

WINDY CITY TIMES

THE VOICE OF CHICAGO'S GAY, LESBIAN, BI, TRANS AND QUEER COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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HOEMO, SEXUAL

Angry Black Hoemo gets real about sex.

Photo by Julia Hale



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CASE BY CASE BASIS

Analyzing the Supreme Court about its newest LGBTQ cases.

Photo of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg courtesy of the Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States

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I'M COMING OUT

Wrestler Kiera Hogan marking coming out at local events.

Photo by Steve Owen Photography



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RICH PFEIFFER:

Pride Parade organizer dies



Rich Pfeiffer, circa 1980 at a Pride Parade rally. Photo from the GayLife archives

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PAT LOGUE:

Portrait of a legal titan

Pat Logue. Photo by Marcia Festen

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UPCOMING 2019-20

WINDY CITY TIMES PRINT DATES:

Oct. 30	Jan. 22	April 15
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Nov. 27	Feb. 19	May 13
Dec. 11	March 4	May 27
Dec. 25	March 18	June 10
Jan. 8	April 1	June 24

online exclusives at
www.WindyCityTimes.com



CHECKS, PLEASE

MillerCoors presented check to LGBTQ nonprofit partners as the company wrapped up its "Tap Into Change" program.

Photo (left) from MillerCoors

SWEET RELIEF



Local openly gay chef Jerry Tapia talks cakes, mentoring and Nigella Lawson.

Photo courtesy of Tapia

MOVING ON

Club Industry—the convention for fitness professionals—ended a 30-year relationship with Chicago with one last event.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Transparent, Jane Fonda and Jared Padalecki.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

When A Great Deal Matters, Shop Rob Paddor's...
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Legal titan Pat Logue, and her impact on many LGBT people

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Politics and social justice causes have been parts of award-winning retired Cook County Circuit Court Associate Justice Pat Logue's life since childhood.

Logue, who now is living with Alzheimer's disease, is also Lambda Legal's former Midwest constitutional litigation director. Her contributions as both an activist and a jurist will long be felt by members of the LGBT community.

"Pat was my mentor," said Lambda Legal Director of Constitutional Litigation Camilla Taylor. "She was a brilliant lawyer, leader and a champion of our boldest, bravest arguments. Pat won precedent-setting, first-of-its-kind victories all over the country. She was a visionary, risk-taker, optimist and always chose the boldest path to victory."

Logue grew up in a suburb outside of Philadelphia, where she lived with her parents and five siblings. Both her parents were deeply engaged in the civil rights and gender equality movements, protesting against the Vietnam War and campaigning for Democratic candidates. Logue's father, a political science professor, ran unsuccessful campaigns for the U.S. Senate four times and co-founded the World Federalist Association's Philadelphia chapter.

Logue graduated from Brown University, where she earned a degree in American Civilization, and Northwestern University School of Law. During law school, she came out as a lesbian.

"My law school years, in terms of the lesbian and gay stuff, was taken up with the coming-out process," Logue recalled in a 2007 interview on the Chicago Gay History website. "My friends and I got involved in orchestrating Chicago's bid for the National Conference on Women and the Law, which took place here in 1986, I believe. That involved 175 workshops on a range of issues, but more than average lesbian and gay content and a lot of related issues."

Logue remained in Chicago after graduating, first working for Jenner & Block while doing pro-bono cases for Lambda Legal. She next moved to Business and Professional People for the Public Interest for three years, where she fought against Commonwealth Edison's rate increases, among other cases.

When Logue moved to Lambda Legal in 1993, she had already been a board member for five years. During her 14 years running the Lambda Legal Midwest Office, she held numerous positions. Among her hires were now Chicago Commission on Human Relations Chair and Commissioner Mona Noriega, who was Logue's first staff member.

"Those initial years setting up the office were just her and I, in a shared office, with one desk and one phone," said Noriega. "Although Pat was younger than me, her litigator training and la-

ser focus in building precedent and changing the landscape for LGBT civil rights inspired me."

Noriega said it was Logue who made her realize that she too was an activist.

"Pat was then, and still is, a hero to me," said Noriega. "I learned to be more thoughtful and strategic, and I like to think that I made her laugh. LGBT civil rights, here in Chicago, the state of Illinois and in this country have been touched, driven and impacted by Pat Logue. I am forever indebted to her."

Logue's wife, Marcia Festen, said that among the Lambda Legal issues and cases Logue was most proud of contributing to were those securing joint adoption rights for same-sex parents in Illinois; the (Jamie) Nabozny v. Podlesny case in Wisconsin, wherein the U.S. appellate court ruled for the first time that public schools could be held liable for failing to protect LGBT students from being bullied; the Lawrence v. Hardwick Supreme Court case, because striking down sodomy laws nationwide opened the door to marriage equality; and the Bud Billiken case that resulted in LGBT contingents being able to march in that iconic parade.

"Pat also had an encyclopedic command of constitutional doctrine, but her writing was never stale or academic," recalled Taylor. "She helped me understand that the path to winning in court is introducing the court to the common humanity and dignity of LGBT people through storytelling."

Taylor also praised how Logue never invoked pity for the organization's clients, though Logue was tasked with telling "stories of people who had been through hell as a result of the discrimi-



From left: Pat Logue, Mona Noriega and Evette Cardona at Noriega and Cardona's 2011 civil union ceremony in Millennium Park.

Photo courtesy of Noriega



Marcia Festen (left) and Pat Logue.

Photo by Suzanne Plunkett

nation and oppression we were challenging. ... She gave our clients back their dignity, and challenged judges to see in our clients a version of themselves. That was part of Pat's genius."

While Logue was working at Lambda Legal, she met Festen. Like a number of long-term gay and lesbian couples, their matrimonial journey had a number of steps; Festen and Logue had a commitment ceremony in 2002, and were legally married on the beach during a family reunion in 2008 at Martha's Vineyard's Edgartown Lighthouse.

"We realized that, since we were in Massachusetts, we could officially tie the knot," Festen recalled. "So with a day's notice, Pat's cousin, the town clerk, found us a Justice of the Peace who got us our license very quickly. It was all rather

spontaneous."

They adopted Ruby, who is now 16, in 2003 in Louisiana, and Ella, now 14, in 2005 in Washington State.

In April 2007, Logue left Lambda Legal when she was appointed Cook County Circuit Court associate judge. She worked for 10 years in family court hearing child custody and divorce cases, joining a handful of openly LGBT Cook County judges. In her role as a judge, Logue married a number of couples, among them Noriega and Evette Cardona, and Vernita Gray, now deceased, and Pat Ewert. She also performed Noriega and Cardona's 2011 civil union in Millennium Park.

"When we won marriage equality, my first call was to Evette, to meet me at the county clerk's office so we could immediately secure a marriage license," said Noriega. "My second call was to Pat to ask if we could come to her house, that weekend, so she could officially marry us. With only two days notice, Marcia and Pat opened their home [and] served cake and champagne, and Pat married us."

"I vividly remember Judge Pat Logue on the day of our wedding, Nov. 27, 2013," said Ewert. "She was grinning from ear to ear, and performed a meaningful and heartfelt service. Afterward she said she had never performed a wedding that meant as much to her as ours. Pat has spent her life doing important 'firsts' for our community. She is an amazing woman."

Logue recently received Lambda Legal's Bon Foster Liberty Award in 2018 and the 2019 American Constitutional Society Chicago lawyer chapter Abner Mikva Legal Legends Award.

In addition to Logue's numerous awards, she was also inducted into Chicago's LGBT Hall of Fame in 2003 and recognized as an extraordinary civil rights leader in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Jan Schakowsky in late 2018.

See <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2018/02/27/extensions-of-remarks-section/article/E227-1> for Schakowsky's remarks.

The woman who beat HIV

BY BOB ROEHR

Leading HIV researchers have come to believe that at least one person has found a way to naturally rid their body of the virus.

While they believe they understand a part of how that was accomplished, they may not know the entire story. And they are grappling with how to turn this information into better prevention, treatment and a cure for HIV.

Loreen Willenberg is that unique individual. She now lives in Sacramento and was diagnosed HIV-positive in 1992 during the worst of the plague, before any effective treatments were available. While she expressed antigens to the virus, indicating that she had been exposed and her immune system had responded, early HIV viral load tests could not detect the virus, and her CD4 counts did not decline. Later, sophisticated tests could detect fragments of HIV RNA in her cells but no complete virus that could reproduce.

She started participating in research studies in 2005—at UC Davis, UCSF, NIH, and the Ragon Institute in Boston, an affiliate of Harvard, MIT, and Massachusetts General Hospital—and quickly was labeled an HIV elite controller, a group that is less than half a percent of those infected who can control HIV without medication.

Willenberg became an advocate for research into elite controllers through a nonprofit she founded called the Zephyr Foundation. She coun-

seled elite controllers and helped recruit them into research studies.

The first paper suggesting that she might have purged the virus was published in the journal *Blood* in 2012 by NIH researcher Stephen Migueles. It was a series of four case studies of elite controllers; Willenberg was the unnamed patient #4 who seemed to possess CD8 T-cells that were very active and effective in killing HIV-infected cells.

Migueles only proposed that she had cleared the virus as a hypothesis to explain clinical data such as not being able to detect any replication competent virus in her blood or the reservoir of gut lymphoid tissue. He told Willenberg the only way he could prove the theory for sure is by looking for HIV in every tissue in her body, including her brain, with an autopsy.

Then this past summer, at an AIDS conference in Mexico City, Ragon researchers presented their data on a “San Francisco patient,” suggesting that the person had achieved a “functional cure” without using any treatment. The data was from Willenberg.

And in retrospect, data from an HIV gut study at UC Davis in 2005 fit into a pattern consistent with her having already cleared the virus. Such a hypothesis had seemed inconceivable at the time.

Steve Deeks, a respected HIV researcher at UCSF, knows Willenberg through donations of



Loreen Willenberg.
Photo courtesy of Bob Roehr

blood, immune cells, and gut tissue she has made through the SCOPE study run by the university. He has come to believe her immune system has found a way to clear the virus. He says, “Once you meet her it’s hard to forget her. She is very inspiring and very sincere, and very intelligent, and very educated, and very opinionated.”

Willenberg’s incredible 27-year journey from frightening diagnosis to veteran research advocate, and the first person believed to have beaten HIV, is told for the first time in *Leapsmag.com*.

Willenberg will be a featured speaker at an HIV cure community forum in San Francisco in November.

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Pride Parade organizer Pfeiffer passes away

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Richard Pfeiffer's entry on the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame—into which he was inducted in 1993—notes that Pfeiffer's "name is synonymous with The Gay and Lesbian Pride Week Committee, and its sponsorship of the annual Gay and Lesbian Pride Parade."

The organizational names may have evolved since Pfeiffer's entry was written, but the sentiment has not—Pfeiffer will long be remembered for his work coordinating the Chicago Pride Parade, which he did up through 2019. Pfeiffer passed away the morning of Oct. 6, according to his husband, Tim Frye.

"Chicago and our LGBT community lost a champion," wrote Ald. Tom Tunney (44th Ward) on Facebook on Oct. 7. "Rich Pfeiffer dedicated his life to LGBT activism and service. The decades he gave organizing the Chicago Pride Parade helped make it one of the nation's most popular celebrations of diversity and acceptance. We owe a lot to Rich and will forever honor the legacy he leaves behind. My thoughts are with his husband Tim Frye and his family."

Ald. James Cappleman (46th Ward) told Windy City Times in a statement, "For many of us, one of the highlights of our coming out experience was participating in the Pride Parade, which existed for all of us because of Richard Pfeiffer's leadership. Although this event grew to be one of the largest LGBTQ Pride events in the country, Richard was a humble man that wasn't looking to be in the spotlight. I will always remember how extraordinarily detail oriented he was. His skill and passion for our rights drove him to make sure that throughout the years the Chicago LGBTQ Pride parade was a time and place where all people from around the world, but particularly the Midwest, could feel welcome and supported."

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Illinois) stated, "For over 40 years, Richard was an icon of Chicago's LGBT movement and one of the Chicago Pride Parade's most fervent leaders. He guided the parade from its origins as a march protesting injustice, through its growth into a celebration of the LGBT community, and in recent years, its turn back toward protest. It is fitting that this past year, which we now know was Richard's last, would also mark Pride's largest parade ever."

"While I was deeply saddened to learn of Richard's passing, I am confident that the many organizations that Richard helped lead and grow will continue his incredible legacy."

"My thoughts are with all those who loved him, particularly his husband of 48 years, Tim. Richard's passing is a loss not just for Chicago's LGBT community, of which he was a champion, but for all of Chicago."

"Richard was an advocate for LGBTQ people. Through his hard work and focused efforts, he raised the visibility of our communities here in Chicago and was a catalyst for change. He taught us to celebrate our communities in all its diver-

sity" said Chicago House & Social Services Agency CEO Michael Herman in a separate statement.

Pfeiffer, who was 70, told Windy City Times in 2018 that each spring he'd begin anew with his principal annual duties coordinating the parade. As the last Sunday of each June drew near, he'd usually be dedicating about 40 hours a week to his efforts. He began working on the parade in the early '70s.

Under Pfeiffer's watch, the event changed dramatically. Organizers and stakeholders in the LGBT community constantly grappled with the identity of the parade, trying to both pay tribute to its organizing grassroots protests while including mainstream voices whose participation often signified socio-political advancements in the community.

"In the first years, there were a lot of people who didn't have anything to lose," Pfeiffer recalled. "You didn't get the teachers, doctors and lawyers. It was students and others. But as the world changed, the LGBT community came out more and more."

In a 2007 interview on the Chicago Gay History website, Pfeiffer recalled growing up in his cloistered Chicago neighborhood, which he said was comparable to growing up in a small town. He also recalled how the initial 1970 Pride "march" had become a full-fledged "parade" by 1971.

"We're not just a 'community'—I say this all the time," he said. "We're just so many different communities that you had to reach all different people in all different ways. So the second year, we became a parade, and had political and social (groups), and bars, and people on the left, and people on the right."

The size of the event quadrupled in 1971, he said, noting that a number of benchmarks denoted the growth of the event in subsequent years.

"In 1977, Anita Bryant had her campaign to try to repeal an ordinance in Miami," said Pfeiffer.

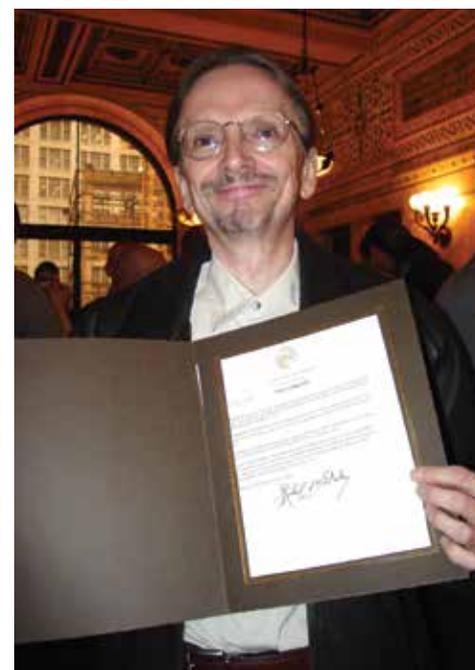


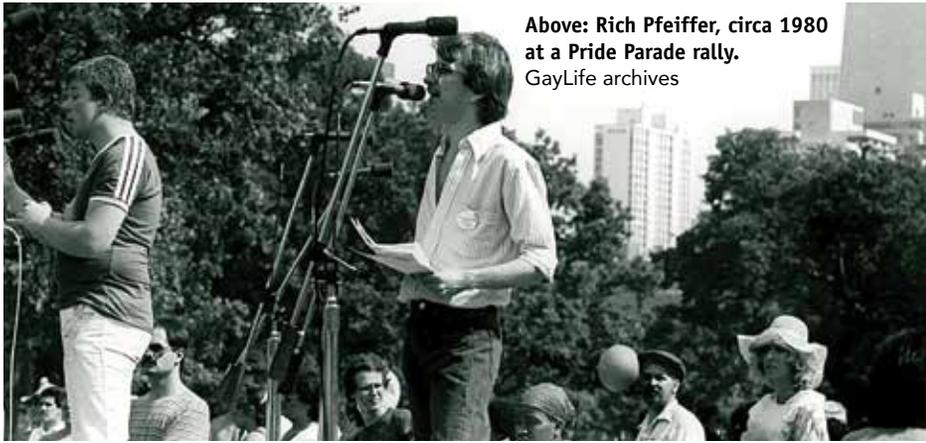
Rich Pfeiffer in 1983 at a Gay Pride rally. Gay Chicago Magazine archives



Above: Rich Pfeiffer at the 2012 Pride Parade. Top right: Pfeiffer in 2003 at a Pride reception with a proclamation from Mayor Richard M. Daley. Right: Pfeiffer (left) with partner Tim Frye.

Photos by Tracy Baim and Hal Baim





Above: Rich Pfeiffer, circa 1980 at a Pride Parade rally. GayLife archives



Pfeiffer (left), with Renee Hanover. GayLife archives



Pfeiffer with Mayor Richard M. Daley (above) and Mayor Jane Byrne (below). Above photo by Tracy Baim; below from Pfeiffer's archives



"That kind of reverberated throughout the country. ... Even in cities where ordinances had been passed, that could happen [anywhere]. Also that same year, in June, Anita Bryant was here in Chicago at Medina Temple, and a number of us were staging a march protesting her. ... There was a feeling, 'You've got to stop this.' It brought out a lot of people. We received more GLBT groups [in the parade] that year. In fact, a lot of non-GLBT organizations that year, as well, supported the GLBT community."

He added that 1982 was another year of significant growth, when anti-LGBT neo-Nazis announced they'd be protesting the event.

"We didn't have the internet yet, but [the news] hit gay media," Pfeiffer recalled. "We were beginning to get phone calls from Paris. We had contingents in 1982 from people from Paris and Berlin, people who were very anti-Nazi. ... I think the parade doubled in size that year."

For the last several years, city officials estimated that about a million persons came out to view the parade. Pfeiffer juggled numerous factors so the event would be an appropriate but manageable scale and scope.

The Chicago Gay History website noted several other instances of Pfeiffer's community involvement throughout the '70s and '80s, including the

Chicago Gay Alliance; Gay Horizons (now Center on Halsted); Gay Speakers Bureau; campus gay groups at Harold Washington College and the University of Illinois Chicago; and a gay couples networking group. Pfeiffer also wrote for Chicago Gay Crusader and GayLife newspapers at that time.

In the '80s and '90s, he was a member of Mayor's Advisory Council on GLBT Issues, serving under three different mayors. His primary job had been as a real estate professional.

When the day of the parade finally came each year, Pfeiffer said in 2018, it felt like a family reunion: "I see so many people there that I don't see the rest of the year."

In a statement to Windy City Times, Jacqueline Perry of Chicago Gender Society reflected on Pfeiffer's efforts towards the Pride Parade's success.

"When I think of all the politics, the logistics, the contracts and the multitudes of personalities to have worked through and with, it had to be a work of love," Perry said. ... "I know that many people have come out to live better lives because of the Pride Parade."

Visitation was held Oct. 12 at Drake & Son Funeral Homes, 5303 N. Western Ave. Services were held Oct. 13.

This Week's Featured Properties



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 **GILEAD**

Supreme Court analysis: Probabilities in the Title VII rulings

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

U.S. Supreme Court observers are more reluctant than usual to try and predict how the court might come down on the always hot-button issue of rights for LGBT people. There is a newly minted conservative majority on the court since the last LGBT case was heard and, this time, the bench's reliable swing vote in favor of equal protection—Justice Anthony Kennedy—is in retirement.

So it is no surprise that post-argument analysis by many Supreme Court observers this week sees a toss-up: It is simply too hard to predict how the court will rule on whether sexual orientation and transgender status are variations of sex discrimination and, thus, prohibited in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

But it is possible to narrow down the prospects. This can be done by looking at each individual justice—what they said during the October 8 arguments, how they voted in past LGBT matters, and relevant remarks they have made in past opinions. Combined, the information points to some probabilities.

The court must make two rulings: Whether Title VII prohibition of employment discrimination “because of sex” can cover sexual orientation. And whether it can cover transgender status.

A “no” means the justice rules against LGBT people and finds that Title VII does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or transgender status. A “yes” means the justice rules for LGBT people and protecting them from employment discrimination under Title VII.

Chief Justice John Roberts: Strong probable no

During oral argument, Chief Roberts gave voice to the idea that the Title VII challenges were asking the court to “update” the federal law to include sexual orientation. This, he said, seemed more like a responsibility for Congress. He also wondered why it would be sex discrimination to fire a man in a same-sex relationship if the employer would also fire a woman in a same-sex relationship. He said the bathroom issue was a “huge problem.” He worried about how the law would handle employers with religious objections to gay people. And he essentially said that transgender status was a “whole different case” and a “different answer” than discrimination based on biological sex.

In the past 11 cases which had significant specific interest to the rights of LGBT people, Roberts voted against such rights 55 percent of the time (in six cases). A notable exception was *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, where Chief Roberts led the 5 to 4 majority that dismissed an appeal brought by proponents of California's Proposition

8—a proposition which had banned same-sex couples from marriage. But as some observers noted, the majority could have struck down such bans in all 50 states, but it did not. On a technicality, it struck the ban only in California. And in his opinion, Roberts emphasized that he sees as “an essential limit” on the court's power: “we act as judges, and do not engage in policymaking properly left to elected representatives. National Center for Lesbian Rights legal director Shannon Minter said, at least on the transgender case, Roberts is “plainly not on board.”

Justice Clarence Thomas: Almost certain no

Justice Thomas is famous for almost never speaking or asking questions during oral arguments, so his silence Oct. 8 was simply routine. Plus, he had missed the first day of the session (Oct. 7) due to illness.

In the past 15 LGBT-specific cases Thomas has voted on, he has opposed equal rights for LGBT people 13 times (87 percent opposed). Of all the justices on the bench today, his record is the most consistently opposed to the interests of LGBT people.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg: Almost certain yes

During oral argument, Justice Ginsburg was the fourth most active questioner, and her questions and comments were pointedly helpful to the attorneys arguing in favor of Title VII covering discrimination based on sexual orientation and transgender status. She prompted attorney Pamela Karlan (who was representing two men fired for being gay) to address the chief arguments of those who want to limit the reach of Title VII—including that Congress never intended, when it passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, to cover sexual orientation. She undercut the opposing side's claim that firing a male employee for being gay would not be sex discrimination because the employer would fire a female employee for being gay. As Ginsburg pointed out, “There's nothing in the record as far as I can see that there was a policy on the employer's part of discharging lesbian women.” And she said, in the transgender case, that “the object of Title VII was to get at the entire spectrum of sex stereotypes.”

In 15 previous LGBT cases before the court, Ginsburg voted in support of equal rights for LGBT people 13 times (87 percent supportive). Her voting record is the most consistently pro-LGBT of any justice on the bench today.

Justice Stephen Breyer: Almost certain yes

Breyer was the most vocal of the justices during the October 8 oral arguments, asking questions and commenting 35 times, with the bulk



U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. Photo from Supreme Court website

of his questions aimed at challenging the opposition to Title VII covering sexual orientation and transgender status. He constructed a hypothetical for the opposition attorney Jeffrey Harris (representing the employers who fired two men for being gay) that led Harris to agree that firing a Catholic for marrying a Jew was still “religious discrimination” even if the employer claimed he fired the employee because he was against interfaith marriages. Breyer said his hypothetical was “an identical case to this one.” And he dismissed opposing attorneys’ “parade of horrors” (concerning bathrooms, locker rooms, sports teams).

Historically, Breyer has voted in support of equal rights for LGBT people in 11 out of 15 cases (73 percent supportive).

Justice Samuel Alito: Almost certain no

During oral argument, Alito's position became immediately clear: This issue needs to be resolved by Congress. “What some people will say [if this court rules Title VII covers sexual orientation],” said Alito, “is that whether Title VII should prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is a big policy issue and that it is a different policy issue from the one that Congress thought it was addressing in 1964. ... And if this Court takes this up and interprets this 1964 statute to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, we will be acting exactly like a legislature.”

In 11 decisions involving LGBT issues, Alito has voted against the interests of LGBT people seven times (64 percent opposed). His dissent in U.S.

v. Windsor (in which the majority struck down the Defense of Marriage Act) focused on there being no “right to enter into same-sex marriage” because there was no explicit statement about same-sex marriage in the Constitution. “Any change on a question so fundamental should be made by the people through their elected officials.” That was essentially what he repeated during oral argument regarding sexual orientation and Title VII.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor: Almost certain yes on sexual orientation only

Sotomayor was tied with Gorsuch for second place in terms of the number of questions and comments asked by the justices October 8. Perhaps anticipating that some justices would express concern about the “social upheaval” some believe would be caused by recognizing sexual orientation and transgender status in Title VII, Sotomayor put the issue on the table very early in the argument. She said the concern about the bathroom issue was “raging in this country” and asked how the courts should deal with women who are uncomfortable with a transgender person in the bathroom.

She also stated emphatically that “we can't deny that homosexuals are being fired merely for being who they are and not because of religious reasons, not because they are performing their jobs poorly, not because they can't do whatever is required of a position, but merely because” they are gay. “It was clear that the Justices are much less familiar with transgender people than they are with gay people,” said Minter. “And it was also clear that many of them, including even Justice Sotomayor, are still affected by many of the most common misconceptions about transgender people—including especially just a fundamental inability to believe that a transgender woman is really a woman or that a transgender man is really a man.”

Sotomayor's voting record has favored equal rights for LGBT people 9 out of 11 times (82 percent supportive).

Justice Elena Kagan: Almost certain yes

During oral argument Oct. 8, Kagan pointedly emphasized the court's fixation on looking strictly at the text of a law, rather than other factors. “For many years,” she said, “the lodestar of this Court's statutory interpretation has been the text of a statute, not the legislative history and certainly not the subsequent legislative history. And the text of [Title VII] appears to be pretty firmly in Ms. Karlan's corner.” Speaking to attorney Harris, who represented the employers who fired gay men, Kagan said, “Did you discriminate against somebody...because of sex? Yes, you did.” Minter said Kagan was “very active and eloquent—and did a tremendous job of poking holes in the arguments of the government and the employer.”

Kagan's voting record on LGBT cases has been pro-LGBT six out of nine times (67 percent supportive). She surprised many in the LGBT community last year when she voted with the majority that said a Colorado commission showed hostility to a baker's religious beliefs against same-sex



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couples marrying.

Justice Neil Gorsuch: Possible on sexual orientation; uncertain on gender identity

Gorsuch's performance got the lion's share of media attention because he made a couple of comments that suggested he is on the fence. For instance, he said that, while sexual orientation discrimination may have been in play when the employers fired the men for being gay, "isn't sex also in play here?" "And isn't that enough?" for a Title VII violation, he asked. "The statute," he said, "talks about a material causal factor ...not the sole cause, not the proximate cause, but a cause." Gorsuch said he was "really close" to seeing the argument that Title VII's text should cover sexual orientation and transgender status, but he also expressed concern about what he said would be the "massive social upheaval" of such a decision. Based just on those comments, said Minter, "it would have been easy to conclude that we may well have his vote." But the transgender discussion, said Minter, "was much tougher."

Gorsuch joined the bench in April 2017 under a cloud of controversy: Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell refused to let then President Obama's nominee to replace the recently deceased Justice Antonin Scalia to proceed through the confirmation process. Once President Trump took office, McConnell allowed Trump to nominate Gorsuch. During his confirmation hearing, Gorsuch evaded answering questions about his positions on LGBT legal issues, but he did say, "if you want to create a revolution in the area and change the law dramatically, that's for [Congress] to do." He was also criticized for an article he wrote before becoming a judge that claimed "liberals" were filing lawsuits on "everything from gay marriage to assisted suicide" to achieve their "social agenda."

In four LGBT-related cases, Gorsuch has voted against the interests of LGBT people twice (50 percent).

Justice Brett Kavanaugh: Probable no

Justice Kavanaugh is the newest member of the bench, joining in October 2018. His confirmation, too, came under a storm of controversy, after several women went public with allegations that he had sexually assaulted them in high school and college. During the two hours of arguments, Kavanaugh spoke up only once. He asked attorney Harris (representing employers), "Are you drawing a distinction between the literal meaning of 'because of sex' and the ordinary meaning of 'because of sex'? And, if so, how are we supposed to think about ordinary meaning in this case?" Harris responded that he didn't see a difference, and Kavanaugh did not offer any explanation or delve further. Title VII does not define sex, but a 1975 decision at the U.S. Supreme Court (*Burns v. Alcala*) said "words used in a statute are to be given their ordinary meaning absent persuasive reasons to the contrary."

In another decision four years later (*Perrin v. U.S.*), the court said, "A fundamental canon of statutory construction is that, unless otherwise defined, words will be interpreted as taking their ordinary, contemporary, common meaning." Minter said a "literal" reading of the word "sex" in the statute helps LGBT people, while an "ordinary" reading would help an employer who wants to discriminate. "Justice Kavanaugh was either highlighting a potential weakness in the employer's argument or—more likely—warning the attorney not to make an argument that would require the Court to disregard the literal text...." Disregarding the literal meaning, Minter said, "would push Justice Gorsuch to support the plaintiffs based on a strict textualist interpretation of the law."

Kavanaugh has yet to vote on an LGBT specific case before the Supreme Court. Like Gorsuch, he dodged questions about his views on LGBT issues during his confirmation process.

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Pence, "who has a clear record of promoting hate and discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community." Among the LGBTQ+-related goals she stated were ensuring that questions about the LGBTQ+ community are included in the census; enforcing federal civil rights laws that protect LGBTQ+ individuals; and, intriguingly, establishing a chief advocate for LGBTQ+ affairs in the White House.

Buttigieg released his plan, "Becoming Whole: A New Era for LGBTQ+ Americans," a policy that aims to bring people together to break down the walls of exclusion and secure full equality for the LGBTQ+ community. Buttigieg's plan covers issues of equality, health, youth and families, community, justice, honor and leadership.

Among other things, his platform would end conversion therapy; end youth homelessness as part of a comprehensive housing agenda; ban medically unnecessary surgeries on intersex infants and children; and celebrate LGBTQ+ history and culture, including by expanding the representation of LGBTQ+ people and history in our National Parks System.

HRC Chicago to honor Kim Hunt, Dane Hites

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Chicago Gala will take place Saturday, Nov. 16, at the Fairmont Chicago, 200 N. Columbus Dr., at 6 p.m.

At the gala, Kim Hunt and Dane Hites will be honored.

Hunt's career spans the public, private and nonprofit sectors, with a focus on advocacy, community building and organizing, and leadership development. She is the former director of the social justice organization Affinity Community Services, and currently serves as the executive director of the Pride Action Tank (PAT)—a project of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), where she also serves as the senior director of operations in the Policy & Advocacy department.

Hites, a native of Oklahoma City, relocated to Chicago in 2016 and currently works as a technology solutions business analyst for Cushman & Wakefield, a leading global real estate services firm. Dane has spent the last two years spearheading diversity, inclusion and belonging initiatives at the firm. He is a founding member and National Secretary of UNITY, the LGBTQ and Allies employee resource group

(ERG). He also serves on the board of Proud2Run Chicago as well as the Children's Research Fund Junior Board of Lurie Children's Hospital.

Tickets are on sale now at HRCChicago.org/gala.

Howard Brown names new officers, members

Howard Brown Health has appointed six new officers and five new members of its board of directors, as well as the full slate of officers and board members for 2019-20.

Joining the board officers are Austin Baidas, Mark Hawkins, Bethany Pagels-Minor, Chef Fresh Roberson, N. Charles Thomas and Oscar Zambrano. New to the board of directors are Nic Belgrave, Chad Nico Hiu, Jared Lewis, Mike Mazzeo and Eric Schneider.

"All of our board officers and new members have shown considerable commitment to the mission of Howard Brown Health and bring diverse talents, expertise and energy to the table. Our organization, patients, and clients are fortunate to have them by our side as we strengthen our commitment to community health across Chicago," said Howard Brown Health President/CEO David Ernesto Munar in a statement.

Presidential candidates unveil LGBTQ+ platforms

A few of the Democratic presidential candidates—U.S. Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Kamala Harris, as well as openly gay South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg—released their LGBTQ+ platforms, coinciding with the LGBTQ+-focused CNN town hall that took place Oct. 10.

Warren—whose campaign page is entitled "Security LGBTQ+ Rights and Equality"—said she would fight to pass the Equality Act; "prevent the weaponization of religion to discriminate against or harm LGBTQ+ people;" work to expand affirmative civil rights testing for anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination; and aim to ban discrimination against sexual orientation and gender identity in our adoption agencies and child welfare system, among other items.

Harris' platform, per her campaign website, starts with a condemnation of current President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike

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Center on Halsted seeks to replace security after community pressure

BY TIM PEACOCK

At an Oct. 5 press conference, Lighthouse Foundation (LF) Board President Rev. Jamie Frazier and colleagues—who had just left a meeting with Center on Halsted (the Center) officials—announced that the Center has already issued a request for proposals to replace its controversial security contractor, Walsh Security, which has for months been a key goal for LF.

Center CEO Modesto Valle attended the meeting along with Board Chair Angela Barnes and Chief Program Officer Hector Torres. Karlyn Meyer and Rev. Tim Wolfe, both of whom are members of LF's CARE (Coalition of Allies for Racial Equality) Strategy Team, accompanied Frazier.

"The sense that I got from the meeting is that they have put this RFP out because of the strength of the people who are standing outside in this moment," said Frazier. "They recognize that continuing to employ Walsh Security is something the community is not going to tolerate."

LF formed after protests in Boystown in summer 2019 following Progress Bar's attempt to ban rap music. At meetings throughout the summer, community members and other stakeholders determined that LF needed to address the security issue at the Center.

Walsh Security is owned by Thomas Walsh Sr., a 19th district Chicago Police Department (CPD) officer who has yet to serve a 60-day suspension related to a racially-charged November 2013 incident at The Lucky Horseshoe.

According to official accounts of the incident—accounts that were the subject of a two year investigation by the Independent Police Review Authority (IPRA)—Walsh physically assaulted James Matthews, a black security guard at the bar. According to IPRA, during the course of the 2013 incident, Walsh used "profanity and racially motivated language towards James Matthews."

In December 2014, Walsh told IPRA investigators he did not assault Matthews, but admitted he did use profane and racist language. "I did call him a [racial slur], which I regret," he said according to court records. Following their investigation, IPRA affirmed three of the four allegations made against Walsh and recommended a 60-day suspension.

Matthews settled with Walsh out of court in 2018 for an undisclosed amount, but Walsh appealed the IPRA determination. That appeal is still under review by the CPD. As of the September 2019 police board monthly public meeting, Walsh had still not served any portion of that

suspension.

Frazier announced Aug. 10 that he and CARE would focus their protests on Valle, who has the power to retract Walsh's contract. On Sept. 3, LF sent a letter to Valle calling for the Center to end its relationship with Walsh Security.

Referring in the letter to actions already taken by the Center to alleviate community concerns, LF said, "While we trust that Walsh Security has taken steps to better educate and train its employees, the passage of time has not alleviated our concerns." They added, "We are also troubled by Walsh Security's wide-ranging instances of incompetence over the years, including providing private security without the required private contractor's licenses; employing a security guard who pled guilty to impersonating a police officer; and allowing guards who are not police to wear police insignia."

At an Oct. 5 CARE meeting preceding the Center meeting, organizational allies discussed what to expect that morning, what had transpired at the September police board monthly public meeting, and the reasoning behind singling out the Center over other businesses and organizations in Boystown.

"We needed a beginning rallying point to organize this work around. The easiest one we saw was Walsh Security," said Strategy Team Member Allen Womble.

Meyer and Wolfe said that the Center had already posted the RFP two weeks earlier, and had emphasized "sensitivity to LGBTQ issues and anti-racism issues," according to Wolfe. There is a 30 day window for proposals that can be extended as needed.

Frazier said LF is committed to "share that RFP with community members...so that we can find security folks—particularly that are of color—that are going to be trans-affirming, that are going to be LGBTQ-plus competent."

He concluded, "One of the things that all three folks who were there representing the Center on Halsted were very clear [about] by the time we left that meeting, is that we ain't going nowhere. We will continue to meet with them, we will continue to engage them, and we will continue to insist change happens. And if that change does not happen, then we are prepared to deploy a whole host of tactics to ensure that it does."

To view the Center on Halsted RFP, visit http://centeronhalsted.org/Security/Security_RFP.pdf.

For more information on the Lighthouse Foundation, visit: <http://www.facebook.com/lightfoundchi>.



Rev. Jamie Frazier (left) speaks with supporters Oct. 5. Photo by Tim Peacock

Trinity UCC event discusses trans incarceration crisis

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Members, allies and visitors of Trinity United Church of Christ (UCC), 400 W. 95th St., screened a documentary about transgender Americans in incarceration, *Where Justice Ends*, the evening of Oct. 11. A discussion with community advocates followed.

The film profiles several transgender individuals who have been subject to a multitude of systemic injustices—among them physical, verbal and sexual abuses, isolation and withholding of medical services—once they've entered prison. It screened as part of the 6th (In) Justice for All Film Festival, and was presented by Trinity UCC's LGBTQ ministry.

The film emphasizes that about one out of six transgender persons will face incarceration, and that statistic increases to 47 percent for transgender persons of color. One of the film's subjects emphasized that those transgender persons often are incarcerated for crimes of survival, or without having any intention of carrying out a crime at all; for example, she went to jail after pawning a saw, which unbeknownst to her was stolen, for a friend.

That point was echoed in the discussion by Howard Brown Health Manager of External Relations Channyn Lynne Parker, who said that quite often transgender person find themselves "born into injustice," facing numerous systems

that act as "a pipeline into incarceration."

"I would challenge anyone in this room to think about what you were going to do to survive," added Parker.

Human resources professional and activist Tatyana Moaton also discussed her experiences going to jail. "Imagine living for about 15 years as female and being placed in a system that's all male," she said.

Parker noted that the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), which was passed in 2003, should be deployed to protect transgender prisoners but instead becomes a "passive weapon" against them. Those prisoners are often placed in solitary confinement ostensibly for their own safety, but are then subject to the same harsh punishment and confinement meted out to the most disruptive detainees.

Natasha Robinson, who lectures on criminal justice at Roosevelt University, added that transgender persons are prosecuted twice—once for their alleged crime, and a second time for being trans.

"Freedom isn't 'free,'" she said.

Activist Caprice Carthans said that community groups need to have incarceration issues on their collective radar.

"It's always about communicating with the community, and empowering them to get to the next level where the money is," Carthans explained. "... Sometimes you need to navigate systems to where they need to be navigated to."

Antonio King, chairperson of Trinity UCC's LGBTQ ministry, moderated the panel.



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ELECTIONS 2020: STATE HOUSE

Ryan Podges: Gay man challenges Feigenholtz for 12th District seat

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Ryan Podges is a political newbie—and his initial foray into the electoral arena may be a daunting one.

That is because Podges, a gay Chicago attorney, is taking on longtime 12th District incumbent Rep. Sara Feigenholtz in the Democratic primary. (Marty Malone is also in this race.) However, Podges said he is not one to shy away from challenges.

Windy City Times: This is your first time running for political office. What's been the biggest surprise for you so far?

PD: Well, every step has been a learning experience for me. It's been challenging, it's been rewarding, it's been time-consuming. I think the most gratifying thing—and what I'm somewhat surprised about—is how eager people have been to have new blood in the political process. I've been circulating my petition the last couple weeks [he needs 500 signatures], and I wasn't sure how I'd be perceived, but people have been absolutely outstanding.

WCT: The incumbent is popular, and has been a longtime ally of the LGBTQ community. What is she, in your opinion, not doing?

PD: I think people want their representatives to be accountable. A lot of the leaders who have been in office a long time have not been as accountable in year 22 as in year two of their office. I think people want to have new faces and new solutions.

WCT: So you feel her ideas are a little stale?

PD: One of the things I hear pretty regularly out in the community is that, since the district is [heavily] LGBTQ, there should be someone leading the charge for LGBTQ people. While I don't think there have been any horribly egregious votes, it's important that the person leads the charge statewide for LGBTQ people.

WCT: Tell me about the 12th District.

PD: The district includes parts of the Gold Coast, Old Town, Lincoln Park, East Lake View and a small portion of Uptown.

WCT: You're a labor/employment attorney. How has that occupation helped you in this political race, if at all?

PD: Well, I have a lot of experience representing workers and unions, and working with unions and other attorneys on issues. So, you know, negotiating and being an advocate for people—those are two key parts of being a state representative. Also, there's listening to people and being able to work with the other side to get things done.

WCT: I was looking at your platform, and there are some interesting ideas there. For example, you mention consolidating school districts.

PD: There are a lot of school districts across the state; I think Illinois has the third most in the country, after California and Texas—and there are other states ahead of Illinois, population-wise. There are many districts in the state that don't have all three levels—elementary, middle and high schools—and there are high administrative costs. It would behoove us to consolidate districts to save administrative fees and put money

back into classrooms.

WCT: Since we're discussing education, I'm curious: What are your thoughts on California allowing college athletes to be paid for endorsement deals?

PD: It's interesting. I think it's a fair thing to do. If you're in music school in college, you can profit off your music; if you're an author, you can publish your work and make money off it; if you're a student-athlete, you can't. There seems to be a disconnect there. Now I'm not sure how it'll be implemented; it won't be allowed until 2023, I believe.

WCT: What do you think is the biggest problem for the LGBTQ community?

PD: I'd say it's access to healthcare. I think LGBTQ people in my district are some of the most fortunate in the state because there are a lot of resources—but, statewide, they're not as fortunate. I'd like those resources to be available to everybody.

Also, there are a lot of homeless people who identify as LGBTQ. That's a shame, and the state should be looking into that.

WCT: You mentioned LGBTQ representation earlier. What are your thoughts on Pete Buttigieg?

PD: I think he's a great role model. He's highly intelligent and well-spoken; I think he represents LGBTQ people very well. As far as I can tell, he's been an exemplary citizen. I'm proud of the way he's been running his race.

WCT: If you could ask our current president one thing, what would it be?

PD: [Pauses and then laughs] There are a lot of questions I'd like to ask. It's hard to narrow it down to one—it really is.

The two things I think about when it comes to Trump are difficulty telling the truth, and bigotry and racism. I'd ask him why he has a hard time telling the truth, and why he feels he has to stoke the flames of bigotry and racism. He seems to be more concerned with pointing out our differences than finding solutions.

WCT: What's your biggest asset in this race,



Ryan Podges.

Photo courtesy of Podges

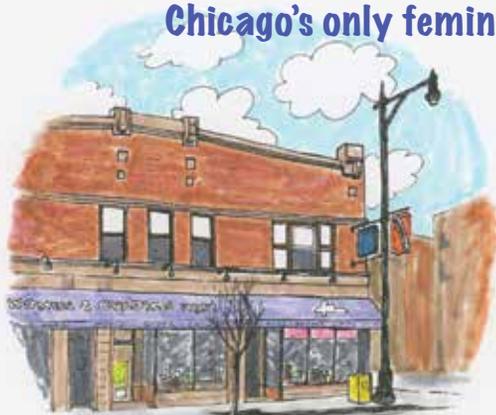
and your biggest drawback?

PD: My biggest drawback is that I'm running for the first time. It's very difficult to take on a longtime incumbent. That's why very few people have done it—but it can be done.

My biggest asset in this race is my ability to listen to people and understand what matters to them as well as my ability to bring change to state government.

See RyanPodges.com.

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MOMBIAN LGBTQ-inclusive books, and hope, in rural schools

LGBTQ students in rural schools are more likely to face bias and discrimination than those in urban and suburban ones, but their schools are also less likely to have LGBTQ-inclusive resources to support them. That's why several recent college graduates launched Hope in a Box last year. The nonprofit donates boxes of LGBTQ-inclusive books to rural public middle and high schools, along with coaching and curriculum guides to help educators use them effectively.

Between 2.9 and 3.8 million LGBTQ people live in rural areas across the country, according to recent estimates from the Movement Advancement Project. LGBTQ students in rural and small-town schools, furthermore, face more hostile school climates than those elsewhere, including biased language, victimization, and anti-LGBTQ school policies and practices, according to GLSEN's latest (2017) National School Climate Survey. They were also less likely to have LGBTQ-related school resources or supports.

Joe English, founder of Hope in a Box (HopeInABox.org) and a 2017 graduate of Yale University, said in a statement about the project's launch, "I know that feeling of isolation and invisibility personally, having grown up in a small, rural town. After college, I returned to my high school to share my experience with my teachers and see how we could make the next generation of students feel more supported." While his teachers saw the need for diverse books and materials to support their LGBTQ students, they felt they didn't have sufficient familiarity with the subject matter or resources to acquire them.

English and his team thus designed a bibliography of 50 books covering a range of time periods, for-

mats, and identities for students ages 12 to 18. This spring, they partnered with 25 rural public schools to pilot "Starter Boxes" of 20 to 30 books from this list, along with supporting multimedia and curriculum guides. The pilot schools are diverse, including a traditional Mormon school in Washington state, low-income schools in rural Vermont and New Jersey, and conservative Southern schools in Tennessee and Alabama, among others.

All the educators they've worked with say they feel better equipped to reach and support LGBTQ students because of Hope in a Box. Almost all (90 percent) believed the project noticeably improved LGBTQ students' emotional well-being within one semester of receiving materials, and 80 percent plan to formally incorporate the materials into their curricula this academic year.

One middle school English teacher who was part of the pilot told them, "Having a character in literature to connect to can make all the difference for some kids who feel alone." And a librarian who serves grades 7 to 12, said, "I see these books constantly checked in and out sort of silently by my students. ... By the nature of where a lot of students are in their journey, there hasn't been a lot of open discussion yet, but these books signal to my students that they are safe with me."

GLSEN founder (and new Lambda Legal CEO) Kevin Jennings—who was assistant deputy secretary for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at the U.S. Department of Education under President Obama—was even more blunt, asserting in a statement, "Hope in a Box's work is literally saving lives. When young LGBTQ people see themselves reflected in school curricula, their sense of self and well-being goes up dramatically, and rates of bullying and harassment drop just as dramatically. By providing these resources to schools with little access to them, Hope in a Box is making a life-saving difference for many young people."

The value is for all students, LGBTQ and not. Another high school English teacher told Hope in a Box, "Our small rural district isn't very diverse; it's been incredibly important for us to find creative ways to help students be open-minded and empathetic. I'm so grateful for the guidance and generos-

ity of the Hope In A Box program because it sends our students such an important message: we recognize LGBTQ students and we appreciate them."

One creative writing teacher added, "This library is what lets my students feel comfortable writing about LGBTQ issues and characters in their creative and personal writing."

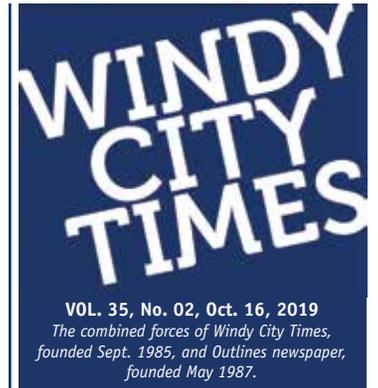
By the end of the 2019 school year, Hope in a Box aims to support hundreds of rural schools in all 50 states; nearly 200 schools across 35 states have already joined a waitlist. The nonprofit's goal is to help at least half of these schools incorporate the materials into curricula.

A growing number of states (including California, Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, and Oregon) are now requiring public school curricula to include information about the history, writings, and contributions of LGBTQ people. Having materials to support that goal accurately and effectively is vital. In states without such requirements, too, the need for guidance and resources is perhaps greater, since there's less motivation for schools to incorporate such works in the curriculum. Either way, Hope in a Box is targeting the schools that have the greatest need—those in under-resourced rural areas.

A similar initiative, the Make It Safe Project (MakeItSafeProject.org), was founded in 2011 by then-14-year-old Amelia Roskin-Fraze, an out lesbian student from California. Make It Safe gives free packages of LGBTQ-inclusive books to schools, youth homeless shelters, and other youth-serving institutions, and has distributed them to more than 60 schools and 25 shelters, with more on the way. Roskin-Fraze is currently an undergraduate at Columbia University, and the project is also now offering a writing scholarship to LGBTQ teens.

Projects like these, with the energy of young, queer activists behind them, can make a real difference for other young people. Visit their websites to find out more and learn how you can help, no matter your age.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (Mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.



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ARTS + THEATER

WEEKLY

ARTS IN THE DARK IN THIS WEEK'S SPOTLIGHT

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Photo by Aneesah
Muhammad (MKI)

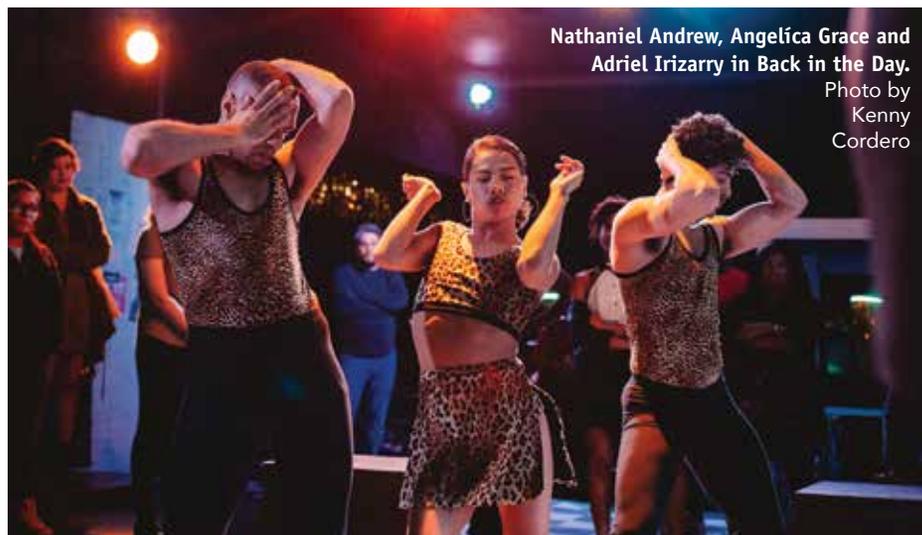
THEATER REVIEW

Back in the Day

Playwright: Miranda González
At: UrbanTheater Company,
2620 W. Division St.
Tickets: \$15-30;
clata.org/destinos-backintheday
Runs through: Nov. 2

BY LAUREN EMILY WHALEN

Immersive theater is tough to get right. So many factors come into play, especially the balance of audience comfort and the opportunity for performers to fully tell a story. Thankfully, *Back in the Day* gets immersive theater exactly right. A celebration of the dance crews that ruled the underground Chicago house music scene from 1981-86, UrbanTheater Company's world premiere (part



Nathaniel Andrew, Angelica Grace and Adriel Irizarry in *Back in the Day*. Photo by Kenny Cordero

of the 3rd Chicago International Latino Theater Festival) welcomes its audience with open arms.

Based on the memoirs of Jose "Gringo" Echeverria, *Back in the Day* follows three battling dance crews: Gringo's AllStars, Los Culitos and Imported Taste. All of the dancers are Black and Latinx teens, and most are queer. They show their stuff at a club called Janel on weekends, competing for cash prizes and bragging rights with matching outfits, sweet moves and plenty of trash talk. However, the real world is always lurking, with gunshots, homelessness and a disease that's striking young gay men nationwide.

Miranda González's script, also inspired by her own memories of the era, develops each character with thorough care, but it's Breon Arzell's choreography that tells the real story. The young people of *Back in the Day* leave everything on the

Turn to page 18

THEATER REVIEW

Invisible

Playwright: Mary Bonnett
At: Her Story Theatre at
Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.
Tickets: HerStoryTheatre.org, 773-327-5252;
\$35
Runs through: Nov. 3

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It could be a scene out of a Beth Henley play: townswomen clustered around a kitchen table, intent on the progress of their club chapter's membership drive, the preparations for the upcoming rally and congratulating one another on their newly won right to vote (this is 1925). Gradually, however, we realize that the festival is a cross-burning pageant, the snowy linens being

folded are hoods and cloaks, and the recruitment campaign under discussion is in support of the Women's Ku Klux Klan of Mounds, Mississippi.

No, this isn't a comedy, no matter how many playgoers may giggle in a futile attempt to dismiss the manifestos promoted by these cheerful, family-focused, pro-feminist (!) white supremacist ladies. Muckraker playwright Mary Bonnett's dialogue incorporates language lifted verbatim from promotional literature disseminated by the WKKK—xenophobic missives outlining its goals in no uncertain terms.

The agenda of the self-christened "Invisible Empire" was (and continues to be, to this day) founded upon the banishment, by any means necessary, of "alien" tribes threatening "100 percent pure American" values, as practiced by the Protestant Christians of Anglo-Saxon descent comprising its adherents. Dominating the targets of this vilification are African-Americans, but

when allies are defined as people like "us" the catalogue of adversaries quickly grows to include people similar to "them"—in this case, Jews, Catholics, Asians, Mediterranean and Eastern Europeans, Native Americans, urban dwellers, liquor drinkers and interspousal ballroom-dancing.

Bonnett could have simply allowed us to stew in horror at this portrait of a subculture still existing today. Instead, she frames it in a narrative featuring two heroes (a journalist from the Chicago Tribune, and a defiant Black female outcast), two martyrs (a clairvoyant orphaned child, and a young wife with a secret, predictable after the first 10 minutes) and two righteous apron-clad villains whose crimes exceed mere alignment on the wrong side of history to encompass lying, cheating, embezzling, betrayal of their comrades, hostile endangerment of strangers, and incitement to cold-blooded murder.

Cecily Keenan directs a cast of actors exhibit-

ing not only the courage required to deliberately immerse themselves in the personalities of repugnant characters, but the experience to reach beyond facile stereotypes, creating recognizable individuals governed by motives disturbingly plausible within the flawed cosmology of a parochial demographic riddled by fear and uncertainty.

Therein lies the value in Bonnett's mission to "shine bright lights in dark places." Women-as-monsters in Western theater are usually depicted as freaks—psychopathic anomalies, or socially insular cults—but the discovery of pious housewifely citizens proclaiming allegiance to a community, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, advocating the economic ruin or violent extermination of those deviating from their doctrine should alert us to the ubiquity of lofty aims subverted to inhumane purposes.

THEATER REVIEW

Sundown, Yellow Moon

Playwright: Rachel Bonds;
songs by The Bengsons
At: Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark St.
Tickets: 773-338-2177;
RavenTheatre.com; \$43-\$46
Runs through: Nov. 17

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Some online research confirmed that this play was autobiographical, at least in general if not in specific details. In a work inspired by one's own life, either the characters inherently need to be interesting or the writer must make them interesting. Rachel Bonds doesn't do either in *Sundown, Yellow Moon*, at least not for me.

I reacted similarly when I saw Bonds' *Five Mile Lake* in early 2018 at Shattered Globe Theatre, directed by Cody Estle as is this one. That play, eventually, engaged me in Chekhovian fashion. Chekhov, the Russian titan of modern drama, created rather ordinary characters—peasants,

artists, landowners, unrequited lovers, doctors—doing seemingly ordinary things which gather critical mass until, by the end, lives are changed forever. This play doesn't achieve the same effect.

Young adult twin sisters Ray (Liz Chidester) and Joey (Diana Coates)—cast against physical similarity—visit their small Tennessee hometown in steamy July, concerned about divorced Dad, Tom (towering Will Casey). A veteran private schoolteacher, Tom recently argued violently with the new Headmaster and accidentally cold-cocked the headmaster's wife. Swearing like a sailor, Tom's salty remarks provide most of the play's humor, but I wouldn't want him teaching MY kids!

Overachieving Joey is headed to Berlin on a Fulbright Scholarship and Ray is a musician, we're told several times. She's lesbian, too, although it makes no difference to anything, so why bother. Ditto, her being a musician: she frequently dangles a guitar but doesn't play or sing a note until the closing minutes. This dreadful tease is counter-intuitive writing. Doesn't Bonds know she's creating unfulfilled expectations?

Late each night Joey swims in the local reser-

voir, where she meets struggling poet Ted, married to a successful writer. Do they become lovers? Bonds provides no specifics, but when Ted (Josh Odor) breaks it off, Joey injures herself, although Bonds again leaves out specifics. Ray, too, acquires a sounding board, Carver (Jordan Dell Harris), appointed caretaker for Tom and an erstwhile musician Ray remembers from school. Carver's past involved a scandal (again no specifics) with a priest.

Constructed mostly of unrelated two character scenes and sorely lacking exposition (Chekhov supplied exposition in spades), the play never forms a discernible whole or makes the characters compelling. The songs are a ruse of sorts. One complete song midway in the play and another at the end are add-ons having nothing to do with the plot. In between, only song fragments are heard. The one song pertinent to story and character is sung by Ray (finally) and Carver immediately before the end. Theater songs need to have uses and most of these don't.

Jeffrey D. Kmiec's abstracted dense forest scenery is effective, as is Becca Jeffords' moody lighting.

CRITICS' PICKS

Be Here Now, Shattered Globe Theatre at Theater Wit, through Oct. 19. By rejecting romcom clichés, Deborah Zoe Lauffer's mostly comedy leads to a smarter, quirkier and even MORE romantic happy ending in this well staged production. *MSB*

Something Rotten! Marriott Theatre, Lincolnshire, through Oct. 20—Musicals and Shakespeare blend in this unashamedly derivative, anachronistic and irreverent comedy, in which Shakespeare's rivals try gaming the system by acting on predictions from a relative of Nostradamus. *SCM*

The Great Leap, Steppenwolf, through Oct. 20—A 5'5" Chinese-American basketball star, Tiananmen Square, international politics and rival coaches shape Lauren Yee's imaginative, impossible Tank Man origin myth. Gregg Obrero dazzles as the b'ball prodigy. *JA*

The Color Purple, Drury Lane Theatre, Oakbrook Terrace, through Nov. 3—Director Lili-Anne Brown allows this speedy musical adaptation of Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning to properly breathe with great emotional performances and gorgeous singing. *SCM*

—By Mary Shen Barnidge, Scott C. Morgan and Jonathan Abarbanel

Chicago International Film Festival features LGBT-related titles

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The Chicago International Film Festival kicks off the evening of Wednesday, Oct. 16 with a screening of *Motherless Brooklyn* as well as *Zombieland: Double Tap* later that evening. The festival lasts through Sunday, Oct. 27, and features a number of films touching upon LGBT themes. Unless otherwise noted, all films will be screened at AMC River East 21, 322 E. Illinois St.

—**Portrait of a Lady on Fire:** A French drama set in the 18th century focuses on the attraction between a reluctant bride and the woman commissioned to paint her portrait. Oct. 17, 5:45 p.m.; Oct. 19, 2:30 p.m.

—**Carmilla:** A vampire tale depicting the relationship between an 18th-century teenager and a young woman who arrives at her estate after a carriage accident. Oct. 17, 8:15 p.m.; Oct. 18, 6 p.m.; Oct. 22, 1:45 p.m.



Knives and Skin
Photo courtesy of Chicago International Film Festival

SPOTLIGHT

Do you love a parade? And Halloween? Kick off the spooky season with **Arts in the Dark**, a one-night-only magical parade of bands, dancers, costumes, floats, puppets and lanterns that celebrates Halloween as the "artist's holiday." This year's event—the fifth annual—draws together About Face Theatre, Black Ensemble Theater, Broadway In Chicago, COLLABORACTION, Chicago Children's Theatre, Chicago Fringe Opera, Jabberwocky Marionettes, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Opera-Matic, 16th Street Theater and Synapse Arts, among other participating troupes. Arts in the Dark is absolutely FREE! It takes place on State Street moving south from Lake Street to Van Buren Street, Saturday, Oct. 19, 6-8 p.m. Arts in the Dark was created by Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), Commissioner Mark Kelly, and is produced by LUMAB. Photo by Aneesah Muhammad (MKI)



—**Tremors:** This Guatemalan drama centers on a gay man forced into conversion therapy. Oct. 18, 8:15 p.m.; Oct. 19, 2:15 p.m.

—**Knives and Skin:** An Illinois town reels from the disappearance of a teen-age girl. Oct. 18, 9 p.m. (Note: This screening takes place at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago Ave.); Oct. 19, 9:45 p.m. (screening at River East 21)

—**By the Grace of God:** Gay director Francoise Ozin appears after the Oct. 22 screening of his new drama about church abuse survivors. Oct. 22, 5:45 p.m.; Oct. 23, 8:30 p.m.

—**And Then We Danced:** A dancer in the large anti-gay nation of Georgia struggles with his sexuality. Oct. 24, 7:45 p.m.; Oct. 25, 5:30 p.m.

Cunningham: This 3D documentary profiles legendary dancer Merce Cunningham. Oct. 25, 5:45 p.m.; Oct. 26, 6:30 p.m.

—**House of Cardin:** The life of fashion designer Pierre Cardin is explored in this documentary. Oct. 25, 2:46 p.m.; Oct. 26 2:45 p.m.

—**Seahorse:** This British documentary centers on a transgender man looking to conceive a child. Oct. 26, 5 p.m.; Oct. 27, 1:15 p.m.

—**The Prince:** In the '70s, a Chilean man is sent to jail, where he forms a close bond with an older fellow prisoner. Oct. 26, 7:15 p.m., Oct. 27, 6:15 p.m.

For tickets and other information, see chicago-filmfestival.com.

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Marissa Chibas in *Daughter of a Cuban Revolutionary*.

Photo by Steven A Gunther

'Destinos' festival offers something for everyone

BY AMELIA OROZCO

The Chicago Latino Theater Alliance (CLATA)—a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization formed in 2016 by the three most prominent Chicago Latino arts organizations: International Latino Cultural Center, National Museum of Mexican Art, Puerto Rican Arts Alliance—is presenting Destinos: 3rd International Latino Theater Festival, and it has just kicked off its 2019 season.

Myrna Salazar, one of the co-founders of CLATA, started this year's journey by attending *Organic Sofrito or Other Recipes for Disaster*, which played at the Steppenwolf 1700 space, 1700 N. Halsted St., through Sunday, Oct. 13), which is based on the true story of a journalist who has been repressed for her views on corruption in Mexico. This is the first play for the actress/playwright Rebeca Aleman, and two characters tell the story. "It's a gripping story about social justice in Latin America, about the real-life women who were killed over their exposure of human and organ trafficking in Mexico," Salazar said, adding, "I was more than pleased to know that this was part of Destinos."

She also staed, "We are also looking forward to *Feos* at the Chopin Theatre—[it is] a play brought by a company from Chile by Aline Kuppenheim in



Myrna Salazar.

Photo courtesy of Salazar

her first collaboration with Guillermo Calderon. Unfortunately, there was a glitch with the American Embassy they were not able to make it here on time. We are hoping to have an answer as to their status in the next few days."

At this time, *La Tia Mariela*—to be co-presented with the National Museum of Mexican Art—is also on hold because of the authorization of visas. Salazar promised to share more on these developments with followers through social media.

Nevertheless, the festival is chock full of inter-

esting works and accessible through the different theater venues throughout the city. "I am excited about the delicate balance of the festival. It covers so many topics such as immigration, jealousy, mental health, politics," said Salazar. "*Feos* is one piece that talks about how everybody looks at everybody and how we are perceived. There are beautiful projections in the way the narrative moves."

Adding a twist of comedy to the festival this year is *Soltera, Casada, Viuda y Divorciada*, a production from Puerto Rico. "This speaks about me," said Salazar. "I was single, married, divorced and I am a widow. So I can relate to each and every one of those titles."

REVIEW from page 16

dance floor, putting their hearts and souls into each high kick and death drop. Even when Carlos (Matty Robinson) is running from gangs, Shane (Nathaniel Andrew) reveals a devastating secret and charismatic Troy (Jermaine Robinson Jr.) is unsure where he'll sleep any given night, they proudly sport bright spandex and grind to Donna Summer.

Director Raquel Torre skillfully moves the cast through UrbanTheater Company's large studio space in Humboldt Park, festooned with full-length mirrors, gold streamers and a bowl full of bright red spiked punch. The audience moves with the actors (though there is limited seating), perching on chairs, cubes and a white leather

sofa as the teens' story unfolds. From making out at parties where unseen parents frequently turn the lights on to mourning a departed friend, the audience has a front row seat to the highs and lows of Chicago adolescent life scored with house music.

While a past-versus-present framing device isn't always effective, *Back in the Day* is a unique and stunning bright spot in a bustling local theater season. In just 80 minutes, an era unfolds: one of elaborate costumes crafted with filched fabric, late nights at Sidetrack and colorful memories to be made among a dark era in U.S. history. UrbanTheater Company's production is a testament to both the beauty of street dance and the power of chosen family, well worth a West Side jaunt.

Another interesting play, *Andares*, is being done in co-presentation with the Shakespeare Theater. It was created and is directed by a young graduate from Ann Arbor, Michigan, named Hector Flores Komatsu, who is indigenous. It's a three-person narrative and it conveys three different indigenous languages. "There are themes of great social, cultural and human values," added Salazar.

When asked which production stands out to her this year, Salazar responded, "The festival is only in its third year and it's very difficult for me to give you what stands out mostly for me. I have been impressed, touched, moved. Theater gives you a different brush; theater is visceral, theater is real. It's not like a movie set and they say, 'Cut, say the line again.' This is the flow of consciousness—you are there, you are pulled in and you have it in front of your face. [This year's first performance] brought me in completely."

As co-founder of the festival, Salazar said that, on a personal level, she is very proud of how far the event has come. "But," she added, "it makes me even more proud to make sure that I can bring our local Latino theater companies and stories to a broader audience. We want to continue to grow the audiences for our local theater groups. That gives me a rush. I feel them. I love the arts, I love this genre. I have a lot of respect for it. I wish the whole world would be fighting for tickets. Most importantly, I want to make sure we share our culture. Sometimes we live so isolated from culture."

When asked how the themes throughout *Destinos* are relatable to a broader audience, and how they can connect the Chicagoan experience from the South Side to the North Side, Salazar (originally from Puerto Rico, but raised in Chicago) stated, "You will be surprised how many of our stories are similar. I wish everyone shared my enthusiasm. Theater is a different art form. I support Broadway In Chicago. I have seen them all. But it's a different entertainment experience when I see my own stories being told on the stage."

"Whether it's about cooking, traditions, sexual abuse, our regional music and traditions, it is in these stories where we find common ground as people."

Destinos: 3rd International Latino Theater Festival will run through Sunday, Oct. 27. See CLATA.org.

THEATER REVIEW

Twice, Thrice, Frice

Playwright: Fouad Teymour

At: Silk Road Rising, 77 W. Washington Street

Tickets: 312-857-1234; SilkRoadRising.org;

\$38

Runs through: Nov. 10

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

This world premiere comedy concerns assimilated, Upper Middle Class American Moslem women. Amira (Catherine Dildilian), 39, is happily married to a doctor. Slightly older Khadija (Annalise Raziq), mother of two, is married to a university professor. Unmarried Samara (Marielle Issa), 31, is a grad student. Her late mother was Khadija's dear friend, so Khadija mothers her now. Samara alone wears a hijab, cites the Koran and says, "I run my life according to my faith." When she marries midway through the play, it's under sharia law. Her husband already has a wife, but sharia allows a man up to four wives plus concubines. However, Samara's hubbie also is Khadija's hubbie.

Despite the title, *Twice, Thrice, Frice* is less about Islamic polygamy than it is about women and their self-identities. Khadija (the name of the Prophet's first wife—he had 11—and mother to his only children) emerges as the surprising and reluctant hero who sets herself on a path to self-fulfillment beyond being a wife. As she finally says on the phone to her husband, "You get your Islamic marriage and I get my American divorce!"

Twice, Thrice, Frice also deals with various ramifications of motherhood. Khadija has a grown son and a teenage daughter, Samara becomes pregnant and very late in the play Amira and her unseen husband decide to adopt. It's a meaningful issue, but it feels shoe-horned in, especially for Amira who is neither the play's protagonist nor antagonist. I suggest it may be playwright Fouad Teymour's unconscious concession to patriarchy, which still dominates Islam (and many other religions and cultures).

Given the serious subjects of *Twice, Thrice, Frice*, it's surprising how light Teymour keeps this 100 minute play, which has excellent entertainment value. The audience connects emotionally with Khadija, so the key to the play's tone is in Khadija's buoyant spirit after the initial shock of her situation. It helps, too, that the three actors are convincing and genuine as directed with understated skill by Patrizia Acerra, who keeps things mostly conversational but lively. One may question how the playwright could allow Samara to do such a thing, but one never doubts the performance.

The handsome set for *Twice, Thrice, Frice* is designed by Jose Manuel Diaz-Soto. It's deep and wide, and uses floor patterns and rich colors to define several rooms in Amira's well appointed contemporary home. A range of grays and blues and slate and marble patterns give it a House Beautiful look. Lindsey Lydden's lighting (say that fast three times) warms it up nicely. The nonstop costume changes (Noel Huntzinger, designer) are stylish, expressive of character and colorful but conservative.

Twice, Thrice, Frice is produced by Silk Road Rising and International Voices Project.

Lesbian author/advocate Julie Justicz writes on 'Difficulty'

BY SARAH TOCE

Chicago attorney/social justice advocate Julie Justicz has a history of fostering an affinity for the written word. Her first novel, *Degrees of Difficulty*, was a 20-year process—but it's finally available wherever books are sold.

"I'm an attorney and an advocate who's been working in the Chicago community for many years, but my passion has also been fiction and creative writing," Justicz said. "While I was working in legal services, I did [the book] on a part-time basis and I've continued to write when I can around work and raising two kids and family life."

Raising two kids and the pressures and joys of family life are relatable elements that go into what makes this lesbian author's writing so immediately profound for all the same-sex moms out there. Another one is, perhaps, the more prominent storyline in the novel.

"I grew up with several siblings and one of whom was born with profound disabilities," she told *Windy City Times*. "And I realized as I grew older how that had significant impact in every one of our lives, not just my brother Robert, who was the one with the disabilities, but also on each of us, his siblings."

Justicz colors her storytelling with stories of being raised with her six brothers. The genesis of "*Degrees of Difficulty*" came about when she recalled "the impact of living with Robert and loving Robert and learning about the sort of limitations on services and care for him - and what that meant for our family over the decades as he grew older."

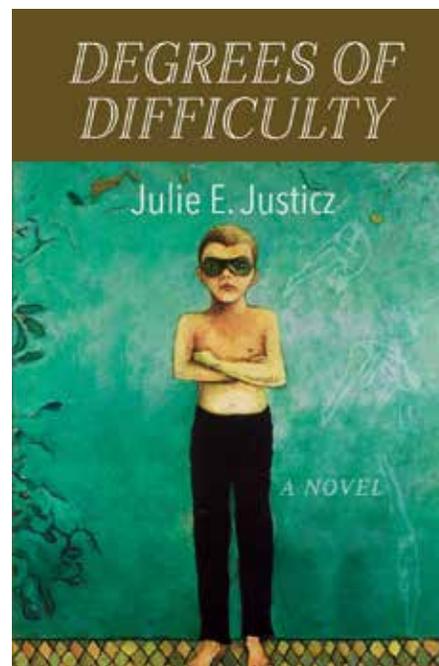
Degrees of Difficulty is a deeply personal retelling of events that are sometimes, but not always, rooted in her own experiences. Still, the experiences stand on their own merits.

"I decided I wanted to fictionalize it because I wanted a bit more freedom to work out some of the emotions behind all of that," she recalled.

One of the through lines she worked out was the intertwining of her own personal life in the real-life narrative.

"I'm a lesbian," she said. "My partner and I have two kids together and one of the characters in the book, who would be very loosely based on me...is a lesbian who lives in Chicago. She's a prominent point of view character in the novel. And she's in her 30s in the second section of the novel—grown up and living independently now, but dealing with the memories and repercussions of a childhood that was marked by some trauma around the medical needs of her younger brother and his death."

It's a much needed perspective; to depict a woman, who happens to be a member of the LGBTQ community, living life. Period. Justicz presents her and her partner and in a way that doesn't make their lesbianism the key feature.



"They are living their lives and they're going about their work as any other characters would do," she shared. "I think for me personally being a lesbian growing up when I did, it gave me a sort of perspective on difference that I think was always helpful in working with people with disabilities and knowing what my brother's life was like."

Regarding the big picture, *Degrees of Difficulty* is an emotionally raw depiction of everyday life, which includes love, loss, independence—and the lack thereof.

"When you dig a little bit beneath the surface, there are issues of pain and trauma and emotional complexity that you don't always see," she said. "I hope readers from all kinds of backgrounds will be able to relate to the book on that level—family members struggling to be their best selves, but sometimes coming up short. On a more focused analysis, I do think for LGBTQ community members and for people who have had siblings or family members with disabilities, [this book] lends a unique perspective on those issues, too. And I hope it speaks to those particular community members."

Degrees of Difficulty is available now; visit JulieJusticz.com.



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Angry Black Hoemo talks race, LGBTQs and sex positivity

BY JULIA HALE

Some queer people who have spent time on Twitter have probably discovered the name "Angry Black Hoemo" on their timelines.

Angry Black Hoemo, also known as Marq, has been living in Chicago for five years. Originally from Louisiana, he moved here for his work as an IT developer. Marq described his job to Windy City Times as something he enjoys, that "pays the bills well enough." Marq is also a violinist, blogger, activist and member of the leather community. He also has more than 20,000 followers on Twitter.

In February 2016, Marq started blogging for Medium before starting his own blog and personal website in August 2016 (AngryBlackHoemo.com). "I arrived to [ABH] over time, in pieces," said Marq. "My first ever blog post was titled 'Angry Black Man.'

"A lot of Black people have done this, where we've reclaimed this [stereotype] of angry. Anytime you're a Black person who's saying something that makes white people uncomfortable, you get labeled as angry." After he started to gain a following on Twitter, Marq wanted to find a way to brand himself. His first thought was to be @AngryBlackHomo, as he'd been on Medium, but had to get creative after finding that name in use already. @AngryBlackHoemo popped into his head and immediately felt right. "It felt like an exclamation point; this is a full [picture] of who I am racially [and] sexually, as far as identity as well as practice." (Update: The first ABH account was suspended, so Marq uses @angryblkhoemo.)

Marq said his following happened organically, but that it became more consistent after he wrote a piece about allies coming into LGBTQ spaces. "I started seeing followers trickling in, and then it was just a steady increase," he said. A lot of Marq's writing and tweets are centered around race, sexuality and identity. For example, he coined the term WhiteGayze in a piece about how being a member of the LGBTQ+ community doesn't cure white people of their racism. "I don't use it as heavily these days because I don't immerse myself in white spaces as much," said Marq.

Something he does talk about nowadays is cancel culture—or the lack thereof. (Cancel culture is a social media phenomenon that involves boycotting someone—usually a celebrity—who sports an unpopular opinion.) "It's not necessarily that [cancel culture] doesn't exist, [but] we really over-exaggerate what it means," he said. "I think we misapply the term. I think that it doesn't exist in the way that a lot of people claim it does and it's not nearly as pervasive as a lot of people think it is."

"We're socialized to find identity with people who have more power than we do, or people who

have more proximity to power, or just people who we like, while we're simultaneously socialized to dislike and disrespect people who are more marginalized," he said. "Then we have this environment on social media where marginalized people now have more access to calling people out and saying, 'this is problematic,' or 'this person did this thing and this is why it offends me.'

"People see accountability, draggings, or public scrutiny as the end of somebody's world, when really it's just a mild inconvenience at worst. [People are] just uncomfortable with this person who has some proximity to power being inconvenienced in a way that they probably wouldn't have had to deal with before."

He added that cancel culture also doesn't really seem to work, as shown in the cases of Kevin Hart, among others. "[There are] people like Bill Cosby or Harvey Weinstein, but it took decades of work for that," he said. "That didn't happen overnight, and even [now], they still have plenty of supporters."

After years of blogging, posting and tweeting for free, Marq became a member of the paid platform Patreon last June. "I have over 50 published blog posts at this point," he said. "I feel like I've given a lot of free work, and I have threads and posts that can be widely referenced. My long term plan is to pivot more of my critical and deep diving work into Patreon, and then keep the threads on Twitter and the posts on Facebook kind of light. I still want some of my work to be accessible."

Marq's first post on Patreon is called "Why I don't subscribe to 'Race First' politics." He said, "When you have multiple identities or experiences that are marginalized, you're oftentimes put in a position where you are [asked], 'What do you identify as most,' or 'What's the most important issues to you.' The common answer is going to be, 'Well ... nothing, really ... all of it.'"

Sex positivity is something Marq is vocal about online as well (hence, the "hoe" in "hoemo"). "Even in the gay community, we police each other's sexuality," he said. "We want to perform this non-sexual purity in order to make ourselves more palatable for cis-hetero folks. It's a big double standard because men who are heterosexual [and] cisgender [are] free to be as sexual as they want."

Marq added that he understands sex positivity means embracing and accepting all sexualities, including those of people who aren't sexually active. "It's important that you own whatever your sexuality is, whether you're highly sexual, or you're not all that sexual, asexual, it doesn't really matter," he said. "We need to have the space [for] everybody to be able to stand in their truth and not be ashamed. [Sexuality] is a part of who you are. If you're in any situation where you have to hide a part of yourself, then we're not building



Angry Black Hoemo.
Photo by Julia Hale

a world where we're really free."

Sex-shaming is inextricably linked to STI prevention, too, he stated. "The two primary causes of what blocks STI and HIV prevention efforts is capitalism first and stigma second," said Marq. "We have the structural barriers of capitalism and then we have the social barriers of stigma. Sex-shaming people is part of it; making [people] feel like their sexuality is something to be ashamed of. That puts people in a position where they might not want to go get tested, or they might feel like it's better to not know than to have this scarlet letter."

Marq's sex-affirming politics were shaped by years of being involved in the leather community. "That was the first community where I really felt like I could be unapologetic about my sexuality. That kind of shaped my ability to stand in my truth and not apologize in general," he said. "I found that I was applying that same mindset to race, to LGBTQ issues, and just politics in general. I didn't feel the need to hide myself or compartmentalize myself."

Marq said his refusal to separate his inseparable identities is part of what caused him to move from the North Side of Chicago to the South Side. "I lived in Edgewater for three years and I quickly saw how navigating [those] spaces as a Black person, you will be fetishized a lot," he said. "There's a duality when you're Black and queer in predominantly white LGBTQ spaces; you are simultaneously hypervisible and invisible at the same time. When you're not being fetishized, you're completely in the background; you're ignored. That was my experience living on the north side a lot of the time."

When the footage of the Laquan McDonald murder was released in November 2015, that's when things really changed for Marq. "That forced us to have a lot of conversations [that] I was avoiding previously. I started seeing a lot more vividly how a lot of white people have their tunnel vision, they don't see certain things." He added that one of the things that a lot of white people in Chicago don't see is the widespread racism he feels is

prevalent in Boystown, including incidents such as the banning of rap music at Progress Bar, a racially charged encounter at the store Beatnix and issues with Walsh Security, the firm connected with Center on Halsted.

"When I first moved to Chicago I got the sense right away that Boystown was not going to be the most welcoming space," said Marq. "Something never really felt right about Boystown from day one. [Then] I would hear more and more stories about the history of Boystown—how it was originally gentrified by white people pushing out Black folks."

"I've talked to a lot of Black gay men who grew up [then] and they would talk about having to have two forms of ID to get into some of the bars here," he said. "I heard about [Progress Bar], that didn't really surprise me. The Beatnix thing didn't surprise me. We tend to look at the gayborhoods as a source of safety, but it's safe for who exactly? I don't necessarily feel safer walking through Boystown than I do walking through parts of the South Side." [Note: Windy City Times has reported this year on incidents involving Progress Bar and Walsh Security.]

"[Coming] from Texas, on the surface, it seemed better coming up here at first. Then situations like that happen," said Marq. "Then you kind of [realize], 'I'm having the same arguments now that I was having when I lived in Texas.'" Since moving to Chicago Marq has gotten involved in local activism, which also influenced his move south: "I've been with BYP100 since 2016. After a year of doing that and going back and forth from Edgewater to the South Side, I decided that I was going to move south in 2017."

Marq said his move has proven to be rewarding. Although he moved for his activism, he said that he's also found a small social scene. "There's not a huge gay mecca on the South Side, but I did find that for the spaces that we do make down there, it's a lot more comfortable as far as it being easier to not only find other Black LGBTQ

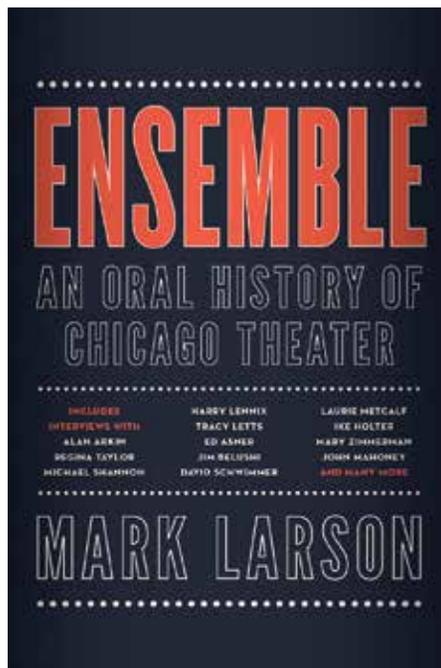
BOOK REVIEW

Ensemble: An Oral History of Chicago Theater

Author: **Mark Larson**
\$13; Lethe Press; 243 pages
 REVIEW BY MACKENZIE MURTAUGH

Chicago has proven itself many times over that it is multifaceted. It is a Midwestern diamond, a lake city, a food hotspot, the foundation of house music. The two American coasts might underestimate its other face, and that is its influence on theater and its considerable history in the United States. This is the conversation that Mark Larson's book "Ensemble: An Oral History of Chicago Theater" attempts, and, overall, it succeeds.

As the title suggests, the book is told entirely through quotes of notable and influential people who have something to say about Chicago theater, like Michael Shannon, Julia-Louis Dreyfuss, Laurie Metcalf, among many others. Larson interviewed more than 300 subjects in preparation for this book, and the time and effort he put into curating this book is not something to overlook. But, with the number of interviews and people and topics, the information presented becomes overwhelming if the reader is not familiar with Chicago's theater community already. Some more context in the form of short blurbs at the beginning of each chapter or something else entirely



would create a more pleasant reading experience for those with less theater knowledge than the book's intended audience— theater junkies and those already in the industry.

The standout part of the book begins deep into the history lesson in Part Four: Theater Making in the Time of AIDS. An undeniably tragic and touchy issue of AIDS in the 1980s changed how LGBTQ+ communities operate in every space.

Larson focuses on how the artistic and creative space took this tragedy as an opportunity to ensure information about the crisis was being spread. Theater houses and storefront spaces held meetings in their lobbies and gave brochures out to each attendee at LGBTQ+ performances in order to raise awareness of the crisis and what LGBTQ+ people can do to both keep themselves and their loved ones safe.

But the reality is that many were not safe, no matter how fast information spread. An entire chapter is dedicated to Scott McPherson's influence on the LGBTQ+ experience of loss in the 1980s with his play *Marvin's Room*, which opened at the Goodman Theatre in 1990. Soon after it made its way to New York, McPherson's partner, activist Danny Sotomayor, died of AIDS complications. After that, McPherson died the same way later that year (1992). Here, the oral nature of the book is masterful, as many of McPherson's closest friends and colleagues remember him through small, emotional stories, both fun and melancholic.

This book is the best fit for those who are already experienced in the world of theater and are looking for an all-encompassing, emotional and well-researched piece of literature on the subject. For those who are simply interested in non-fiction and history, regardless of the topic, you might find yourself struggling to put the pieces together. In all, this impressive work shines an important light on the various topics, both related to sexuality and society, in the theater world that deserve to be talked about and understood.

Women & Children First targeted by anti-trans vandals

BY MATT SIMONETTE

The windows at Women & Children First bookstore, 5233 N. Clark St., have been vandalized on multiple occasions with stickers featuring anti-trans messaging, according to its staff. The Andersonville bookseller and others are planning an Oct. 20 neighborhood event in solidarity for the store's employees, patrons and other community members.

Store manager H. Melt said that they first saw the stickers on Sept. 23.

"I came into the store on a Monday—I work Mondays—and I saw that there were a few stickers on our front windows with trans-misogynistic messages," they recalled. "They were stickers I hadn't seen before, and I immediately took them down. They were very easily removable, and they were very large."

H. Melt notified Women and Children First's staff and owners. The store has several trans individuals on staff.

"It turned out that the same stickers had turned up a week prior," they added. "One of the owners, Sarah [Hollenbeck], had found one of the stickers between our space and Chicago Therapy Collective, which primarily serves trans folks. She

Turn to page 30

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SPORTS

Pro wrestler Kiera Hogan marking coming out at Chicago events

BY ROSS FORMAN

Kiera Hogan is holding her official coming out party in Chicago, anchored around IMPACT Wrestling's premiere event of the year, Bound For Glory, set for Sunday night, Oct. 20, at the Odeum Expo Center in suburban Villa Park. She will be meet with Illinois State Rep. Greg Harris at his North Side office and numerous other LGBT-related events and appearances during her Chicago visit.

Hogan announced in July that she is dating fellow pro wrestler Diamante—and her coming out led to her multi-day Coming-Out Party that includes her dropping the Ceremonial First Puck at the Chicago Wolves hockey game on Saturday, Oct. 19, at the Allstate Arena in Rosemont when the successful minor league team presents its inaugural Pride Night game.

"I'm excited and nervous, but can't wait to share my story and meet so many people. I just hope I can inspire at least one person," said Hogan, 25, an Atlanta resident who has been wrestling professionally since 2015.

"I hope I can be an inspiration and encourage others to be true to themselves."

Hogan said that, since coming out, "It's been awesome. ... Everyone has been very supportive and loving; I couldn't ask for better people in my life."

That starts with, and includes, the IMPACT Wrestling roster. Many fellow wrestlers have taken to social media to support Hogan and several will be attending her events around Chicago to support Hogan.

"My fellow Knockouts were very supportive and helped me with my (coming-out) post," she said. "They are all my sisters at the end of the day, my family supports me every step of the way."

"IMPACT Wrestling has given me a platform to express everything I've been through [and] they've been very supportive. IMPACT Wrestling is my family."

Here is the schedule for Kiera Hogan's Coming-Out Party in Chicago:

—Thursday, Oct. 17: Pizza Party To Benefit The Pinta Pride Project

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Lou Malnati's Pizzeria in Buffalo Grove

Details: This Pizza Party is hosted by The Pinta Pride Project, which runs Buffalo Grove Pride in suburban Chicago. Molly Pinta, 13, spearheaded the first-ever Buffalo Grove Pride Parade this past June. Kiera will speak to the attendees, sign autographs,



Keira Hogan.

Photo from IMPACT Wrestling

pose for photos and more. Ticket Info: Go to: www.squareup.com/store/pintapride

—Saturday, Oct. 19: Ceremonial Coin-Toss for flag football games from Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA)

Time: 11 a.m.

Location: Warren Park in Chicago, 6601 N. Western Ave.

Details: Kiera will talk with players before the games start, then perform the ceremonial coin-flip.

—Saturday, Oct. 19: Ceremonial puck drop before Chicago Wolves game against Rockford IceHogs for the team's Pride Night.

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Allstate Arena, in Rosemont

Details: The Wolves are holding their inaugural Pride Night, with a portion of select tickets sold to the game to benefit the Center of Halsted. Hogan will do the ceremonial puck drop, then participate in various Pride Night festivities.

—Saturday, Oct. 19: Co-hosting drag show at Scarlet Bar

Time: 9 p.m.

Location: Scarlet Bar, 3320 N. Halsted St.

Details: Every Saturday night, Scarlet Bar hosts PREGAME to kick off the night's festivities, with four local drag performers on stage. Hogan will join PREGAME host Aurora Gozmic with co-hosting duties.

—Sunday, Oct. 20: Speech and Q&A

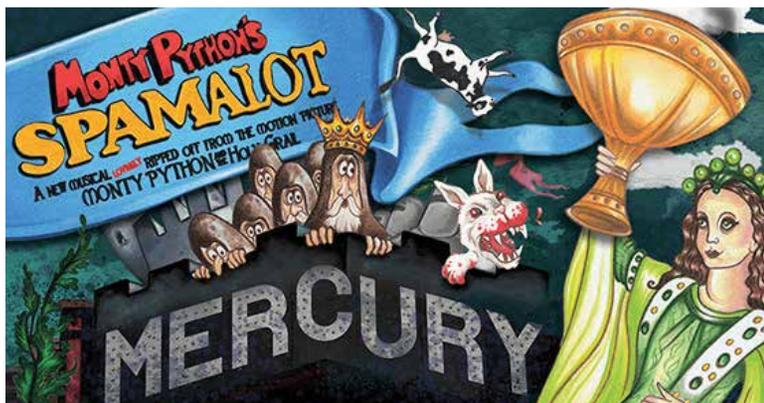
Time: 11 a.m.

Location: Center on Halsted in Chicago, 3656 N. Halsted St.

Details: Hogan will speak at the Center on Halsted, including a Q&A session, autographs and photo opportunities.

Tickets: www.community-centeronhalsted.org/kierahogan

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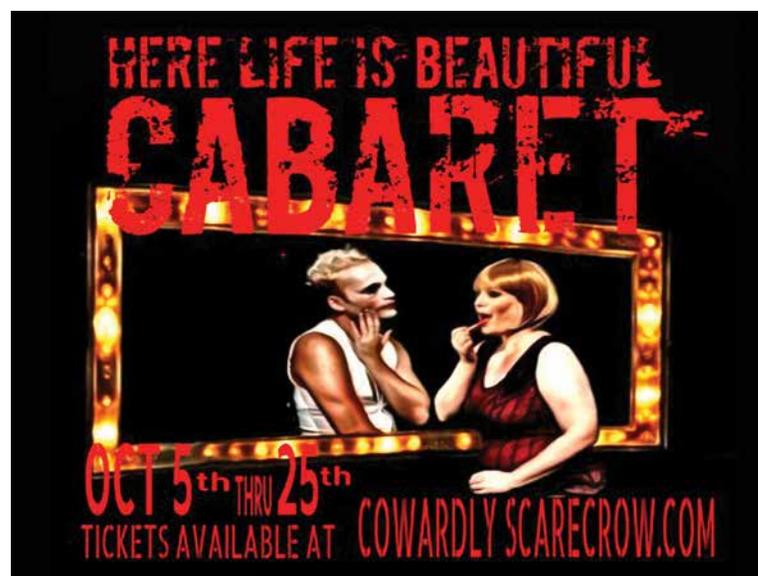
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SPORTS

NFL player makes history by coming out



Ryan Russell.
Photo from Russell

BY ROSS FORMAN

For Ryan Russell, it's now all about coming back, not just coming out.

The Texas native—who played football at Purdue University and then 23 games over three seasons (2015-17) in the NFL—is ready to return to the pinnacle of professional football. He wants back in the NFL, where he was a defensive end for

the Dallas Cowboys and Tampa Bay Buccaneers, where he compiled 21 tackles and three sacks.

Russ, as he is known, would be the sport's first-ever out active player. He came out in late August as bisexual, thus becoming the only male athlete in the four major professional sports leagues to openly identify as LGBT.

"It's been awesome, freeing," since coming out, said Russell, 27, who was selected in the fifth

round of the 2015 NFL Draft. His Purdue career included 149 tackles (25 for loss) and 10 sacks. "I wake up every day and am so happy for the support and the love that I've been receiving."

Russell admitted in a phone interview with Windy City Times that, since coming out, he often has thought to himself, "What was I afraid of before [coming out]?"

"It's been amazing ... all of my loved ones and friends rallied around me, as I knew they would. It's been a very liberating experience," he said.

Russell's coming out was years in the making, although it was just under a year from when he knew he had to come out.

Sadly, it was the death of his best friend—the first person he came out to—that pushed his decision. On Sept. 11, 2018, former teammate Joseph Gilliam died from a rare form of cancer.

"I had long been contemplating my journey. It had been a while in the making—20-plus years of learning to love myself, accept myself and understand myself," he said.

Gilliam's death "was the catalyst for me to start living my life the way I wanted to: openly, honestly and unapologetically," he said. "When someone so close to you, when someone so inherently good and pure and loving passes unfortunately and unexpectedly, it made me realize that every day on earth is not guaranteed, and I really did not want to spend any more days not living my truth."

Russell grabbed major mainstream media headlines by coming out, in the process introducing the world to his boyfriend, Corey O'Brien.

Now he's more focused than ever on a return to the NFL—and he's healthier than ever, he said.

On July 29, 2018, Russell signed with the Buffalo Bills, but was released about a month later, never playing at NFL game for the team.

His shoulder had been injured.

Now he's ready for his comeback.

Coming out

Russell, in telling both ESPN and Outsports that

he is bisexual, instantly walked into the spotlight. He was ready, more than ready. He knows his coming out gives him "the opportunity to make an impact" on a bigger scale.

"The day of [my coming out] was very liberating," Russell said.

And the overwhelming positive feedback to his personal announcement has far overshadowed the few, limited negative comments on social media.

He received support on social media when he came out from tennis icon Billie Jean King, which he described as "a crazy moment for me."

He also has received support from unknown dads who reached out to him because his story motivated them to grow closer with their own sons.

"As a child, I did a lot of reading and writing, and always wished I had read stories that I needed ... so I always thought that would be my medium to help others," Russell said. "Now everyone can see me as an out bisexual professional athlete, that gives me a new opportunity that could be public speaking or just sharing my stories."

NFL

Russell confirmed he is 110 percent healthy after a shoulder injury over the past year or so. He doesn't think it's a matter of if he will return to the NFL, but when.

"I am very positive that, when the opportunity comes, I will have a lot of healthy years and help a team win [games]," he said.

When?

He has no idea—but he said he will be ready.

And he knows Gilliam will be smiling down on him.

Russell attributes everything to Gilliam.

"I want to take the parts of Joseph that really helped me, that I love the most and that I saw that he represented very strongly and add those to my character for the rest of my life," he said.

Away from the spotlight

In addition to his skills on the football field, Russell is an accomplished writer. His poetry book is due out in late October.

"I'm very much into literature, poetry, fiction, creative form writing ... just journalism overall, technical writing," he said.

Russell also enjoys Quinton Tarentino movies—"to a crazy, obsessive amount," and admitted he enjoys breakfast food so much that he could eat it for all meals daily, every day. He also enjoys hiking, the beach, being in nature, traveling and more.

"There's nothing crazy unique about me ... I am just who I am," he said.

Russell was in Chicago twice for games against the Bears, and he often drove the near-two hours from Purdue.

"I love Chicago, especially the food," he said. "The beaches in Chicago have such a welcoming vibe, which surprised me. And the nightlife is great, too."

"But I'm just an anti-cold winter person ... that's the only hardship of living in Chicago. But overall, Chicago has amazing culture, art and diversity."

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Thousands attend AIDS Run & Walk

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

For the second consecutive year, "Live True. Be You." was the theme of AIDS Foundation of Chicago's (AFC) AIDS Run & Walk, which marked its 18th year.

More than 2,000 participants came together on the sunny, crisp Oct. 5 morning at Soldier Field to raise money for AFC and the 27 CommunityDirect beneficiary partners from across Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.

These organizations will again receive 90 percent of the money and as of this publication date over \$435,000 has been raised this year with fundraising ongoing through Nov. 15. Since this event began in 2001, over \$6 million has been raised to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

This year's partners are Agape Missions, AMITA Health Housing & Health Alliance, Catholic Charities, Center on Halsted, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus, Chicago Center for HIV Elimination, Chicago House and Social Service Agency, Chicago Recovery Alliance, Dance for Life Chicago, Erie Family Health Centers, Heartland Alliance International, Howard Brown Health, Legal Council for Health Justice, Lurie SID, Men and Women in Prison Ministries, Michael Reese Care Program at Mercy, Mother and Child Alliance, New Ages Services Corporation, Open Door, Pride Action Tank, Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago, Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center County Children's Health Initiative Program, Season of Concern, Sex Workers Outreach Project—Chicago, Sinai/Holy Cross Strolling Bones, Loyola University Medical Center and The Night Ministry.

The Chicago Gay Men's Chorus kicked off the event with renditions of "True Colors" and "Seasons of Love." WGN entertainment reporter and radio host Dean Richards again served as the emcee.

AFC CEO and President John Peller spoke about all of the people who have been lost to HIV/AIDS since the epidemic began—including Michael Bauer who passed away this year and who supported the AFC in various roles for many years. "Their voices and visions have been taken from us and today we are here to carry on their legacy," Peller said.

Peller also spoke about the Getting to Zero Illinois Plan to end HIV transmissions by 2030. He said AFC has partnered with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Chicago Department of Public Health and other organizations to achieve this goal.

AFC Board Member Craig Johnson led The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt presentation. Among other things, he noted that there are 48,000 quilt squares honoring those who have died of AIDS in the United States.

Jeff Award-winning director and advocate Chris Pazdernik spoke about being diagnosed with HIV in 2009. The onetime Windy City Times 30 Under 30 honoree added that getting involved as an AIDS Run & Walk participant six years ago helped him be open about being HIV-positive.

Artist/philanthropist/AFC Digital Communications Manager D'Ontace Keyes told the crowd he was a Black, queer, man living beyond his HIV diagnosis. He called this event a family reunion and an "illustration of what justice, community and fellowship look like in the flesh."

Keyes also spoke about ensuring transgender people's survival so they are not left behind while also working toward Getting to Zero.

IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike said she was honored to be at the event and spoke more about the Getting to Zero Illinois Plan which includes increasing access to healthcare services that support PrEP usage, making resources available where they are most needed and increasing public health workforces to adapt to the changing realities of the HIV epidemic. She added that there has been progress but not in every community that needs it.

Both state Sen. Robert Peters and state Rep. Thaddeus Jones also spoke.

Peters said he was the lead sponsor of a bill to expand PrEP access to minors statewide.

Jones, who appeared onstage with his wife Saprina Jones, spoke about the Jones Foundation non-profit they started that focuses on educating students about HIV/AIDS. He added that his three nephews dying of AIDS is the reason for his HIV/AIDS advocacy.

Ahead of the run/walk, Fitness Formula Club's Joy Miles led warm-up stretches for participants and Jeff Award nominee Donica Lynn sang "You'll Never Walk Alone."

Lynn also said she is a nine-year brain-tumor survivor and lost an aunt to AIDS.

First-place winners in the 10K race include Cassandra Hutton in the female category, Jamie Hock in the male category and KT Hawbaker in the non-binary category.

The 5K race first-place winners were Carly Schuyler in the female category, Duane Castaldi in the male category and Kody Keckler in the non-binary category.

The event also featured music by the Lakeside Pride Band and DJ Harry Tyner as well as free flu shots courtesy of Walgreens, free HIV testing from the CORE Center, a MillerCoors Beer Garden, the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile where participants and volunteers each received a free hot dog and sponsor booths.

See <http://aidsrunwalk.org> for more information or to make a donation. Visit <https://gtzillinois.hiv/> for details about the Getting to Zero Illinois Plan.



Top row, from left: Chicago Gay Men's Chorus; Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike; AFC Digital Communications Manager, artist and philanthropist D'Ontace Keyes. Bottom row, from left: State Rep. Thaddeus Jones and his wife, Saprina; AFC CEO and President John Peller.

All photos by Carrie Maxwell



BILLY Masters

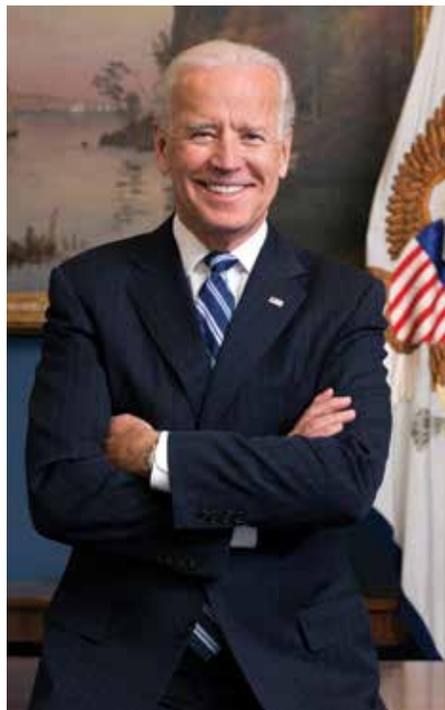
"There is no right or wrong way to be gay, to be queer, to be trans, and I hope that our community, even as we struggle to define what our identity means, defines it in a way that lets everybody know that they belong among us."—**Pete Buttigieg** at the recent Equality Town Hall responding to cries of "trans lives matter" and "trans people are dying."

Have I gone insane? Or has the world? It's really a toss-up. Perhaps we'll figure it out by the end of this column—which you can read in its entirety on BillyMasters.com. First, let's look at CNN's Equality Town Hall. There weren't many surprises. Thank God for good ol' reliable Joe. First, **Biden** almost made a startling revelation by saying "When I came out..." He quickly realized how that sounded, laughed and put his arm around **Anderson Cooper** saying, "I've got something to tell you." Cooper responded, "I kinda figured it out a while ago." Then, Biden rattled on and on: "Back 15, 20 years ago in San Francisco was all about gay ...gay bathhouses. It's all about around-the-clock sex. It's all ... come on, man. Gay couples are more likely to stay together longer than heterosexual couples." And if you think that's bad, you should have seen him in the swimsuit competition!

Alright, I admit it. I've had my share of around-the-clock sex orgies in San Francisco 15, 20 years ago. I've also had them 15, 20 days ago. But, I'm a bad example—I've had around-the-clock sex orgies at the Vatican. I hate to point this out to Joe, but bathhouses in San Francisco closed in 1984. You'd have thought the LGBTQ topic would be right up Pete Buttigieg's alley, so to speak. But based on performance alone, all hail **Queen Warren**. Her quip, while not phrased in a particularly presidential way, certainly seemed the right response during the Trump era. Still, I really missed **Bernie**. He could have told us about gay bars during Prohibition.

This leads perfectly into the **Ellen DeGeneres** debacle. Many people were horrified after she was seen sitting next to **George W. Bush** in the Dallas Cowboys VIP suite. Their seating was happenstance—Ellen and wife Portia de Rossi were invited by Charlotte Jones, the daughter of the Cowboys owner. The more militant members of our community feel she should have protested, walked out or done something other than spend time with a man who tried to block same-sex marriage, went into needless wars and did other horrific things. Instead, Ellen stayed and socialized. She said, "I'm friends with George Bush. In fact, I'm friends with a lot of people who don't share the same beliefs that I have. We're all different. And I think we've forgotten that that's OK that we're all different."

I was reminded of when **Barbra Streisand** received the Kennedy Center Honor in 2008 during the presidency of George W. Bush. She could have turned it down. She didn't. The honor is selected by an independent committee. So, like Ellen, Barbra was invited to something that thrust her



Billy gets political, discussing Joe Biden (above), among others.

into contact with the President. Although, unlike Ellen, Babs was careful not to be photographed anywhere near Bush. Streisand later wrote about the experience: "I have never met George W. Bush, but for the past eight years I have been blogging about him and his administration on my website. I have relayed my frustration at the direction he has taken our country in no uncertain terms. So it was just as surprising to me as it apparently was to the press that upon meeting President Bush and extending my hand to him, he said to me, 'Aw, c'mon, gimme a hug and kiss.' And then he proceeded to embrace me. I must say, I found him very warm and completely disarming...even though I think perhaps he was kissing me hello as I was kissing him goodbye...I guess in some small way, he and I proved that we could agree to disagree, and, for that weekend, art transcended politics."

Here's what I think—people are never one thing. If I stopped talking to friends with views or actions or traits that I disagree with, I'd have no friends. Interacting with different-minded people leads not only to many spirited debates and conversations, but also to broader understanding of another point of view. As gay people, how many times have we asked, "Why does one part of my life that you don't understand or agree with define me and scare you?" We look for acceptance, so it's hard to argue not accepting others. I don't expect to sit down with Bush anytime soon, but I'm sure I'd find him charming. I may end up liking him more than Ellen, who I find ... well, you know.

Then there's the sudden shake-up at Fox News. Did **Shepard Smith** quit or was he fired? He says he quit. However, two days before his announcement, Attorney General Bill Barr stopped off at Rupert Murdoch's home for a private tête-à-tête. Could that meeting be connected with this situation? Perhaps Smith didn't so much quit as

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HALLOWGLOW PARTY 10PM-2AM

SATURDAY OCT 26
DOG DAY SATURDAY HALLOWEEN EDITION 1-5PM
HALLOWEEND COSTUME CONTEST WITH DIXIE 10PM-3AM

SUNDAY OCT 27
BOYSTOWN SUNDEAD FUNDEAD ZOMBIE BARCRAWL 2-8PM
SUNDAY FUNDAY AFTER DARK - MADONNA EDITION 10PM-2AM

MONDAY OCT 28
BOOSICAL MONDAY SHOW TUNES 8PM-2AM

TUESDAY OCT 29
DIXIE AND ALEXIS PRESENT TRICKS & TREATS 9PM-2AM

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was somewhat nudged. A spokesperson for the newsman addressed the rumors, saying, "This was Shep's decision and his alone." The question remains, why would Smith terminate a contract worth about \$15 million a year? And what will he do for the year that (or if) his non-compete clause is enforced?

Could it be that a caustic cad of cable is currently paying cash for cock? Once one reaches a certain age, I suppose one does what one must. Still, sources say the paying for partners is a perpetual problem for the serial psycho. I can't imagine this latest wrinkle will help his lengthy legal battle. For now, he's putting on a brave face. At least, I think it's a brave face. With that much filler, it's hard to tell.

When fellas are flipping a flipper for a fee, it's definitely time to end yet another column. What more is there to say except to check out BillyMasters.com—the site that never has any filler. If you have a question, send it off to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I run into Joe Biden at my next round-the-clock sex orgy! So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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the DISH

Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR TAO Chicago

BY ANDREW DAVIS

The last time I was at what is now **TAO Chicago** (632 N. Dearborn St.; TaoChicago.com) was when it was Excalibur nightclub at a circuit-club event that the now-defunct Hearts Foundation hosted.

Dining at TAO turned out to be much more memorable than that night—for all the right reasons.

The restaurant—which had a star-studded premiere and which regularly has celebrity DJs at its upstairs nightclub—is an understandably huge spot. Patrons, fittingly, harbor huge expectations—and Tao meets almost every one of them.

The cavernous dining area (with steps leading to it that could test a tipsy individual, given the darkness) seats up to 300 patrons, and the Asian-themed spot (which has a 30-foot ceiling) has a 20-foot tall Quan Yin (or “goddess of mercy”) statue on one side. Hostesses and servers are the telegenic sort you’d expect to send at a trendier



Omakase at TAO Chicago.
Photo from TAO Chicago

River North spot (an observation, not a criticism).

But since this is a culinary item, it would behoove me to discuss the food—and it would behoove you to try it.

The menu is a lot to digest (pun intended), with categories such as “The Sea,” “The Land” and “The Sky.” There are also soups, dim sum, yakitori (skewered chicken), sushi and sashimi, noodles and rice, sides and even specialty rolls—which could be a nightmare for indecisive folks. (The other drawback is the noise level. When you have even 200 diners and a room with the acoustics of Tao’s, conversations can be a little challenging.)

However, the selections we tried were very impressive. Start with drinks such as the Ruby Red Dragon (Finlandia grapefruit vodka, orange liquor, yuzu citrus, hint of pomegranate).

Appetizers were promising, with my friend adoring the oysters with osetra caviar. Other offerings included tuna Pringles (tuna on those chips, and which might seem slightly overpriced), The Chilean sea bass satay (\$22!) was absolutely lovely and my favorite app was the spicy tuna tartare on crispy rice.

As for entrees, we were treated to two intriguing items: drunken lobster pad Thai (with brandy and cashews) as well as the Shanghai fried rice (rice with vegetables, shrimp, pork and egg, and covered in egg). However, the ne plus ultra turned out to be the wagyu rib-eye teppanyaki (at a celebration-only price of \$89), which was served with various dipping sauces; the meat was cooked perfectly—in fact, I didn’t even need the sauces to appreciate this beguiling dish.

But—whatever you do—don’t leave without trying dessert. You could go for a fruit plate, but there are other tempting items such as bread pudding doughnuts, molten chocolate cake and (of course!) the giant fortune cookie (which had the fortune “Someone is thinking kinky thoughts of you” for me).

(By the way, shout-outs go to server Ozzy and trainee Adam, who were very attentive to all tables they were assigned to—not just ours.)

At some restaurants, an evening meal can be dinner—or it can be an experience. Tao is definitely the latter.

Note: Restaurant profiles/events are based on invitations arranged from restaurants and/or firms.

HIGHLIGHTING CHICAGO'S DIVERSE DRAG PERFORMERS

PROFILE BY
TONY PEREGRIN

DRAG PROFILE OF THE WEEK
ROSEMARY MAYBE

BEHIND THE NAME
“Rosemary Maybe is inspired by Rosemary’s Baby. My name was originally Rosie Cheeks, but I wanted something more spooky and sexy.”

FIRST DRAG PERFORMANCE
“I started performing when I was 17 in the Rocky Horror Picture Show shadowcast at the Music Box Theatre. I had never known that cis women could perform as drag queens until I saw an article about Crimson Kitty, a New York City-based queen who’s been doing it for years. I decided to try drag and loved it. It’s been seven years now and I’m still going strong!”

DRAG INSPIRATION
“I get inspiration from the extreme—Raquel Welch, Edith Massey, Klaus Nomi. Whether it’s extremely sexy, extremely creative, or extremely disgusting and raunchy, I love people who throw themselves into who they are to the fullest extent.”

GO-TO NUMBER TO SLAY THE CROWD
“That would have to be my Eggs number. I do it as Edith Massey from John Waters’ Pink Flamingos. I start off in a playpen, and throughout the act pull hard boiled eggs out from my bra, under my wig, and a few... other places. I eat them Cookie-Monster style while lip-syncing my heart out to Heart’s ‘Alone.’”

FUN FACT
“In my daily life I’m an academic! I’m in grad school getting my Master’s in Library Information Sciences, and currently work as an assistant archivist at the Leather Archives and Museum.”

WHERE CAN WE CATCH YOU
“Catch me at Berlin the fourth Friday of every month for Geekhaus for all things nerdy, Kink It! for all things kinky, and Plan 9 Burlesque at the Newport Theater every other month for even more nerderly.”

SOCIAL MEDIA
Instagram: @rosemarymaybe
Facebook.com/rosemarymaybe

Photo by Nightingale Club



SIDETRACK

The Chicago Reader hosted a discussion in advance of the HRC/CNN town hall Oct. 10. Presidential candidate Marianne Williamson (above) stopped by the event.
Joseph Stevens Photography



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HOEMO from page 20

people but Black LGBTQ people who want to be around Black people primarily," he said. "I think that makes a difference."

What's more, he added that queer activism on the South Side of the city has only just begun. "There are more intentional efforts happening on

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the South Side now that are specifically geared toward Black and Brown LGBTQ people, like Pride South Side, Fahrenheit Chicago, Black Pride—[and] we have a couple of gay bars down there," said Marq. "[There are] efforts to circumvent [racial] issues and give ourselves spaces where we can. We're also seeing now how Boystown is being gentrified; even the white gays are being pushed out. So, it's like, 'There you go.'"

KYLE'S BED & BREAKFAST

by Greg Fox



WINDY CITY TIMES COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Oct. 16

State treasurer's LGBTQ reception Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs will host a celebration. Honors for Outstanding Service in Business: Ryan Bandy, Club Station House and Win, Lose or Draught, Owner; Outstanding Service in Leadership (posthumously): Michael Bauer, community activist; Outstanding Commitment in Education: Dr. Raymond Crossman, president of Adler University, President; Outstanding Commitment in Community Service: Center on Halsted; Outstanding Commitment as an Elected Official: Illinois state Rep. Kelly Cassidy; Outstanding Service in Workforce and Labor: Jackie and Cyndi Richter, founders/owners Heels and Hardhats Construction; Outstanding Achievement in Sportsmanship - Caitlin Cahow, Olympic Athlete 12:00pm - 1:00pm Concourse of the James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph St. <http://IllinoisTreasurer.gov>

Madonna: Madame X Tour Intimate concert experiences with best-selling female solo touring artist of all time. \$165-230. Through Oct. 28. 8:30pm The Chicago Theatre (Chicago) 175 N State St Chicago <http://www.theatre-chicago.org>



PHOTO FINISH
Through Oct. 27

The photo exhibit "Activists and Icons" is at the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center
Photo of James Baldwin
by Steve Schapiro

- 6:30pm Northwestern Technological Institute, Ryan Family Auditorium 2145 Sheridan Rd. <http://news.northwestern.edu/stories/2019/04/hidden-figures-one-book/>

Chicago-based lesbian comedian Whitney Chitwood release show Release show for new album, The Bakery Case. \$10 8:00pm The Newport

Theater, 956 W. Newport Ave. Tickets: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4387708?date=2143816>.

Friday, Oct. 18

Joffrey Ballet's Jane Eyre Cathy Marston's enthralling adaptation of the classic novel runs October 16-27. \$35 to \$199 7:30pm Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University 50 E Congress Pkwy Chicago 312.386.8905 Tickets: <http://joffrey.org>

Saturday, Oct. 19

CGHA part of hockey team's Pride Night Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA) will be playing on the ice at Allstate Arena during the day and at 7 p.m. will participate in the first-ever Wolves Pride Night, involving the local semi-pro hockey team the Chicago Wolves. \$30 includes a Pride Night T-shirt (of which only 60 are available 10:00am Allstate Arena 6920 N. Mannheim Rd., Rosemont, IL 60018 Tickets: <http://ChicagoGayHockey.org/wolves-pride/>

Second City anniversary open house As part of Open House Chicago, comedy lovers are invited to explore Second City's legacy at the theater's Old Town home, Piper's Alley, 230 W. North Ave., 11:00am <http://openhousechicago.org>

3rd Annual Chicago Organizer Fair People Power Political Activists is a study/action organization that gives participants opportunity to get involved with the political process and learn about politics and help promote democratic values. "People Power Political Activists" on Facebook. Veronica Khachatryan veronikahachatryan@gmail.com 12:00pm - 3:00pm Harry S. Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Ave. 773-524-7371

Arts in the Dark Streets filled with cos-

tumes, music, dance, and more to celebrate Halloween and the creative Chicago community. State St. from Lake to Van Buren 8:00pm <http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com>

Big Orange Ball Kick off Halloween with light bites, spooky treats, seven drag queens, silent auction, raffle, dancing, scary-fun surprises. Hosted by Amailia Black 8:00pm - 12:00pm Park West Chicago 322 W. Armitage Ave Chicago Tickets: <http://aesbid.com/ELP/BOB19/> Tickets

Sunday, Oct. 20

Red Stars hosting National Women's Soccer League semifinal For the second time in franchise history, the Chicago Red Stars will host a National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) semifinal matchup, which will mark their fifth consecutive playoff match. 2:30pm SeatGeek Stadium, Bridgeview <http://ChicagoRedStars.com>

Monday, Oct. 21

Benefit for the homeless More than 40 Chicago punk, prog, noise, rock and surf musicians-including current and former members of PiL, Naked Raygun and Local H-will perform at a benefit concert to raise money for the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless. Suggested donation \$20. "Celebration of Life & Work of Rob Warmowski to Benefit CCH" on Facebook. 5:00pm - 10:00pm Metro Chicago, 3730 N Clark St.

Tuesday, Oct. 22

Gender and Sexuality Studies Workshop Where is the Safe Place?: Legal Socialization and Intersections of Police and Interpersonal Violence Among Young Transgender Women. Jane Hereth, PhD

Candidate, Social Service Administration. Discussant: Yanilda Maria Gonzalez, Assistant Professor, Social Service Administration. Workshops are held on alternate (even) weeks. Questions to gssworkshop@gmail.com. 3-6:15 p.m., Seminar room, 5733 S. University Ave. <http://lists.uchicago.edu/web/subscribe/sexuality-gender-wkshp>

Lezfest Presentation and celebration of queer female and non-binary performance artists, through Oct. 23. Proceeds fund programming by, for, and about our queer community. 7:30pm Pride Arts Center, 4147 N. Broadway 866-811-4111 or 773-857-0222 Tickets: <http://web.ovationtix.com/trs/pe.c/10348755>

Saturday, Oct. 26

'Activists and Icons' Photographs of Steve Schapiro 46 large-format photographs tell the story of seminal moments in history from the March on Washington (1963) to Robert Kennedy's presidential campaign (1968). Closes Oct. 27 11:00am - 5:00pm Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center 9603 Woods Dr. Skokie, IL 60077 <http://ILHolocaustMuseum.org/activists-and-icons>

Thursday, Oct. 31

23rd Annual Haunted Halsted Halloween Parade Parade kicks off from Halsted and Belmont and travels north to Brompton. The costume contest crowns a \$500 cash winner in each of six categories: Scary, Drag, Creative, Youth, Cosplay, and Group (<10), and a Large Group (10+) category with a \$1,000 prize. A total of \$4,000 in cash prizes. FREE to spectate or participate. Floats Welcome!. Register online 7:30pm Halsted and Belmont, north to Brompton. Tickets: Haunted-Halsted.com

Thursday, Oct. 17

Hidden Figures' author at 'One Book One Northwestern' Margot Lee Shetterly, author Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race. Doors 4 p.m. 4:30pm

VANDALS from page 21

had seen it, thinking it was a one-off, and taken it down."

One of the store's neighbors later said they had removed stickers as well. H. Melt noted a pattern: The stickers appeared between Sunday evening and Monday morning. With the first incident, there was one sticker; on the second occasion, there were two; the last time, four stickers appeared. They did not wish to repeat the message on the stickers, which they said seemed to be produced professionally.

"The messaging was specifically targeting trans-women and was trans-misogynistic," H. Melt said. "... What we've been doing is informing people in the community, informing our staff, and working with our fellow queer and trans activists—as well as our customers—to let everyone know what's happening."

While communicating about the incidents online, H. Melt discovered that a feminist bookseller in London had been targeted online by TERFs (Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminists) for their support for transgender and nonbinary community members.

"They have also experienced a lot of harassment—particularly online harassment—as well," H. Melt added. "We've seen

these same exact stickers, these same exact designs, have popped up in Liverpool. They've popped up in the U.K., so we know that this is a global issue."

Women & Children First is collaborating with the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce and Chicago Therapy Collective to host a community activation event on Sunday, Oct. 20, co-owner Hollenbeck said.

"We will be covering Andersonville with trans-affirming messaging, using sidewalk chalk, flags, stickers and whatever else we have at our disposal," Hollenbeck said. Our intention is to 'shower' the neighborhood in a joyful celebration of trans lives and voices."

Hollenbeck added that the Sunday evening timing of the event was intentional, since the stickers seemed to be getting posted under the cover of darkness on Sunday nights.

"We wanted to have this joyful celebration on a Sunday night in hopes that it would run counter to the hateful vandalism that's been happening. We obviously have no idea if it will happen again, but it has been a targeted pattern, on a specific day and on a specific store, though there are other trans-inclusive and other LGBTQ-inclusive businesses on the street. We just thought that it was necessary to meet them with a strong and joyful response."

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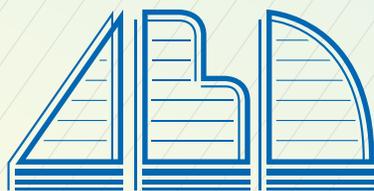
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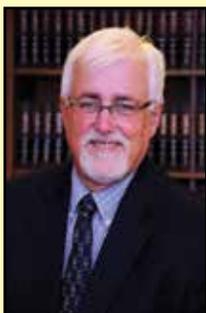


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The sardonic paintings of Japanese cult artist Tetsuya Ishida (1973 – 2005) represent the alienation of a treadmill society dominated by work, productivity and consumerism. Ishida's work is an extraordinary testament to the malaise and anxiety of a generation at the turn of the century.

WRIGHTWOOD
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ISHIDA
Self-Portrait of Other

