly emboldened if sports executives decide that Texas is essentially too big to bail. Conservatives lawmakers have filed measures in almost a dozen states that would require people to use bathrooms or facilities that correspond to the sex on their birth certificate. LGBT advocates condemn the measures as discriminatory.

As the New England Patriots and Atlanta Falcons settled in Houston this week, the NFL issued a statement embracing "tolerance and inclusiveness" without comment on Texas' bill or whether it could jeopardize future Super Bowls in Texas. The NCAA, which has 14 championship events booked in the state between now and 2019, declined comment.

"Texas wins an outsize number of these events. These really are good facilities. It's a location that's fairly centralized," said Daniel Rascher, president of California-based SportsEconomics, which performs

impact studies and financial analyses surrounding major sporting events. "If a determined organization wanted to go elsewhere they would do it, but it is the state that would be the most difficult to avoid."

Since 2004, Texas has hosted more combined Super Bowls (three), NBA All-Star Games (three) and NCAA men's Final Fours (five) than any other state. San Antonio is scheduled to host another Final Four in 2018, and Dallas is hosting the women's NCAA Final Four in April. The Dallas Cowboys' \$1.2 billion, 100,000-seat stadium will also host one of college football's playoff games in 2018.

The lack of public comment so far from the NFL and others may be rooted in hopes of the bill fizzling out before reaching Republican Gov. Greg Abbott's desk. Abbott has taken a neutral stance and made no mention of bathrooms while laying out his legislative agenda this week. GOP House Speaker Joe Straus has been more forceful, condemning the proposal as an economic backlash waiting to happen.

But the bill has a powerful backer in Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who presides over the Senate and is popular with social conservatives who drive Texas politics. He called warnings from the Texas Association of Business, the state's dominant business lobby, "fear-mongering" and has pointed to the Super Bowl kicking off in Houston as proof that sports will stick around.

Houston passed an ordinance expanding gay and transgender rights, but voters in 2015 repealed it after Patrick rallied conservatives in the nation's fourth-largest city behind a "No men in women's bathroom" campaign. The NFL made clear at the time the

repeal wouldn't affect its Houston Super Bowl plans that were two years away, and the NCAA still held the Final Four in Houston last year.

"It's much harder for the NBA or NFL or anyone else to walk away from the great state of Texas. No doubt about it," said Republican state Sen. Don Huffines, a wealthy Dallas developer. "They're going to be missing something if they don't do business in the state of Texas. They are politicizing this issue. Not the legislature."

Landing big games isn't just a point of pride for Texas but a legislative priority. Texas has doled out more than \$235 million in state dollars over the past decade through a major events fund that helps cities attract marquee events. Rascher said Arizona is the only other state with a similar piggybank dedicated to wooing selection committees and sports league executives.

The NCAA last year made special note of ways North Carolina's law differed from other states in deciding to relocate seven championships elsewhere. The Texas bill excludes some of those factors, including invalidating local equal-rights ordinances, although there is separate legislation that could have similar effects.

North Carolina's new Democratic governor is pushing his Republican-controlled Legislature on a vote to repeal its law.

"They felt like, 'We're in North Carolina, we're the basketball capital of America, the NCAA wouldn't dare pull basketball events from our state.' But they did," said Phillip Jones, president of the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau. "We're being disingenuous in thinking that because we're Texas they would not pull the events from Texas. They will."

### ► Trump Vows

Continued from p. 6

announced that the president would leave intact a 2014 executive order that protects workers for federal contractors from anti-LGBTQ discrimination, saying in a statement that Trump "continues to be respectful and supportive of LGBTQ rights, just as he was throughout the election."

During a Monday news briefing, White House spokesman Sean Spicer offered no details on whether Trump could still issue an executive order

affecting the LGBTQ community.

"There is a lot of executive orders, a lot of things that the president has talked about and will continue to fulfill, but we have nothing on that front now," Spicer said.

Religious conservatives, who saw a series of defeats on same-sex marriage, abortion and other issues under former President Barack Obama, have been bolstered by Trump's win. In a letter last year to Roman Catholics, Trump pledged, "I will defend your religious liberties and the right to fully and freely practice your religion, as individuals,

business owners and academic institutions."

Trump's Supreme Court pick this week was also considered a positive sign for conservatives.

A favorite of conservatives, Neil Gorsuch serves on the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, where he sided with Hobby Lobby and the Little Sisters of the Poor when they mounted religious objections to the Obama administration's requirement that employers provide health insurance that includes contraceptives.

# The Dirty Show Pays Homage to Gay Leather Bars of the '70s

BY KATE OPALEWSKI

The leather scene once occupied a very visible part of gay culture, which has been missing from the Dirty Show. In an effort to celebrate leathery goodness and include more gay attributes to the venerable Motor City alt-art event, the Dirty Show invites the leather community to the new Daddyhole, a leather bar to open for four nights only.

"The concept is meant to be a gay interactive art installation and a co-production between the artists creating the atmosphere and the patrons that attend," said Tim Toy, who created the Daddyhole inside the Russell Industrial Exhibition Complex in Detroit for freedom-minded individuals to find themselves and their pleasures, including fetishes like S&M, and bondage and discipline.

But also, for leather lovers to dance, enjoy great music, have a drink and relax, as they did back in the day.

"We want to make this experience as authentic as possible," said Toy. Which is why organizers are asking men to dress in leather, kink, raunchy or shirtless attire (at a minimum), and to "naturally hang out at the bar for a few hours." By doing so, these leather-clad individuals can participate in this unique event with free entry into the Dirty Show.

The Daddyhole is open Feb. 10-11 and Feb. 17-18 from 10 p.m. - 1 a.m. Toy can be reached on Facebook or by email at timrichards442@gmail.com to RSVP to coordinate a date and time to attend.

"This kind of expression is needed now more than ever. It's a way for people to escape and explore other lifestyles and alternative artwork. There's something satisfying about letting your guard down and experiencing other walks of life," said Toy, adding, "The Dirty Show has always been an outlet for people of all different kinds of lifestyles. Everybody comes here and feels comfortable



The Daddyhole is open Feb. 10-11 and Feb. 17-18 from 10 p.m. - 1 a.m.

and there's no judgment. It's like more is more. Everybody accepts everybody."

## The Main Event

The Dirty Show has featured world renown erotic artists many times before, but this year, the special guest artist happens to be one of Europe's most important sculptors and public artists - David Cerny, who is an agent provocateur of the highest order.

The Dirty Show has always shown the best in erotic painting, sculpture and photography from almost every civilized country in the world. The 18th annual event is no exception with artists including Derek Hess, Niagara, Robert Williams, Molly Harvey, XNO, Olivia, Kevin Kelly and a stunning selection of classic

and historic erotic cinema posters from the

U.S. and abroad - curated by the founder of the now defunct Royal Oak Detroit CPOp Gallery, Rick Manore. International artists include Gernot of Germany, Francois Dubeau of Canada, and the Gao Brothers from China.

The legendary live installations and revues will be back.

"Burlesque, and performance art of the lascivious kind make the Dirty Show not only an exhibition for the visual art, but also the art of the exhibitionist, when real life can blur fantasy and reality with the event itself becoming an immersive and interactive giant, pulsing work of art as a whole," said Dirty Show founder Jerry Vile, pointing to the main stage where the Chris Harder, Jeez Loueez, The Benson Twins, Ray Gun and the ever popular Schlep Sisters will perform.

The Dirty Show is Feb. 10-11 from 7 p.m. - 2 a.m., Feb. 12 from 1-5 p.m., and Feb. 17-18 from 7 p.m. - 2 a.m. Tickets are \$30 on Friday and Saturday (21+), and \$20 on Sunday (18+). The Russell Industrial Exhibition Complex is located at 1600 Clay St. in Detroit. For more information, visit the Dirty Show online at [www.dirtydetroit.com](http://www.dirtydetroit.com).

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## PetCalls to Host Valentine's Day Fundraiser for Detroit Dog Rescue

BY BTL STAFF

**DETROIT** – Valentine's Day is for pets, too. That's why PetCalls is hosting a fun Valentine's Day mixer for friends and pets on Feb. 14 at the Museum for Contemporary Art Detroit on 4454 Woodward Ave. The event will feature specialty cocktails and treats for humans and their dogs. From 6-9 p.m., guests can stroll the museum and enjoy music and other entertainment, including a pet psychic.

"We go into homes everyday with our veterinarians and we know people like to take their pets to fun places," said Kimberly Jackson, CEO of PetCalls. "We are big fans of saving homeless animals so we decided to show our love for Detroit Dog Rescue with an event on the most romantic night of the year."

PetCalls is a Detroit-based mobile veterinarian service for dogs, cats, and other animals. Services that can be done at home include digital X-ray, ultrasound, K-laser, lab tests, vaccinations and other treatments.

Guests and their pets will be treated to pet psychic readings from the readers of the Boston Tea Room. These readers will help human guests understand their dogs' individual quirks and moods and, although they can't claim to work any training miracles, the psychics have dozens of years of experience.

A photographer will also be on hand at the dinner to snap pictures of dogs and their humans and a silent auction with unique gifts catered to canine and human guests will collect additional funds to benefit Detroit Dog Rescue.

Detroit Dog Rescue is the first and only no-kill dog shelter in Detroit. Since opening in 2014, DDR has rescued thousands of dogs and advocated for alternatives to euthanasia, proper pet care education, and low cost spay and neuter options.

The cost for the event is \$35 for each human and four-legged companion. A special VIP ticket is available for \$50 that includes a VIP reception from 6-6:30 p.m.

*For more information, visit PetCall's website at [petcalls.net](http://petcalls.net) or telephone 313-788-7387.*



## Give Yourself the Wedding Gift of Premarital Counseling

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

There are so many things to consider as you prepare for that walk down the aisle. Flowers, rings, cake flavors – these are just the tip of the iceberg. But lurking beneath the surface may be something bigger that needs addressing. Should you add finding the right therapist for premarital counseling to that growing list of decisions to be made?

"What we call 'premarital' counseling is really counseling for anyone who is considering stepping up commitment in a relationship, whether they plan on getting married or not," said Royal Oak-based psychotherapist Matt Sweet. "All relationships go through milestones in which connection is increased. For example, people may buy a house together, or co-parent, or begin to share finances."

Marriage is arguably the biggest milestone a committed couple can reach. And in the hopes of building a long and lasting union, premarital counseling might be a beneficial tool.

"I believe the reason most people seek premarital counseling is to identify and address any issues or problems that may arise as the relationship grows," said Sweet. "While this is a good reason, it's important to know good premarital counseling also aims to strengthen the bond in the relationship by building a sense of connection, understanding and affection between the partners. While people who are in the beginning stages of a relationship may be in a place where they feel they do not need this it is very common that partners begin to take each other for granted and begin to drift apart in small but important ways over time. Ideally, premarital counseling teaches the couple how to guard against this."

It's all about looking out for the long-term health of your relationship and protecting your prospects for success in the marriage. Premarital counseling "breaks the seal on couples therapy," said Sweet. "So if couples therapy is needed later in their relationship it may not be intimidating. Couples therapists often say that people wait way too long before getting couples therapy. Having gone to premarital counseling is a way to get comfortable with the process of seeing a therapist."

"An additional benefit is that a trained therapist can also diagnose if one or both of the people in the relationship would benefit from individual mental health treatment," Sweet added.

So while premarital counseling might



not have been at the top of your lists of decisions to make about your big day, it could prove to be one of the important choices you make.

"Premarital counseling aims to facilitate the creation of a long-term relationship endowed with joy, intimacy, mutual support and kindness," said Sweet. "Good premarital counseling will help identify any conflicts they may have and provide them with a way to engage around these conflicts. Even if a specific conflict is not resolved in therapy, the couple can learn to manage and cope with it in their relationship."

"Finally, and this is sometimes surprising, premarital counseling is often enjoyable for the people who do it," Sweet continued. "Many of the couples I've worked with tell me they look forward to their sessions because it is a specific time that they set aside to learn about and connect with each other."

### Financial Counseling Can Be Beneficial Too

One of the topics that might come up in premarital counseling is whether a couple can benefit from having a prenuptial agreement in place before saying 'I do.'

"A prenup is a contract that's entered into before the marriage," said Angie Martell, an attorney whose practice, Iglesia Martell Law Firm, PLLC is located in Ann Arbor. "It sets out what will happen in the marriage and provide a guide for what happens in the case of death or divorce. Prenups protect spouses and they can also protect businesses, children – especially children of a prior relationship – and it can be written to benefit a less privileged

spouse."

Martell said she has worked with a great variety of LGBT clients on drafting their prenups.

"It's really a personal choice," she said. "For some clients, prenups are considered just standard in that they feel very comfortable about discussing their finances with each other. Usually, it's for people who have established a business or an economic situation before they are married. It's usually not a lot of couples in their twenties. But if a couple is married and one has a lot less money than the other or there's an age disparity, it's good to have one."

For couples who have been together for a great many years before marrying it may seem that a prenup is not needed. But Martell said it could be just the opposite.

"Because we haven't been allowed to marry for very long the prenup might be helpful so that you can establish this is a long-term relationship and the spousal support should be calculated not only on the length of the marriage," she said. "Say you have a couple who've been together 30 years but only married one year. In the prenup you can say that the couple has been together for 30 years so that spousal support should take that into account."

*For more premarital counseling information, contact Matt Sweet, LMSW at 5600 Woodward Avenue, Suite 205 in Royal Oak, call 248-930-2137 or visit his website at [www.mattsweet.com](http://www.mattsweet.com). For questions about prenuptial agreements, visit the Iglesia Martell Law Firm, PLLC at 17 N 1st St #111 in Ann Arbor, call 734-369-2331 or visit their website at [www.iglesiamartell.com](http://www.iglesiamartell.com).*

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## Blumz Says Handmade Matters This Valentine's Day

BY BTL STAFF

This Valentine's Day, it's all about handmade and hand-delivered, according to Sadie Quagliotto, marketing director for Blumz by JR Designs.

"Valentine's Day gifts are supposed to be special, not just something you scoop at the store," she said. "So, Blumz handmade a bunch of our designs to sell for this year's festivities."

Handmade tokens of love at Blumz come in the form of flowers – romantic roses or impressive modern bouquets – gourmet chocolates, candies, plush animals, cards, balloons, and other small gifts.

"We also have a couples Valentine's Day class for people who want to give an experience as well as a gift," she said.

At one of the most unique shops in Michigan, the staff at Blumz will help lovers and friends select beautiful and affordable gifts that represent exactly what they are feeling.

"Our goal is to help you use our products and designs to convey the perfect message of love to that someone special this Valentine's Day," she said.

Quagliotto adds that Blumz will expand their store hours on Feb. 13–14 to accommodate shoppers, as well as offer up free gifts for those who order and request early delivery dates.

Details for Blumz Valentine's Day offerings can be found on their website [www.blumz.com](http://www.blumz.com). Blumz in Ferndale is located at 503 East Nine Mile Road. Call 248–398–5130. Blumz in Detroit is located at 1260 Library Street. Call 313–964–5777.

*Blumz by JR Designs, co-owned by Jerome Raska and Robbin Yelverton, is an award winning event planning and floral design company.*



## The Frivolist: 8 Pieces of Ridiculous Relationship Advice You Should Disavow

BY MIKEY ROX

Another Valentine's Day is sneaking up on us, and if you're currently in a relationship, you're probably acting a little more lovey-dovey than usual. There's nothing wrong with that, of course – do you, I say – so long as it's not a dog-and-pony show to cover up underlying relationship issues that you'd like to keep brushed under the rug. In that case, you may need couples' counseling or fair-trade relationship advice from a friend. What you don't need, however, are these eight outdated tidbits that you've already heard but which only stand to exacerbate your problems. Take a look and steer clear.

### 1. Long-Distance Relationships Never Work Out

Meeting a guy who lived hundreds of miles away and falling hard for him seemed to be my M.O. for the first seven years of my dating career. After the first two long(ish)-term relationships fizzled out – for reasons related to lack of intimacy (basically I cheated on them) – I finally met someone who made staying faithful despite the distance worthwhile. I don't think I loved this person any more than I did the others – I consider myself rather in touch with my feelings, and I love hard (even though my actions don't always prove that) – but with experience and age came wisdom.

For one, I didn't like how I made the first two guys feel, one of whose heart I just about broke in two, and I didn't like how I felt about myself afterward – especially after they dumped me. The third time, however, I was determined to get it right, and it worked because it was the right relationship for me at the time. Despite the 300-plus miles between us, we scheduled time to see each other (on average, two weekends a month). We looked forward to that time together and the weekends were full of excitement and passion. After a year and half of traveling back and forth we decided to move in together, and eventually we married. More on that later.



### 2. Never Go to Bed Angry

You've heard over and over again that you should never go to bed angry at your partner from your parents and grandparents, who claim to abide by this "rule" – but I call bullshit. In a perfect world, sure, we'd kiss and make up before falling into a comfortable slumber together, but sometimes – *sometimes!* – our S.O.'s make us so fucking mad that all we can think about in the moment is slipping them an Ambien and smothering them in their sleep. (Real talk, y'all; don't pretend you haven't digressed to that space.) The underlying issue of this anti-logic, however, is that not all arguments can be resolved right away, and forcing yourself to extinguish your fiery feelings oftentimes only serves to distance yourself from the actual problem just so you're not yelling at each other anymore. Thus, get it all out. If you need to scream at each other one night, go to bed angry, and dole out the silent treatment for the next few days, so be it. Soon enough, cooler heads *will* prevail so you can really talk about what's going – and that's the best thing for your relationship.

### 3. Holding Out On Sex Will Get Their Attention

If you think withholding sex from your partner to get their attention is a smart move, prepare to have your feelings hurt – perhaps worse than you ever imagined. For starters, couples can be very stubborn toward one another, especially if each individual thinks they're "right" in a situation. Then it becomes a battle of wills, and that's not a healthy way to deal with the issues at hand. Secondly, your partner may misinterpret your unwillingness to connect sexually in many ways – for instance, that you're not attracted to them anymore or you're finding pleasure elsewhere – which could lead to retaliation tactics, like bangin' a side trick for instant gratification. You'll regret your presumed power play at that point, but the damage will already be done. Avoid certain disaster by skipping the passive-aggressiveness body language and verbally discussing what's bothering you.

### 4. Dote on Your Partner to Keep Them Happy

I'm all for doing nice things for your partner – I enjoy planning dates, cooking dinner and surprising mine with the occasional gift – but your efforts



should be reciprocated for you to maintain satisfaction in your relationship. That doesn't mean that you should expect your partner to do exactly what you do for them, but they should show their appreciation for you in their own way from time to time. On the other hand, if your partner doesn't put much effort into the relationship but takes advantage of all the nice things you do for him or her, ditch the dirtbag. You'll save a lot of time, energy and heartache by leaving that leech.

## 5. 'He's a Man. That's Just What They Do'

When my husband and I first moved in together as boyfriends a decade ago, our once-thriving long-distance relationship turned upside-down in our new cohabitation situation. We both had our own living styles, and to say they clashed is a gross understatement. My biggest gripe was that he never cleaned a single thing in the house. He didn't make the bed or sanitize the bathroom or sweep the floor or even put the dishes in the dishwasher half the time – and it made me furious to the point that I started lashing out. I discussed this problem with my friends and family, and all I heard was, "He's just a man." This unanimous retort burned me to the core. Why? Because I'm a goddamn man, too – but I'm also a grown-ass person who doesn't live like a slob. This approach to mansplaining applies to many aspects of masculine culture, like dudes' desire to cheat, too. I can't say I'm completely innocent in that regard, but I would never tell somebody it's just what I do because I'm a man. I cheated because I was being an inconsiderate asshole – end of story. Thus, the faster you shut down the "all guys act this way" bullshit and maintain your high expectations, the better off you'll be.

## 6. Keep Some Things to Yourself So You Don't Seem Crazy

I'm married but on my way to an amicable divorce – which might make you question why I'm handing out relationship advice like snack-size Kit-Kats. Well, I'll tell you: I've been through it ALL in the past 10 years with my husband, and as someone who prides myself on living and learning and trying to avoid the same mistakes again, I think I'm more than qualified to dispel advice by way of my experiences. As such, one of the most important things I can impart unto you is to always be your authentic self in your relationship – from the very beginning. If you get a little crazy sometimes – fuck it – let that shit show. Your partner will eventually see that side of you anyway, and it's better to spread your undiagnosed bipolar disorder all over the table so everybody knows what

they're getting into from the start. From there, you two can decide if the relationship is worth pursuing or if you're better off without each other – a decision that's only made that much harder with time.

## 7. If You're Unhappy, Leave

If your relationship is irreparable, I recommend cutting your losses and going your separate ways – but that's not an endorsement to be hasty. Couples get angry at one another, annoy each other, and fight. That's the byproduct of loving someone so much. But that doesn't mean you should throw it all away because you've made each other unhappy. If your overall outlook on life is dismal because of your partner, yes, it's time to reevaluate your togetherness, but if your feelings got hurt or they did something to piss you off, step back, breathe and remember *why* you want to be in this. It'll make all the difference.

## 8. Move On If They Don't Want to Get Married

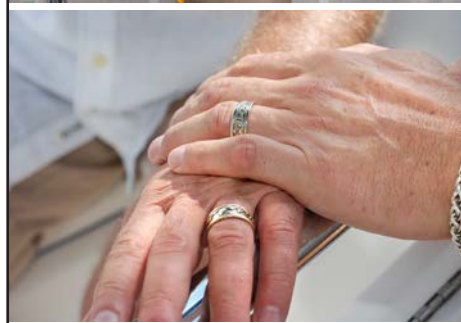
My husband and I have been separated for about two years, divorce is imminent, and I consider myself a one-and-done kinda guy now. That's not to say I'll *never* get married again, but I'd prefer not to. My boyfriend (yep; not ashamed of it, either) may feel differently in a few years – he's never been married before – but I've been honest with him from day one about my circumstance and why another marriage may not be in my future. Nonetheless, if he wants to tie the knot down the road and I'm still anti-nuptials, it shouldn't mean that I love him or am committed to him any less than I am now; I just don't want to go through the emotional and legally messy uncoupling process again. I did it, I learned my lesson, and now I need to be smarter.

Therefore, if you're in a relationship with someone who doesn't want to get married, don't sacrifice the love and commitment just because they're not willing to get a certificate to prove it. They have their reasons for refusing to say "I do," and if your relationship is solid, you'll get through it. If you need a marriage to be fully satisfied, however, maybe this isn't the right person for you. Your constant quest to be joined in matrimony will eventually degrade the relationship until there are very few reasons to stay together. In that case, count your blessings – because it was never meant to be in the first place.

*Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and LGBT lifestyle expert whose work has been published in more than 100 outlets across the world. He splits his time between homes in New York City and the Jersey Shore with his dog Jaxon.*

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# Happenings

## Editor's Pick

### Henry Ford Museum Celebrates Black History Month



Meet the woman who demanded equal rights for all women and African-Americans at a time when this was little more than a dream. Ford Motor Company presents "Pre-Emancipation: Ain't I a Woman - Meet Sojourner Truth" Feb. 11-12 for the Douglas Auto Drive-In Theater, Driving America Exhibit. Saturday viewing times are 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. Sunday viewing time is at 11 a.m.

Admission is free for museum members. For non-members the fee is \$16.25-22. A list of Henry Ford Museum Black History Month events can be found on their website, [www.thehenryford.org](http://www.thehenryford.org).

## OUTINGS

### Thursday, Feb. 9

**Free Legal Consultations & Services for LGBTQ Immigrants** 1 p.m. Second Thursday of every month Grand Rapids Pride Center and Justice for Our Neighbors, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. 616-458-3511. [www.grpride.org](http://www.grpride.org)

**#TheGirzRoom Hoe-Back Thursday Drag Show** 11 p.m. Hosted by Zoey Gaychanel and Pixie Mae Barnes. Free cover. Organization Name, 315 Braun Ct., Ann Arbor. [www.facebook.com/events/174496816371045/?ti=cl](http://www.facebook.com/events/174496816371045/?ti=cl)

### Friday, Feb. 10

**LGBTQ Teen Valentine's Dance** 7 p.m. Food, dancing with DJ Fudgie. Email Zoe Steinfield for details. TRUE, a Teen LGBTQ Group, 469 N. Hagadorn Rd., East Lansing. 725-222-8783. [truelgbtq@gmail.com](mailto:truelgbtq@gmail.com) [www.facebook.com/events/1830186150558923/](http://www.facebook.com/events/1830186150558923/)

### Saturday, Feb. 11

**TGMI Port Huron Social Club** 1 p.m. Transgender Michigan, 324 Superior Mall, Port Huron. [www.transgendermichigan.org](http://www.transgendermichigan.org)

### Sunday, Feb. 12

**The Dirty Show** 12 p.m. Tickets: \$30. 21+ (18+ on Feb. 12) The Dirty Show, 1600 Clay St., Detroit. [www.dirtydetroit.com](http://www.dirtydetroit.com)

**A Cat Cabaret** 6 p.m. Tickets: \$100. Proceeds go toward supporting various programs at Caffe Lounge and Ferndale Cat Shelter. Ferndale Cat Shelter, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 248-544-3030. <http://bit.ly/2gNVvdK>

### Tuesday, Feb. 14

**Single Lady Social** 8 p.m. Pi Kappa Psi Sorority, 1331 Broadwat St., Detroit. 313-307-5913. [www.facebook.com/events/1705701859445279/](http://www.facebook.com/events/1705701859445279/)

### Thursday, Feb. 16

**Detroit Elders** 5 p.m. Attendance is free. SAGE Metro Detroit, 4750 Woodward, Detroit. 313-833-1300 ext. 15. <https://sagemetrodetroit.org>

**Home Sweet Home** 6:30 p.m. Support LGBTQ homeless youth. Tickets: \$75 Ozone House, 100 N. Ashley St., Ann Arbor. 734-662-2265. [amorris@ozonehouse.org](mailto:amorris@ozonehouse.org) [www.ozonehouse.org](http://www.ozonehouse.org)

**LGBTQ Book and Movie Club** 7 p.m. Meets the 3rd and 4th Thursday of each month. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. [redbellisenegal90@gmail.com](mailto:redbellisenegal90@gmail.com) [www.goaffirmations.org](http://www.goaffirmations.org)

### Sunday, Feb. 19

**Drag Queen Bingo** 11 a.m. Tickets: \$20-\$30. Reservations required. 18+ Five15, 515 S. Washington Ave., Royal Oak. 248-515-2551. [www.five15.net](http://www.five15.net)

**PFLAG Ann Arbor** 2 p.m. Ann Arbor meeting for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Free to attend. PFLAG Ann Arbor, 306 N Division St., Ann Arbor. 724-741-0659. [info@pflagaa.org](mailto:info@pflagaa.org) [www.pflagaa.org](http://www.pflagaa.org)

**PFLAG Monthly Meeting** 2 p.m. Entry from parking lot behind church. Every third Sunday. PFLAG Ann Arbor, 306 N. Division at Catherine Street, Ann Arbor. 734-741-0659. [info@pflagaa.org](mailto:info@pflagaa.org) [www.pflagaa.org](http://www.pflagaa.org)

## MUSIC & MORE

**FIA's Palette Cafe** "Film Fancy February: The Eagle Huntress" Reservations required 24 hrs in advance. View menu online. Tickets: \$30. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 5 p.m. Feb. 10. 810-234-1695. [www.flintarts.org/films](http://www.flintarts.org/films)

## Benefits/Social Events

**The Ark** "The Love Hangover: A Benefit for Breakfast at St. Andrew's" Tickets: \$30. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 18. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

## Comedy

**Broadway in Detroit** "Motor City Laugh-A-Thon". Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Feb. 10 - Feb. 10. 313-872-1000. [www.broadwayindetroit.com](http://www.broadwayindetroit.com)

**Motor City Casino** "Lisa Lampanelli" Coming off of her "Stuffed" tour, Lisa Lampanelli - a comic's comic - is heading to Detroit Feb. 17 to get up on stage and say what most people are afraid to think in one of her raunchy, gut-busting performances. Her recent play, she said, is about food and body image. Tickets are \$30-45. Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Feb. 17. 800-745-3000. <http://www.soundboarddetroit.com>

## Concerts

**Blind Pig** "Busty and the Bass" Tickets: \$10-12. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 15. 734-996-8555.

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

**Blind Pig** "The Love Bang!" Tickets: \$8-11. Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. 9:30 p.m. Feb. 11. 734-996-8555. [www.blindpigmusic.com](http://www.blindpigmusic.com)

**Exodos Rooftop** "Pre-Valentines Day" Featuring jazz musician Sky Covington and Jimi Blues. Tickets: \$10. Exodos Rooftop, 529 Monroe, Detroit. 6 p.m. Feb. 12. 248-445-1277. [www.skycovington.com](http://www.skycovington.com)

**The Ark** "Greg Brown" Opener Chicago Farmer. Tickets: \$35. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 17. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

**The Ark** "The Vegabonds" Tickets: \$15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 16. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

**The Ark** "The Ark's Open Stage" Tickets: \$2-3. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 15. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

**The Ark** "My Folkly Valentine" Tickets: \$20. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 14. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

**The Ark** "The Band of Heathens" Opener Lee Harvey Osmond. Tickets: \$20. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 13. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

**The Ark** "Mountain Heart" Tickets: \$35. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 11. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

**The Ark** "Pokey LaFarge" Opener Jack Grelle. Tickets: \$25. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Feb. 10. 734-761-1800. [www.theark.org](http://www.theark.org)

**The Magic Bag** "The Mega 80's" Tickets: \$12. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Feb. 4 - Feb. 10. 248-544-3030. [www.themagicbag.com](http://www.themagicbag.com)

## Film & Video

**FIA's Palette Cafe** "Film Fancy February: Sunset Song" Reservations required 24 hours in advance. Tickets: \$30. View menu online. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 5 p.m. Feb. 17. 810-234-1695. [www.flintarts.org/films](http://www.flintarts.org/films)

## Shows

**Live Nation** "Dita Von Teese: The Art of the Teese" Burlesque Review" Tickets: \$35-100. The Fillmore Detroit, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Feb. 9. [www.thefillmoredetroit.com](http://www.thefillmoredetroit.com)

## THEATER

**Sing Happy! A Celebration of Kander and Ebb** Tickets: \$30 for dinner and show; \$15 for show only. Penny Seats Theatre Company, Conor O'Neills Irish Pub and Restaurant, 318 S Main St., Ann Arbor. Through Feb. 16. [www.pennyseats.org/box-office](http://www.pennyseats.org/box-office)

## Benefits and Fundraisers

**8th Annual Chili Cook-Off** Tickets: \$20. Includes ten chili tastings and three beer samples. Chili-only tickets: \$10. Children ages 5-10: \$5. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre, Wolverine State Brewing Company, 2019 West Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor. 4 p.m. Feb. 12. 734-971-2228. [www.a2ct.org/events/annual-chili-cook-off](http://www.a2ct.org/events/annual-chili-cook-off)

## Civic/Community Theater

**Shakespeare, You Sexy Beast** Shakespeare's bawdiest, sexiest, naughtiest, and most romantic scenes and sonnets. Tickets: \$18 plus service fee. Roustabout Theatre Troupe, YES (Ypsilanti Experimental Space), 8 Washington St., Ypsilanti. Feb. 9 - Feb. 11. <http://roustabouttheatre.com/>

## Professional

**Firepower by Kermit Frazier** Tickets: \$17-20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodward Wilson, Detroit. Through March 12. 313-868-1347. [www.detroitreptheatre.com](http://www.detroitreptheatre.com)

**Hand to God** Tickets: \$10-20. The Ringwald Theatre, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Through Feb. 26. 313-237-SING. [www.broadwayindetroit.com](http://www.broadwayindetroit.com)

**The Lion King**. Broadway in Detroit, Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Through Feb. 26. 313-237-SING. [www.broadwayindetroit.com](http://www.broadwayindetroit.com)

## ART 'N' AROUND

**Detroit Institute of Arts** "Detroit After Dark: Photographs from the DIA Collection" Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Feb. 5 - April 23. 313-833-7900. [www.dia.org](http://www.dia.org)

**Detroit Institute of Arts** "Bittersweet: Coffee, Tea & Chocolate" What is your ritual for drinking coffee, tea or chocolate? Take a picture and share it on Instagram. It's all part of the Detroit Institute of Arts' exhibit - the first of its kind at the museum to engage all five senses. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 1 - March 5. 313-833-7900. <http://www.dia.org>



## Affirmations Spring Bash 2017

Affirmations Community Center in Ferndale will host their annual fundraising event, Spring Bash 2017 – Emerald City, on March 18 from 6-11 p.m. at the MGM Grand Detroit. The event will feature curbside valet, a VIP reception, open bar, a delicious three-course dinner and entertainment. A block of rooms have been set aside for Spring Bash guests at the hotel and casino at 1777 3rd St. in Detroit. Call 877-888-2121 to reserve a room by Feb. 17.

At the event, Hanna Hartley will receive the Jan Stevenson Award; Debbie Kenjorski will receive the Lorna Utley Award; Henry Grix and Howard Israel will receive the Charles Moyer Philanthropy Award; and John White will receive the Volunteer of the Year Award.

To purchase your tickets visit the Spring Bash website at <http://gaybe.am/4W>.

For sponsorship information, purchase an advertisement in the Affirmations program book, raffle and auction donation information, or general questions, contact Katie Koch at [kkoch@goaffirmations.org](mailto:kkoch@goaffirmations.org).

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## Fundraising Opportunities for Ferndale Pride

Though Ferndale Pride doesn't take place until June 3, there will be a number of fundraising opportunities before then, in and around the city, where profits will go to supplementing the costs of putting on the weekend-long celebration.

**Feb. 21 5 p.m.**  
Happy Birthday Julia  
Music, chair of Ferndale  
Pride  
Greenspace Cafe  
215 W. Nine Mile Road,  
Ferndale  
248-206-7510 or visit  
<https://greenspacecafe.com/>

**Feb. 25 at 7 p.m.**  
Mardi Gras Gala  
Ferndale Elks Lodge #1588  
22856 Woodward Ave.,  
Ferndale  
248-542-2626 or visit <http://www.elks1588.com/>  
Tickets: \$20 to include  
dinner catered by Howe's  
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**March 1 and April 5 at 7 p.m.**  
50/50 Raffle at first  
Wednesday  
Rosie 'O Grady's  
279 W. Nine Mile Road,  
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248-591-9163  
or visit <http://rosieogradysirishpub.com/>

**March 19 all day**  
Jay's Penalty Box  
22726 Woodward Ave.,  
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248-398-4070 or visit  
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**May 3 at 7 p.m.**  
Tin Can Raffle at first

Wednesday  
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248-591-9163 or visit <http://rosieogradysirishpub.com/>

**May 16 all day**  
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*For the most up-to-date information about fundraising events, check out their website [www.ferndalepride.com](http://www.ferndalepride.com).*

*Contact Julia Music at 248-906-8683 or email [julia@ferndalepride.com](mailto:julia@ferndalepride.com) for details regarding Ferndale Pride.*

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\*Based on IHS Markit U.S. total new light-vehicle registrations vs. vehicles in operation in the MY2006-2015 models that have been on the U.S. market for the entire ten-year time period in the Non-Luxury Traditional Compact segment for non-turbo cars. †EPA-estimated city fuel economy for 2017 Subaru Impreza CVT non-Sport sedan models. 2017 Subaru Impreza CVT Sport sedan shown is rated at 36 mpg hwy. Actual mileage may vary. ††EyeSight is a driver assist system that may not operate optimally under all driving conditions. The driver is always responsible for safe and attentive driving. System effectiveness depends on many factors, such as vehicle maintenance, weather, and road conditions. See Owner's Manual for complete details on system operation and limitations. Please remember to turn off EyeSight when going through a car wash.

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# GLAAD: Films Dip, Comic Books Up in Award-Worthy Gay Content

BY LYNN ELBER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—“Moonlight” and “Star Trek Beyond” are the only major films found worthy of GLAAD Media Awards nominations, the fewest nods for gay-inclusive movies since 2003.

The gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender advocacy group called the outcome disappointing and a reflection of the mainstream film industry’s dearth of LGBT story lines.

While three of the category’s five spots went unfilled, the picture was far different when it came to music artists and comic books: The categories for both were expanded from five to 10 nominees for the 28th annual awards.

A downturn in major-movie depictions also goes counter to TV, which has brought gay and transgender stories to the fore and has 10 contenders each in the TV comedy and drama series categories.

Streaming service Netflix received a leading four nods for shows including “Transparent” and “Grace and Frankie.”

“At a time when progress is at a critical juncture, it is imperative that Hollywood tell more LGBTQ stories that reflect the community’s rich diversity and build understanding that brings all communities closer together,” GLAAD chief executive Sarah Kate Ellis said in a statement.

“Moonlight,” a coming-of-age story about a gay black man, is up for eight Academy Awards nominations on Feb. 26, including best picture.

The GLAAD awards honor outstanding images of the LGBT community in music, movies, TV and journalism. Ceremonies are set for April 1 in Los Angeles and May 6 in New York.

Among the 115 nominees in 21 English-language categories are Ta-Nehisi Coates’ “Black Panther” comic book; Lady Gaga; “The Daily Show with Trevor Noah”; and NewYorker.com and the Tampa Bay Times for stories on the Orlando, Florida, nightclub mass shooting.

The 41 Spanish-language nominees in 11



Nominee Ta-Nehisi Coates’ “Black Panther” comic book.



Nominee “The Daily Show with Trevor Noah”



Nominee Lady Gaga performed at Super Bowl 51 Sunday. She announced a new tour right after the show. AP Photo.

categories include Kany Garcha with the sole music artist nod and, for best TV journalism segment, Orlando reports from NTN 24; Telemundo; Univision; CNN en Espanol; and TV Azteca.

In the limited-release film category, nominees are “The Handmaiden,” “Naz & Maalik,” “Other People,” “Spa Night” and “Those People.”

Online: [www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)



“At a time when progress is at a critical juncture, it is imperative that Hollywood tell more LGBTQ stories that reflect the community’s rich diversity and build understanding that brings all communities closer together.”

— GLAAD chief executive Sarah Kate Ellis said in a statement.

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## Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

### Gus Van Sant 'Won't Get Far On Foot'

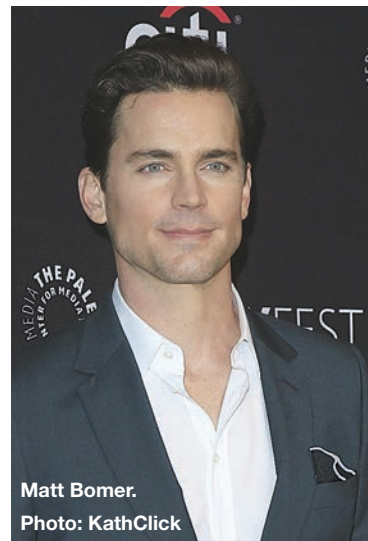
For every triumph in a filmmaker's life, there are also troughs. Gus Van Sant gave us the '90s classic "My Own Private Idaho" and also the little-seen 2016 disaster "The Sea of Trees." You can't win 'em all, so an artist picks up and moves forward to new work, which is what the acclaimed filmmaker is doing. He's readying the queer history miniseries "When We Rise" for ABC, and he's also got a new film in the works: "Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot." It's a biographical portrait of the late John Callahan (who died in 2010), the writer-producer responsible for the animated series "Quads!" and "Pelswick," which were both about people with disabilities. Callahan knew this topic well – he was paralyzed at age 21 in a car accident – and his experience formed the basis for his writing and creative work. Joaquin Phoenix has signed on to star in the movie, which will also feature Rooney Mara and Jonah Hill. In production now, it's a safe bet Van Sant will be readying this one for Cannes 2018 and the hope of some better reviews than he got last time.

### 'Walking Out' with Matt Bomer

The Sundance Film Festival is a place where actors show up with films they hope will give audiences a chance to see them do something more substantial than work in front of green screens, shouting at CG space aliens. They're movies more weighted toward featuring real human beings in real human situations. Matt Bomer has just such a film there, "Walking Out." Adapted from a David Quannum short story by the directing team of Alex and Andrew Smith ("The Slaughter Rule"), the film stars Bomer and young Josh Wiggins as an estranged father and son on a hunting trip. As they struggle to bond and find common ground, they run into unexpected trouble that tests their resolve and devotion to each other. The film also stars Bill Pullman and buzzed-about newcomer Lily Gladstone, whose heartbreaking performance as a ranch hand with an unrequited crush on Kristen Stewart in Kelly Reichardt's "Certain Women" earned her waves of critical praise and year-end awards speculation. After its Sundance bow, expect "Walking Out" to reach general audiences sometime later in the year.

### 'Novitiate' finds Sony love at Sundance

Sony Pictures Classics has picked up "Novitiate," from director Margaret Betts, at the Sundance Film Festival, and will ready it for theatrical release later this year. It's Betts' first narrative feature – she's also the director of the documentary "The Carrier," about a pregnant African woman with HIV – and the film's positive reviews and strong cast are what will eventually buoy its arthouse box-office prospects. Starring "The Leftovers" Margaret Qualley, "Novitiate" follows a young nun coming up against rigid Catholic traditions of female submission and repressed sexuality in the 1960s (and, yes, in 2017, hence any good period piece's relevance) as the Church began to modernize with changes brought about by Vatican II. Melissa Leo co-stars as a forbidding Mother Superior, and the supporting cast includes Julianne Nicholson, "True Blood"'s Denis O'Hare, and "Glee"'s Dianna Agron. If you've been itching for a fresh downer of a nun movie ever since you saw "Ida," maybe this one will satisfy?



Matt Bomer.  
Photo: KathClick

### Look out for 'Beach Rats'

The big movies with well-known stars make the most noise at film festivals, but it's the up-and-coming filmmakers sneaking in quietly with fresh perspectives who make the world exciting for adventurous moviegoers. That's the case with Eliza Hittman. She's already got one feature under her belt, 2014's critically well-received "It Felt Like Love," about adolescent girls exploring life and sexuality. And this year, Hittman has flipped over to studying the ways of teenage boys in "Beach Rats," screening at Sundance. Starring young British actor Harris Dickinson, it's the story of a working-class Brooklyn teenager spending a summer dealing with not only a potential girlfriend, but also with the older men he finds on gay hookup apps. We won't spoil how it all turns out, but any American film that deals truthfully with male bisexual impulses deserves attention, and this moody exploration of fluid sexuality deserves a wider audience. You'll probably have to hunt a little harder for this one – maybe at regional queer festivals as 2017 rolls on – but do seek it out.

Romeo San Vicente's beach body can't wait for the weather to turn shirtless.

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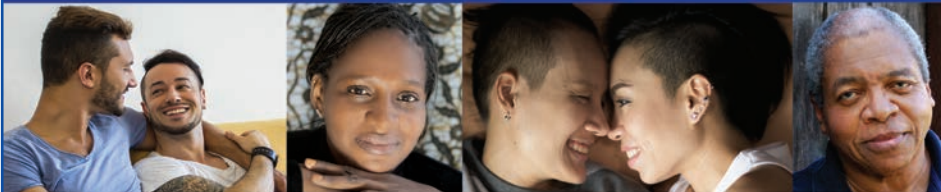
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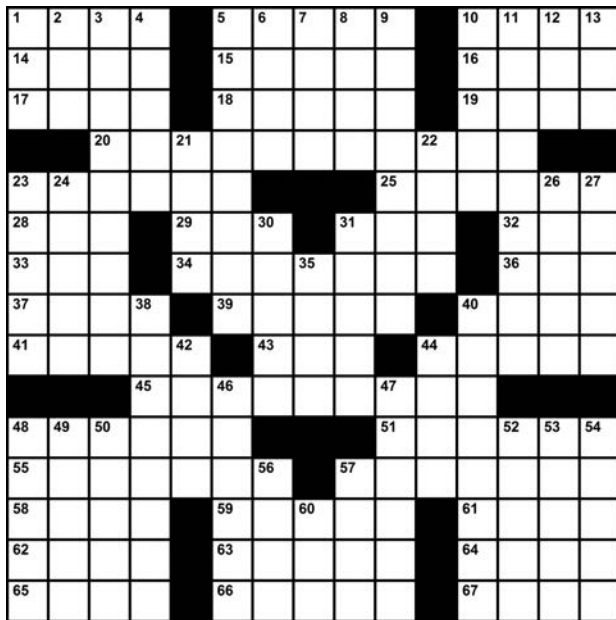
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# Q Puzzle



- 36 Hoopla  
 37 Good buddy on a radio  
 39 Placed in position  
 40 Wet spot cause  
 41 Women live together here  
 43 "Science Guy" of PBS  
 44 Parts of floats  
 45 Sexual identity at birth  
 48 Smackers that you take home  
 51 Most like twisted humor  
 55 With 57-Across, dictionary that recently added the two LGBTQ terms in this puzzle  
 57 See 55-Across  
 58 Acted like  
 59 Olympic award for Jenner  
 61 Kind of ranch  
 62 Jerry Herman musical  
 63 Sexual favors obtained on-line?  
 64 Every 24 hours  
 65 Aspen vehicle  
 66 Chicken hawk pads  
 67 Hungers
- 9 Walked in a cocky way  
 10 How sailors come  
 11 Condom for anal sex?  
 12 The whole shebang  
 13 Hearst's kidnappers (abbr.)  
 21 They may show through a wet T-shirt  
 22 The Gay '90s, and more  
 23 Cookies unit  
 24 Addis \_\_\_\_, Ethiopia  
 26 Urvashi Vaid's birthplace  
 27 Fowl places  
 30 Having sex, with "it"  
 31 Martin of "The West Wing"  
 35 Lid problem  
 38 Emulated Elton John  
 40 Frequent Rock Hudson costar  
 42 Rogers of "Common Ground"  
 44 Belgrade native  
 46 Sailors that sound like their discharge?  
 47 What a liver does  
 48 Mosque heads  
 49 Everest is on its border  
 50 Doughnut filler  
 52 Piece for Liberate  
 53 Harptop  
 54 They beat queens when they're wild  
 56 Pass out  
 57 Hold one's horses  
 60 Article of Marlene Dietrich

## You Can Look It Up

### Across

- 1 Elton John Broadway musical  
 5 Husband and husband, for example  
 10 Supporters of drag queens  
 14 "Nuts!"  
 15 Not potent  
 16 "Lesbians ignite!" e.g.  
 17 Pantyhose woe  
 18 One you go down on  
 19 Room for Frida

- 20 Not solely male or female  
 23 "Peter Pan" penner  
 25 Like Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"  
 28 Org. for Evan Wolfson's peers  
 29 Beatnik's abode  
 31 Castro Street, on BART  
 32 Game with "Reverse" cards  
 33 Tic \_\_\_\_ (sometimes fruit candy)  
 34 Sounds like three men in a tub

### Down

- 1 Certain plugs  
 2 McKellen of "The Da Vinci Code"  
 3 Crossdresser on a track?  
 4 Kenneth of "Lucifer Rising"  
 5 Deck problems  
 6 Date opening?  
 7 Tin Woodsman's rust source  
 8 La Salle of "ER"

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\$70/couple

Live Jazz with the Jesse Kramer Trio  
Reservations recommended but not required

Tuesday, February 14th  
5:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

#### Upcoming Events

Mardi Gras Party  
Saturday, February 25th

Oscar Party  
Sunday, February 26th

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