

WINDY CITY TIMES

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

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'CLOUT' STANDING

Queer Clout author Timothy Stewart-Winter is returning to Chicago.

Detail from book cover

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The Cult of Whiteness

On #OscarsSoWhite, Donald Trump, and the End of America

BY MAX S. GORDON

In this week's Windy City Times, we are publishing the first of a four-part in-depth essay by Max. S. Gordon.

"You've got to learn to leave the table when love's no longer being served." — Nina Simone

"I, too, sing America." — Langston Hughes

PART ONE

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It is befitting that a conversation about racism and the Oscars occurred so close to Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, as it is impossible to talk about Hollywood or America without deconstructing whiteness. If you haven't noticed, whiteness is currently under attack, is deeply threatened, and may be, when all is said and done, eradicated completely. (When whiteness crumbles, patriarchal dominance will be right behind it.) When I speak of whiteness, I am not talking necessarily about individual white people, but the construct of whiteness, the cult of whiteness, while particularly onerous to people of color everywhere, on some level oppresses us all.

For many of us, a discussion about the Oscars may seem petty and insignificant given what is currently going on in this country. America, at this moment, is a country in flames. We have a city tricked by an indifferent governor and his administration into drinking poisoned water, which, regardless of his original intentions, may have had homicidal results; teachers in the same state walking out of their classrooms because the ceiling was literally falling down on them; and a mayor in another Midwestern city allegedly covering up police brutality and civilian murders in order to protect his career. And yet, as I write this, these men are still in office, still governing.

We trip through life, unable to digest the grief and rage over one violent incident before having to face another. Tamir Rice, Sandra Bland, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin. Americans all, deserving of our protection and justice, but disregarded once out of the headlines or courtroom—like so much garbage. Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze, strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees. The gross negligence and injustice of it all could send you half out your mind, but even insanity is a luxury now, as we still have to feed our kids, we have to go work. Everything is backwards—instead of sleeping through our bad dreams, we awake each morning to fresh nightmares.

Homeless men and women and the mentally ill roam the



Max S. Gordon.

streets sick, desperately in need, and it is estimated that close to sixteen million children live below the poverty level. The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world, as the prison industry continues to turn a profit. For many of us, feeling safe and protected is part of a nostalgic past. We dread the terrorist who may be lurking on the subway car or train, or who may blow us sky-high while we're standing by the coffee-machine at work. We scan the faces as we board the plane, wondering if the person sitting across the aisle is the enemy and this flight will be our last. Or perhaps it will be the high school student during second period who takes us out, and if not him, then the maniac with the assault rifle who finishes us off in a movie theater while we watch Star Wars with our kids. And now, after Charleston, there's blood on the collection plate too, as even the church pew is marked as a potential crime scene.

In light of this gruesome reality, who the hell cares about a bullshit self-indulgent contest that is always an hour too long, hosted by someone who too often disappoints the viewing audience and critics, then followed by media coverage of the millions of dollars in loaned diamonds and a debate over which color gown dominated the red carpet. Given what we face as a nation at the moment, a dinner-table conversation that shifts from social welfare and justice to whether Leonardo DiCaprio will finally win a best actor Oscar this year may

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JACOB MEISTER

Seeks to topple Dorothy Brown in next month's elections.

Photo from campaign team

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#PREP4LOVE

HIV campaign launched at event.

Photo by Matt Simonette

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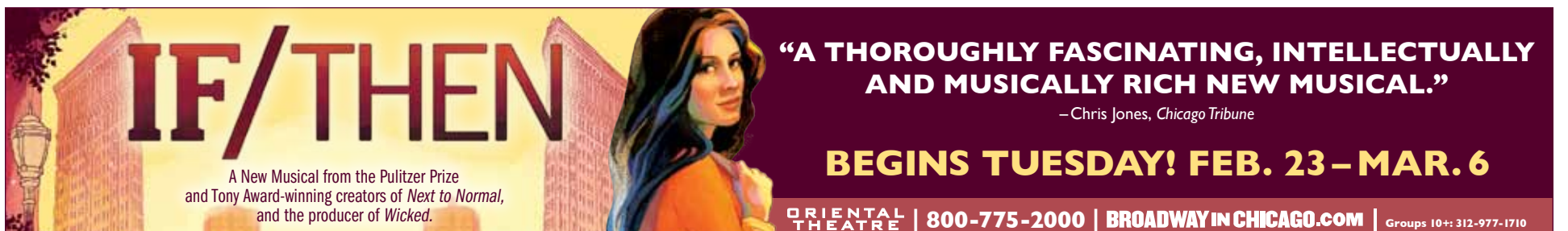
STEPHEN CONE

Actor/director talks about new film, Henry Gamble's Birthday Party.

Photo by Photo by Janna Giacoppo

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IF/THEN

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—Chris Jones, *Chicago Tribune*

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A TIP FROM A
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TM

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didn't cause the
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in my neck.
Smoking with
HIV did.**

Brian, age 45, California

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health problems, including a
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and surgery on an artery in his
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'HEART' OF THE MATTER

Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus held
"From the Heart," a social gathering and
award ceremony.

Photo of performer (left) by Vern Hester

OKIE-DOKIE



Oklahoma City—yes, Oklahoma City—is
staking its claim as a tourist destination.

Photo by Jerry Nunn

'GROUND' WORK

A sneak peek of the new TV series
Underground was held at the DuSable
Museum.

BAN ON THE RUN

Ask Lambda Legal deals with the
issue of bosses banning trans
employees from restrooms.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about St. Vincent,
Chaz Bono and Sam Smith.

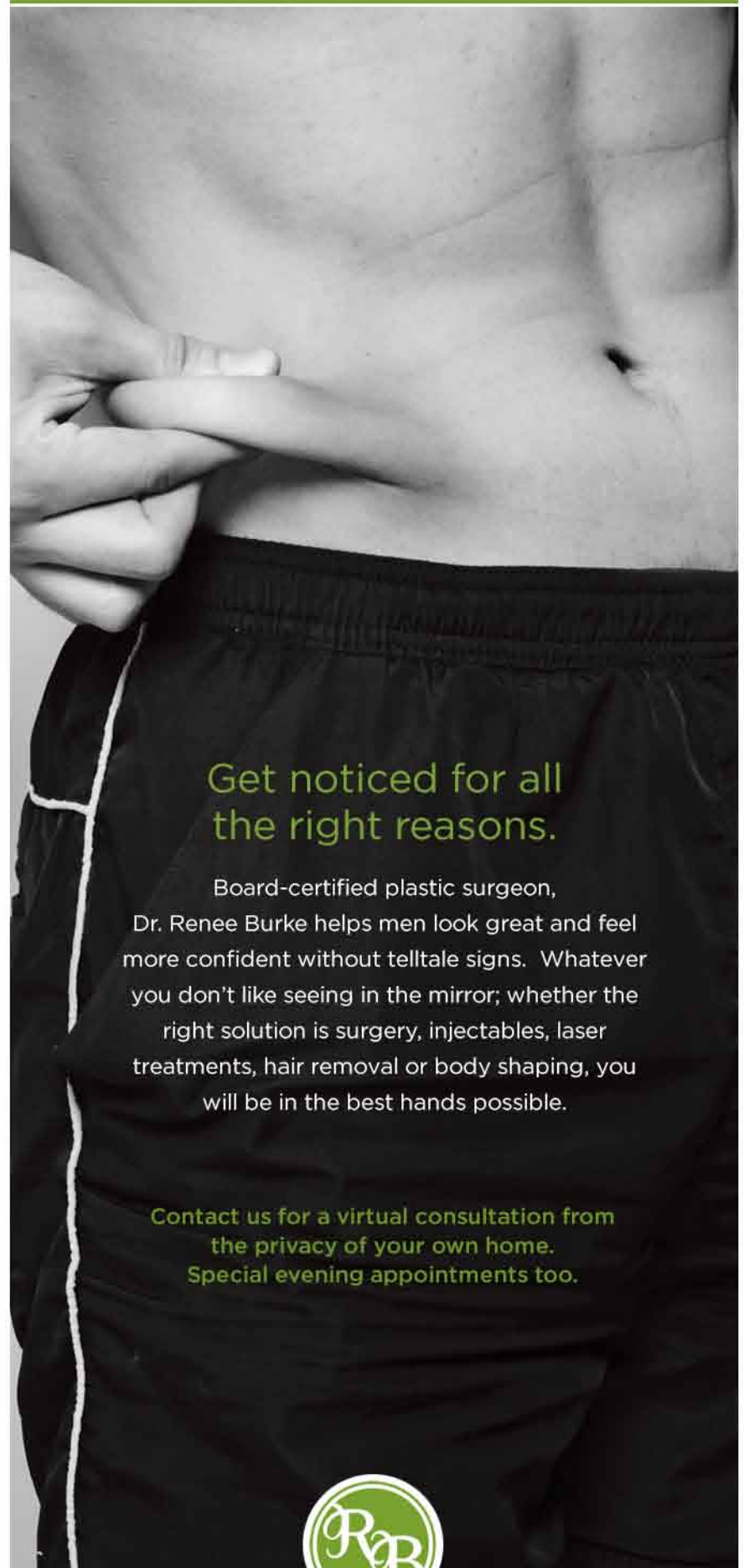
plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

KIM REMINDER



WCT chats with Naysha Lopez and Kim
Chi, the two Chicago entrants in the
upcoming season of RuPaul's Drag Race.
Photo of Chi from Logo

SOME THINGS CAN'T BE SOLVED AT THE GYM



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RENEE BURKE MD

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Trans article connects psychology, hormone therapy

A Transgender Health article shows that transgender individuals may experience significant improvement in psychological functioning after as little as three to six months of hormone therapy, with improved quality of life reported within 12 months of initiating therapy by both female-to-male and male-to-female transgender individuals.

Jaclyn White Hughto and Sari Reisner of Fenway Health, Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School; and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (Boston), and Yale School of Public Health (New Haven, Connecticut), reviewed the evidence from published studies of transgender adults treated with hormone therapy for gender identity disorder.

"Reviews of the existing literature of this nature are hugely helpful in moving the field

of transgender health forward," said Editor-in-Chief Robert Garofalo MD, MPH (Professor of Pediatrics and Preventive Medicine, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, and Director, Center for Gender, Sexuality and HIV Prevention, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago) in a statement.

"This work highlights a healthcare disparity affecting transgender people—depression and anxiety—and offers a potential therapeutic option to help eliminate or reduce it: access to hormone therapy," Garofalo added. "It sets the bar for future research to be conducted in this area, which is sorely needed and may help some clinicians caring for transgender people."

The research article is at <http://online.liebert-pub.com/doi/full/10.1089/trgh.2015.0008>.



Dr. Ibrahim Abdurrahmani Farajaje.
Photo courtesy of BiNetUSA

Bisexual activist Farajaje dies

Black bisexual activist Dr. Ibrahim Abdurrahmani Farajaje—the provost and professor of cultural studies at the Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley, California—died Feb. 9 at age 63.

BiNet USA co-founder Lani Ka'ahumanu said in a statement, "One of our dearest most brilliant, fierce, outspoken, loving, gentle, and fun/ny queer bisexual beings—The Reverend Dr. Ibrahim Farajaje—has passed.

"A towering talent, an intellectual genius and a kind hearted teacher beloved by many, Dr. Farajaje's writing on the decolonization of queer theory 'took off where Audre Lorde left off.' Like Lorde and her dear friend the Black bisexual poet June Jordan, Dr. Farajaje transitioned too soon from this life to the next."

In 1995, Farajaje and his family were featured in a groundbreaking cover story on bisexuality for Newsweek. Last year, he helped facilitate a conference that had LGBTQ clergy from across the nation gathering in Portland, Oregon, to collectively create of a plan to engage hundreds of thousands of LGBTQ people from diverse spiritual traditions in the "Black Lives Matter" movement.

Canada appoints first trans judge

Kael McKenzie, a judge for the Canadian province of Manitoba, has made history as the country's first transgender person to hold that

position, Gay Star News reported. He was sworn in during a Feb. 12 ceremony in Winnipeg.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh, the minister for justice and attorney general, said, "It's historic. ... Any time the court can be more diverse, I think it strengthens the court, it makes it more legitimate, it gives it greater authority."

In part, McKenzie thanked his family for their support, saying, "I have two great sons. This day would not be complete without them."

The article is at <http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/canada-appoints-first-trans-judge/#gs.GECsU4g>.

Digital transgender archive launched

A digital transgender archive—with the website DigitalTransgenderArchive.net—has been launched at the College of the Holy Cross, The Boston Globe reported.

The archive is a compendium of historic documents, oral-history transcripts, photographs and newsletters from years past. Organizers believe it is the first time such a collection of transgender-related digital material has been available.

The archive materials have been gathered from 13 institutions, with eight more slated to donate in the coming months. Among the educational universities that are involved are Harvard, Cornell, the University of Victoria and the University of Michigan.

College of the Holy Cross is in Worcester, Massachusetts.

The article is at <http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/02/12/digital-transgender-archive-launches-holy-cross/EbH3YSX1TkxVeRwQXD7p6I/story.html>.

HRC praises move by Dept. of Education

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC), in a statement, praised the U.S. Department of Education for deciding to publish a searchable database—in the coming months—of educational institutions who have sought and/or received an exemption from federal civil-rights law in order to discriminate against LGBT students.

In December, the organization called on the department to make such a move.

"We have been alarmed by the growing trend of schools quietly seeking the right to discriminate against LGBT students, and not disclosing that information publicly," said HRC President Chad Griffin.

In the report "Hidden Discrimination: Title IX Religious Exemptions Putting LGBT Students at Risk," HRC highlighted 56 colleges and universities in 26 states that have requested religious exemptions under Title IX since 2013.

GUEST COLUMN

BY RAMON GARDENHIRE



Budgets Matter

Do #BlackLivesMatter? It's hard to tell if they matter to those who control the systems that prevent Black people across the country from accessing health care, sustainable employment, education, housing—even Oscar nominations.

Sunday, Feb. 7, 2016, marked National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. We have lustrous examples of progress toward ending new HIV infections in all communities, including Black communities, such as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (or PrEP), a once-a-day HIV prevention pill that is nearly 100 percent effective when taken consistently at preventing HIV infection. And for the first time in decades, Chicago reported fewer than 1,000 new HIV cases last year. However, I caution us: We shine brightest when we are most vulnerable. There are seeds of failure in this data, in that it doesn't lay bare the disproportional impact HIV is having on the Black community—and in particular, Black young gay and bisexual men.

rampant in other communities, would our public health infrastructure and elected officials not declare a state of emergency?

And let me be abundantly clear: Infection rates in the Black community are not associated with risky behavior. Nearly every study demonstrates how Blacks utilize condoms at the same, if not higher, rates than their white counterparts. These numbers (and lives) are rooted in racism.

Say the word "racism" and people imagine someone in a white hood, terrorizing Black folks. However, in reality, ordinary people, systems and institutions perpetuate racism daily—often unaware and benign to the toxic effects of systemic racial bias.

Are we doing enough to prioritize Black lives? We are the face of this epidemic because of the systems that keep us out of reach of access to healthcare (especially in Illinois, where Gov. Bruce Rauner has dismantled so many support

systems that thousands of people—Black, brown, and otherwise—relied on to stay housed, fed and healthy).

The good news is that, for many of us—including you—if you're reading this article, Black lives do matter.

On Feb. 17, 2016, Gov. Rauner will unveil his FY17 state

"Say the word 'racism' and people imagine someone in a white hood, terrorizing Black folks. However, in reality, ordinary people, systems and institutions perpetuate racism daily—often unaware and benign to the toxic effects of systemic racial bias. "

But there are still approximately 1,800 new HIV infections in our state each year.

Fifty percent of those infections are in the Black community, and HIV rates are highest among young gay and bisexual Black men.

If the HIV rate doesn't change, 1 in 16 of my Black brothers and 1 in 32 of my Black sisters will be diagnosed with HIV in their lifetimes. A recent report highlights that a young Black gay man becoming sexually active today at the age of 18 has about a 60 percent chance of being HIV-positive by the age of 40. In addition, a recent study suggests that 66.7 percent of Blacks between the ages of 18 and 65 years old have never been tested for HIV.

What does all this tell us? Do Black lives matter? If these numbers were

budget. If past behavior is an indication of future behavior, he will propose devastating cuts to the very programs and services Black communities need to turn the tide in HIV infections.

I believe that the Illinois state budget is a profoundly moral document. If you find these cuts just as horrific as I do, I ask you to lend your voice to the choirs of those rallying against injustice and call upon the governor and elected officials to repudiate these cuts and Pass a Positive Budget. It can't be only those affected by these cuts calling for change. Because change happens when those not impacted make themselves uncomfortable, so others can be comfortable.

See <http://www.aidschicago.org/page/our-work/advocacy/pass-a-positive-budget>.

Ramon Gardenhire currently serves as the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC). In this position, he is responsible for setting strategic direction for AFC's policy and advocacy development and implementation and engagement at the city, state, and national levels. In addition, he oversees engagement of community partners as related to policy. His areas of focus have included the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and ensuring that new federal and state healthcare systems meet the healthcare needs of people with HIV, Medicaid policy, federal and state budget and appropriations, and the Illinois AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). At the state level, one of his proudest accomplishments is leading a coalition that successfully expanded Medicaid coverage for low-income adults without children under the Affordable Care Act. The expansion makes approximately half a million Illinoisans newly eligible for healthcare coverage. He was also a leader in a coalition that helped enact comprehensive sexual health education for Illinois students.



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Justice Scalia dies—and the fallout begins

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

Antonin Scalia, the U.S. Supreme Court justice most hostile to equal rights for LGBT people, has died, and a threat by Republicans in Congress to block President Obama from naming his replacement promises to escalate the nation's already bitter political civil war.

"Justice Scalia was a gleeful and influential political culture-warrior as well as ... a towering figure who cast a dark shadow on the law and on the lives of many Americans," said Evan Wolfson, who headed the national group Freedom to Marry. "More than just a dependable 'No' vote on the constitutional and civil rights of gay people and others, he reveled in disparagement and incendiary attacks that influenced many judges, politicians, and lawyers, and epitomized the prejudices and exclusion we were working, fortunately with some success, to overcome."

Such was the spirit of reaction by most LGBT legal activists to the news Feb. 13 that Justice Antonin Scalia was found dead earlier that day in his hotel suite at a private resort in west Texas. The news sent shockwaves through the legal community and the current field of presidential candidates.

Within hours of news of Scalia's death, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell issued a statement saying the Senate should not consider a nominee "until we have a new president," and during the Feb. 12 GOP debate, most of the remaining six candidates agreed. But Obama made clear that he intends to fulfill his duty to name a replacement, and LGBT legal activists have good reason to feel confident that the chief executive will nominate someone who will recognize the right of LGBT citizens to enjoy the protections of the U.S. constitution.

Many political observers believe it is unlikely that Congress will allow the seat to remain open for the 12 months or more it would take for a new president to assume office. And it's a big gamble for Republicans to presume that the GOP's eventual presidential nominee will win in November.

If Congress does stall the nomination process, the Supreme Court will operate with eight justices. That scenario could potentially improve chances of positive outcomes on LGBT-related cases, given that Justice Anthony Kennedy often votes with the court's more liberal wing on LGBT cases.

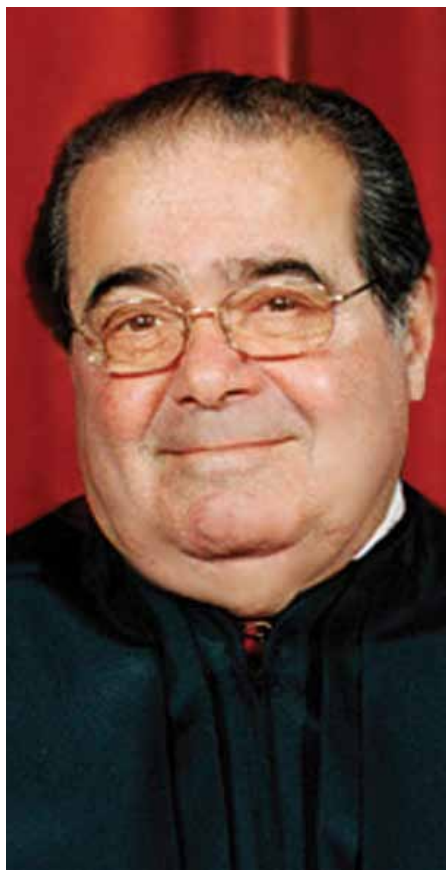
"It is already apparent that one result of Justice Scalia's passing will be to focus public attention on how important the Supreme Court is to the lives of all Americans, which I think is a good thing," said Jon Davidson, national legal director for Lambda Legal.

Davidson said he expects history will judge Scalia "quite harshly" when it comes to the rights of LGBT people, women, and people of color.

Davidson's colleague, Lambda Legal senior counsel Jenny Pizer, said Scalia's "contempt for gay people will look increasingly anachronistic—and disturbed—over time."

"I believe his strongest influence has been as a trumpeter, calling to rally the religious right," said Pizer. "His intemperate tone has seemed intended to inspire anger and alarm among those working for reactionary causes ... [G]iven how frequently his dissents have been cited as authority by the lower courts, he certainly has had influence in slowing LGBT legal progress that way, as well as by motivating political outrage against, and defiance against, liberal court decisions."

Scalia was the current Supreme Court's most staunch conservative, and one who often wrote dissenting opinions to the court's most historic



U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

rulings on LGBT-related cases. Appointed to the court by President Reagan in 1986, Scalia always voted against the interests of gay people in cases before the court—beginning with the 1987 five-to-four decision allowing the U.S. Olympic Committee to ban Gay Games from calling itself the Gay Olympics. He also joined the unanimous decision in 1995 to allow St. Patrick's Day parade organizers in Boston to exclude a gay contingent, and was with the majority five-to-four decision in 2000 to allow the Boy Scouts of America to revoke the membership of an Eagle Scout because he was gay.

What really marked Scalia as anti-gay were his dissents to pro-LGBT decisions. They began in 1996 with his vigorous complaint in dissent to a six-to-three majority opinion in *Romer v. Evans*—a majority opinion that struck down a Colorado law that had barred any political subdivision in the state from prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. Scalia derided the majority for saying the state law was driven by "animus."

"Of course it is our moral heritage that one should not hate any human being or class of human beings," wrote Scalia. But, he said, "one could consider certain conduct reprehensible—murder, for example, or polygamy, or cruelty to animals—and could exhibit even 'animus' toward such conduct. Surely that is the only sort of 'animus' at issue here: moral disapproval of homosexual conduct...."

In 2003, Scalia led the dissent against a six-to-three majority in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which had struck down state laws banning consensual intimate relations between adult persons of the same gender. Scalia said the Texas law, which made it a felony for two adults of the same sex to engage in sexual relations in the privacy of their bedroom, simply sought "to further the belief of its citizens that certain forms of sexual behavior are 'immoral and unacceptable.'" Other such behaviors, he said, included "fornication, bigamy, adultery, adult incest, bestiality, and obscenity."

Almost 10 years later, in response to a question at an appearance before an audience at Princeton, Scalia suggested he made such ex-

treme comparisons because they were "effective."

"I don't apologize for the things I raised. I'm not comparing homosexuality to murder. I'm comparing the principle that a society may not adopt moral sanctions, moral views, against certain conduct—I'm comparing that with respect to murder and that with respect to homosexuality."

And Scalia led the dissent in other major LGBT-related cases before the Supreme Court: *U.S. v. Windsor*, which, in 2013, struck down the federal Defense of Marriage Act ("[E]ven setting aside traditional moral disapproval of same-sex marriage (or indeed same-sex sex), there are many perfectly valid—indeed, downright boring—justifying rationales for this legislation.")

In the most recent LGBT case, 2015's *Obergefell v. Hodges*, Scalia led the dissent once again, saying he thought the national public debate over marriage for same-sex couples was "American democracy at its best."

Because Scalia dissented landmark LGBT decisions in recent years, his hostility to LGBT people was held in check to some extent. But

he was still seen by LGBT legal activists as an unapologetic rabble-rouser for lower court judges and right-wing political figures who shared his disdain for LGBT people.

"His opinions about LGBT people were particularly harsh, and he wrote about them in openly disparaging terms that perpetuated the most damaging and vicious stereotypes," said Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

"One that particularly stands out is his dissent in *Lawrence*, when he wrote that 'Many Americans do not want persons who openly engage in homosexual conduct as partners in their business, as scoutmasters for their children, as teachers in their children's schools, or as boarders in their home. They view this as protecting themselves and their families from a lifestyle that they believe to be immoral and destructive.'"

"[B]y voicing such extreme views," said Minter, Scalia "gave a stamp of legitimacy to anti-LGBT bias and other deeply reactionary positions and, in that way, pulled the Court's jurisprudence to the right."

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ABA passes key resolutions

The American Bar Association (ABA) recently passed two significant resolutions, according to a press release from The LGBT Bar.

The first urges all state, local, territorial and tribal legislatures to examine any and all statutes that criminalize "consensual, non-commercial sexual conduct, in private and between persons who have the legal capacity to consent." The resolution follows decades of legal battles regarding sodomy laws, culminating in the 2003 Supreme Court decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* and the recent decision to amend the Uniform Code of Military Justice to remove consensual oral and anal sex from its list of offenses.

With the second resolution, the American Bar adopted the ABA Model Act Governing Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Agencies and urges its adoption by all "appropriate governmental agencies and legislatures."

Wolfson to address NEIU grads May 9

LGBT-rights leader Evan Wolfson will speak at Northeastern Illinois University's commencement ceremony on Monday, May 9.

Commencement will take place at UIC Pavilion, 525 S. Racine Ave.

Considered by many to be the leader of the marriage equality movement, Wolfson is the founder and president of Freedom to Marry, the successful campaign driving the strategy to win marriage for same-sex couples throughout the United States.



New LAGBAC President Cecilia Horan.

Horan is LAGBAC's new president

The Lesbian and Gay Bar Association of Chicago (LAGBAC) has named Cecilia Horan as its new president—becoming the first woman leader of the organization.

Horan is a partner at Hinshaw & Culbertson, LLP, where she concentrates her practice in tort litigation and insurance coverage disputes. She previously served as LAGBAC's vice-president and chaired the Special Events Committee, which has maintained a presence at Chicago Market Days and organized an annual Pride reception for Cook County judges.

The outgoing President, John Litchfield of Foley & Lardner LLP, led LAGBAC since 2010.

Founded in 1987, LAGBAC is a not-for-profit organization that promotes the professional development and advancement of LGBT legal professionals. See LAGBAC.org.

Nominations sought for 30 Under 30 Awards

Windy City Times is seeking to recognize 30 more outstanding LGBT individuals (and allies) for its annual 30 Under 30 Awards.

Nominees should be 30 years or under as of June 30, 2016, and should have made some substantial contributions to the Chicagoland LGBT community, whether in the fields of entertainment, politics, health, activism, academics, sports or other areas.

The deadline to nominate individuals is Friday, April 15.

Windy City Times Managing Editor Andrew Davis coordinates the awards program for the paper. Hundreds of people have been honored by the paper in the more than 10 years since the awards were established. Most honorees have

gone on to great success in their careers and educations, including working for the Obama presidential campaign and administration, plus individual successes in music, legal, professional and academic careers and much more.

Individuals, organizations, co-workers, etc. can nominate a person by emailing Andrew@WindyCityMediaGroup.com or faxed to Andrew Davis' attention to 773-871-7609. Self-nominations are welcome.

The nomination should be 100 words or fewer, and should state what achievements or contributions the nominee has made. Nominators should include their own names and contact information as well as the contact information and the age of the nominee.

Note: Following the policy instituted in 2005, individuals can only win once. Those have won the award since that year are ineligible for this year's awards.

Honorees will be notified in May and recognized at a free ceremony in June.

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CCHR Board of Commissioner members (including new member Julio Rodriguez, right), outgoing staff attorney Abel Leon (speaking) and others.

Photo courtesy of Mona Noriega

CCHR announces expanded coverage, staff changes

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

The Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR), the city's civil rights agency charged with enforcing ordinances and investigating complaints, has announced two changes to the Chicago Human Rights and Fair Housing Ordinances.

Military status has been added as a protected class under the Human Rights Ordinance and the Fair Housing Ordinance. The CCHR has also made it illegal for landlords, realtors or other parties to retaliate against those who file a housing discrimination complaint against them under the Fair Housing Ordinance.

According to CCHR's press release announcing these changes, "This amendment would make it illegal to discriminate against veterans, active duty military personnel, reservists and members of the National Guard. Currently, the only protection under the ordinances for veterans is the prohibition of discrimination based on military discharge status."

This change covers both employment and housing protections.

CCHR Commissioner Mona Noriega explained that this change was made due to what the commission heard from members about discriminatory treatment they experienced in the areas of housing, employment and credit during the monthly Veterans Advisory Council meetings.

"The City of Chicago has prioritized serving veterans, and advancing military status as a protected category was one way our office could deliver on these priorities," said Noriega.

In the area of retaliation in housing, the CCHR is expanding what they've already done in terms of employment discrimination to the Fair Housing Ordinance.

"Our hope is that this added protection will help victims of housing discrimination feel safer about filing complaints," said Noriega.

In addition to these changes, the commission has been working to align the City of Chicago's Human Rights and Fair Housing ordinances

with the Federal government's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). CCHR is working with the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities (MOPD) to amend these ordinances and regulations.

"In addition, we have really stepped up education, whether it be easy to read fact sheets, or reaching out directly to small businesses and small landlords so they understand what their rights and obligations are in regards to providing access," said Noriega. "The issue of hate crimes continues to be a priority for the CCHR and we use all opportunities to discuss what constitutes a hate crime, how to report a hate crime and to go into schools to deliver anti-bullying workshops and peace circles as one of the ways to reach children and prevent hate crimes."

CCHR has named Kelly Suzanne Saulsberry its new policy and outreach director. In her post, Saulsberry has been working on a variety of initiatives and programming including in partnership with the MOPD to convene a discussion with disability activists on issues faced in the disability community.

"Kelly has also taken the lead in a year-long delivery of trainings across the city in partnership with CHA on housing discrimination, and along with CCHR staff, Kelly participated in a press conference hosted by the Southwest Side International Human Relations Council, a diverse coalition of community-based organizations and residents that promotes peace and understanding between Chicago's Muslim communities and other racial, ethnic and religious communities in Chicago," said Noriega.

CCHR has also added Julio Rodriguez to its board of commissioners.

"The Board of Commissioners are the last step in the adjudication of complaints of discrimination that are filed at the CCHR," said Noriega. "Each of the board members are experts in how discrimination affects the protected classes in the areas the CCHR has jurisdiction—housing, employment, public accommodations, credit and bonding. As a longtime organizer

in the Latino and in the LGBTQ communities and as expert in employment issues, Julio's intersectional perspective on the issues that come before the board will help ensure that the CCHR delivers on our mission of advancing civil rights for the people who live and visit the City of Chicago."

"As the newest member of the board of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, I'm honored to be a part of this very critical body," said Rodriguez. "Given the recent events in our city, it's even more important for community leaders to work closely with both our elected officials and key staff in the administration to ensure that the rights of all Chicago residents are protected. It's also imperative that we create more transparency and opportunities for everyone's voices to be heard. As a gay Puerto Rican man, who was born and raised in Chicago, I've seen the best and the worst of this city. I hope in my role on the Board, I can bring a different and unique perspective on how discrimination impacts different communities and offer new solutions to address them."

In addition to Rodriguez's appointment and the changes to the Chicago Human Rights and Fair Housing Ordinances, the CCHR has announced that gay staff attorney Abel Leon will be leaving the commission staff.

Previously, Leon worked as an EEOC investigator for the City of Chicago's human resources department. Noriega noted that this work lent itself to his work at the CCHR.

Noriega explained that Abel was instrumental in the expansion of anti-discrimination protections to include military status as well as the addition of retaliation protections in housing. In his time at the CCHR, Noriega noted that Leon expanded outreach to the Latino community via Spanish speaking presentations on a variety of subjects, prepared and delivered various trainings as a part of CCHR's partnership with Chicago Community Trust's ADA 25 and conducted outreach to local bar associations among other endeavors.

"I'm very fortunate to have the opportunity to work with such great advocates of social justice issues," said Noriega. "While we're sorry that Abel will no longer work for the City of Chicago, the recent appointment of Julio to the CCHR Board, the addition of Kelly to the staff, plus the dedication of long-time staff, helps keep the momentum going to advance civil rights for the people who live and visit the City of Chicago."

See www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cchr.html for more information.

EI PAC issues endorsements

The Equality Illinois Political Action Committee issued its first round of endorsements for the 2016 primary elections.

The PAC is supporting Susana Mendoza for the Democratic nomination for Illinois state comptroller and the re-election of 24 incumbent state legislators who have supported measures advancing LGBT equality in Illinois.

Endorsements are based on a candidate's record in office and responses submitted on the Equality Illinois PAC's 2016 candidate questionnaire. Read more about the Equality Illinois PAC at eqilpac.org.

The endorsements are as follows:

Illinois State Comptroller—Democratic Primary

Susana Mendoza

Illinois Senate (District number)

Heather Steans (7)

Laura Murphy (28)

Scott Bennett (52)

Illinois House of Representatives (District number)

Cynthia Soto (4)

Sonya Harper (6)

Emanuel "Chris" Welch (7)

Ann Williams (11)

Sara Feigenholtz (12)

Greg Harris (13)

Kelly Cassidy (14)

John D'Amico (15)

Lou Lang (16)

Laura Fine (17)

Robyn Gabel (18)

Michael J. Madigan (22)

Christian Mitchell (26)

Thaddeus Jones (29)

Al Riley (38)

Will Guzzardi (39)

Jaime Andrade (40)

Litesa Wallace (67)

Mike Smiddy (71)

Stephanie Kifowit (84)

Jay Hoffman (113)

Trans-related birth certificate bill filed in Illinois House

BY MATT SIMONETTE

State Rep. Greg Harris (D-Chicago), on Feb. 11, introduced a new bill that would make it easier for transgender Illinois residents to amend their birth certificates.

The bill, HB 6073, amends the state's vital records act so that a declaration by a physician that the individual is undergoing medically appropriate treatment would be the main requirement to change the gender-marker on a birth certificate. Previously, an affidavit from a doctor saying that the individual had undergone gender-reassignment surgery was needed to implement a gender-marker change. The new rule would also apply to intersex individuals.

Activists have long advocated for such changes to birth certificate rules, since many transgender individuals may not be able, or may not wish, to undergo gender-reassignment surgery.

"Surgery is something that is not available, necessary, or even medically advisable for every person that is transitioning," said John Knight, LGBT and HIV Project director for ACLU Illinois, in a statement. "Our State should recognize this reality. This proposal brings Illinois' vital records law into line with the standards used by the federal government and a growing list of states."

Harris' bill now goes to the House Rules Committee.

Event celebrates #PrEP4Love launch

BY MATT SIMONETTE

About 75 community members gathered Feb. 8 as the Chicago PrEP Working Group celebrated the launch of its #PrEP4Love campaign with a reception at West Point Missionary Baptist Church, 3566 S. Cottage Grove Ave.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, among young gay Black men, as well as cisgender and transgender Black women, among others, and features models from those demographics. The initial ads were rolled out in various Chicago locations Feb. 1.

A panel discussion—with Oakland, California-based activist Rob Newells moderating—focused on three of the models photographed in the campaign: Elijah McKinnon, Shaquan Gray and Chad Chaney.

McKinnon was one of the people who worked on developing the campaign. “In the beginning, I had no interest in being in the campaign because I was so heavily invested in producing it,” said McKinnon, adding that colleagues persuaded him to change his mind.

Gray, who is a minister, said, “So often we think churches don’t talk about sex, but I thought we had to talk about being sex-positive ...I wanted to see if I could help bring to light that God loves us no matter what, no matter what we do.”

Chances Dances, Youth Empowerment Performance Project and Darling Shear provided entertainment for the evening. Mister Wallace was emcee.

For more information, visit PrEP4love.com or call 872-215-1905.



Elijah McKinnon.
Photo by Matt Simonette



Gender JUST members and attendees of the event.
Photo by Matt Simonette

Gender JUST members discuss global activism

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Members of Gender JUST (Justice United for Societal Transformation), on Feb. 14, gathered for its third annual Valentine’s Day meeting, Romancing the International: Or, Gay Rights After Creating Change.

The talk centered on queer activism in an age when large-scale non-profit organizations (NPOs)—the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the National LGBTQ Task Force among them—have begun to address LGBT rights in other countries. It is an issue activists found especially pertinent after the 2016 Creating Change conference in Chicago, where controversy arose when A Wider Bridge, dedicated to fostering relations between Israel and the LGBT community, scheduled a reception that sparked protests. The Task Force, which organizes Creating Change, also engaged (and subsequently disinvited) officials from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

“The big questions raised around Creating Change were, is the movement over and, if so, how do we recover the movement?” said Gen-

der JUST Executive Director Yasmin Nair. “The question Gender JUST is more interested in is the more radical one—why do we still need a movement? We feel that the idea of a movement is embedded in the NPO structure.” [Nair is an occasional contributor to Windy City Times.]

Nair and fellow Gender JUST member Julian Hendrix discussed pinkwashing marketing strategies many activists say Israel employs in order to detract from its treatment of Palestinians living in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank. They also contrasted Boycott, Divest and Sanctions (BDS) actions around Israel with the anti-apartheid movement that captured public attention about South Africa in the mid-’80s. Nair urged that activists’ considerations now had to be “cognitive and informed ...The question becomes, what’s at stake and for whom?”

The Feb. 14 meeting was the first public Gender JUST meeting in about a year, and the first of several bimonthly meetings, Nair said.

“Our contribution has to be a larger cognitive tool in the queer community,” she added. “We provide an analytical space to think about the actions that the community engages in. Spaces and events like this can provide more contemplative frameworks.”

The next meeting, to be held in April, will address issues pertaining to transgender youth and NPOs.

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WHITENESS from cover

seem almost blasphemous.

But because our need for escape has never been greater, we may crave movies more than ever. The Oscars matter because in American culture and all over the world, movies matter. And in a country where an actor can leave Hollywood, become governor of a state, and then become president of the United States, movies matter because stars matter. We are a society decidedly built on a system that refused to have a king and queen, yet superstars are the closest thing we have to royalty. And if anyone doubts a star's power, consider how stars have been used in modern history, to sell clothing, to sell cosmetics, to sell religions, to sell politics, to sell wars. Rock stars, sports stars, political stars, TV stars. The right star might influence you to go to AA for recovery, to leave a bad marriage, to try a new diet or health regimen, to even join a cult. And, one may argue, nothing fascinates us more or wields more power in the American consciousness than the movie star.

ii

"Winning!" — Charlie Sheen

"Can I speak to you before you go to Hollywood?" — Labelle

In 2004, I ended a piece entitled "Bringing Down the Hope: Condoleezza Rice, Black Capitalism, and War" with the line, "In the end, despite her many achievements, I can't claim Dr. Rice. If she is the realization of Dr. King's dream, he should have been more specific."

Deliver us from the writer who quotes him or herself, but I include it here because what motivated that piece more than a decade ago is the same question that inspired this one: for people of African descent, a people who are themselves the descendants of slaves, what is our relationship to American capitalism and patriarchy and should it be any different because of our horrific past? What does it mean for us as black Americans in this society to "win"?

Is it "winning", for example, when a black star makes millions for his or her latest clothing line or sneaker, and endorses a company which uses the equivalent of slave or child labor in a developing nation? Shouldn't we, who know what it means to be on the wrong side of capitalism, know better? For the shining black capitalist in 2016, out to pillage and get rich or die tryin', is there any less blood on the money because it goes into in a black hand instead of a white one? What is the black fulfillment of the American dream?

And what does black success really look like in Hollywood? Hollywood—which so often has an aggressive disregard for the black actor and has been more devoted to its stereotypes and romance about black life than to the truth. When Hollywood is negligent, what is the black actor's responsibility to honor "the blues song" and the black American experience? Should we praise the black actor any time he appears, even if the vehicle encourages the kind of contempt that affirms, most decidedly, that black lives don't matter?

We may root for Kerry Washington, exhilarated that a black woman is the lead on one of the most popular shows on television, and that Shonda Rhimes, a black woman, writer and producer, has been credited with single-handedly saving a major network. And yet, as I've also written before, there are aspects of their show *Scandal*, including its depiction of torture, that I find deeply problematic. But, business is business.

Angela Bassett is gifted performer and I'm always glad to see Gabourey Sidibe in anything. My goodwill towards them and my curiosity about the casting of Patti Labelle (underused as a non-singing black maid!) kept me watching *American Horror Story* (AHS). What I didn't anticipate was its truly perverse depiction of slaves being tortured, which I still regret see-

ing to this day. (The real horror is the thought of children being exposed to the show.) AHS has a certain creative extravagance and one is titillated by the knowledge that because it has no boundaries, anything can, and will, go down. Some people call this "brave". (You watch parts through your fingers, like young children watching scary movies, not sure if you can handle what comes next. And often you can't.) The premise of AHS is full of potential too often is unrealized, particularly when it applies to examinations of racial terror: weaving together history and fiction while revealing what lurks in our subconscious, the history we refuse to integrate. James Baldwin wrote about *The Exorcist* in his book on Hollywood, *The Devil Finds Work* (1976):

For, I have seen the devil, by day and by night, and have seen him in you and in me: in the eyes of the cop and the sheriff and the deputy, the landlord, the housewife, the football player: in the eyes of some governors, presidents, wardens, in the eyes of some orphans, and in the eyes of my father, and in my mirror. ... The devil has no need of any dogma—though he can use them all—nor does he need any historical justification, history being so largely his invention. He does not levitate beds, or fool around with little girls: we do. The mindless and hysterical banality of evil presented in *The Exorcist* is the most terrifying thing about the film. ... Americans should certainly know more about evil than that; if they pretend otherwise, they are lying, and any black man, and not only blacks—many, many others, including white children—can call them on this lie, he who has been treated as the devil recognizes the devil when they meet.

With the exception of one rare, beautiful episode of AHS that featured an extraordinary performance by actress Naomi Grossman, cruelty is woven into the show's fabric and its lack of empathy for its victims. Perhaps the show's sociopathic tone is its biggest indictment of American life. I finally gave up last year after the extended, brutal rape of a gay man in the season's opening while another character looked on; mesmerized, amused. Whatever one thinks of the show, however, I've taken time to examine it here because it's money-making Hollywood at its best, it has millions of viewers, and it definitely hires black actors.



Actress Jada Pinkett-Smith (left) had something to say about the lack of diversity in this year's Oscar nominations, while Janet Hubert (right) had something to say about Pinkett-Smith.

YouTube screenshots

I've watched *American Horror Story* with ambivalence, often glad a black person has a job, then remembering that the person who flips the switch on the electric chair has a job.

We need to be able to say no, an example led by black actors, particularly black female actors like Esther Rolle, Cicely Tyson, Beah Richards, and Alfre Woodard. Robert Townsend reminded us in 1987's "Hollywood Shuffle" that black actors don't have to debase themselves in Hollywood to "win"; there is always work at the post office. But then this: Hattie McDaniels, Oscar's first black winner is often quoted as

saying, when criticized for her role in the film *Gone With the Wind*: "Hell, I can make a lot more money playing a maid than being one!"

iii

"The new racism: Racism without 'racists.' Today, racial segregation and division often result from habits, policies, and institutions that are not explicitly designed to discriminate. Contrary to popular belief, discrimination or segregation do not require animus. They thrive even in the absence of prejudice or ill will. It's common to have racism without racists." — Eduardo Bonilla-Silva

If you've followed the #OscarSoWhite controversy, then you know that for a second year in a row an exclusive roster of white actors, directors and writers were nominated, with what seems with one exception like the deliberate exclusion of any artists of color. Lawyer April Reign created *OscarSoWhite* as a hashtag in response to the Oscar race of 2015. Reign told *Forbes* magazine last year, "There were many performances both in front of and behind the camera by people from marginalized communities that I believe should have been recognized."

Jada Pinkett Smith, after the 2016 nominations were announced and history seemed to have repeated itself, recorded a video on Martin Luther King day about the Oscar race. She instructed black Americans: "Begging for acknowledgement or even asking, diminishes dignity and diminishes power. And we are a dignified people and we are powerful, and let's not forget it."

Whether she was motivated by an activist's fervor or sour grapes because her husband, Will Smith, wasn't nominated for his performance this year in the film *Concussion*, Jada looked beautiful, noble even, and her words resonated with those who preach self-determination. While she never mentions the word boycott, she made it clear that not only will she not be attending the Oscars, she won't even be watching. Spike Lee came forward in his inimitable way, joined her, and asked, "How is it possible for the second consecutive year that all the nominees under the actor category are white?"

The arguments and rebuttals follow on social media, including a mesmerizing response (or meltdown, depending on whom you ask)

press, claims, "(#OscarSoWhite) is racist to whites. One can never really know, but perhaps the black actors did not deserve to make the final list." Piers Morgan tweets soon after in response: "MISSING: a set of marbles. If found, please return to Charlotte Rampling." George Clooney acknowledges that we are "moving in the wrong direction", Danny Devito admits that "the entire country is a racist country", and Whoopi Goldberg reasons on *The View*: "Oscar can't be that racist, I won one!"

Will Smith informs us that in his experience "prejudice is everywhere, but racism in America is rare." I am irritated at Smith, because what he ends up describing in his critique are racial preferences, with the usual, "we're all prejudiced" line that too often lets real racism off the hook. Smith has no analysis of institutional racism, which is required in this particular conversation, as Oscar and Hollywood are American institutions. And an analysis of institutional racism may help us understand how we can have generation after generation of new people in new positions, how everyone can be well-intentioned and talk enthusiastically of making progress, and yet year after year the only black faces we see on the executive floors of Hollywood studios are operating the elevator or pushing a food cart.

Whoopi is another performer who uses her platform to talk about individually prejudiced people, whom she colloquially refers to as "boneheads". She refuses, however, to discuss the power of institutional racism and sexism, how insidious it is, and how it is perpetuated throughout our society in our universities, corporations and law-enforcement. Whoopi has replaced Truman Capote as this generation's talk-show bullfrog. Truman, whose work I adore, did his star turns on *The Tonight Show* with slithery insinuations and gossip, while Whoopi nastily shouts down anyone who attempts to disagree with her politics on *The View*. She openly tells the audience, Don't bother writing me because I don't give a care if you disagree. Her opinions on race lack depth, and I believe she's dangerous. We're invited to think that because she dresses in schleppey clothes and occasionally faux-farts on the air, that she's "everywoman", "just like us", and not a millionaire Hollywood insider.

Certain black actors love to keep discussions of race on the level of personal experience, knowing that it won't implicate or insult the white members of the audience who may watch their movies and pay their salary. They are allowed to remain the favored black performer, the audience leaves their racism unexplored, and everyone stays happy and pats themselves on the back for having had an honest conversation about race—racism in America is treated as just another "hot topic." Conversations about institutional racism, sexism and homophobia are always more threatening than mere talk of "prejudice", because they extend us past the whims of personal bias and force us to examine what is endemic in the belief systems of our culture; what keeps injustice alive, regardless of who the individual players are.

In the end, I am more annoyed at myself for expecting anything different from Smith. He is the black Tom Cruise (or maybe the only Tom Cruise, as Cruise isn't quite Cruise anymore), and for Will to talk about racism, and the frustrations of black life, goes against his brand as an actor. He's our golden boy, winning, and always full of sunshine. (He'll win his Oscar playing Obama one day.)

iv

"I love being famous. It's almost like being white." — Chris Rock

For the mere mortals of social media, Jada's video inspires discussion and debate. Some claim we need our own movies, our own awards shows, and, most importantly, we need to stop looking to Hollywood and white people for help or validation. This argument asks: How many times do we as black Americans need to be



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abused and rejected by Hollywood before we get it? Certain white people and institutions simply refuse to acknowledge us, and always will. It's time we empowered ourselves.

Others contend that as black Americans we should be able to participate within the system anywhere and in any way that we choose. And that no matter how much one may appreciate the BET (Black Entertainment Television) or NAACP awards, they will never wield the same economic power or command the same media attention as the Oscars in Hollywood. We have a right to demand equality within organizations, aware that completely divesting from and abandoning America's institutions is a romantic fantasy. (Along with the suspicion that the true white segregationist may be so delighted to see us leave he'll not only buy our plane ticket but help us pack.)

The truth, as always, lies somewhere in between. As black Americans, it has been reported that we are responsible for approximately 46% of movie ticket sales. Which means if we stop going to movies, we could shut the industry down overnight. Jada is right; we have to know our power. And we need our own projects, we need our own film companies, and we need our people to support them. We need to know that our projects are worthy and invest in them, whether they are recognized by "mainstream" institutions or not.

But the Civil Rights Movement wasn't a mass exodus from the South in which activists said, "If you're not going to serve us, fine. We'll get our own lunch counters, department stores, hotels, and restaurants." In other words, demanding equality in America and insisting on full participation isn't the same as asking for white validation and approval.

We desegregated buses, schools, hotels and major league sports because we are Americans, and this is our country too. And not because we landed here by accident on a cruise ship, or as my high school teacher seemed to suggest, because slavery was a shrewd career move



"... Jackie Robinson and Aretha Franklin are just as American as John D. Rockefeller and Betsy Ross."

Left: Jackie Robinson. Right: Aretha Franklin, photo by James J. Kriegsmann

orchestrated by bored Africans. We built this country with our bare hands, from Florida to New York to California—sometimes paid for our work, but too often kidnapped and exploited, or incarcerated and exploited for it. Black men and women, including my own grandfather, have fought in our wars. One thing you'll never see in this country is #IraqWarSoWhite.

We are entitled to enjoy every last square inch of this land, and Jackie Robinson and Aretha Franklin are just as American as John D. Rockefeller and Betsy Ross. Walter Lee Younger tells the character Linder who wants to pay to keep his black family out of a white neighborhood in Lorraine Hansberry's play *A Raisin in*

the Sun: "we have decided to move into our house because my father ... earned it for us brick by brick."

We know the experiences of black performers in the United States from Vegas to Mississippi, who were told to stay in trailers behind the hotels where they were headlining, asked never to use the pool, and to come and go through the kitchen. Ella Fitzgerald, like many jazz greats, had to have a white person buy her food in towns where it was potentially life-threatening for a black person even to enter a white restaurant. These stories are part of our collective history.

Which is why #OscarsSoWhite isn't just a

"black cause", and why some have suggested that white actors should be the ones to boycott the Oscars, not blacks. We may not need white validation, but in the battle against racism, we can use all the help we can get. It mattered, for example, when Walter Yetnikoff, President of CBS records, threatened to pull his other artists, including Bruce Springsteen, from MTV in the Eighties when they refused to play Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean". Or when David Bowie confronted MTV's Mark Goodman on the channel's system of musical apartheid and why black musicians weren't being played. The truly secure white artist doesn't want an #OscarsSoWhite or anything else "so white". He or she wants to compete with and learn from black artists, knowing that the victory of winning any award is sweeter when the playing field is equitable. She understands that she needs both Mozart and Sly Stone, Bessie Smith and Joni Mitchell. And she will acknowledge her appreciation and creative debt to the black American artist, as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones both shared and acknowledged a love for black American blues.

Max S. Gordon is a writer and activist. He has been published in the anthologies *Inside Separate Worlds: Life Stories of Young Blacks, Jews and Latinos* (University of Michigan Press, 1991), *Go the Way Your Blood Beats: An Anthology of African-American Lesbian and Gay Fiction* (Henry Holt, 1996). His work has also appeared on *openDemocracy*, *Democratic Underground* and *Truthout*, in *Z Magazine*, *Gay Times*, *Sapience*, and other progressive on-line and print magazines in the U.S. and internationally. His published essays include, "Bill Cosby, Himself: Fame, Narcissism and Sexual Violence" and "Maybe Yesterday, But Not Tonight: A Black Homosexual Speaks to Governor Mike Pence." This column originally ran on February 7, 2016, at <http://www.thenewcivilrightsmovement.com/>.



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ELECTIONS 2016

Meister aims to unseat Brown as Circuit Court clerk

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Attorney Jacob Meister, a longtime participant in LGBT activism and politics, is running to unseat incumbent Dorothy Brown as clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Meister—the only openly gay candidate in the county primary races—contends that Brown has let the office flounder under her watch, and that he has better ideas to better automate and connect it for the 21st century.

Despite Brown's massive legal problems, Meister still faces significant challenges. Brown still enjoys significant name recognition and another contender, Ald. Michelle Harris (8th Ward), was a latecomer to the race and quickly received the backing of the Cook County Democratic Party.

But Meister has been able to score some significant endorsements, among them the Chicago chapter of the National Organization for Women PAC, Judge Abner Mikva and a large coalition of Latino politicians that included U.S. Rep. Luis Guterres, state Reps. Iris Martinez and Luis Arroyo as well as Ales. Raymond Lopez and Carlos Ramirez-Rosa.

Meister is also the founder of the LGBT-rights organization The Civil Rights Agenda, which he launched in 2010. This is not his first run for political office; in 2009, he tried to become the first openly LGBT member of the U.S. Senate, but dropped out of the primary race. That seat eventually went to U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk.

Windy City Times: Why did you set your sights on the Circuit Court clerk's post?

Jacob Meister: I've been practicing in the Cook County courts for 25 years, and in courts around the country and around the state. I've seen how desperately broken the court clerk's office is, both operationally and ethically. Dorothy Brown came to office on a promise of bringing the computer systems and the electronics systems up to date. That was 15 years ago and I was a supporter of hers.

The office has continued to get further and further behind. It has a devastating impact on the administration of justice in this county. There's near-universal recognition among lawyers and judges that the office is nearly broken. It's still a paper-based system, which, in 2016, is unacceptable. Files regularly get lost or there are huge amounts of missing papers from files. Things get misfiled. We actually know why that is—inconsistencies, broken systems, a lack of operational integrity and ethical integrity.

This is an office that not only impacts my profession—the ability of judges to do their jobs—it also impacts the most economically challenged in our community and it also disproportionately impacts persons of color. At any given time we can have 100 people sitting in Cook County Jail whose cases have been dismissed—but they're still sitting in jail because their paperwork has errors in it, or their paperwork is lost, misplaced or misdirected. That happens every single day, without fail. There's one case we're aware of where a young kid did his time and stayed in the prison system six months after his term was up. He was still in prison because the clerk of the Circuit Court got the paperwork wrong. That's a horrible injustice and it's very expensive to the taxpayers.

Municipalities are wasting a tremendous amount of money because they don't have access to computer link-ups. They don't have access to court files and schedules. So police officers regularly show up to court only to find out that the case was dismissed weeks earlier and that they weren't needed. The best estimate we



Jacob Meister.
Photo from campaign

have, only in the City of Chicago, in wasted police officer time is probably about \$20 million a year, which is huge—that's a couple hundred police officers that could be out on the streets.

The clerk is the chief operating officer and chief record-keeper of the entire court system countywide, and what the clerk does or doesn't do impacts the ability of the court system to achieve justice.

WCT: What kind of financial commitment would be required to implement changes you want to see?

JM: It would require about a \$25-30 million capital investment in infrastructure. That would be rolled out over a two-year, two-and-a-half-year period. The cost savings would be recognized almost immediately, within a year. There's direct cost savings in the clerk's office, but then you also achieve cost savings within the sheriff's office, the state's attorney, the public defender's office—at the county level—and there are municipal savings. It's hard to quantify it exactly. We can cut down \$20 million to the city of Chicago in police officer time. The systems will easily pay for themselves very quickly. Venturing a guess, I think we could be saving \$50-70 million across all levels of government.

WCT: Do you think it would be difficult to get the county to make that initial investment?

JM: I don't think so. I think there is a desire to get it done. I've had a lot of conversations with County Board commissioners, members of the General Assembly, a lot of members of the judiciary. There is an absolute desire to get it done and a fundamental lack of confidence in the current court clerk's ability to get it done.

WCT: You are the only gay candidate in the county race. What are your thoughts on that?

JM: The field of gay candidates running for office is very slim, and I'm proud to say that if I win this office, it would be the highest office ever held in the state's history by an openly LGBT candidate. I think our community

in general doesn't do enough to support gay candidates. I think it's one of our big failings in an environment where we're post-marriage and we've achieved quite a bit in terms of securing rights.

We, as a community, haven't worked to move ourselves forward in terms of elective office. We're missing a very big opportunity. There are other people who've run who've had a similar experience, and they won't run again, because they're not supported by their own community. That needs to change.

WCT: Do you think that's a weariness about politics in general, on everyone's part? What do you attribute it to?

JM: I somewhat attribute it to a complacency that I see—we've "won" marriage and some people look at that and think our work is over. They don't look at that and say, "We have more work to do." We've got these bundles of rights, now we've got to make sure we achieve those rights. We have those rights in the Human Rights Act, but just having those laws on the books doesn't achieve equality. It's only the legal recognition of the right to equality.



Ald. Will Burns.
Twitter photo

Alderman retiring to join Airbnb

Chicago Ald. Will Burns (4th Ward) will leave his post on City Council to join the private sector and work for rental service Airbnb.

Founded in San Francisco in 2008, the service has listings in almost 200 countries.

Burns previously represented the 26th District in the Illinois House of Representatives (2008-11).

Interestingly, two aldermen (Brendan Reilly and Michele Smith) recently demanded that Mayor Rahm Emanuel ditch his plan to regulate and tax the home-sharing industry in favor of enforcing the stricter vacation rental ordinance they spent two years negotiating, The Chicago Sun-Times noted.

Six years after the ordinance took effect, City Hall has licensed 200 vacation rental units; however, Airbnb, VRBO and other companies that facilitate home rentals are currently marketing more than 4,000 units.

Emanuel said he will use an open and transparent process to select a replacement for Burns, according to ABC7Chicago.com. The mayor's office said any resident of the ward may apply and a commission of local leaders will select the finalists. Once Burns leaves his post, Emanuel will have 60 days to appoint a replacement.

The Sun-Times article is at <http://chicago.suntimes.com/news/7/71/1268312/aldermen-want-emanuel-scrap-airbnb-ordinance-start-enforcing-tougher-vacation-rental-regulations>.

WCT: Will you continue on with the Civil Rights Agenda? Where does that organization go in the landscape you are speaking of here?

JM: We've returned to our core mission, which is to protect the rights that we've gained—it goes back to the Human Rights Act. We've got a long list of legal cases that we're still fighting. We're still fighting against Chick-fil-A. We're still fighting against taxicab companies who kick people out for kissing in the back seat. The Hobby Lobby case—we won, but I expect Hobby Lobby is going to appeal, and appeal, and appeal that decision.

But I anticipate that we're going to continue to fight it and score a huge victory in the court system. We've been doing LGBT non-discrimination training. We continue to do our work, but it's just the next generation of work. If elected, I certainly can continue to work with a not-for-profit. My role will certainly change; I won't be practicing law but we've got a core group of people who are still very active. It will continue.

See JacobMeister.com.

Kim Foxx LGBT event on Feb. 20

LGBT Leaders for Kim Foxx is bringing together like-minded new leaders, young professionals and Cook County progressives to rally behind Cook County state's attorney candidate Kim Foxx at her campaign headquarters, 3619 S. State St., on Saturday, Feb. 20, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

The organization meets every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the headquarters. For more about the Feb. 20 event, see "LGBT Leaders for Foxx Day of Action" on Facebook.

Affinity hosting voter registration

Affinity Community Services will be partnering with the Chicago Lawyers' Committee to hold a voter registration talk balk Saturday, Feb. 20.

Attendees will have an opportunity to engage in a discussion with the Chicago Lawyers' Committee about the history of voting rights, and the importance of voting. In addition, attendees will learn best practices on how to work with organizations and communities to increase the number of registered voters.

The event will take place Saturday, Feb. 20, at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 5700 W. Midway Park, 1-3 p.m. For more information, visit www.affinity95.org.

Clinton rally in Chicago Feb. 17

Hillary Clinton will travel to Illinois on Wed., Feb. 17, and will hold a Get Out the Vote event in the Bronzeville area of Chicago to encourage supporters to vote in the March 15 primary and to take advantage of early voting.

The Get Out the Vote event—to take place at the Parkway Ballroom, 4455 S. Martin Luther ing Dr., at 11 a.m.—will mark Clinton's second visit to Bronzeville since announcing her candidacy for president.

Interested persons should visit <https://www.hillaryclinton.com/events/view/1729950/>.



Hillary Clinton.
WCT archives

Tiny Home Summit to address youth homelessness in Chicago

CHICAGO—Pride Action Tank and Polk Bros. Foundation will host a Tiny Home Summit April 18-19 to bring together experts from across the country to address the issue of youth homelessness and new solutions to house this vulnerable population in Chicago.

The Chicago Tiny Home Summit will be at University of Illinois at Chicago Monday, April 18, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Tuesday, April 19, 9 a.m.-noon.

The tiny home movement has already been part of housing solutions in a dozen U.S. cities. The two-day summit will bring together experts to discuss utilizing lower-cost, quicker solutions to meet the demand for homes for the unstably housed in Chicago, especially focused on the youth homeless population, estimated to be more than 20,000 in the city of Chicago.

The tiny homes movement can also offer creative solutions for dignified housing that comes with services and resources for those seeking a path to independent living.

"There are many types of solutions needed to address the complex issue of homelessness in Chicago," said Debbie Reznick, senior program officer with Polk Bros. Foundation. "We can learn from the experiences of experts in other cities, and then create innovative solutions that make sense here."

The Pride Action Tank, a project of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, and Windy City Times,

along with lead sponsor Polk Bros. Foundation, joined by UIC's Gender and Sexuality Center and Alphawood Foundation, are summit hosts. Topics will include financing, housing as HIV prevention and public policy issues.

Experts from around the country—including from Seattle, Dallas, Austin and Memphis—will share their experiences creating tiny home communities. During the summit, a model of the winning design of the Tiny Homes Competition—hosted by the American Institute of Architects—Chicago, Pride Action Tank, Alphawood Foundation, Landon Bone Baker Architects, and Windy City Times—will be on display.

"I am extremely excited to bring together a wide range of people to explore the tiny home movement in Chicago," said Summit Chair Tracy Baim, publisher of Windy City Times and founder of Pride Action Tank. "This is not a one-size-fits-all solution to homelessness, but it can work for certain populations, and also open up myriad opportunities to bring tiny homes to many segments of the Chicago population, including those who want to downsize and live more cheaply."

Early bird registration is \$45. After March 15, registration is \$65. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on March 18, and breakfast only on March 19. Register here: <http://chicagotinyhomes.com/>.

BYP policy program includes LGBTQs

Black Youth Project (BYP) 100, an activist member-based organization of Black 18-to-35-year-olds, released the "Agenda to Build Black Futures," which includes the LGBTQ community, according to a Chicago Reader article.

Among other things, the agenda calls for the adoption of a workers' bill of rights, divesting from for-profit prisons and reparations to address the impact of slavery on Black lives.

On its website, the organization says, "We envision a more economically just society that values the lives and well-being of all black people, including women, queer, and transgender folks, the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated, as well as those who languish in the bottom 1% of the economic hierarchy."

Windy City Times recently interviewed BYP100 leader Charlene Carruthers. In part, she said, "We do our work through a Black, queer feminist lens, which means that we work very hard to center the most marginalized of the marginalized in the Black community. We carry out our mission through transformative leadership development, public policy advocacy, direct action organizing and civic engagement."

The Reader article is at <http://www.chicagoreader.com/Bleader/archives/2016/02/02/black-youth-project-100-releases-the-agenda-to-build-black-futures>.

Illinois poverty report released

In the latest of its annual reports on poverty, "Racism's Toll," Heartland Alliance's Social IMPACT Research Center reveals the moral, human and economic cost of what a press release calls "inequities in the state and calls out public policies that have and are actively creating these racial inequities."

Among the report's findings are:

—Black children in Illinois are nearly four times more likely to live below the poverty line than white children;

—Poor Black (16 percent) and Latino (22 percent) Illinoisans are more likely to live within a mile of a hazardous chemical facility than poor whites (13 percent); and

—Nationally, the median net worth for a white household is \$110,500 versus \$6,314 for a Black one.

"The consistency and persistence of these severe disparities by race in Illinois underscore how much more work we have to do," said Amy Terpstra, director of the Social IMPACT Research Center and a co-author of the report. "These inequities are the product of the public policies, market forces, and institutional practices of both yesterday and today, which systematically place barriers in the path of Illinoisans of color."

"Racism's Toll: Report on Illinois Poverty" is available for download at www.ilpovertyreport.org.



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Dr. Menachim (Marc) Singer

*passed from this world on
November 18th, 2015, while visiting family in Israel.*

Marc was born on July 29th, 1950 in Romania, the son of Ilana and Max Singer. He is survived by his life partner, Michael Hora, his mother Ilana, children Ronit and Solomon, his brother Dov and wife Ola, three nieces and a large gathering of friends throughout the world.

**On February 21st, 2016,
there will be a Celebration of Life Service,**
remembering and honoring

Marc at the Hoover-Leppen Theatre located at
The Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago
At 11:00a.m.

There will be a brunch reception following in
The Irving Harris Family Foundation Reception Hall.

Donations may be made in Marc's memory to:
The Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights
208 S. LaSalle Street Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60604



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Phil Burgess.
Photo courtesy
of Walgreens'
communications
department



Burgess named honorary president of pharmacists' association

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Lifelong pharmacist Phillip Burgess (RPh, DPh, MBA) and longtime LGBT activist has been named honorary president of the American Pharmacist Association (APhA).

Burgess will be inducted as honorary president at the March 2017 APhA Annual Meeting and Exposition in San Francisco.

"The term runs for one year and is a lifetime achievement award position acknowledging the contribution an individual has made to the whole pharmacy profession," said Burgess.

He will also be addressing the entire convention at the 2017 annual meeting and will attend the APhA Annual Meeting and Exposition in Baltimore in March to thank the APhA leadership for selecting him for this post.

"As honorary president, I will be included in APhA board meetings and provide input to the various initiatives of the organization," said Burgess.

This post caps off a lifetime of advocacy on behalf of pharmacists and a 40-year career working for Walgreens in a variety of capacities, including National Director of Pharmacy Affairs, National Director of Pharmacy Operations, Director—Intercom Pharmacy Operations, Corporate Manager of Personnel Recruitment, Store Manager, Pharmacy Manager and

Staff Pharmacist.

Burgess left Walgreens in 2009 to start his own company—Philip Burgess Consulting, LLC. His company provides support and representation to healthcare related businesses/organizations, entrepreneurs, trade associations and governmental agencies.

"My work at Walgreens allowed me to develop a wide range of associates active in the governmental and regulatory area," said Burgess. "Also, as a member of the Illinois State Board of Pharmacy, I realized the importance of helping companies to affect legislative and regulatory changes that would allow their products to be maximized to improve patient care."

The primary focus of Philip Burgess Consulting, LLC, is, according to its website, "to assist clients in expanding patient access to quality and cost-effective health care. Specifically, we assist our clients to understand and comply with current pharmacy regulations in all 50 states. We also help our clients analyze and propose changes to pharmacy regulations that expand the use of new technology and delivery systems."

Burgess was born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee, and even before he applied to college his father—who was also a pharmacist and owned several drugstores—told him he would get a pharmacy degree before deciding

what else he wanted to do with his life. He received his pharmacy degree from the University of Tennessee and got his MBA from the University of Chicago.

"That's how I became a pharmacist," said Burgess. "My father was a very religious man and instilled in me a strong sense of ethics for which I am thankful. His work in the drugstores was always secondary to his commitment to God and the church. An interesting fact is that Elvis Presley attended our church, First Assembly of God in Memphis, before and after he became famous. My father was his Sunday School teacher."

Getting hired at Walgreens right out of college is what brought Burgess to Chicago and he's been here ever since.

"I came out and never looked back," said Burgess. "Coming from a strict Pentecostal background, there certainly were some internal conflicts, but I never regretted my decisions early in life."

Currently, Burgess serves as president of the Community Pharmacy Foundation, is on the Executive Committee of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy and is in his 14th year as a member of the Illinois State Board of Pharmacy—including five terms as chairman.

Previously, he served as APhA's representative on the HIT Advisory Board, was a member of the Pharmacy e-Health Information Technology Collaborative and served on the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS during the Clinton and Bush Administrations.

Along with his various philanthropic work on behalf of pharmacists, Burgess has also been an LGBT activist for a number of years including many years as a member of the National Board of Directors for the Human Rights Cam-

paign (HRC).

"My husband, Jim Nutter, and I have provided financial support to multiple LGBT organizations over the years including HRC, the Center on Halsted, Howard Brown, Equality Illinois, AIDS Foundation of Chicago and Lambda Legal," said Burgess.

Burgess has also received the NACDS Harold Pratt Lifetime Achievement Award and the Operation PUSH Unity Partner Award.

As for his advice to young professionals, Burgess said that the one thing he learned from "working in a corporate environment was that nothing is more valued by an organization than integrity. I'm thankful to my father for instilling that importance in me."

"Walgreens is a very conservative organization. Being open about my sexuality, however, never impacted my ability to be successful and to continue to rise in the company. Because I was honest and straight-forward about who I was, I think it actually was a plus to my career advancement, not a handicap. I urge young people who are struggling with being open both at work and to their families, that they can reflect on my success and this honor that I have received and realize that they too can achieve without hiding who they are."

When not working and participating in philanthropic endeavors, Burgess and his husband spend time with friends and enjoy entertaining at their house. They are also active travelers.

"I have a small row of flower boxes off of my balcony that I thoroughly enjoy changing and decorating for the different seasons," said Burgess.

See www.philburgessconsulting.com and www.pharmacist.com for more information.

NU study: Some LGBT youth still face bullying

A new Northwestern University study has found that most adolescents would agree that the situation involving LGBT youth and bullying does, in fact, get better—but that it's still a major hurdle for some.

The study—which involved 248 youths—found that harassment, discrimination and even physical/sexual assault affect about one-third of the adolescents. It also revealed that said bullying can lead to long-term problems such as major depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

More than 84 percent of the respondents experienced decreasing levels of victimization over the four years. However, 10.3 percent experienced significant increases in bullying, and 5.1 percent maintained high levels of victimization over the four years.

"We tend to think that society is evolving but we can't just accept this narrative that 'it gets better' and think it gets better for everyone," said Brian Mustanski, an associate professor in medical social sciences at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and director of the new Northwestern Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing.

Mustanski is the lead author of the study, published Jan. 21 in The American Journal of Public Health. The study was considered unique because it looked at not only the number of victimizations but also the severity of the incidents.

UN group issues LGBT stamps

The United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) has released six new postage stamps that aim to promote equality for LGBT people, according to The Guardian.

The stamps—by artist and UNPA art director Sergio Baradat—were unveiled in a ceremony at the UN general assembly building that included a performance from the New



UN "Free & Equal" stamp.

Image courtesy of Sergio Baradat

York Gay Men's Chorus. It has marked the first time the global body's post office has issued stamps with an LGBT theme.

The stamps support the UN human rights office's Free & Equal campaign, which aims to promote fair treatment of the LGBT community.

The article is at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/05/new-un-stamps-promote-lgbt-rights>. More information about the stamps is at <https://unstamps.org/shop/free-and-equal/>.

48th Ward meeting Feb. 20

The 48th Ward Democratic Party will hold a meeting where it will endorse candidates on Saturday, Feb. 20, at 11 a.m. at 5539 N. Broadway.

Also, election assignments will be distributed. People who are members of the ward and wish to help out in the election can email ward48dems@aol.com.

To become a judge, visit <http://www.chicagoelections.com/en/serving-as-a-judge-of-election.html>.



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in the LIFE

Lala Thomas

TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THOMAS

- **Age**
19
- **Orientation**
Trans female
- **Relationship status**
Single
- **Hobbies**
Volleyball, track, acting and dancing
- **Idol**
Nicki Minaj
- **Family**
Has five siblings: "I am close with all of my siblings; they accept me for who I am. They do not play about me."
- **Favorite movie**
The Other Woman
- **Favorite TV show**
Scream Queens (2015)
- **Little-known fact**
"I'm a dancer, actress and model."



Her life changed dramatically last May 2, as that's the day Lala Thomas' grandmother, Myra Stevenson, passed away. Stevenson raised Thomas. "My mom was in the picture, but she was going through some things at the time,"



Thomas said. "My grandmother's death was so hard for me to the point I had no feelings left. When my grandmother died, a part of me died with her. She was the person I never thought would die, [and now I] have to figure out what to do." Thomas is in her fifth year of high school,



which hasn't been hard, she said, "because it's a life-learning lesson. "I came into this school year with a focused mindset. I have good grades; my college access level [has] changed; I get a lot of recognition because I became a better student. I won the



Most Improved Student of the Month [award]." Thomas said her long-term goals are to finish school and become a professional dancer, actress, and model. "I hope to achieve these goals by getting good grades, going to casting calls for modeling and auditioning for plays, [and] also by keep making up dances and



performing them for school events, etc." Thomas will graduate this year. "I am on track to meet some of the goals and milestones that I have set for myself," she said. "In June, I will complete my requirements to receive my high school diploma [and] am



currently in the process of deciding which offer for college admission I will accept." Thomas is cast in a play at the American Theater Company. "I am coming up with [a] three-person dance group, which I'm still casting people," she said with pride.

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viewpoints



Kim L. HUNT

Race matters in budget impasse

February is Black History Month—and Illinois' eighth month without a state budget. As we highlight Black people's contributions to the American narrative, the message sent by Illinois' budget impasse is hardly celebratory.

All Illinoisans are suffering as the fragile web of supportive services slowly unravels. Communities across the state are feeling the ripple effects of layoffs, reduced services, slow state payments and the tension that comes with sustained uncertainty.

In the midst of our shared suffering, we must acknowledge this sad truth. People of color, especially Black people, are enduring the deepest battle scars from this budget stalemate. And if history is our teacher, these will become the scars of future generations. America's tortured racial history is imbedded in the laws and policies that govern all of us, resulting in widening social, health and economic gaps that operating without a state budget only exacerbates.

Earlier this month, Heartland Alliance's So-

cial IMPACT Research Center issued a report that illustrates how pervasive these disparities are in Illinois. The study reports that despite significant dips over the past several decades, the number of Illinoisans living in poverty today, 14.4 percent, is almost the same as it was in the late 1960s (14.7 percent). While under 10 percent of whites in Illinois are living in poverty and Hispanic and Asian populations each have poverty rates of close to 20 percent, a whopping 30.6 percent of Black people are living in poverty statewide, while making up less than 15 percent of Illinois' population. And what is even more disheartening is that 43.2 percent of Black children under the age of 17 are poor. In fact, poverty among Black people outpaces that of whites, Latinos and Asians in all age categories.

The report lays out a number of health and economic disparities by race. But what is at least as important as the data is the case the authors lay out for the "legacy of inequality" that colors public policy in America. The report offers a historical soundbite of the legalized racist policies of the past that benefitted whites and created barriers for people of color, policies and practices that ignore the generational impact of those benefits and barriers, and the practice of mid-20th-century redlining that seems to have intertwined race, ZIP code and opportunity into perpetuity.

This budget impasse threatens any progress made towards reducing inequalities in Illinois. For example, last year, for the first time in de-

cades, Chicago saw fewer than 1,000 new HIV cases. That does not happen without a network of community organizations and institutions focused on communities hardest hit by the epidemic — Black bisexual and gay men, transgender women of color, and Black heterosexual women living in communities with high HIV rates. Blacks make up only 15 percent of the state's population but account for 50 percent of new HIV cases. Yet, the governor's proposed budget includes a devastating 66 percent cut to the African-American HIV/AIDS Response Act, a dedicated line of HIV funding that supports the Black community, the community hardest-hit by HIV. This at a time when an estimated 6,525 Illinoisans do not know their HIV status and nearly 50 percent of people living with HIV in this state are not receiving any medical care or HIV medications.

One thing is abundantly clear this Black History Month in "the land of Lincoln": Elections have consequences. We must continue to put pressure on the governor and our state legislature to approve a humane budget with a revenue increase even as we prepare ourselves for the next budget battle. As the late poet Maya Angelou often said, "When you know better, you do better." We can do a lot better, Illinois.

See http://socialimpactresearchcenter.is-suelab.org/resource/racisms_toll_report_on_illinois_poverty_1_1.

Kim L. Hunt is executive director of the Pride Action Tank and advocacy advisor to AIDS Foundation of Chicago.



Brian MCNAUGHT

Who's to blame for sexually deformed people?

Whether or not my good friend, Paul Shanley, dies in prison, the global sex scandal in the Catholic Church, and in other denominations, will never be over until the Church changes its sexual ethics and publicly apologizes for improperly molding the minds and hearts of its sexually abusive and abused priests, nuns, religious brothers, and lay people. That means everyone raised Catholic.

Indoctrinated since birth with the message that having sexual thoughts and feelings, and expressing yourself sexually with yourself or with another (before heterosexual marriage), are gravely sinful, and grounds for spending eternity in hell, Roman Catholics are transformed into molesters, deviants, and repressed, immature, ignorant, and sexually non-functioning individuals. The most damaged were people like me, who grew up in a sexually-repressed, Irish Catholic family, and who went to Catholic schools for sixteen years. Priests, such as Paul Shanley's classmates, entered the seminary and a life of celibacy after eighth grade, at age 14. Most nuns and brothers entered the religious life of chastity after high school, at age 18.

Was it nobody's fault that we became among the most sex-negative and sexually obsessed people in the world? It was as if the Church took a litter of puppies and trained them to be afraid and aggressive. The adult dog bites a child and is put down. But no one looks at the trainer. The Catholic Church has been, and remains, the trainer of sexually damaged people. This atrocity will continue until the Church stops teaching its children that sexual thoughts are impure and need to be repressed,

that masturbation kills potential babies, condoms and birth control pills interfere with God's plan, and that genital sex with another is only permitted with a person of the other sex to whom you are married. Even then, certain sexual acts, such as anal sex, are forbidden. Those messages create sexually deformed people who are prone to do damage to themselves and to others. Until the Catholic Church, and other religious groups, change their sexual message, we will continue to have sex-related abuse of children and adults, sex-related alcoholism, drug abuse, and suicide, and sex-related emotional breakdowns.

Paul Shanley was one of those sexually damaged people, but he fought hard against the messages and training he received. He preached tolerance and acceptance of those condemned by the Church. He started a ministry to street kids, runaways, hustlers, drug addicts, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender children. He successfully lobbied to get himself appointed as the first official minister of the Church to LGBT people. His message was that gay is good, bi is good, and straight is good. He was frequently featured in the Boston Globe, and on radio and television. He was handsome, masculine, very intelligent, and defiant of authority, be it Church or State. He dared to go where no other priest was willing to step, including a meeting of men who claimed to be lovers of boys. Having worked extensively with gay hustlers, Paul felt he had a relevant perspective to offer.

Paul is 85, and may never leave prison despite more than a decade of incarceration for a crime he couldn't have committed. He was no saint, but he's not a pedophile. Yet, with his poor health, and trembling hands, he is the Sacrificial Lamb of both the Catholic Church in Boston, which will oppose his release until his death, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which wants to look tough on the crimes of the Catholic Church. He is in protective custody because of the witch hunt created by the Boston Globe's Spotlight team, canonized in the film Spotlight. The hysteria created by the constant drum beat of the media resulted in the beating death of an old, feeble priest in prison, prior to Paul's incarceration.

Paul Shanley's former boss, Cardinal Bernard Law, instead of being in prison for shuffling abusive priests from parish to parish, fled to Rome where he has a cushy job in the Vatican at a prestigious parish. The current head of the flock in Boston has refused for 10 years to meet with Paul in prison. Nor has any other diocesan priest, all former friends and classmates of Paul, visited him.

According to Paul, the district attorney, Martha Coakley, offered him a plea deal just prior to the trial. If he would plead guilty to a lesser charge than raping a 6-year-old every Sunday for several years, he wouldn't spend any time in jail. He said, "no," because he was innocent and didn't want to be listed as a child molester. There was no evidence he committed the crime, only the "recovered memory" of a very disturbed man, who after reading the Spotlight's stories on big money paid to victims by the Church, claimed that he just remembered that 40 years ago he was molested by Fr. Shanley. But the jury wanted to find the priest, whom the Spotlight team repeatedly focused on prior to the trial, guilty of something. So, the man featured in People magazine as the hippie street priest, was sent to prison, and everyone hoped that was the end of the story, and the bad press.

Why aren't Catholics taught that all feelings are natural? Why wasn't I told that being gay wasn't something to be ashamed of, or secretive about? Why weren't priests, nuns, and brothers taught to be healthy role models of sexual maturity? Why isn't masturbation, or self-pleasuring, described as normal and a healthy way to relax and relieve sexual tensions? Why are condoms and birth control pills not seen as effective ways to prevent the birth of an unwanted child, and a way to allow sexual pleasure to be experienced without fear of consequences? Why are condoms different from pot holders? Is it God's will that we be burned?

The Catholic Church owes some apologies: to me for what it did to me, to the people who abused me, and to the people I impacted negatively. The Church needs to take responsibility for how it trained us, and for the results of its

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WINDY CITY TIMES

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Windy City Times reviews Looking Over the President's Shoulder.

Photo by Dean La Prairie

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Lyrics by Korie

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

It's shaping up to be quite the Chicago season for gay lyricist and opera librettist Michael Korie.

Porchlight Music Theatre is currently presenting the Windy City premiere of Korie's 2013 off-Broadway musical *Far from Heaven* (co-written with composer Scott Frankel and playwright Richard Greenberg). Korie is also part of the original writing team of the 2006 musical *Grey Gardens* who will reunite for the upcoming world premiere musical *War Paint* at the Good-

man Theatre starring two-time Tony Award-winners Patti LuPone and Christine Ebersole.

During a recent telephone interview with the Windy City Times, Korie touched on many aspects of his long writing career. He started out as a journalist covering gay and lesbian issues for the *Village Voice* in New York before he started composing his own songs.

"I was writing music and going into clubs and singing and playing it, but there was no one to write the words so I became a lyricist and I found I liked that better," Korie said. "I found that certain composers did so much more inter-

esting and unexpected things with my words."

Korie also liked having a collaborator to work with because "it's also a hell of a lot of work to try and get your show produced, and it really helps to have a partner and share the burden."

Korie initially rose to fame as an opera librettist, notably in collaboration with composer Stuart Wallace for the biographical opera *Harvey Milk*, which debuted at Houston Grand Opera in 1995. Recounting the life and 1978 assassination of the United States' first openly gay politician, Korie also feels *Harvey Milk* was an important work that also marked the first time romantic duets for openly gay characters were depicted on the operatic stage.

That more opera companies haven't staged *Harvey Milk* in light of the Academy Award-winning 2008 movie *Milk* shows how conservative American opera companies still are with their programming. Yet Korie was pleased that *Harvey Milk* received its Australian premiere last year.

Korie is also known for adapting John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* into a 2007 opera with gay composer Ricky Ian Gordon. The opera originally started as a three-act piece, though Korie said he and Gordon have revised it down to a two-act after more than 10 years later—very much lamenting the complicated production schedule of staging new operas.

"Nobody has noticed the gay content in [*The Grapes of Wrath*]," Korie said. "And I've always not been a 'rah-rah' role model" with gay characters."

This is certainly the case with *Far from Heaven*, which is based upon Todd Haynes' acclaimed 2002 film of the same name, about a 1950s housewife named Cathy Whitaker who kindles a romance with an African-American man after discovering that her husband, Frank, is gay. Korie was very proud about the complexity of Frank and about writing him a selfish self-realization song in the show.

"At first I thought it was an odd choice, because I thought it would be operatic," said Korie about playwright Richard Greenberg's desire to musicalize *Far from Heaven*. "Also, I questioned how you could do what that film did, which is to tell a story that was moving but also had an ironic distance at the same time."

Korie said he and his collaborators could have made *Far from Heaven* into a campy and jokey show like so many new musicals nowadays that mock the form and the wholesome image of mid-century America.

"There's been all kinds of musicals of the past 20 years where there are numerous Tupperware jokes and where they write Lesley Gore kind of songs and poke fun at the 1950s and exaggerate everything," Korie said. "But that would not have served the kind of interesting way that this story treads the line" in what he said was Greenberg's idea to write the show as "un-ironic camp."

Korie also started to delve into the creation

of *War Paint* before he realized that he wasn't allowed to talk to the media about it just yet. So instead he did touch upon the luxury of tailoring musical theater roles to specific stars, like writing for Tony Award-winner Kelli O'Hara who was part of *Far from Heaven* from its beginnings, and for Patti LuPone who appeared in past Korie/Frankel workshops of musicals that didn't come to fruition.

"We did love to work directly for [Patti LuPone]. She's such a wonderful actress so it's a privilege to hear what she has to say," Korie said. "I feel the exact same way about Christine [Ebersole]. We basically wrote *Grey Gardens* for Christine and she was there before the piece was finished at the very first workshop and subsequent ones. And she's such an amazing performer that we kept saying let's put a song for Christine here and then you end up with a score that more difficult than *Gypsy*."

Korie said some writers are finicky about taking suggestions from actors in the creation of new works, but he and Frankel are not at all that way.

"It's such a collaborative form with people doing book and lyrics, that I think the actors are just as integral to that collaboration," Korie said. "They're the ones who have to do it every night and sometimes they have a much better barometer of truth."

Porchlight Music Theatre's regional premiere of *Far from Heaven* continues through Sunday, March 13, at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays (1:30 p.m. only on March 3), 8 p.m. Fridays, 4 and 8 p.m. Saturdays with 2 p.m. matinees on Sundays. Tickets are \$32-\$48. Call 773-327-5252 or visit www.porchlightmusictheatre.org.

The world premiere of *War Paint* starring Patti LuPone and Christine Ebersole begins Tuesday, June 28, at the Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St. Tickets are currently available for subscribers. For more information, call 312-443-3800 or visit www.goodmantheatre.org.

'Raggedy And' to feature trans actress

Pride Films and Plays will present the world premiere of David Valdes Greenwood's comedy *Raggedy And*, opening March 12 at Rivendell Theater, 5779 N. Ridge Ave.

In it, Delia Kropp will be the first transgender actress to portray a trans character for a major Chicago stage production.

Tickets are \$15 (previews)-\$27; call 800-737-0984 or visit www.pridefilmsandplays.com.

Michael Korie.

Photo by Matthew Murphy



THEATER REVIEW

Looking Over the President's Shoulder

Playwright: James Still

At: American Blues Theater

at the Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.

Tickets: 773-404-7336;

www.americanbluestheater.com; \$29-\$39

Runs through: March 6

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

They used to be called “domestic servants” (or perhaps, “hired help”), but are nowadays most often appear on personnel rosters as “support staff.” Before you dismiss those who make their living through the exercise of housekeeping skills, however, consider what your place of business would look like if the janitors quit for even one week. When President Franklin Roosevelt exhorted the stewards of the 107-room residence in our nation’s capital to remember that they shared in making history, his were wise words.

Alonzo Fields never intended to spend more than two decades in the butler’s pantry of the White House, surrounded by wall-to-wall dishracks and floor-to-ceiling linen closets. Born in 1900, in an Ohio town founded by former slaves, he sought a career as an opera singer, enrolling at Boston’s New England Conservatory of Music and supplementing his meager income as a butler in the home of retired NBS director Samuel Stratton, whose ac-

Manny Buckley in *Looking Over the President's Shoulder*.
Photo by Johnny Knight



quaintances included President Herbert Hoover. In 1933, spurred by the onset of widespread economic devastation, Fields accepted employment in the Hoovers’ dining room, little suspecting that it would afford him a backstage view of four administrations, three wars and countless meals prepared for a dazzling array of distinguished guests. (The highlight of the evening is his tale of being one of six hand-picked—and, coincidentally, racially-diverse—men dispatched to a “top-secret” safe house, their mission, to care for British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, then laboring on the famous “iron curtain” speech.

The aesthetic of a solo show lies in its first-person narrative, whether arising from the story or from the person telling it. Manny Buckley’s portrayal of Fields for this American Blues Theater production takes full advantage of the intimacy engendered by the Greenhouse’s upstairs studio. Under Timothy Douglas’ direction, our insider witness emerges an individual of warmth, dignity and modesty commanding our immediate respect.

Fields’ summary of his life and times, while not without regrets—his were not the only plans thwarted by the Great Depression—is noteworthy for its absence of rancor. Every

mention of slights inflicted upon African-American citizens (Marian Anderson’s concert en-tourage not being offered the customary post-show refreshment, for example) is balanced by a corresponding report of small advancements, from Eleanor Roosevelt inviting a heavily laden busser aboard her private elevator to Harry Truman integrating the armed forces, the former acknowledged with wry humor and the latter with the hopeful appreciation that comes of recognizing the—yes, historical—importance of humble deeds in shaping the future of great countries.

THEATER REVIEW

Far from Heaven

Playwright: Music by Scott Frankel,

lyrics by Michael Korie,

book by Richard Greenberg

At: Porchlight Music Theatre

at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave.

Tickets: 773-327-5252;

www.porchlightmusictheatre.org; \$35-\$48

Runs through: March 13

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

For theatergoers of certain age, merely hearing that their play’s setting is a middle-class Connecticut suburb in 1957 is enough to trigger expectations of secrets, shame and illicit sex lurking beneath a veneer of privileged tranquil-

ity. The screenplay by Todd Haynes providing source material for this song-cycle musical is not an authentic product of that repressive era, however, but a conscious replica thereof, steeped in hindsight.

Richard Greenberg’s book delivers a concise depiction of a time when recovery from the upheaval of recent decades mandated a level of conformity unimaginable today (for example, unmarried men and childless women were regarded with suspicion as “social deviants.”) After the local newspaper designates Mrs. Cathleen Whitaker the “model housewife”—despite her being seen speaking one on one with her Negro gardener—kaffeeklatsch chat hints at a troubled marriage. Like many husbands, Frank Whitaker often works late at his Manhattan office, but one night his spouse pays him a surprise visit, only to discover him kissing

another man. During their struggle to keep up appearances, Cathy increasingly confides in single-father Raymond—even to accompanying him on his horticultural errands—to the disapproval, titillation and ultimately condemnation of their neighbors.

What remains unclear in 2016 is the purpose behind a narrative too idealized for any historical value in terms of civil rights or gay liberation—Cathy may suffer from excessive naivety, but surely Raymond knows that crossing the color line will not end well, and Frank opts to undergo draconian “conversion therapy” to cure his homosexuality *against* the advice of his doctor. Granted, Scott Frankel and Michael Korie have crafted a score of sung dialogue replete with extended tremolissimo final notes, alleviated by a few bona fide melodies in quasi-jazz and Latin-American mode. Bill Morey has

assembled a wardrobe out of Mademoiselle and McCall’s magazines for moms who disdain house-dresses. Music director Chuck Larkin (no stranger to the syrup-and-soap school of pop warbles) guides this Porchlight Musical Theatre ensemble, led by the exquisite Summer Naomi Smart, through their recitative-based vocalizations.

For some playgoers, a three-hankie cry is enough to justify a nostalgic two hours-plus fantasy of affluent bigotry, but a timeline in the playbill reminding us, say, that Hartford experienced its own civil rights protest marches in 1965, or that a gay bar operating in Westport since 1937 continued to do so until 2010, would offer context to better allow us to reflect on how far we have come since those bad old days.

THEATER REVIEW

Pop Waits

Playwrights: Molly Brennan, Malic White

At: Neo-Futurists, 5153 N. Ashland Ave.

Tickets: 773-878-4557;

www.neofuturists.org; \$20

Runs through: March 12

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

During a period of severe depression in my mid-20s, I used baroque music (Bach, Corelli, Handel, Telemann, etc.) to help hold myself together. Its rhythmic regularity and spiritual purity comforted me and restored order to my life. Distinguished performers Molly Brennan and Malic White, billing themselves as “p(ART)ners,” also live with depression and seek relief through music, which is the entire point and purpose of their new show. White’s music of choice is that of Iggy Pop while Brennan prefers Tom Waits (hence, the show’s title)—neither one a composer/performer likely to calm you down or restore order. Hey, Malic and Molly: Maybe it’s your music that’s making you crazy.

Their 90-minute show is very entertaining, and I don’t mean merely amusing (the common misuse of “entertaining”), although it has many amusing moments. I mean that it



Pop Waits’ Molly Brennan and Malic White.

Photo by Joe Mazza/
Brave Lux

grabs and holds one’s attention and interest. The performers have charisma and the show (directed by Neo-Futurist veteran Halena Kays) uses numerous meta-theatrical devices, from audience participation (a lucky few even have a beer onstage) to slapstick to revelatory monologues to sing-along to clowning to semi-nudity. The spine of the show, however, are songs the two perform, with White channeling the shock rocker and Brennan the folk-ish Waits. They perform nine Iggy Pop tunes and four Waits-style songs. They still are waiting on Waits for performance rights, so Brennan and composer Spenser Meeks have

written sound-alike songs that do a fine job, especially “Heaven’s a Bar in Chicago,” which should stay in the show even if real Waits songs become available. A three-person band (directed by Meeks) provides solid backup.

I’ve seen White and Brennan perform many times (especially Brennan) and I admire the diversity of their skills, and I honor their courage to confront personal demons in such a public way. Nonetheless, Pop Waits is not my type of show. I must admit it: I’m simply too old for it. It’s filled with contemporary musical and cultural references I either do not understand at all or which I consider to be markers of the decline of civilization.

Frankly, I don’t understand the emotional allure of Pop and Waits for White and Brennan, who say they were adolescents when they discovered Iggy and Tom, both of whom already were well-passed the pop idol stage of their careers (Waits and Pop are my age). I’d have thought that teens would seek icons of their own generation. Waits at least speaks to my intelligence, but I never had enough aggression to answer Iggy’s call. Still, the mostly young audience embraced the show and the music enthusiastically, and I will not say nay. At least I embrace the p(ART)ners enthusiastically.

CRITICS’ PICKS

American Buffalo, Mary-Arrchie Theatre Company at Angel Island, through March 6. With the wrecking ball only months away, this 30-year-old Chicago theater company returns to its roots for one last all-star stand. MSB

Hairspray, Paramount Theatre, Aurora, through Feb. 21. The hit 2002 Tony Award-winning Broadway musical adaptation of John Waters’ quirky 1988 film receives a dazzling production out in Aurora. Amid all the laughs are serious reminders of segregation in the early 1960s. SCM

Le Switch, About Face at Theater Wit, through Feb. 21. Frequent big laughs in always-sharp Philip Dawkins’ new comedy about a love-challenged gay man, afraid of losing homo identity to hetero-normativity now that gay marriage is legal. JA

The Man Who Murdered Sherlock Holmes, Mercury Theater, through March 20. The game’s afoot in this delightful new musical starring Nick Sandys as the supersleuth and Michael Aaron Lindner as the author who—well, you know—by the creative team that brought us the long-running Christmas Schooner. MSB

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

Anthony Rapp.



NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

Anthony Rapp: Theater legend on 'Rent,' 'If/Then'

BY JERRY NUNN

CULTURE CLUB

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Far from Heaven
The NEW MUSICAL from the Creators of Grey Gardens

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at **STAGE 773** 1225 W. Belmont Ave
PorchlightMusicTheatre.org

Anthony Rapp is a theater legend in many circles, having brought the Broadway hit *Rent* to life in the '90s. He later reprised the role of Mark Cohen on tour and in the film version.

He revived *Charlie Brown* in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* with Kristin Chenoweth on Broadway.

In addition, Rapp has a long resume in movies as well with hits like *A Beautiful Mind* and *Twister* among them.

The Illinois native now plays the part of Lucas in the show *If/Then*. The story follows a woman named Elizabeth Vaughan in New York City who takes two different choices in life and where those paths lead her. The show brings Rapp back to his roots in Chicago for a short run. Windy City Times called him to talk about his life in theater over the years.

Windy City Times: Hi, Anthony. Nice to see you are returning to Illinois. This is your birthplace?

Anthony Rapp: I was born in Chicago and grew up in Joliet.

WCT: Did you always love theater?

AR: Yes, I started when I was little kid. My mother was a nurse and I started off doing a show at summer camp where she worked. I was six years old the first summer that we went there. I just auditioned for the show and I loved it.

When I came back to Joliet, I started doing more community theater. There was a director who encouraged my mom to take me to Chicago to get professional work. We just went from there.

I grew up in showbiz but I didn't have a stage mother. We were all very naïve about everything. We put one foot in front of the other and did our best to work.

WCT: Did you work at a lot of theaters in Chicago?

AR: I didn't work at a lot of theaters in Chicago. My first professional job was as an understudy in *A Christmas Carol*. My first equity job was right after that. It was the first national tour of *Evita* and it was happening in Chicago. This was a sit down production. In the original production there were four kids and I auditioned to replace one of the kids. I did that for about six months.

WCT: Was *A Christmas Carol* at the Goodman Theatre?

AR: Yes. I didn't work at the Goodman again until 1988 when I was in high school, where I did a John Guare play called *Landscape of the Body* that Robert Falls directed.

WCT: How did *Rent* happen?

AR: The first thing I did was in the fall of 1994. When I first auditioned, all I knew about it was that it was a workshop and a 10-performance production. It was just like any other audition. I was working at Starbucks at the time. Even though I had been working since I was a kid, I was in a bit of a slow period.

We did the 10 performance workshops; then it turned into something really great after that, obviously.

A year later, we did the off-Broadway production, then the Broadway production.

WCT: After performing the role so [often], was it weird to see the part played by other actors?

AR: It was a little weird at first, but it has been 20 years, so I have seen a lot of people play the role now. It is not so weird anymore. There are times when I am really happy with what they are doing and there are times that I want to punch them!

WCT: There is a big anniversary coming up.

AR: This is the 20th anniversary of the opening night on Broadway.

WCT: Did Idina Menzel lead you over to *If/Then*?

AR: It was the writers of *If/Then* that also wrote *Next to Normal* in the New York Musical Theatre Festival, so we became friends and I was a part of all that. They wrote this part for me. Idina was certainly part of what attracted me to it, but she wasn't the only thing.

WCT: Are you only touring selected cities?

AR: No, Idina did only the first 14 weeks but I am doing the whole thing.

WCT: Talk about the performer that will play Elizabeth in Chicago.

AR: Her name is Jackie Burns, who was Idina's standby in New York. She has a lot of experience with the show over the years we have been doing it. She's fantastic. She's just not a household name the way Idina is.

WCT: Describe your character and the show *If/Then*.

AR: It is about a woman named Elizabeth, who is played by Jackie now—created by Idina Menzel—who has gone through an unhappy marriage. She comes back to New York to start her life over. On the first day she comes back, she either goes with her new friend Kate or with her old friend, my character, who's name is Lucas, in very small decisions to spend time with one or the other. Her whole life hinges on that one day and one decision. It follows both tracks of her life and jumps back and forth. My character is greatly affected by the changes in her life, so it is also about the ripple effects we have on one another.

WCT: It sounds like the Gwyneth Paltrow movie *Sliding Doors*, where her life splits in two.

AR: I never saw that movie, but apparently that is an apt comparison in terms of that structure.

WCT: Since the character Lucas was written for you, is he similar to you?

AR: What is similar is that we are both pretty similarly minded and passionate about what we believe in. I think Lucas is a little more neurotic than I tend to be and a little less happy. I certainly have moments where I can be unhappy about things, but he is a little more pessimistic in his personal life than I am. What links us [are] intelligence and passion for the causes that we believe in.

When you have a part written for you, it doesn't necessarily mean that it is like you. It just means that you have quality in your performing that resonate well with what the writers have in mind.

WCT: Do you like the traveling with a touring show?

AR: Yes, it is fun. I have done it before. I like it every few years. There are some people who are nonstop on the road. I wouldn't want to do that.

I travel a lot for other projects, so I am used to being on the road and not being home. I like to have a balance where I can spend chunks of time at home and chunks traveling.

WCT: You must have a ton of theater fans.

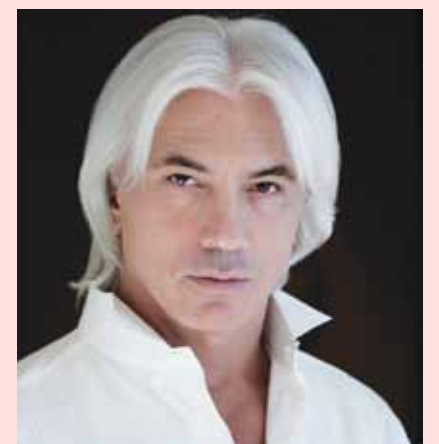
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Hvorostovsky recital Feb. 26

Siberian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky will sing in recital at Lyric Opera of Chicago, 20 N. Upper Wacker Dr., with Estonian pianist Ivari Ilja on Friday, Feb. 26, at 7:30 p.m.

The works of composers such as Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky and Richard Strauss will be performed.

Tickets are \$49-\$199; visit lyricopera.org/dmitri or call 312-827-5600.



Dmitri Hvorostovsky.

Lesbian filmmaker recalls parents' flight from Nazis

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Filmmaker Sharon Karp describes her upbringing in suburban Evanston as being “more formal” than that of her friends.

Her parents, both of them immigrants, were strict, and did not let her spend the night at friends' houses, for example. It was almost always impossible for strangers to win her family's trust. But Karp's parents, George and Gisela, never hid the reason why. They, along with Karp's oldest sister, had to spend five years crossing from Austria to the western coast of Europe in order to escape Nazi persecution.

The stories of that escape formed the basis of Karp's film “A Song for You,” which the filmmaker, who is a lesbian, compiled from interviews with Gisela as well as a published manuscript by George, home movies and artifacts her parents kept from their journey. She and her sisters also made trips, which Karp filmed, to some of the same locations George and Gisela passed through.

“It was pretty awful growing up with those stories,” Karp recalled. Her parents would profess not to wish to speak about those times, she said, but could rarely stop once their memories were sparked. But once Karp grew older, she admitted, “I couldn't not tell those stories either.”

George, who was Hungarian, studied medicine in Vienna and counted Sigmund Freud among his instructors. It was there that he met and married Gisela, who worked in a shop. But once they Nazis came to power in Austria, George—

a Jew in the professional classes—knew he would be among the first targets of the Third Reich. The couple left Austria with their daughter, eventually making their way across the Pyrenees with the aid of the French resistance. They later settled in the Chicago area, where George ran a West Rogers Park medical practice.

Silvia Malagrino, a filmmaking partner, insisted that Karp begin filming Gisela's reminiscences in the mid-2000s.

“You can see it in the film, the tension in [Gisela's] body, as she's taken back there” telling the stories, Karp said. “She still relives the horror of what happened to her. ... Their story became our family's story at the beginning, because they did have such a dramatic story. Our friends at school had families who didn't have stories like that. I realized from the beginning that it captured people's thoughts and attention, and would inspire debates, dialogues and all sorts of emotion, because of how obscene and horrific that experience was.”

Karp first showed the film at the Gene Siskel Film Center in January, 2014. She's been trying to get it seen in as many festivals and other venues as she can since. Gisela passed away in 2008, but Karp said having “Mama there on my computer” as she assembled the film helped ease her grief.

She did not mention her lesbianism in “A Song for You” because she did not want viewers to infer that she saw any connection between her sexual orientation and the family's traumatic memories. George and Gisela were largely supportive of her coming out, though Karp's

Sharon Karp.
Photo by Matt Simonette



father did not know what to make of it when he compiled his memoirs, she said.

“He didn't mention my birth, even though he delivered me—I'm born early in the parking lot of Frank Cuneo Hospital, and he doesn't mention it,” she said. “He didn't know where to go with me [in the book], or to explain the fact that I wore Army jackets and combat boots, and was a hippie, and rebel, and all the things he'd call me. I was a dyke, commie, leftie—not any of the things a successful, middle-class doctor in Evanston [aspires for in a daughter].”

Nevertheless, George was mostly amused when she actually came out. “He laughed and said, ‘Sharon, what will you get into next?’”

Gisela, Karp thought, was kind of relieved. “She liked that a lot better. She was so afraid for us. My sisters and I were watched like hawks. Boys could do anything and we would be unable to stop them. Any possible thing that could happen, my parents feared would happen to us. So when she found out I was a lesbian, it was, ‘Oh, that's nice.’ She always liked my girlfriends. She always accepted my partner Nicole, and treated her like a daughter.”

“A Song for You” will next be shown Thursday, March 3, at North Suburban Synagogue Beth El, 1175 Sheridan Rd., Highland Park, at 12:30 p.m. For more information, see asongforyoumovie.com.

‘The Danish Girl’ on Blu-Ray March 1

The Danish Girl—which stars Academy Award winner Eddie Redmayne and Academy Award nominee Alicia Vikander—is out on Digital HD, and will be on Blu-ray, DVD and On Demand on March 1.

The plot is as follows: In the 1920s, a strong and loving marriage evolves as Gerda Wegener (Vikander) supports Lili Elbe (Redmayne) during the latter's journey as a transgender woman.

A bonus feature is “The Making of The Danish Girl,” as Redmayne, Vikander, director Tom Hooper and others on the filmmaking team discuss some of the creative processes used for the film.

KNIGHT at the movies

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Henry Gamble's Birthday Party; 4th Man Out

Everybody in the pool

At the beginning of writer-director Stephen Cone's latest feature, **Henry Gamble's Birthday Party**, it's the night before the adorable, blonde Henry (winningly portrayed by adorable, blonde, out actor Cole Doman) turns 17 and late at night in his bedroom, he and his best friend Gabe (Joe Keery) are having a sleepover. Lying next to each other in bed, the conversation turns to sex and, very quickly, Henry and Gabe are masturbating under the covers. It's immediately apparent that Henry has a thing for the oblivious Gabe (who has turned himself on talking about his desires for a girl).

This scenario will be familiar to scores of gay men and women (and, no doubt, their straight and straightish counterparts as well) and the mixture of intimacy, youthful bravado and closeted emotional and sexual yearning set the stage for the events to come. Like one of the leading characters in Cone's critically acclaimed 2011 feature *The Wise Kids*, young Henry is also faced with coming to terms with being gay and a religious conservative.

Henry is not the only one trying to navigate the tricky line between secular pleasures and religious conservatism. As his birthday party commences the day after the sleepover with Gabe, pretty much everyone in attendance is struggling with this uneasy intersection, especially his parents, an Evangelical pastor and his wife, whose marital discord we sense is reaching the breaking point.

Henry's birthday is being celebrated with a seemingly innocent pool party to which both friends and parents have been invited. All afternoon and evening long as the bathing suit-clad teens and young adults frolic in the pool, we act as voyeurs along with their parents who sit on the sidelines, sizing them up—and each other. There are a lot of other troubled folks on hand and as the party progresses (and a bottle of illicit wine gets drunk), secrets are revealed and lives are irrevocably changed.

Although a tad melodramatic with one subplot too many thrown into the mix, Cone's nuanced script and his sure touch with his actors (who include a bunch from the Chicago theatrical community) is always a pleasure to bask in, as are many of the naturalistic performances. It plays exclusively at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St. <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/henrygamble>

4th Man Out

Nice, sweet Adam Hutcherson (out actor Evan Todd) is a garage mechanic who spends most of his down time hanging out with his hunky longtime best friend Chris (Parker Young, of *Suburgatory*) and their other two pals Ortu (Jon Gabrus, of MTV's *Guy Code*) and Nick (Chord Overstreet of *Glee*). Together, this inseparable foursome engage in typical straight male bonding: watching sports on TV, drinking beer, playing poker, chasing chicks and making the random gay jokes—that is, until Adam announces on his 24th birthday that he's gay.

And that's where director Andrew Nackman's wry little film, aptly titled **4th Man Out**, offers a canny twist on the typical "dude comedy." Instead of the expected derision, Adam's bros, though baffled by their friends announcement, do their best to be supportive—they sign him



Henry Gamble's Birthday Party.

up at a Grindr-type hook up site and even accompany him to a gay bar. In typical straight-guy fashion, they also worry about becoming the object of Adam's affection. The awkwardness prevails until they are shamed into realizing how stereotypical their behavior has been by a pretty young lass that Chris is hot for. All seems good until one night mixed signals between Adam and one of his buddies threatens to change things up for good.

This is broad, familiar territory and some of the supporting characters (like a super-religious neighbor who's always stopping by with muffins) stretch the credibility to the breaking point. Yet, the camaraderie between the pals and the enthusiasm of the bright, energetic cast and lickety-split pacing certainly help—as does a genuine tenderness—unheard of in previous dude comedies. This movie was the opening-night selection for Reeling, Chicago's LGBTQ film festival (for which I acted as co-programmer) and is now available digitally. Former Chicagoan Kate Flannery (*The Office*) co-stars as Adam's overbearing but well-intentioned mother. <http://www.4thmanout.com/>

The gay man's national holiday

Will Rooney Mara and Cate Blanchett take home a gold statuette for Carol? Will Eddie Redmayne grab his second Best Actor Award playing transgender in *The Danish Girl* or Alice Vikander her first for Supporting Actress as a supportive wife? Will Sam Smith get the Best Song Oscar for "Writing's on the Wall," his theme song for *Spectre*, the latest James Bond action blockbuster?

Who will wear the best gown and the tackiest; make the stupidest remarks at the podium and the funniest? Will the In Memoriam salute be truly moving or grossly gratuitous? What celebrity will have the worst facelift? Whose speech will inspire, delight or fall flat on its Botox? How long will this longest of awards show go? How will Chris Rock handle the controversy over the lack of non-white nominees this year?

All this and more will be answered when the **88th Academy Awards** are presented Sunday, Feb. 28, on ABC. If you're not hosting your own viewing party (my husband and I will be doing the honors for at least the 10th time), there are dozens of screening parties around town to choose from (with the Center on Halsted's and the Gene Siskel Film Center's as two of my faves). Love 'em or hate 'em, there's still nothing quite like the Oscars. <http://oscar.go.com/>

Upcoming movie calendar

Highlights from films opening in Chicago, Feb. 26-March 4 (with some descriptions com-

ing from studio press materials):

—**Eddie the Eagle** (Feb. 26)—With help from a rebellious and charismatic coach (Hugh Jackman), British ski jumper Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards (Taron Egerton) trains for the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary, Alberta in this inspirational sports drama.

—**Gods of Egypt** (Feb. 26)—The survival of mankind hangs in the balance when Set (Gerard Butler), the merciless god of darkness, usurps Egypt's throne and plunges the prosperous empire into chaos and conflict. Hoping to save the world and rescue his true love, a defiant

mortal named Bek (Brenton Thwaites) forms an unlikely alliance with the powerful god Horus (*Game of Thrones'* Nikolaj Coster-Waldau).

—**RECOMMENDED: Henry Gamble's Birthday Party** (Feb. 26)—See details above. <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/henrygamble>

—**The Witch** (Feb. 26)—A 17th-century Puritan family in New England becomes convinced that their teenage daughter is in the service of Satan when their young son disappears. A raft of British character actors with familiar faces

Turn to page 29



Web series looks at British trans artists

Joi Productions and Plot Lost Pictures is presenting BOXX, a fictional Web drama series following two Black diasporan London based trans artists as they create a documentary about their lives.

Episode one is slated to be released March 8.

The series stars Yrsa Daley-Ward, Khaleb Brooks, Zhi Holloway and Olu Adaeze, and features Stephanie Yamson and Denver Isaac.

BOXX is on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJofqAGhGrGTUm0Eu-dIggqg>.

Oscars viewing party at Siskel Feb. 28

The Gene Siskel Film Center (GSFC) of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), 164 N. State St., will host "Hollywood on State: Where You're the Star" on Sunday, Feb. 28.

Among other things, hosts Tommy Walton

(SAIC Fashion Design Department, MasterChef) and Kate Pankone (Project Runway) will welcome guests to the red carpet, asking them predictions for the evening and, of course, who they are wearing.

The 88th Academy Awards HD Telecast begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets (\$100 general admission or \$200 VIP lounge) can be purchased online at SiskelFilmCenter.org/hollywoodonstate2016 or 312-846-2072.

'A Night with Oscar' Feb. 28 at Center

The Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., will host the Academy Award-related event "A Night with Oscar" on Sunday, Feb. 28.

Doors will open for red-carpet arrivals at 6 p.m., and there will be bar service and a buffet. The Oscars telecast starts at 7:30 p.m.

There will be the Green Room, described as "a sparkling party for radiant red-carpet revelers." The ceremony will stream live on the big screen in the Screening Room.

Tickets and more information are at CenterOnHalsted.org/ANWO.

Stephen Cone.
Photo by Janna Giacoppo

MOVIES

Talking with 'Party' animal Stephen Cone

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Chicagoan Stephen Cone is off to a grand start in 2016.

The multi-hyphenate (writer-director-actor-teacher) has just finished wowing critics and audiences in the leading role in *Le Switch*, the latest gay-themed play from Philip Dawkins. Cone is also, no doubt, basking in the praise for his latest film, *Henry Gamble's Birthday Party*. The movie won an award at last fall's Chicago International Film Festival from the Out-Look jury (of which this writer was a member) and went on to prestigious film festival screenings across the country, including a memorable evening at BAM Cinema Fest (a personal triumph for Cone). Now *Henry Gamble* (which made my top 10 list for 2015) is getting a theatrical run in Chicago (at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St.) beginning Friday, Feb. 26.

Cone's film, like his 2011 hit *The Wise Kids*, focuses on the uneasy intersection of human desire and religious conservatism. *Henry* (played by out actor Cole Doman) is celebrating his 17th birthday with a pool party to which both teens and adults have been invited. As the party goes on, a lot of secrets are brought to light. *Henry's* is that he's gay and has a silent crush on his straight best friend while another of the male attendees has a crush on him. That's for starters. Between performances, Cone chatted about the film with *Windy City Times*.

Windy City Times: How hard is it to get the money to do a movie with religious themes and queer themes? Those are two of the hardest things to get financed so that immediately comes to mind.

Stephen Cone: Not as hard as a movie like *Black Box* (Cone's previous film, which focused on a group of actors putting on a college pro-

duction) which didn't have any overt, obvious niche. A movie dealing with largely LGBT themes is that it is its own genre. I would say my LGBT leaning movies have been less difficult than others to get financed.

WCT: Okay, that's heartening to hear. What made you want to go back to these themes that you explored so beautifully in *The Wise Kids*? What else did you want to say?

SC: It was just deciding what to make next and I'd written this other screenplay that wasn't very good (*laughs*) about two ministers who share the gospel with the adult-entertainment industry. I thought it would be this entertaining romp of a thing and it ended up not being very interesting but it culminated back home in suburbia with a pool party and when I was thinking about what to make next

Turn to page 29

Wedding expo at Hard Rock March 20

The eighth annual Chicago "Same Love, Same Rights" LGBT wedding expo will take place at the Hard Rock Hotel Chicago, 230 N. Michigan Ave., 1-4 p.m.

More than 35 select LGBT-friendly vendors will be present. The grand-prize giveaway will be a wedding for the winner and up to 30 guests, courtesy of Rev. Pamela Magnuson at Pine Manor and www.GayWeddingChicagoSite.com.

See http://www.samelovesamerights.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=186&Itemid=313.



From left: Baraka de Soleil, Leteefah Holder, LaRoyce Hawkins, Danielle Pinnock and Kenrick Joey McFarlane.

Photo by Tracy Baim

Talkback takes place after 'Body/Courage'

Rivendell Theatre hosted a fantastic talk-back tonight after the performance of *Body/Courage*—written by and starring Danielle Pinnock and directed by Megan Carney—which runs through Feb. 27.

The discussion, "MEDIA AS A MESSAGE: Race & Body Image," was about how pop culture frames, conditions, creates and reinforces self-perception. On stage were (from left): performance artist Baraka de Soleil, Los Angeles-based actress Leteefah Holder, actor LaRoyce Hawkins (from TV's *Chicago P.D.*), Pinnock and visual artist Kenrick Joey McFarlane.

See <http://rivendelltheatre.org/>.

WANDA SYKES

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The Chicago Theatre provides disabled accommodations and sells tickets to disabled individuals through our Disabled Services department, which may be reached at 888-609-7599 any weekday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Ticketmaster orders are subject to service charges.

BOOKS

'Queer Clout' author examines LGBTQ activism, Chicago politics



Timothy Stewart-Winter.

Photo courtesy of Stewart-Winter

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

When Rutgers University Assistant Professor of History Timothy Stewart-Winter—also the author of the new book *Queer Clout: Chicago and the Rise of Gay Politics*—returns to Chicago for appearances at the University of Chicago's Scherer Center for the Study of American Culture on Feb. 22 and Andersonville's Women and Children First on Feb. 23, the city will be as familiar to him as it is brand-new.

For the recipient of accolades such as the Jacob J. Javits, ACLS/Mellon, James C. Hormel Fellowships and early enthusiastic reviews of *Queer Clout*, life is one of ceaseless discovery whether academic or personal.

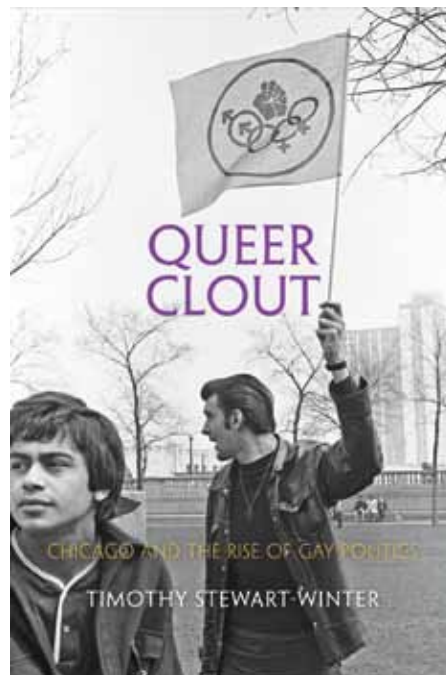
Either way, he embraces it and it is this enthusiasm which pervades *Queer Clout*—a book that intertwines a study of the city's LGBTQ community and Chicago political history and examine the synergy between them as it traces “the gay movement's trajectory since the 1950s from the closet to the corridors of power” and “challenges the traditional division between the homophile and gay liberation movements, and stresses gay people's and African Americans' shared focus on police harassment.”

“Compared to the better known stories of San Francisco and New York, the story of gay empowerment in Chicago was in many ways representative of the dozens of other regional magnets for gay migration,” Stewart-Winter writes. “This book introduces the reader to women and men who created a social movement far from social meccas.”

Born in Boston in 1979 and raised in Michigan from the age of 8, Stewart-Winter's own introduction to the LGBTQ community occurred during his first semester as an undergraduate at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania.

“I'm someone who went from being not out to anyone, including myself, to being out to pretty much everyone in my life in a very short period of time,” he told *Windy City Times*. “I identified as both gay and queer and being around LGBTQ people who were my age shaped my self-understanding. It was the pretty visible contingent of queer activist students and out faculty that made the difference for me.”

During post-graduate work at the University of Chicago, Stewart-Winter was inspired to create his dissertation around an urban history



project but at first he vacillated as to where to focus it upon. That changed as he came to know the city.

Emblematic for a man preparing for a life dedicated to academia, with observation came questions.

“Early in my time in Chicago, I was in a long distance relationship with someone in the San Francisco Bay area,” he explained. “For a while I planned to write the dissertation on neighborhoods in San Francisco but, as I got to know Chicago and got more involved in Chicago's sources, I really believed that looking at a city that isn't famous all over world for being queer but draws queer migrants from all over the middle of the country lets us ask questions that are harder to ask about coastal cities.”

Some of those questions surrounded the way the Chicago community was structured.

“I perceived Chicago's queer life as very segregated racially because it is bifurcated in nature and has such a sharp boundary between the South and North sides,” Stewart-Winter said. “I always wondered why all visible gay institutions were concentrated on the North Side and that became a question I wanted to learn more about.”

Stewart-Winter cautiously acknowledges that such boundaries are changing and so there is an increase in social services. While all of this is happening in concert with an exponentially growing visibility in the media and politics, there is a downside.

“At a time when fewer people were out and visible, those who were tended to be brave and gutsy folks,” he said. “That is still true. People have always found different ways of being trans, gender nonconforming, lesbian gay or bi. I do worry that with the increased visibility of the left, there is also an installation of a particular model as the only path. Those that have been mainstreamed try to speak for the community as a whole. But there are multiple, overlapping communities that are diverse and made up of people who don't necessarily identify with the subculture.”

Yet there are many experiences that unite the community generationally—high among them are the attitudes of law enforcement towards it and abusive treatment that was as rife in the earliest days of the movement as it is now towards particularly trans people of color.

Policing was one of the questions to which Stewart-Winter was drawn. It formed the genesis of *Queer Clout*.

“I think it's where queer people encounter State power in its most intimate and violent forms,” he said. “There's a degree in which fear of the police and law enforcement shaped LGBT mobilization from the '50s and '60s and well into the '70s and '80s. In part, that is the story that I wanted to tell.”

As the book begins by charting gay and lesbian life in 1950s Chicago, Stewart-Winter writes that “friends and lovers faced the risk of becoming enmeshed in the dangerous clutches of policeman, with money and influence offering the only means of escape.”

“There is the emergence of progressive and Left Liberal coalitions in Chicago politics and the ways that they challenged and questioned the machine,” Stewart-Winter acknowledged. “I always knew that I wanted to look at both movement organizations and electoral politics at City Hall in the same study. They kept pulling me towards the make-up of *Queer Clout*. Unpacking policing and how and why the police stopped raiding gay bars as a form of social control has to do with gay activism but there are some aspects of the story that are random and unexpected.”

Whereas aggressive policing became a catalyst for coalition building that occurred in a relatively short span of time, following successes like marriage equality and an increase of anti-discrimination laws, the movement seems to be fracturing.

“The coalitions that were possible became more difficult later especially with the turn to marriage, which has been very much perceived as a white, middle-class preoccupation,” Stewart-Winter said. “It is an issue that people who are more focused on survival are less likely to be engaged with. We can tell a story that is rosy—about everyone getting along—or we can tell a story that is nothing but conflict and white, gay racism but what I tried to do is tell a story that looks at how things really played out on the ground and shows that there were always both tensions and alliances.”

“Things don't always get better,” he added. “Linear progressive narratives are something I try to resist. Nothing ever plays out exactly the way the movement plans but, at the same time, the movement creates the conditions that enable change to happen.”

Queer Clout is as replete with lessons that can be drawn from history as it is with the questions it inspires—ones that Stewart-Winter will continue to ask even as he moves on to his next project, which delves into Sex and Drugs in the AIDS Crisis.

For more information about *Queer Clout*, visit <http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15524.html>.

Gallery hosting sexual-assault exhibit

The Awakenings Foundation—the home of the only known collection of rape-survivor artwork—has announced its first curated exhibit, “Graphic Relief,” which will feature international comic book, graphic novel and zine media artists who deal with the topic of street harassment.

Artists are welcome to submit, regardless of survivor identity, as long as works speak to the topic.

The Awakenings Foundation exists to help survivors of sexual assault heal through the creative arts. This exhibit will open up our mission to a wider community of artists and patrons by tackling the epidemic of street harassment and catcalling, which has been thrust into a spotlight in recent digital and social media.

Email Laura Kinter at laura@awakeningsfoundation.net.

Joffrey presenting 'Bold Moves'

For its annual winter engagement, The Joffrey Ballet presents “Bold Moves,” a program of three contemporary ballets that runs at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, 50 E. Congress Pkwy., through Feb. 21.

The program includes a world premiere by British choreographer Ashley Page, along with the return of two popular works from the Joffrey repertoire: Yuri Possokhov's RAKU and Jiri Kylian's Forgotten Land plus live orchestral accompaniment from the Chicago Philharmonic, led by Joffrey Music Director Scott Speck.

Single tickets, priced \$32-\$155, are available for purchase at The Joffrey Ballet's official box office at Joffrey Tower, 10 E. Randolph St.; the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University Box Office; all Ticketmaster Ticket Centers; at 800-982-2787; or at Ticketmaster.com.

Book on gay men, meth seeks to provide recovery solutions

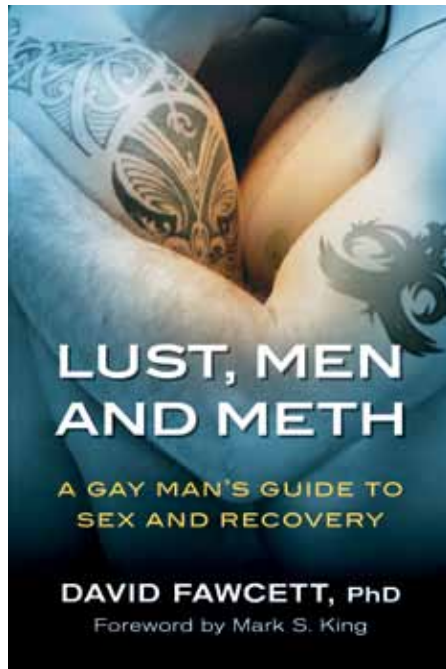
A new book—Lust, Men and Meth: A Gay Man's Guide to Sex and Recovery (Healing Path Press)—seeks to provide a road map for healthcare professionals treating gay men for methamphetamine addiction and sexual compulsion.

Lust, Men and Meth is written by David M. Fawcett, a Florida-based psychotherapist, addiction specialist and sex therapist who specializes in mental health and substance-abuse issues. The book is the product of 13 years of research by Fawcett.

Illuminated by dozens of case studies, Lust, Men, and Meth presents a guide to recovery from meth use/addiction. The book helps professionals address issues of self-esteem and sexual intimacy that fuel addictive behavior among gay men, as well as HIV transmission dangers increased by meth use.

Lust, Men, and Meth is divided into three parts: "The Perfect Storm," which assesses the components of individual personality traits and gay cultural norms that invite the opportunity for meth addiction; "Exploring the Sexual Universe," which explores how meth can rewire a gay man's approach to sexuality, resulting in risky behavior and seroconversion; and "Restoring Your Life," providing seven tools for recovery from meth and restoring drug-free intimacy.

Fawcett is gay and HIV-positive. He has co-founded or served on numerous groups addressing meth use and HIV in the gay communities of Florida and across the country. As



a board member of the Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse, Fawcett helped form the South Florida Methamphetamine Task Force, which he also chaired. He received the 2015 Koch Award for Professional of the Year for Broward National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, and was twice named NASW Social Worker of the Year.

See <http://david-fawcett.com>.

Author Jarrett Neal in Chicago Feb. 27

Jarrett Neal, author of *What Color Is Your Hoodie: Essays in Black Gay Identity*, will discuss and sign his book Saturday, Feb. 27, 2 p.m., at Revolution Books, 1103 N. Ashland Ave.

In 13 essays, Neal reports on the status of Black gay men in the new millennium, examining issues such as classism, racism within the gay community, representations of Black male body within gay pornography, and patriarchal threats to the survival of both Black men and gay men.

What Color Is Your Hoodie? employs the author's own quest for visibility—through bodybuilding, creative writing, and teaching among other pursuits—as the genesis for a dialogue that aims to symbolize the entire Black gay community's struggle for recognition and survival.

Neal's fiction, poetry and essays have appeared in *Chelsea Station*, *The Gay and Lesbian Review*, *Requited Journal*, *The Good Men Project* and other publications, including the Lambda Literary Award-nominated anthologies *For Colored Boys Who Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Still Not Enough* and *Black Gay Genius: Answering Joseph Beam's Call*.

Mapplethorpe book out in March

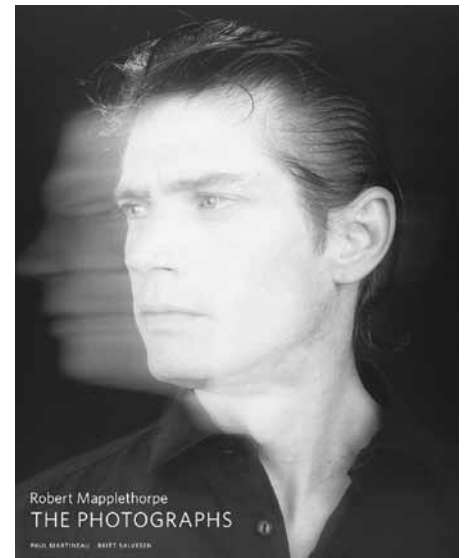
Robert Mapplethorpe: *The Photographs* (J. Paul Getty Museum, March 2016) offers an examination of the artist's oeuvre and influence.

Drawing from the extraordinary collection jointly acquired in 2011 by the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art from The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, as well as the Mapplethorpe Archive housed at

the Getty Research Institute, the authors were given the unique opportunity to explore new resources and present fresh perspectives.

Robert Mapplethorpe: *The Photographs* presents some of Mapplethorpe's most familiar portraits, including intimate self-portraits and those of his long-time benefactor and lover Samuel J. Wagstaff Jr., poet-musician Patti Smith and other members of New York's cultural elite, including artists David Hockney, Andy Warhol, and Louise Bourgeois, actress Isabella Rossellini and singer-songwriter Deborah Harry.

A companion publication, entitled *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Archive*, by Frances Terpak and Michelle Brunnick, will also be published in March, coinciding with the exhibition, *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Medium*.



CFW holding Internat'l Women's Day Dance March 12

The LGBTQ Giving Council of Chicago Foundation for Women (CFW) is hosting the 2nd Annual International Women's Day Dance on Saturday, March 12, 7 p.m.-12 a.m. at the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture.

Reviving this Chicago tradition last year, the LGBTQ Giving Council successfully brought together folks from across the city to celebrate queer and trans* women, and raise dollars for the LGBTQ communities.

The LGBTQ Giving Council was the first affinity group in Chicago formed to provide grants to organizations and programs that serve LGBTQ communities. Since 2008, the Giving Council has awarded more than \$95,000 in grants to 12 organizations and programs including Youth Empowerment Performance Project (YEPP), a safe space for queer youth experiencing homelessness to explore their history and address their struggles; and Affinity Community Services, a social justice organization working on behalf of black LGBTQ communities. The LGBTQ Giving Council provides grants through its Lavender Fund.

"We are thrilled to renew the tradition of the International Women's Day Dance! The Dance has become the Giving Council's biggest fundraiser," said Kim Hunt, Giving Council member. "Come party with us and support groups that are doing great work with and on behalf of queer and trans women!" To purchase tickets or become a sponsor see www.cfw.org/events/. The event is at 3015 W Division St., with a free parking lot.

CFW is a grantmaking organization dedicated to increasing resources and opportunities for women and girls in the greater Chicago area. To support our philanthropy, the Foundation promotes increased investment in women and girls, raises awareness about their issues and potential, and develops them as leaders and philanthropists.

LGBTQ bowlers prepare for Second City tourney

Registration is now open for the 2016 Second City Open Tournament Chicago (SCOTCH), which welcomes LGBTQ bowlers to Chicago to compete for fun and prizes.

The third annual event is March 5-6 at the 40-lane Waveland Bowl, 3700 N. Western Ave.

Last year's tournament drew 140 bowlers (including 19 women) from Illinois and 10 other states. This year, organizers hope to increase participation to the maximum capacity of 144 bowlers. Both veteran bowlers and newcomers are invited to participate. Whole teams are welcome as well as partial teams and individuals, which can be matched up with others.

Participants and raffle entrants could win a variety of prizes, including cash awards, a new STORM bowling ball or a STORM bowling bag.

The SCOTCH earlybird registration fee is \$109. Feb. 20 is the final day to register.

The complete SCOTCH 2016 rules and details can be found at <http://www.scotch-bowling.com>. Or Like and follow the latest SCOTCH news on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SCOTCHtourney>.

Paula Poundstone in Skokie March 19

The North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 Skokie Blvd., Skokie, will welcome comedian Paula Poundstone on Saturday, March 19, at 8 p.m.

Her most recent comedy CD, *I HEART JOKES: Paula Tells Them in Boston* was recorded during a performance at the Wilbur Theatre in the heart of the city and was released on April Fool's Day 2013.

Tickets are \$45-\$52; visit <http://www.northshorecenter.org/>.

The Clarence Darrow Commemorative Committee

invites you to participate in its annual wreath-tossing and symposium commemorating Darrow

Sunday, March 13, 2016
10 a.m.-noon

A tribute on the anniversary of Darrow's death

Cook County Jail: Then and Now
The Impact of Poverty and Racism
Speaker: Hanke Gratteau



In 1902, Darrow wrote: [People] are in jail simply because they cannot avoid it on account of circumstances which are entirely beyond their control"

Today, many of the inmates of Cook County Jail are locked up because they cannot afford \$5000 bail, because they committed crimes of survival, because they are mentally ill.

Join us as Hanke Gratteau, director of the Cook County Sheriff's Justice Institute, describes today's jail population and efforts underway to shift the paradigm. Under Gratteau's leadership, the Institute mines data to expose the consequences of criminalizing homelessness, mental illness, drug dependency and the devastating effects of generational poverty. The goal: to enlighten policies and practices regarding incarceration and evictions.

Gratteau is a former award-winning journalist, including the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Journalism. She also served as Executive Director of the John Howard Association, a corrections watchdog group, and Vice-President for Public Affairs at Ounce of Prevention.



This year's event includes Clarence Darrow's own words from his 1902 address to prisoners in Cook County Jail, as read by Fawzia Mirza.

Fawzia Mirza is an actress and producer, for stage, TV and film. "I love to use performance, personal storytelling and comedy to break down stereotypes across a multiplicity of identities: race, religion, sexual orientation and gender and defy the concept of the 'model minority' often portrayed in the mainstream," she said.

Please join us at 10 a.m. just EAST of the Clarence Darrow Bridge in Jackson Park (the bridge is under construction) for the traditional tossing of flowers and brief speeches to commemorate Darrow; the Symposium begins at 10:45 a.m. in the Museum of Science and Industry: The Rosenwald Room (formerly the New Columbian Room). Beverages and rolls will be served. (The Darrow Bridge is behind the Museum of Science and Industry: Driving south on Lake Shore Drive, pass the light at 57th Drive and turn right at the next light [Science Drive]. You will come almost immediately to Columbia Drive. If you turn left and follow Columbia Drive there is parking near the bridge. You may park near the OmniMax Theater and walk south to the bridge. Parking is by the bridge.)

See www.darrowbridge.org or call 773-387-2394

BOOK REVIEW

Soul Serenade

by Rashod Ollison

\$25.95; Beacon Press; 230 pages

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Vinyl is making a comeback.

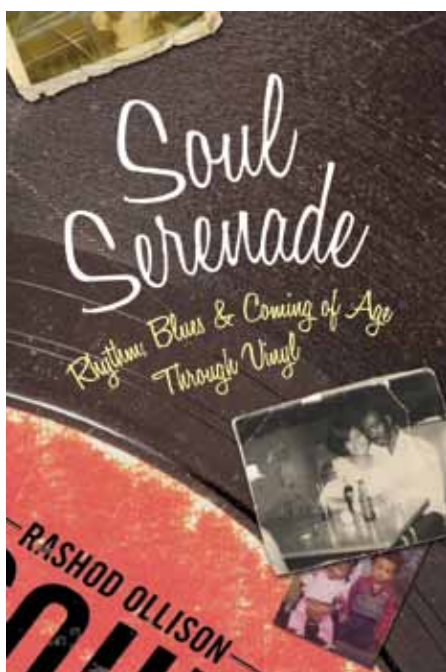
Those are five words that put a smile on a music aficionado's face. A CD isn't the same, they say. An MP3 is nowhere near as good. You don't get the right sound unless you're spinning a record, so vinyl is coming back—but, for people like Rashod Ollison in *Soul Serenade*, it never really left.

There was once a time when "Dusty" Ollison's parents were happy.

He knows it's true; he has evidence of it, in the form of a picture taken at the beginning of their marriage, which lasted thirteen years. When they split, he was old enough to witness but too young to understand, having become inured to the fights, the cheating, and the drinking at his home near Hot Springs, Arkansas.

After Ollison's father fled his family—leaving Ollison's mother with a 'tween and two small children—he rarely returned. But he left a gift behind: stacks of vinyl.

Ollison says he remembers poking around music stores with his father, ogling covers, eager for approval of his taste in performers. Chaka Khan, Bobby Womack, Stevie Wonder, Ollison recalls fascination with their record labels



spinning on the turntable. Michael Jackson gave him comfort, Aretha was a mood barometer, they all taught him about grown-up love through lyrics. With his mother working two full-time jobs to keep food on the table, Ollison counted on music to anchor him. It was his means of escape as his oldest sister took her rage out on him, as his family moved repeatedly, as he was bullied in school for "actin' like a woman."

He denied feminine gestures and a tender



Rashod Ollison.

Photo by Hyunsoo Leo Kim

heart, but by age 13, he could no longer ignore that he was gay.

School, by then, had joined music as a thing of refuge; Ollison excelled at his lessons, achieved good grades, made friends, and expanded his playlist. As he grew, he also wondered about his father sometimes but was largely indifferent, even as the man lay dying.

And then an aunt told Ollison something that made him change his tune.

Soul Serenade starts where many good memoirs do: with a faded picture of a time that barely seems possible. From there, we're surprised by a death that promises to taint much of what's to come, all wrapped in family lore.

But don't get complacent. Author Ollison doesn't allow any lingering. Soon enough, his story becomes angry yelling, a smack upside the head, profanity, TV-as-babysitter, fists and sore feet. We're taken from neighborhood to neighborhood as the lights are shut off, the rent isn't paid, and he's taunted with words that his sister has to explain. It's chaos—but it's also a darn good tale that it doesn't dissolve into whining or poor-me-ing, a testament to Ollison's storytelling skills.

Soul Serenade is one of those books that sticks in your brain—not only for the suggested music, but because the memoir itself leaves its mark. And if that sounds like solid gold to you, then give this book a spin.

Want more? Then look for *After the Dance: My Life with Marvin Gaye*, by Jan Gaye and David Ritz; or *Chaka! Through the Fire*, by Chaka Khan and Tonya Bolden.

Chicago Auto Show runs through Feb. 21

This year marks the 108th edition of the Chicago Auto Show (#CAS16), which runs through Feb. 21 at McCormick Place. First staged in 1901, the Chicago Auto Show is the largest auto show in North America and has been held more times than any other auto exposition on the continent.

In all, nearly 1,000 different vehicles (covering more than 1 million square feet) will be on display during this year's nine-day show. The Chicago Auto Show features hundreds of interactive booths, accessories and auto-related exhibits, competition vehicles, and antique and collector cars.

One big difference with this year's show is that booths are in different places than in previous years—which may disorient regular visitors. However, the diversity of vehicles on display is still staggering.

The annual First Look for Charity took place Feb. 12. It was expected to raise more than \$2.5 million annually to benefit 18 local charities.

Admission is \$12 for adults, \$7 for seniors age 62 and older as well as children ages 7-12, and free for children age up to 6.

As for special days at show, Family Day took place Feb. 15 and Women's Day on Feb. 16, with Hispanic Day on Friday, Feb. 19. There's also a food drive during which attendees can exchange three cans of food for a coupon good for a half-price discount off full-price admission.

For more information about the Chicago Auto Show, visit www.chicagoautoshow.com.

Photos and text by Andrew Davis



Chicago Auto Show 2016.

Photos by Andrew Davis and Tracy Baim



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"It's funny. I play a gay character on a TV show. Whether it's me or the character, at the end of the day it's still my body, it's still telling the story. It's the character and his journey, but it's my body, my lips, my hands."—**Nick Jonas**

When I came out in the late '80s, there were about eight seven-nights-a-week gay dance clubs in Boston. By 2000, there weren't any. Once Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage, the gay scene changed drastically. In 1992, Boston's WFNX began broadcasting a weekly gay radio program. If the subject matter of "One in Ten" was groundbreaking, so was its home—the area's most popular alternative rock radio station. Throughout the show's history, I often appeared as a guest and, occasionally, as a host. One night in 2005, I asked our engineer where young gay people went at night. He kinda snottily said, "Oh, we don't need to go out to gay clubs like your generation did—we just go anywhere." I suddenly felt very old... and very smart. Equality comes with a price. If you want the rights to be able to do what everyone else does where everyone else does it and be considered the same as everyone else, you don't need your own things—like clubs or radio stations.

Last week, SiriusXM shut down its groundbreaking queer station, OutQ. It wasn't completely unexpected—this past summer, Sirius abruptly cancelled the wildly popular program by **Derek & Romaine**. Rumors were circulating that other changes were in store. With almost no warning, the plug was pulled on OutQ. But the cuts didn't stop there. At the same time, **Lance Bass** was canned, even though he's on **Andy Cohen** ... rather, Andy's Sirius station (Radio Andy). Can't Bass get a break? First Meredith Vieira and now this?

Barry Manilow had to interrupt his One Last Time—One Last Tour due to "oral surgery." OK, I don't mean it like Kathy Griffin would—he really did have oral surgery. Barry was rushed into emergency surgery to deal with complications from an earlier procedure. Apparently, he had a benign tumor in his mouth removed in 1986 and, since then, he's needed regular treatments. While the doctors expect he can resume his schedule soon, his publicist says that Manilow has been ordered not to "talk, sing or rap." Rap? Did I miss something? Is he known as a rapper? Is it Tupac, Jay Z and Manilow? Maybe we should start calling him Mani-O.

Another singer is making tongues wag over some racy photos. **Aaron Carter** was recently featured in a series of photos with **Chris Crocker**. You remember Chris—his 15 minutes of fame sprang from a viral video imploring people to "Leave Britney alone." It's that history which led to canoodling with Carter.

It all started when a scurrilous website claimed that if you ask Aaron Carter to sing his biggest hit "I Want Candy," he will whine like a baby. Lots of people argued back and forth, and then Crocker entered the fray. He made a video saying, "Leave Aaron Carter alone right now! For real, though. I mean, you people are mad because he doesn't want to sing, 'I Want Candy' from when he was a kid? That's like people asking me to do 'Leave Britney alone.' Now, I would do Aaron." As I always say, you've got to put it out into the universe. Aaron tweeted, "@ChrisCrocker is my man crush." The two-some seemed to be flirting online and before you know it, they were face to face, posing for a number of suggestive shots. How suggestive? People are now claiming the two are lovers—



Sirius XM has said "Bye, Bye, Bye" to Lance Bass, Billy says.

Photo by Rodrigo Varela/Getty Images

something Crocker clearly isn't discouraging. However, we're told that Aaron's people made Chris delete an Instagram video that showed the guys on the brink of a kiss. But nothing is ever really deleted, as you will see on BillyMasters.com.

If I've never said anything (and Lord knows I've said it all), I've said that if there were a reality star I'd want to watch getting fucked, it would be **Will Wikle**. Not being a Big Brother devotee, I was late to the Wikle party. But I jumped on board (as it were) in 2011 when he whipped himself into shape and re-emerged as a top (top?) NYC go-go boy (boy?) while still working as an ER nurse—which probably came in handy while clubgoers watched his heart-stopping gyrations. When asked about this career trajectory, he said, "To my Southern Baptist family back home, I tell them that God blessed me with a bountiful butt, and shaking it is my ministry." Well, isn't that special.

Those of you not in the Tri-state area will get to see Will's ass (and the rest of him) in his upcoming porn debut. Yes, he's doing porn. This somewhat surprised me—not because he isn't hot enough, but because he'd always refused it as an option. He said, "Never. I like to be in control"—a statement all good bottoms say at one time or another. But Wikle got to be in control for this project to be released by CockyBoys. Will is co-producing *The Still-est Hour*, which also features **Colby Keller** and **Levi Karter**. We're told the film cost roughly five times the amount of a usual porn. In addition to the hardcore content, this flick also includes quite a bit of plot and dialogue. Judging solely from the trailer, the acting skills are questionable—to say the least. But the heat generated by them certainly sizzles. You can check out Wikle from a variety of angles at BillyMasters.com.

When we're watching Wikle's willie, it's definitely time to end yet another column. Before ending, I want to thank you for the birthday wishes. Sincerely, I appreciate it and never take it for granted—except, perhaps, when I'm having sex with reality stars ... I do draw the line at Internet sensations. And speaking of the Internet, check out www.BillyMasters.com, the site that never goes down (unlike its proprietor). If you have a question for me, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Chris Crocker makes a "Leave Billy alone" video. Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.



MANHOLE

One last Tea in B-town before the hole closes ... forever. Sun., February 14.
Photos by Vince Rango

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Charlatan

BY ANDREW DAVIS

"Che cazzo fai?"

I bring up this vulgar Italian phrase (which roughly translates as "What the f--k are you doing?") because it's on prominent display in the back of the restaurant Charlatan (1329 W. Chicago Ave.; CharlatanChicago.com).

Maybe the phrase is there to convey some sort of laid-back, rock 'n roll attitude. However, the fare served betrays that to an extent, as it's pretty elegant—proving that chef Matt Troost knows exactly what he's doing.

The decor at Charlatan is interesting (that catch-all word), to say the least. Wood is prominent, but there are also animal heads on the wall along with skeletons on the wallpaper. In addition, there's a nifty red booth in the back (that definitely stands out from the rest of the seating); the restaurant's Jackie Aker said that it might be converted into a chef's table, but the staff isn't sure.

There aren't many cocktails on the menu—but, boy, did I enjoy the one I had. It was called a Civil Obedience (you have to love the names of some restaurants' drinks), and it was a tasty concoction of Tito's vodka, Meletti Amaro, pineapple, allspice and lime. There's also a solid selection of beer (including the popular Lagunitas Brewing) and wines.



Aker described the cuisine as "Italian country-house meets Midwest farmhouse." The menu has headings such as "Salt + Time," "Rolled + Extruded" and "Large + Limited"—which one could argue give the place a pretension it doesn't need.

But the food itself is done quite well. Aker noted that The Chicago Sun-Times food critic called the daily focaccia one of the 10 best things he had last year. I wouldn't rate it quite that high, but it was pretty good. However, the creamy chicken Bolognese (Charlatan has a daily Bolognese) might make my list for the top 10 things I've had this year—although 2016 still has a way to go. I'd return for that dish alone.

My dining companion adored the grilled octopus, which is served with beef-braised baby carrots, pan gratato, parsley and romesco. The black-pepper rigatoni (served with wild-boar ragu, parmesan and fried Brussels sprouts) was also quite pleasing. Lastly, we tried the goat cheese-stuffed chicken breast—and, for me, it almost ranked up there with the chicken Bolognese.

The dessert listing (which has changed, for the

Images from Charlatan.

Photos by Andrew Davis and Gretchen Rachel Hammond



most part, from the one listed online) is enticing, even if it's pretty short. The budino (served with an almond mini-financier) is tasty, sweet and almost shockingly lemony.

By the way, Charlatan is one of the few places I've visited that offers an actual pig head as a dish. Coming from the South, it's not that odd a sight for me, though; however, it might almost lead someone else to ask, *"Che cazzo fai?"*

DANCING ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

BY MARC 'MOOSE' MODER

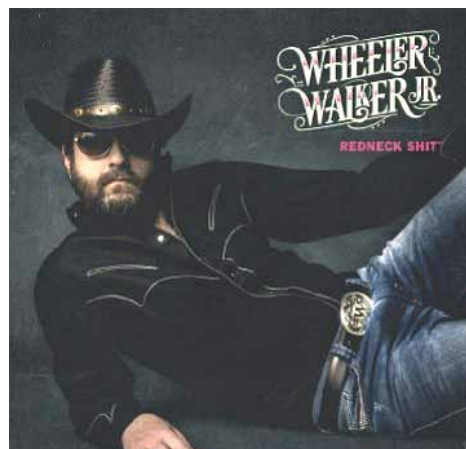


Giving country another (10th) chance

As the genre of country music hits rough patches, and then bounces back time after time, the fans feel the loves and losses, like the highs and lows of a break-up and make-up. Now I'm not speaking of the regular country fan who thinks Florida Georgia Line is as high-quality as George Jones. I'm talking real country fans who know that the times when pop passes for the genre (early '80s, late '90s, now) are low points to true fans. Our long, dark time (when Garth Brooks first retired until the present) might be almost over though. Recently, after the good lord Timberlake introduced us to the guiding light of Chris Stapleton, I had to look into other powerhouses coming down the country road.

Need a baby step into the shallow waters between your love for Lana-Del-Ray-pop and the genre? Check out dreamy albums by Amy Blaschke (Opaline) and Rachel Brooke (The World's Greatest Anchor). If you're already down with Jenny Lewis, Rumer or Neko Case, you're there. If you don't know the past three, get to work.

Comedian Ben Hoffman unleashed is alter ego, Wheeler Walker Jr., onto us last week with an amazingly great comedy music album of the highest rate of offensiveness called Redneck Shit. The Howard Stern of country, you have to go into the album with an open mind that Hoffman will offend everyone in good time. With lyrics like, "They say



it's crazy, say it's a sin, I just need someone to rest my balls on their chin" from the ode to straight-on-Gay love, "Which One O' You Queers Gonna Suck My Dick?", he's sending a big middle finger to the established "Bro Country." But Redneck Shit isn't just funny, it's a true country jam made with assistance from the Nashville establishment to hearken back to the days of the outlaw country of Waylon, Willie and Merle.

Speaking of the Nashville establishment, Wynonna Judd, who's one of the genre's best vocalists, has been coasting for decades now. After two strong solo albums in the '90s, two mediocre ones to follow, a reunion with her nutty mama and some covers albums, the red-headed diva is back with what could be the best album of her career, Wynonna and the Big Noise, which is also the moniker under which it's recorded. With heavyweights like Jason Isbell and Susan Tedeschi and songs written or co-written by Chris Stapleton, Julie Miller, Raphael Saddiq, Kevin Welch and even Eagles bassist/singer Timothy B. Schmit, Big Noise is not just a return to form, but a rare evolution in middle age which will remind music fans of Bonnie Raitt's '90s comeback in tone and maturity.

Good country is out there, and it doesn't come with autotune, electronic drums or from a reality show. It comes from the heart, and we still heart country.

Check out these artists and more as Moose spins Lumbersexual: Otter Country on February 20, 9 pm, at The SoFo Tap.



nightspots the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN
YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR



Boylesque w/Ben D. Mann: The Tainted Love Show

Thu., Feb. 18, 10:30 pm

Mary's Attic,
5400 N. Clark St.

Chicago's own unique all-male review performing their favorite twisted love songs. Starring Clyf Hangar, Otter Chaos (pictured), Isaac Zire, The Bendettes, and host Ben D. Mann. A different special guest performer each week.



Big Freedia LIVE

Fri., Feb. 19, 10 pm

Seven Nightclub,
3206 N. Halsted St.

The Queen of Bounce hits Boystown! \$28 advance general admission tickets, limited number of Ultimate VIP Experience tickets available for \$35, available at www.whatisseven.com.



Brian's Speakeasy Grand Opening Party

Thu., Feb. 25, 6-9 pm

Brian's Speakeasy,
440 N. State St.

Come check out the new space downtown (formerly Downtown). DJ Freddie Bain spins the tunes. Enjoy Jack Daniel's and Tito's specials with the crowd.

WINDY CITY TIMES

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Feb. 17

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaks to Get Out the Vote event Doors open at 10 a.m. Members of the public wishing to attend should RSVP online. 11:00am Parkway Ballroom, 4455 S. M. L. King Dr. Tickets: <https://www.hillaryclinton.com/events/view/1729950/>

Free HIV/AIDS testing at Affinity Community Services Affinity is a social justice organization that focuses on health and wellness, leadership development, and community building for Black lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women and LGBTQ youth of African descent in the Chicago metropolitan area. 1:00pm - 3:00pm Affinity Community Services 1424 E. 53rd St. Suite 306 Chicago 773-324-0377 <http://www.affinity95.org>

Chicago in Focus. State of Chicago's Neighborhoods How will the budget affect neighborhood life? Panel: Alderman Tom Tunney, 44th Ward Chicago; Kevin Jackson, Chicago Rehab Network; Karen Kolb Flude, Forward Chicago; Giselle Mercier, ElevArte Chicago; Lauren Nolan, Voorhees Center for Neighborhood and Community Improvement, UIC. Free, cash bar. RSVP League@LWVChicago.org 5:00pm - 7:00pm Urban League Club, 65 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago 312-939-5949 <http://lwvchicago.org/>

Taste of Judaism class Classes on the modern Jewish take on spirituality, values, and community. Rabbi Cindy Enger of Or Chadash teaches Wednesdays Feb. 10, 17, and 24. Free. Register online 7:00pm - 9:00pm Temple Shalom of Chicago 3480 N. Lake Shore Dr. Chicago <http://www.reformjudaism.org/learning/judaism-classes/taste-judaism-chicago>



SOMETHING 'MU'

Saturday, Feb. 20

Lesbian musical duo Whatismu will perform in Palatine.

Photo by Ed Peterson Photography

Thursday, Feb. 18

Black, Queer and Invisible? Center on Halsted chats with Kim Hunt (Executive Director of the Pride Action Tank) and Zach Stafford (Contributing writer for The Guardian). Monthly series interviews local LGBTQ and ally leaders on their lives and today's most pressing topics, followed by networking with some of Chicagoland's organizations advancing Black and LGBTQ equality. \$5 suggested donation. 6:30pm - 8:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11299>

Chicago Theatre Week With 100 theatre productions, a celebration of Chicago's world-class theatre scene presented by the League of Chicago Theatres in partnership with Choose Chicago. \$15 or \$30. Through Feb. 21 7:00pm Various locations including The Goodman and About Face Theatre at Theater Wit <http://www.choosechicago.com/things-to-do/arts-culture-and-entertainment/chicago-theatre-week/>

The Welcoming Committee (TWC) theater night for "Cocked" TWC is a national LGBTQ group creating communities of LGBTQs to go en masse to not specifically gay nightlife, sports, culture, travel destinations for one-time experiences. Ticket includes silver level seats, exclusive backstage after-party 9 pm with cast, drinks, appetizers. 7:30pm - 9:00pm Victory Gardens Theater 2433 N Lincoln Ave Chicago Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cocked-at-victory-gardens-theater-tickets-20110611380>

Friday, Feb. 19

Supporting Our Transgender Students Jennifer Leininger, Lurie Children's Hospital Gender Development Program, "Beyond the Gender Binary: Supporting Trans and Gender Nonconforming Students"; Carolyn Wahlskog 360 Youth Services of Naperville, "Current Trends in Supporting LGFBTQ+ Youth"; Owen Daniel-McCarter, Illinois Safer Schools Alliance, "Legal Protections for Trans Youth: State of the Law." Workshop to be given twice on Feb. 19, the first 8-11:30 am. Second time slot will feature a panel of parents who have transgender children. All high school personnel in McHenry County, mental health providers, PFLAG/PTI members invited. Register with LLCrain@co.mchenry.il.us by Feb. 15. 12:30pm - 4:00pm McHenry County College, The Scot Room - B178, 8900 U.S. Highway 14, Crystal Lake <http://www.pflagillinois.org>

Bisexual Trans Queer Book Discussion Discussion of Lambda Literary Award finalist

Blood, Marriage, Wine & Glitter by S. Bear Bergman. Free event. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.gerberhart.org/events/bisexual-trans-queer-book-discussion>

Ticked Pink for Bright Pink Benefiting Bright Pink national non-profit organization focusing on prevention and detection of breast and ovarian cancer. A night of both celebration and tribute. Tickets \$25-\$125. 8:00pm - 1:00am Morgan Manufacturing, 401 N Morgan St. Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ticked-pink-for-bright-pink-2016-tickets-19364407464?aff=es2>

Saturday, Feb. 20

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (LGBTQ) Support meeting to talk about illnesses, symptoms, treatment, doctors, and personal issues such as dating, relationships and work. Every Saturday. 11:00am - 12:30pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://dbsa-glbtc-chicago.com>

Affinity Community Services Voter Registration Talk Talk with Chicago Lawyers' Committee about history of voting rights, importance of voting and learn best practices on working with organizations and communities to increase the number of registered voters. 1:00pm - 3:00pm St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 5700 W. Midway Park, Chicago <http://www.affinity95.org>

Lesbian couple Whatismu Performance duo with a music hybrid of Indian percussion, rock guitars and EBM synthesizers that expresses emotions without words, the vision of guitarist/multi-instrumentalist Lorrie Kountz collaborating with guitarist Laura Jansons, Kountz's wife. \$20 online. \$25 at door 7:00pm Great Plains Zen Center Benefit, Countryside Church, 1025 N. Smith St., Palatine Tickets: http://www.greatplainszen.org/benefit_concert

Asians & Friends Chicago's Chinese New Year's Dinner \$40 for multi-course meal,

entertainment, \$50 at door. Cash bar. Cocktails 6:30 pm. 7:00pm Phoenix Restaurant 2131 S. Archer Chicago Tickets: <http://afchicago.org/blog/2016/01/02/chinese-new-years-dinner-at-the-phoenix-220/>

Sunday, Feb. 21

ACHurch4Me MCC Sunday Worship Service Diverse congregation welcomes all walks of life, paths of faith, and spiritual connection. 11:00am AChurch4Me MCC, 7366 N Clark St, Chicago <http://Www.achurch4me.org>

The Boys in Briefs PFP's new singing quartet: At the Beach 7:00pm Uptown Underground, 4707 N. Broadway St., Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/1678970355713530/>

Monday, Feb. 22

Movie Musical Mondays: Cabaret Monday nights through February, screening past movie musical Oscar winners. Bring your own snacks and warm up your voice - it just may turn into a sing-along! \$5 suggested donation. 6:30pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted St. <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11251>

Tuesday, Feb. 23

Financial Education Fair Basic banking and how to save money at 7:00-7:45. Student loans and debt management at 8:00-8:45 pm. Mortgages, building credit, what to save, and tips on minimizing fees. <http://www.chicagocitytreasurer.com/77-proud-calendar-of-events/>. Tickets: <http://tinyurl.com/77Proud-EqualityIllinois>

Wed., Feb. 24

Book Reading and Signing: Queer Clout by Timothy Stewart-Winter 7:30pm Women & Children First Bookstore, 5233 N Clark St., <http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com/event/author-reading-queer-clout-timothy-stewart-winter>

KNIGHT from page 22

(but not names) co-star in this horror thriller.

—**Desierto** (March 4)—When their truck suddenly breaks down, a migrant named Moses (Gael Garcia Bernal) leads 13 others on a trek through the harsh terrain along the U.S.-Mexico border and find themselves in a fight for their lives against a psychotic sniper (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) and his vicious hunting dog.

—**London Has Fallen** (March 4)—Secret Service agent Mike Banning (Gerard Butler)

springs into action to save captive U.S. President Benjamin Asher (Aaron Eckhart) from the terrorists who attacked London. It's a sequel to Olympus Has Fallen.

—**Whiskey Tango Foxtrot** (March 4)—While working as a war correspondent in Afghanistan and Pakistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, Kim Barker (Tina Fey) develops a crazy relationship with a fellow journalist from Scotland (The Hobbit's Martin Freeman). Based on Barker's bestselling memoir. Margot Robbie, Billy Bob Thornton and Alfred Molina co-star.

CONE from page 23

I thought, "Oh, this is interesting. What if the entire movie was this?" That's where it came back practically.

Also, Wise Kids didn't confront sexuality and desire very directly so I think the real answer to your questions is: yes, I wanted to go back and do something that confronted evangelical desire and evangelical hypocrisy a little more directly.

WCT: I love that the movie is centered on this quintessential American ritual: the pool party where you have all these half-naked people running around and all this unspoken desire. Here, of course, with all these nubile teens on display, the voyeurism is akin to ... Hitchcock! [Laughs]

SC: That's the irony of these Christian pool parties. You have these deeply devout, faithful people who are probably members of the abstinence club (*laughs*) and yet, there are these occasional moments where everyone gathers and removes the majority of their clothing. I find that an absolutely fascinating thing and it's a reminder that even Christians live in bodies and that single phrase could sum up the last 10 years of my work.

WCT: I don't know a lot about your background, Stephen. Are you delving into your past, I'm guessing?

SC: [*Laughs*] Only in the sense that I'm in-

terested in personal work and I'm interested in mining the emotional experiences that I encountered whether directly or indirectly in a semi-autobiographical way. I would be doing that probably whatever atmosphere I was raised in. If my dad was a Jewish firefighter, I would probably be making very different films but they would probably be personal. I'm just making movies about what I know. The sort of complicated, naughty, nuanced environment I grew up in.

WCT: Many of the adults in the film are emotionally closeted, while most of the teens are completely open with no gender biases. That was really refreshing to see on the screen.

SC: Thank you!

WCT: What's up next, Stephen?

SC: I don't want to say too much but I'm going to try and make a feature this summer down in South Carolina so it will be a similar situation to The Wise Kids where it's still partially Chicago in that we use Chicago actors and some crew but we'll probably join forces with some southern talent. This is about an older, southern photographer; an older female lead role. My top five ideas right now are all about women. So look for portraits of women from me for the next little while.

<http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/henryg-able>

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RAPP from page 20

Do they ever chase you down the street?

AR: They don't usually chase me down the street but when I do get recognized, people are generally very respectful. I am proud of the work I have done, so I don't mind being recognized. There are times when I am in mid-bite at a restaurant and they ask to take a picture, where I say, "Please let me finish eating!"

Other than that, I have been very fortunate to be appreciated for the work I have done.

WCT: You have some movies coming out this year?

AR: I did a couple of low-budget films this past summer. With independent films, it takes a while to see light of day sometimes. I think both are still being edited and scored. I am hopeful that they will get to see the light of day eventually. I still haven't seen them myself. I have seen stills, but not the finished product. They were really good experiences to work on and really good roles.

You never know how a film is going to turn out but I am proud of them. They are both queer-themed and have interesting stories to tell about the LGBT experience. One is called Dreamland and the other is Modern Love. Those

are the working title names, though. I haven't heard anything differently yet, if the titles will be changed.

WCT: Are there queer themes in If/Then?

AR: Yes. My character is bisexual and Kate is a lesbian. She is involved with a woman. So I would say those are two pretty queer things!

Check out If/Then before it splits out of town at the Oriental Theatre, 24 W. Randolph St., Feb. 23-March 6 with tickets at www.BroadwayInChicago.com.

BLAME from page 16

training. Defrocking or excommunicating us doesn't end the problem. We're not the problem. The priests in prison are not the problem. The Church's nonsensical sexual theology, and its highly-destructive mind- and heart-molding methods, are the problem.

Fired for being gay in 1974 by a Catholic newspaper, Brian McNaught has spent the past 42 years educating the public on LGBT issues, and was named by the New York Times "the godfather of gay diversity training."

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