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PHOTO: MIKE RUIZ

St. Patrick's Day: From one settler to another

By: Nicole Lashomb*/TRT Editor-in-Chief

OPINIONS Identity. We all have many. However, to a select few, you can only have one—to be Irish, at least if you are a member of the LGBT community in the streets of South Boston on St. Patrick's Day.

Gay and Irish, that's fine. Just make sure you don't wave a rainbow flag or use the words, gay, LGBT, or any other terminology to let on that that may be the case, at least according to the traditional St. Patrick's Day parade officials at the time of publi-

cation. I am hopeful that will not continue to be the case. After a decade-long tradition of banning gay groups from marching in the parade with regulations stipulated by the Allied War Veterans Council, AWVC, for the first time this year, negotiations are underway to resolve and eradicate this long history of exclusion.

In a city that boasts many liberal ideologies and progressive advancements, a city that has pioneered civil rights, a city that proudly inscribes the route of the freedom trail along its streets, and a city that displays dedicated monuments in honor to the Irish settlers, this pervasive and ongoing homophobic mentality leaves me baffled. As an ethnic group in a country rampant with discrimination against

early settlers by the inhabitants of this not-so-welcoming homeland that once viewed the Irish as outsiders, one would think there would be a greater sense of understanding. Unfortunately, that has not been the case and it appears that the organizers of the traditional parade have forgotten their troubled past. It was not uncommon to see signs displayed in storefronts such as "Irish Need Not Apply." Yet, that is exactly what parade officials are doing to the LGBT community. Gays Need Not Apply.

Currently, Mayor Walsh and others are attempting to negotiate an agreement with St.

It was not uncommon to see signs displayed in storefronts such as "Irish Need Not Apply." Yet, that is exactly what parade officials are doing to the LGBT community. Gays Need Not Apply.

Patrick's Day Parade organizers, which would allow openly LGBT groups to participate in this long-standing tradition. It is yet to be determined whether these negotiations will be in vain or if real strides will be made. When we celebrate the identities of us all, out and proud, our community becomes stronger and our streets become safer. I am hopeful.

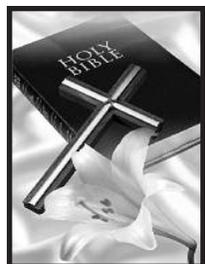
From one settler to another, as we all are, Happy St. Patrick's Day!

*Nicole Lashomb is the editor-in-chief and co-founder of The Rainbow Times. She holds an MBA from Marylhurst University and a Bachelor's from SUNY Potsdam. To reach her, send your thoughts, feedback and/or concerns to her to: editor@therainbowtimesmass.com.

editor@therainbowtimesmass.com.

Faith, Family and God – Space for people we hate

By: Paul P. Jesepe*/TRT Columnist



In late January, I had the opportunity to twice attend Holy Eucharist at Saint Bartholomew's Episcopal Church (www.stbarts.org) in New York City on Park Avenue. I always try to spend time at St. Bart's when in New York, whether for Eu-

charist, evening prayer or to sit quietly in a side chapel with its large Eastern Orthodox icon of the Blessed Mother. Fr. Edward Sunderland, LCSW (<http://tiny.cc/vj2mbx>) celebrated both Eucharist liturgies. In one, he shared a sermon reminding everyone of the many aspects of faith. Although there were several lessons to take away from each sermon, two themes still resonate weeks later. I don't recall if they came from one sermon or if I'm mixing them together like a fine recipe.

"Faith is a conversation about possibilities," he said. It draws us to "open space for people we hate." Conversations use words and these expressions of language can free and empower. You can't transform some-

Mustering the courage and patience to find a place for haters and bigots enables us to help them by slowly re-directing their negative energy into goodness.

one's negative energy if you're unwilling to engage.

In further reflecting on Fr. Edward's lessons, we need to welcome people to our table who seek us harm and try to be patient with the demons limiting them, though they are sometimes projected and unleashed on us. Mustering the courage and patience to find a place for haters and bigots enables us to help them by slowly re-directing their negative energy into goodness.

It can be an exhausting, emotionally draining endeavor. In doing so, however, we open space for, as Fr. Edward noted, "the God we

To read the rest of this story visit: <http://wp.me/p22M41-21b>

Standing up for justice: Q&A with CeCe McDonald

By: Keegan O'Brien*/Special for TRT



[This interview was originally published on www.SocialWorker.org]

CeCe McDonald faced life in prison for defending herself against a racist and transphobic hate crime in 2011. Supporters built up a nationwide campaign to raise awareness about her case and fight for her freedom. As result of ongoing pressure, CeCe was offered a plea deal which included pleading guilty to second degree murder and accepting a 41-month prison sentence. She accepted the deal and was incarcerated in a men's prison. She was released early on January 13 2014.

Shortly after CeCe was released from prison, this writer had the privilege of interviewing her about her case, and the larger political issues it connected to. What follows is a story of bravery, resilience, and strength on the part of one woman, in the face of a system that sought to grind her down, and a discussion of the multifaceted issues, and structural obstacles that trans women, particularly African American, continue to face today.

Q: Why don't we start with the attack itself: if you had the opportunity to tell people what happened that night, what would you like to say?

A: Well, a group of my friends and I were

"They were making it seem like I was the initial aggressor, and that was not at all the case. It was the exact opposite, but they instantly criminalized me!"

walking to the 24 hour grocery store around midnight. Prior to even getting into the incident we were stopped by the police for what he said was a noise complaint, but I knew that it was racial profiling because he clearly just drove by a bar that was open where a bunch of people were being loud and drunk and we were just down the street, walking, talking amongst ourselves.

So, as I was walking and talking with my boyfriend, some of my friends were up ahead, and as I was talking to him I saw this back and forth conversation going on

See CeCe Interview on Page 6

The Rainbow Times

The Freshest LGBT Newspaper in New England—Boston Based

TheRainbowTimesMass.com

editor@therainbowtimesmass.com
sales@therainbowtimesmass.com

Phone: 617.444.9618 / 413.282.8881
Fax: 928.437.9618

Publisher Gricel M. Ocasio	Design Prizm Designs
Editor-In-Chief Nicole Lashomb	Webmaster Jarred Johnson
Assistant Editor Lauren Walleser	Columnists/Guest* Lorelei Erisis
National/Local Sales Rivendell Media	Deja N. Greenlaw
Chris Gilmore	Paul P. Jesepe
Liz Johnson	Wilfred Labiosa
Lead Photographer Glenn Koetzner	John Verlinden
Reporters Chuck Colbert	Keegan O'Brien*
Tynan Power	Affiliations National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association
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Lauren Walleser	Keen News Service
	*Guest Writer

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As for TRT I really enjoy this publication because of its diversity, both on staff and in the coverage and discourse. I always pick it up at my local market here in Easthampton (next to Noho). Truly a great asset to our community for thought provoking editorials and range. Much Thanks!

—Amiee Joy Ross (aka The Bearded Lady), Online, Easthampton, MA

Dear Editor,

In the spirit of reliving the fun and care free spirit of the disco/retro era of the 70s and 80s, my partner Harrison Carmichael and I also created a dance event 5 years ago. It has grown from a monthly tea dance in Roslindale to a bi-monthly event in the South End to a weekly tea dance on Sundays at Club Cafe. It was a grass roots effort to bring a Sunday evening tea dance back to Boston. We think we have finally done it and we are thankful to Club Cafe for inviting our Back2Basics Tea Dance to their venue. No cover charge and its a great way to bring primarily folks in the 40s and 50s (who rememehr the great music from the 70s and 80s) together. If you do another story, it would be wonderful to have this event included. Thanks.

—Rick Ward, Online

Mr. Ward,

We will do so. Thank you for the information & your feedback. We appreciate it. —The Editor

To submit your letters to the editor, please send them with your full name, phone (to verify identity) & e-mail to TRT's editor: editor@therainbowtimesmass.com

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Negotiations continue for gay-inclusive St. Patrick's Day Parade

By: Chuck Colbert*/TRT Reporter

The push back was strong and immediate in the local LGBT community as word spread this weekend that Boston Mayor Martin J. "Marty" Walsh has persuaded organizers of the St. Patrick's Day Parade to invite the grassroots advocacy organization MassEquality to march in South Boston's annual parade — provided no one wear T-shirts or carry signs identifying their sexual orientation. In other words, no indicators of gay pride or LGBT identity would be permitted.

"Since early this morning [Saturday, March 1], my email and phone hasn't stopped," said Sylvain Bruni, president of Boston Pride. "People are pissed and not happy" with the deal put forward.

"Everyone who reached out to us," Bruni added, "really doesn't like it" and "feels it is an affront to the LGBT community even to think it would be acceptable to ask people not to be themselves."

"I have yet to hear anybody who thinks this is a good idea," said Bruni. "Every person who has reached out to us said that MassEquality should say 'No.'"

On behalf of Boston Pride, Bruni strongly urged MassEquality to reject the identity-maker restrictions proposed by the Allied War Veterans Council (AWVC) parade organizers.



Las year's St. Patrick's Peace Parade participants carried a strong message that still holds true today - for a unified St. Patrick's Day Parade in Boston, Massachusetts.

for almost 45 years to gain recognition, acceptance and visibility," Bruni wrote in an email to the organization and press statement. "We cannot accept a request to go back into the closet for the sake of marching in the South Boston Parade."

He explained, "Requesting that LGBT marchers conceal their identities in a public event dedicated to celebrating its participants' heritage is commensurate with the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy, which our community has fought so hard to repeal. Ac-

cepting the terms proposed by the AWVC would send the message that it's okay for gay people to exist, as long as no one knows they are gay, as long as they don't say anything about it, as long as they don't cast any 'shame' on the Irish and military heritage on display during the parade. Worse, it would acknowledge that denying visibility to the LGBT community is acceptable in 2014."

Bruni also noted that "LGBT persons are not the only ones against whom the AWVC discriminates," he wrote, citing the examples of Veterans for Peace and the Foundation for International Justice.

"We cannot turn our back on them now; we must stay united in the fight against all dis-

crimination," Bruni wrote.

Veterans for Peace spokesman Pat Scanlon told the Boston Globe, "I applaud the effort, but I think it's clearly not enough," he said, adding, "We really think the city should take back the parade."

News of a potential breakthrough allowing LGBT participation for the first time in two decades broke in The Boston Globe on Saturday morning under the headline "Gay group invited to march in Southie parade" with the subtitle "Walsh-brokered parade deal forbids reference to orientation in signs, shirts."

The mayor's press secretary issued a statement saying Walsh met with U.S. Representative Stephen Lynch on the parade matter: "It was a very positive meeting, and they remain optimistic that a solution can be reached that will work for all parties involved."

Local broadcast media, including Channel 5 (the local ABC affiliate), Channel 4 (CBS affiliate), and New England Cable News followed the story with evening broadcast reporting. Both Coredini and Mayor Walsh commented on camera.

"Anybody marching should be proud of who they are," Walsh said.

Voicing hope that a compromise could be worked out, Coredini said the issue was not whether LGBT people have marched in the parade. Rather, it's about being "allowed to march openly," she said, referring to LGBT veterans who would like to march.

Sunday, March 2, a *Boston Herald* ...

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Fenway study shows inadequate Pap tests in transgender men

By: Lauren Walleser/TRTAssistant Editor

BOSTON, Mass. — A recent study published in the Journal of General Internal Medicine (JGIM) finds that female to male (FTM) transgender patients had over 10 times higher odds of having an inadequate Papanicolaou (Pap) test compared with female patients.

Fenway Health's Director of Women's Health Jennifer Potter and colleagues from Fenway, Harvard Medical School and the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health conducted the research.

"We hypothesize that both the physical changes induced by testosterone therapy and provider/patient discomfort with the exam that may interfere with the collection of an adequate sample during the Pap contribute to this trend," said Ida Bernstein, the study coordinator. "Further research is required to understand this disparity and test these theories."

According to a Fenway Health press release on the study, cervical cancer can still occur in FTM trans men if they have not undergone complete sex reassignment surgery or wait until later in life to have a complete hysterectomy. National guidelines, therefore, recommend trans men with a cervix receive Pap tests.

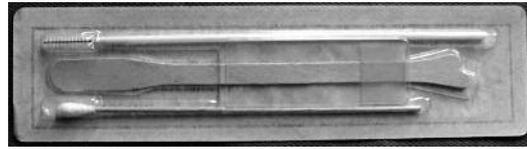
"If a person on the FTM spectrum has not had a total hysterectomy, which includes removal of the cervix, and has ever had skin-to-skin sexual contact with another person, they are at risk of HPV," said Bernstein. "All people who have had sexual contact with another person are at risk of HPV regardless

of the kind of sex they have, even if there's no penetration or fluid exchange. Some strains of HPV cause changes to the tissues of the cervix that can lead to cancer. Cervical cancer screening is an important part of preventive health for all people who have a cervix."

The study shows that FTM patients had a prevalence of inadequate samples and were also more likely to have had longer latency to follow-up testing. When asked if negative experiences with healthcare lead trans men to not undergo regular Pap tests, Bernstein spoke to a related study.

"We are interviewing individuals on the FTM spectrum and conducting an online survey open to the FTM community to better understand people's experiences with and barriers to Pap tests," Bernstein said. "We have so far found a huge range and diversity of experiences and attitudes towards Pap tests specifically and healthcare in general across our participants. Negative interactions with healthcare providers and/or other clinic staff are one factor that can lead FTM patients to be reluctant to seek care or even avoid care altogether. While the need for gender-affirming and competent care for FTM patients is clear, the work to understand these and other barriers is ongoing."

Mason Dunn, executive director of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coal-



tion, also shared his thoughts on trans experiences with healthcare.

"The impact of negative experiences in healthcare for trans people are far-reaching and deeply concerning," said Dunn. "When doctors fail to provide compassionate or understanding care, many trans people are less likely to seek out necessary or preventative medical care. In one study—"Injustice at Every Turn"—50 percent of surveyed trans people reported having to teach their medical care providers about trans identities. This lack of information takes significant time to remedy and sometimes leads to frustrating interactions with healthcare professionals. If a trans person is required to explain the very foundation of their identity at every appointment, they may be less likely to seek out care when they need it."

Bernstein said more research is needed to understand the changes on the cervix induced by testosterone as well as patient/provider discomfort with Pap tests. Both Bernstein and Dunn agreed, in the meantime, that it is important for healthcare providers to make these tests and exams more comfortable.

"The diversity of comfort with and preferences for the Pap that we are observing across people on the FTM spectrum suggests that providing patients with as many options as possible to customize the Pap to

fit their personal needs may be an effective strategy, including options related to how the Pap is physically performed as well as interactions between the patient and provider," said Bernstein. "Avoiding assumptions when working with this diverse population is of paramount importance. We need to be mindful of creating health settings that are welcoming and inclusive of all gender identities. Work to develop interventions to address patient and provider barriers to accessing and providing this important preventive care, respectively, is necessary and ongoing."

Dunn echoed those sentiments. "It's important for providers to respect identities that come to them seeking care," Dunn said. "Respecting pronouns, names and gender identities is pivotal to providing compassionate healthcare. Additionally, providers should have open communication with those seeking care about what language they would prefer to use in terms of identity, their body and relationships."

The research involved a retrospective electronic medical record review of Pap test results from tests performed on 233 FTM and 3,625 female patients at an urban community health center between 2006 and 2012.

Bernstein said Fenway is also developing a brochure on HPV and cervical cancer screening for people on the FTM spectrum and are asking for feedback on this brochure from the FTM community. They are also developing provider trainings using the brochure as an educational tool.

For more information on Fenway Health, visit www.fenwayhealth.org.

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Salem, Mass. passes transgender inclusive non-discrimination ordinance

SALEM, Mass. – The Massachusetts Transgender Equal Rights Coalition (MATERC) is pleased to report the passage of a transgender inclusive non-discrimination ordinance in Salem, Massachusetts. The ordinance passed the Salem City Council unanimously on Thursday evening.

“Local ordinances like these are a fantastic achievement for local advocates, and push the state of transgender rights forward across the Commonwealth,” said Mason Dunn, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC) and a member of MATERC. “The Salem City Council and the entire community should be immensely proud of this ordinance.”

Among the most vocal champions for this ordinance were Salem Mayor Kimberly Driscoll and Salem LGBT Liaison in the Mayor’s Office Kristian Hoysradt. Together, Driscoll and Hoysradt have been working with members of the Salem No Place for Hate Committee to make the city more inclusive of LGBT identities, through local laws, policies, and services.

“This ordinance is particularly important because it protects transgender people in places of public accommodation,” said Kara Coredini, Executive Director of MassEquality and a member of MATERC. “Although the state nondiscrimination laws do not yet provide protections from discrimination for transgender people in public places, local or-



MTPC Marchers at a former Boston Pride parade. Ordinances like those in Boston, Cambridge, Amherst, Northampton and now Salem fill that gap and provide these essential protections.”

“We hope to see ordinances like these continue to appear in towns and cities across Massachusetts,” continued Dunn of MTPC.

This Monday, March 3rd, there will be an ordinance signing ceremony at 5:30 p.m. in Mayor Driscoll’s office located at 93 Washington Street in Salem.

The Massachusetts Equal Rights Coalition (MATERC) succeeded on November 16, 2011, in securing passage of An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights thanks to lead sponsors Representatives Carl Sciortino and Byron Rushing, and Senators Ben Downing and Sonia Chang-Diaz. MATERC will continue to work towards passage of non-discrimination protections in public accommodations.

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Pride Events 2014

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Northampton Pride , May 3 http://tiny.cc/ppd7bx	Pride Toronto , June 20-29 http://tiny.cc/torontopride
Boston Pride , June 6-16 www.bostpride.org	Pride Vermont , TBA (September 14) www.pridevt.wordpress.com
Capital Pride , June 6 http://www.capitalpride.org/	Pride NYC , June 27-29 http://www.nycpride.org/
LA Pride , June 6-8 http://www.lapride.org/	San Francisco LGBT Pride , June 28-29 http://www.sfpride.org/
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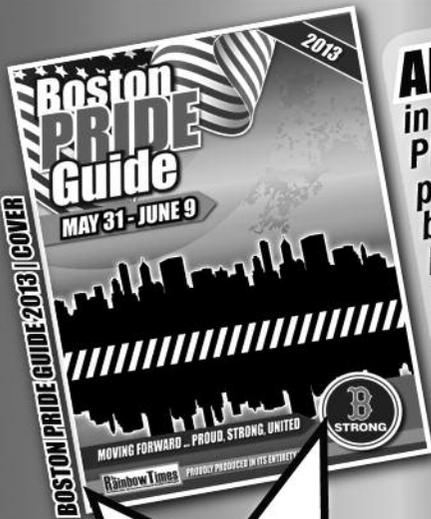
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CeCe Interview from page 2

between my friends and some people. I didn't know if it was an argument or anything at the time. I'd just seen them talking, and then as I got closer to the scene, I saw this guy being really rude and making really hurtful, derogatory statements, saying things like we're "chicks with d#@ks" and "you n#@@%rs need to go back to Africa." It was just a lot for me. That was the first time that I ever dealt with racism like that.

It was crazy how things happened after that. Eventually, everyone was arguing and I was just sitting there trying to figure it out, but a part of me knew that this whole situation was petty. These people were clearly drunk. As I was getting ready to walk off, this woman came out and yelled "I'll take all you bitches on," and she threw her drink at me and smashed her cup in my face. That's how my face got lacerated, and that's pretty much what initiated the whole big brawl. It was sad that things happened the way they did. Even when I reflect on that whole incident it just all could've been so preventable. After the initial melee was over, and I was bloody and disoriented, just trying to figure things out, they started to pursue me again. I kept telling them that I didn't want to fight no more and to please just leave me alone, but this same guy literally kept pursuing me. Other people were yelling at me to turn around, and then I did and here he came just angry and full of hate and anger and bitterness and full of drugs and alcohol. He went from walking, to almost jogging, to sprinting. I just felt like he was gonna really hurt me to the point that he was gonna try to kill me. So, I felt like at that point, I needed to defend myself, and my intentions weren't to stab him; my intentions were to walk away. I was trying to be the bigger person in the situation and let it go.

Eventually, he caught up to me and I was walking with my back away from him, making sure that he wasn't gonna try anything slick. Then, he was in reach, and so I pulled the scissors out and told him "I don't wanna fight." He looked down at them like he didn't even care. It was like he was possessed, so I remember saying just one last time, "I don't wanna fight" and he reached out, grabbed my hair, and was trying to pull me, like, yank me down. My reflexes kicked in. It was my initial reaction. I didn't even know I had stabbed him; it was just a reaction of having to defend myself. Right after I stabbed him, he was like "bitch you stabbed me" and yelling "this bitch stabbed me." So, I was like, I need to hurry up and leave because he's crazy and he's gonna do something really bad—like go get a gun or something. So I ran and waited in the store parking lot.

What's sad is the police department is literally across the street from where the thing happened. This had all been going on for a good 15 to 20 minutes and none of the bystanders chose to call the police, not up until the point where he was stabbed. Why did it have to get to that point for anyone to call the police? The area we were in was a majority white, and has a history of being racist and very discriminatory and very bigoted, so it's not surprising, but it's sad.

So after I was standing in the parking lot for a while, the police came and I was like "Finally!" But, the first thing they did was get out of the car and arrest me! When I asked for what and they said, "Someone called in saying that someone was stabbed," and I was like, "Yeah, clearly me!" My face was covered in blood. My clothes were covered in my blood! They were making it seem like I was the initial aggressor, and that was not at all the case. It was the exact opposite, but they instantly criminalized me!



PHOTO: BILLY NAVARRO JR.
CeCe McDonald

I sat in the back of the police car still bleeding for 20 minutes before they decided to take me to the damn ambulance to take me to the hospital—and they still did a bad job helping me! Later on, I found out that after they sewed up my face there was no room for the saliva to go, so it wouldn't go through my mouth and there was no way for it to come out. So, I was in extreme terrible, terrible pain and it really affected me because I couldn't eat and couldn't sleep.

Three days later is when I found out that they were charging me with murder and I had a full blown panic attack to the point that I blacked out. It was really freaking scary. I called everybody I knew; that's how people got involved. A close friend of mine [name withheld] who was a caseworker connected me with someone who works for the Trans Youth Support Network. They pretty much were the keystones of this whole movement that got built up. It was a really, really troubling time for me and I had my ups and downs, so low that at one point I was on the brink of suicide. So, to have such loving and caring support from family and friends who you just encompassed me with, so much encouragement was a blessing, and it meant a lot.

Eventually, when it came time for the trial process, they added another murder charge. So, I was looking at two murder charges for one person, and because they charged me with a second charge I was looking at 80 years! Honestly, that made [me] want to just give up, but I knew that I wanted to fight this for as long as I could, especially after knowing and educating myself about the prison industrial complex and how the system targets certain groups of marginalized people. I was inspired by that knowledge and decided that I wanted to be the person who fought this system, and to let them know that I wasn't scared, and that I was gonna do whatever I need to make sure my voice was heard.

The first plea deal they gave me was eight years, but I was not trying to settle for any years. I felt like this jury of my peers wasn't a jury of my peers at all, and it was really easy for these white people to find me guilty because I had already been criminalized from the beginning. But, I just stayed as strong as I could, and eventually they offered a second plea deal for 41 months, which I accepted, and when the day of sentencing came his family showed up. They were trying to make it seem like I was this evil person who took away this great and caring guy, and I felt like, yeah, he was a

To read the rest of this story visit:
<http://wp.me/p22M41-215>

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By: Romeo San Vicente*/Special to TRT

DEEP INSIDE HOLLYWOOD

McConaughey adrift on the *Sea of Trees*

We no longer remember *Failure to Launch* or *Ghosts of Girlfriends Past*. We happily put them out of our head when Matthew McConaughey took the wheel of his terrible career and pulled an abrupt and awesome u-turn into seriously excellent work, the kind he promised everyone back in *Dazed and Confused*. Whether it's on TV in HBO's wickedly great *True Detective* or in good movie after good movie like *Mud*, *Killer Joe* or his now-Oscar-nominated turn in *Dallas Buyer's Club*, the man is on fire in the best possible way. So it's almost run-of-the-mill good news to learn that he's taken a role in the latest Gus Van Sant drama, *Sea of Trees* opposite Ken Watanabe. From a Chris Sparling (*Buried*) script that made the 2013 Black List, Van Sant will tell the story of an American man who goes to the notorious "Suicide Forest" located in the foothills of Japan's Mount Fuji. There he meets Watanabe, a Japanese man who's having second thoughts about his own planned demise and the two begin a journey out of the forest and back to the land of the living. Maybe when he finds his way out he'll give Kate Hudson some career rehab pointers.



Emma Watson

Stockholm, Pennsylvania, population Cynthia Nixon and Saoirse Ronan

Lest we forget that indie cinema is still the main destination for gut-wrenching, heart-breaking stories, here comes *Stockholm, Pennsylvania*. The debut directorial feature from Nikole Beckwith – it's adapted from the stage play – was developed through

the Sundance Screenwriting Lab and sounds like it's going to require a box of Kleenex to deal with. A kidnapping drama – hence that title – it tells the story of a developmentally stunted young woman (Saoirse Ronan) held for 20 years by her captor (Jason Isaacs), then reunited with her birth mother (Cynthia Nixon) as an adult. Her mother must struggle to nurture the daughter she's never known, earn her trust and affection and fight to restore her to the world of functioning human beings. In other words, here comes Cynthia Nixon swinging for the bleachers, and if anyone can get us to enter this sorrowful world it's her. She always was the coolest member of the *Sex and the City* gang. Shooting this year, expect accolades for her come 2015.

Emma Watson endures *Regression*

Alejandro Amenabar, the gay, Academy Award-winning, Chilean-Spanish filmmaker, isn't afraid to go there. He put Nicole Kidman through supernatural hell with *The Others* and directed Javier Bardem in the euthanasia-themed drama *The Sea Inside*. Now it's Emma Watson's turn, as she takes a role in the director's new film, *Regression*, a thriller with a disturbing (and, until now, under wraps) plot. So far what we know is that the script is from Amenabar himself and co-stars Ethan Hawke as a convicted sex offender with no memory of his crimes, which include raping his own daughter. No news on whether or not Watson plays the daughter or the therapist who engineers the title's therapeutic process that helps Hawke's char-

acter retrieve the evidence of his horrible actions. Shooting this year, look for it to make your local multiplex the feel-bad place of 2015.

College Republicans court the gay vote

Hot new gay director John Krokidas, fresh off his 2013 indie hit about the Beat Generation, *Kill Your Darlings*, has plans to reunite his stars for the next project on his plate. Krokidas is looking for *Kill* cast members Daniel Radcliffe and Dane DeHaan to reteam for *College Republicans*. From a Black List script by Wes Jones, the film is a period piece, set in 1973, concerning much younger versions of right-wing political operatives Lee Atwater and Karl Rove on a very strange political road trip. The light-hearted satire of the birth of contemporary dirty tricks-style campaigning will tell the story of Rove cutting his teeth on a hardball campaign for National College Republican Chairman under the guidance of campaign manager Atwater. In other words, it doesn't sound like a warm, fuzzy Tea Party-approved biopic. Good.

Alexis Bledel wants to marry Katherine Heigl. Won't you help?

OK, not in real life. But the producers of *Jenny's Wedding* are still hoping you'll donate to their Indiegogo fund to finish production on the romantic comedy-drama about two lesbians facing uncertain ...

See Hollywood on Page 9

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BUTCH: Not like the other girls, in Easthampton

Easthampton, MA—US premiere of SD Holman's show, BUTCH: Not like the other girls, will be exhibited at the Mill Arts Project MAP (Eastworks 116 Pleasant Street suite 137, Easthampton, MA) from April 4 - May 4, 2014, with an opening party on April 4th 7-9 p.m.

BUTCH is a photographic exploration of the liminal spaces occupied by female masculinity in contemporary communities. Curated by local resident of the valley over 20 years, Amiee Joy Ross, the exhibit is free and open to the public.

Holman delineates BUTCH as "an inclusive site of resistance to limitations on the way women, gender, and sexuality are still defined." The images honor the beauty, power and diversity of women who transcend the gender binary, with subjects reflecting the many sizes, shapes, ethnicities, and styles of Butch. The transversal dialectic of female masculinity is celebrated here — unapologetic and undiluted.

SD Holman is a photo-based artist who has exhibited internationally at galleries including the Advocate Gallery (Los Angeles), the Soady-Campbell Gallery (New York), the San Francisco Public Library, The Helen Pitt International Gallery, Charles H. Scott, Exposure, and Fotobase Galleries (Vancouver). Holman defines as a non-commercial, photo-based artist, a participant observer employing subjective conceptual documen-

tary practice. Holman's approach to photography is conflicted and perverse, bringing gesture, hazard, and a painterly sensibility into this most technical of media. Hailed by Guy Warrington as "the best portrait photographer in Vancouver," Holman is also Artistic Director of The Queer Arts Festival, a professional three-week, transdisciplinary arts festival in Vancouver, BC.

"This show displays to me such a large range of this word, this expression, Butch. I truly believe the meaning crosses dialogue into all sorts of people's gender identities," says debut curator Amiee Joy Ross.

Known in the Pioneer Valley as The Bearded Lady, Ross has been in the area for over twenty years and has been a professional piercer in Northampton and Provincetown for sixteen years at Piercings by the Bearded Lady. Ross has sat for numerous artists, photographers, videographers and art classes including local painter Betsy Stone, Leonard Nimoy, and Del LaGrace Volcano.

Declared a Gender Terrorist by Del LaGrace Volcano, Ross says, "My personal identification with the word butch as part of my gender expression, and my participation in this work, are just a small part of why I am bringing SD Holman's Butch Project to the Valley."

The MAP gallery is located on the first

To read the rest of this interview visit:
<http://tiny.cc/ujj6bx>

see that, so isn't it worth five bucks? Sure it is. Do it for the sake of lesbian wedding movies now and forevermore.

**Romeo San Vicente knows all about dirty campaigns. Ask that still-angry homecoming king he used to know. He can be reached care of this publication or at www.DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.*

Hollywood from page 8

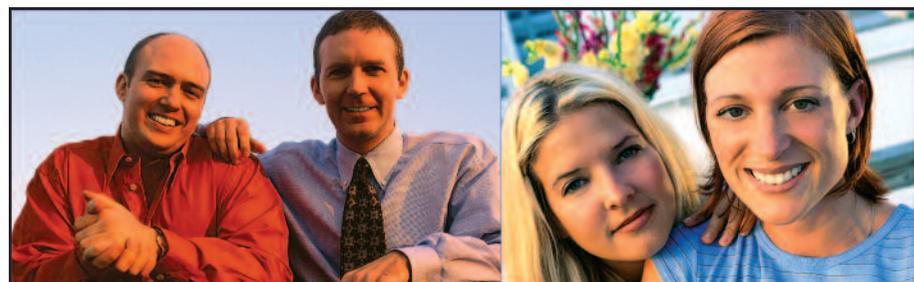
marriage plans. From director Mary Agnes Donoghue (screenwriter of *Beaches* and *White Oleander*), the film stars Katherine Heigl as Jenny, a lesbian who wants to marry her girlfriend (Alexis Bledel). Except Jenny never got around to telling her parents (Tom Wilkinson, Lindo Emond) that she's gay. Principal photography is finished but the production is looking to raise about 150,000 more dollars to complete the film. And that's where Indiego goes in. As of this writing, they've managed to come up with a little more than \$30K. So it boils down to this: You may never want to see Katherine Heigl do anything else in this life except make out with Rory Gilmore, but you know you do want to



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DANU

Wednesday, March 12, 7:30 p.m., Bowker Auditorium

Hailed as a "spirit-raising concoction" by The Irish Times, this five-member ensemble is among the most charismatic traditional Irish groups working today. Built around virtuoso players and the rich vocals of Muireann Nic Amhlaioibh, their concerts are at once authentic, clever, and fun.

SEASON SPONSORS: Baystate Health and Health New England/Event Sponsors: The Recorder, WRSI 93.9FM, The Harp Pub in Amherst

PAT METHENY UNITY GROUP

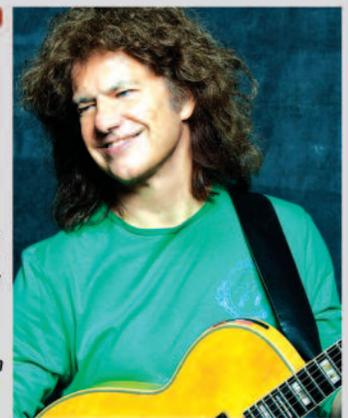
WITH CHRIS POTTER, ANTONIO SANCHEZ, BEN WILLIAMS & GIULIO CARMASSI

Wednesday, March 26, 7:30 p.m., FAC Concert Hall

Winner of 19 Grammy Awards, jazz icon Pat Metheny is one of the most influential and creative guitarists on the planet. Whether purely acoustic or searingly electric, powerfully intense or deeply contemplative — that unmistakable Metheny sensibility is always at work.

Pre-Concert talk at 6:30 p.m. at the University Club.

SEASON SPONSORS: Baystate Health and Health New England/Event Sponsors: The Daily Hampshire Gazette, NEPR 88.5FM



CHRISTOPHER O'RILEY AND MATT HAIMOVITZ: SHUFFLE.PLAY.LISTEN

Mon., March 31, 7:30 p.m., FAC Concert Hall, Chamber Seating

Pianist O'Riley and cellist Haimovitz forge a fabulous mash-up that unleashes the lyrical and virtuosic properties of their instruments. In true iPod form, they will shuffle their musical selections from works by Piazzolla and Stravinsky to covers by Arcade Fire and Radio-

head. The Billings Gazette called the performance "sublime interpretations of classical works...followed by jaw-dropping new works massaged into magic."

Pre-Concert talk at 6:30 p.m. at the University Club.

SEASON SPONSORS: Baystate Health and Health New England/Event Sponsors: Applewood Retirement Community, NEPR 88.5FM, UMass Hotel and Conference Center, Preview Magazine.

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¡Ayudemos a bajar el alto índice de crímenes al conocernos!

Por: Wilfred W. Labiosa*/Columnista de TRT

LATIN VISION



PHOTO: ERIC HESS

En las pasadas semanas en el área de Boston se han registrado un alto número de crímenes – más de los que han sucedido en los pasados años, durante el mismo periodo de tiempo. En la nación, también se han registrado un sinnúmero de crímenes a personas en comunidades en las que antes no se veían crímenes. ¿Qué está pasando en nuestro estado y en nuestra nación? Cada vez que leo los periódicos de este estado y otros veo un alto índice de crímenes. La mayoría de estos crímenes basados en robo de dinero o por drogas y/o asaltos con armas de fuego por las mismas razones o por hostigamiento sexual. ¿Qué está sucediendo? En los periódicos se dice que es por la baja en la economía que estamos pasando por esto. Otros dicen que es por el alto índice de drogas en nuestras comunidades. Yo digo que son factores múltiples que no se deben de categorizar solamente en el problema de las drogas o en factores económicos que estamos enfrentando en estos momentos. Por supuesto que estos son problemas que pueden conllevar a la criminalidad pero no tod@s l@s dro-

gadictos son criminales que asaltan a personas en las calles o bancos. El@s pueden ser personas con problemas de salud mental que usan drogas para “controlar” sus problemas. El problema de drogadicción es una enfermedad que conlleva tratamiento.

En mi opinión, otros factores que están llevando a esta criminalidad lo es la falta de conocimiento de nuestra comunidad. ¡Me explico! Ya no hay un sentimiento de comunidad – ¿tú conoces a tu vecino? ¿Conoces a la persona que es dueño de la bodega? ¿Conoces a la persona que recoge la basura? ¿Conoces a la persona que camina al frente de tu casa todos los días? Mi suposición es que lo más probable es que NO les conoces. No es la respuesta a todas estas preguntas. Yo digo que nuestra sociedad ha perdido el sentimiento de comunidad y de proteger al prójimo. Al uno no conocer o hablar con el/la vecin@, al uno no saber lo que le está pasando a esa persona que vemos todos los días, estas personas se aíslan y comienzan a tener sentimientos tales como rencor y malicia. Quizás sea una idea muy básica pero piensen que, si nos conocemos más los unos a los otros, como el mundo pudiera cambiar. Si sabemos que el vecino esta deprimido por perder su trabajo y que está a punto de perder su casa, le daríamos la mano. ¿Sí? Yo digo que si, quizás no con dinero pero ofreciéndole comida, ayudándolo a reconocer el problema

y a buscar ayuda. Si reconocemos que la persona al frente tiene un problema de drogadicción o alcoholismo, le buscaremos ayuda, ¿Sí? Yo digo que sí, que lo llevaríamos al hospital o a un programa que le pueda rendir la ayuda. Por supuesto que la persona tiene que aceptar de nuestra ayuda pero si le conocemos, la persona estará más propensa a aceptar esta ayuda.

A las personas que están confrontando una crisis o etapa difícil le recuerdo lo que Albert Einstein dijo, “La vida es muy peligrosa. No por las personas que hacen el mal, sino por las que se sientan a ver lo que pasa.” El mismo dijo que a menudo, la gente se queja de la crisis que está ocurriendo en sus vidas, de lo mal que van las cosas, pero realmente no hacen nada por cambiar su situación y escogen la manera más fácil para hacerlo. Si esta persona no intenta cambiar la situación, nadie lo puede hacer por ell@s, pero si pueden darle ideas y la ayuda para que tomen las riendas y comiencen a buscar el cambio, eso sería perfecto. Siempre hay que poner nuestro esfuerzo para llegar a algo y “siempre” no es la vía más fácil.

Tod@s estamos aquí, así que ¿por qué no podemos vivir más como una comunidad en la que sus miembros se ayudan el uno al otro para que podamos vivir en armonía y paz? Siempre van a haber crímenes, aunque no tiene que haber tantos crímenes. El mundo está lleno de personas que tienen una personalidad que los llevan a la criminalidad pero

hay much@s otr@s que lo hacen por necesidad – que no nacen sino que se sienten que es la única manera de sobrevivir y de poder resolver el problema, no piensan en las repercusiones de sus acciones y en el futuro sólo en el pasado y presente. En esta nación, much@s venimos aquí por las oportunidades y otr@s que nacieron aquí la aman por la democracia y las posibilidades que existen en ella. Así que vamos a recordarnos de esto y a movilizarnos para hacer algo mejor. Si cada un@ de nosotr@s pone de su parte, el mundo sería un mejor lugar. Como Walt Disney dijo, “En este lugar perdemos demasiado tiempo mirando hacia atrás. Camina hacia el futuro, abriendo nuevas puertas y tratando cosas nuevas. La curiosidad nos puede conducir por nuevos caminos”.

Espero que tod@s se comiencen a conocer uno al otro y que nuestra sociedad cambie – lo notamos durante tragedias, ¿porqué no notarlo durante todo el año? Vamos a tener valor y a conocer a otros, aunque sea a un@ de nuestr@s vecinos – ¡hagan este ejercicio! Si cada mes conocemos a un@ persona, quizás hagamos la diferencia y ayudaríamos a fortalecer nuestra comunidad y sociedad. Como San Patricio, vamos a tener fe, tengamos un espíritu de esperanza y devoción espiritual (para que uno se sienta mas cómod@). Les deseo una primavera llena de colores y esperanza. ¡Feliz Día de San Patricio y Feliz Primavera (vamos a tener fe que llegue pronto)!

Pregúntale a Lambda Legal – Personas LGBT de la tercera edad y sus derechos

Por: Karen Loewy/Abogada y Estratega Principal del Programa de Personas de la Tercera Edad de Lambda Legal



P: Mi pareja y yo hemos estado juntos por más de 30 años, y a medida que avanzamos en edad, nos preguntamos: ¿seremos capaces de obtener los beneficios de cada uno de Seguro Social si uno de nosotros sobrevive el otro?

R: Con el envejecimiento de nuestra comunidad, preocupaciones adicionales pueden surgir con respecto a la discriminación porque somos gay, lesbiana, bisexual o transgénero. Históricamente, las personas de la tercera edad LGBT han sido especialmente vulnerables a la hora de ejercer sus derechos a beneficios federales como el Seguro Social, que en parte depende de que el gobierno los reconozca como esposos/as.

La desaparición de DOMA es un punto de cambio en la capacidad de las parejas del mismo sexo que han entrado en un matrimonio civil para acceder a beneficios federales del Seguro Social y de la supervivencia. Aunque la Administración del Seguro Social (SSA, por sus siglas en inglés) todavía está investigando cuanto abarcan las protecciones disponibles a los reclamantes con cónyuges del mismo sexo, algunas protecciones son claras. Por ejemplo, la SSA ya está procesando las solicitudes de beneficios por jubilación, beneficio especial de pago global por fallecimiento, y los beneficios de sobrevivientes para las parejas que estaban casadas válidamente y que viven en un estado que respeta su matrimonio.

La SSA continúa trabajando con el Departamento de Justicia para determinar cómo se van a procesar las solicitudes de los demandantes casados que viven en un estado que no

respeta su matrimonio o por los demandantes que forman parte de una unión civil o pareja doméstica registrada, entre otras cuestiones. Mientras tanto, la SSA le recomienda a cualquiera persona que piense cumplir con los requisitos de elegibilidad para beneficios conyugales a seguir adelante y solicitar, independientemente de donde vivan. No hay multa en solicitar, incluso si la SSA determina más tarde que uno no es elegible, además la fecha de cuando sometió su solicitud determina cuándo comenzarán los beneficios potenciales si se les concede. La SSA ha creado una sección especial en su página de internet para contestar a las preguntas acerca de DOMA que puedes encontrar aquí (<http://ssa.gov/same-sexouples/>).

Para los cónyuges transgéneros, la SSA tiene una política desafortunada de remitir todos los reclamos por beneficios conyugales a sus oficinas regionales para revisión. Esta política a menudo se traduce en retrasos y errores innecesarios durante el tiempo que la oficina del consejo evalúa la validez del matrimonio. El Proyecto de Derechos Transgéneros de Lambda Legal presentó una demanda en nombre de Robina Asti, una mujer transgénera de 92 años de edad que fue negada los beneficios de sobreviviente por la SSA después de la muerte de su marido. La agencia negó sus beneficios después de determinar que ella era "legalmente masculino" en el momento que se casó, a pesar de sus tres décadas de vivir como una mujer y todos los documentos legales que demostraban lo contrario. Ve un vídeo sobre Robina y su lamentable historia aquí: <http://tiny.cc/94d6bx>

Si tienes alguna pregunta o sientes que has sido discriminado por tu identidad de género, orientación sexual, o estatus de VIH comunícate con nuestra Línea de Ayuda al 1-866-542-8336, o visita nuestra página web: www.lambdalegal.org/ayuda.

To Cook Is to Love: A Foodie's Journal — A Celebration of Spring with “Chocolate”

By: John Verlinden*/Special to TRT

¡MUCHO GUSTO!



PHOTO: RACHEL POWER

What a winter! There have been piles of snow and record cold. After each artic mass we got a Canadian cold front, which was followed by an Alberta Clipper, and then by a Nor'easter. We've gone through bags of salt searching for solid pavement. Even my snow shovel looks haggard and worn out, and I'm sure its back is tired too.

Well, even though we aren't quite done yet, I'm optimistic. We'll probably have a few more sloppy storms, but spring, at least officially, begins this month. I think we deserve a treat, don't you? What better way to celebrate our long anticipated escape from the grey and cold than with chocolate.

You'll love this easy, never fail recipe from my new book, *To Cook is To Love*. Celebrate spring with every bite of deep, dark, fudgy yumminess.

Cake de Chocolate (Chocolate Mocha Fudge Cake)
Serves: 12

Ingredients:

- 1 dark chocolate cake mix
- 1 package instant chocolate pudding mix
- 1 cup nonfat yogurt
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 cup of water
- 2 tablespoons orange zest

2 tablespoons espresso coffee powder
1 1/2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
confectioners' sugar

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Prepare a bundt cake pan by treating it with nonstick cooking spray for baking.
3. In a large bowl, use an electric mixer to combine all ingredients except the chocolate chips and mix until smooth.
4. Add the chocolate chips. Stir to combine and distribute chips.
5. Pour the batter into the treated bundt pan.
6. Bake for 45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
7. When cool, invert cake onto serving plate.

8. Pour a little confectioners' sugar in a sifter and sprinkle over the top.
To share your favorite chocolate recipe, ask a question or suggest a topic for a future article, contact me at john@muchogusto.com or visit www.muchogusto.com and join our Latin food forum.

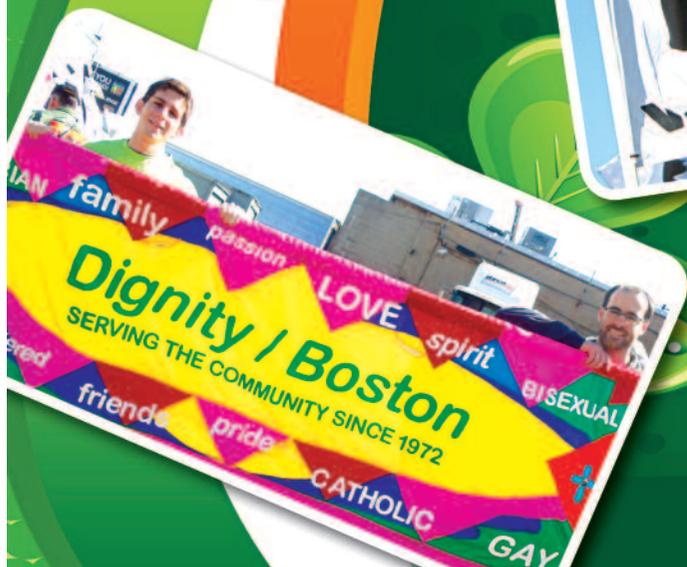
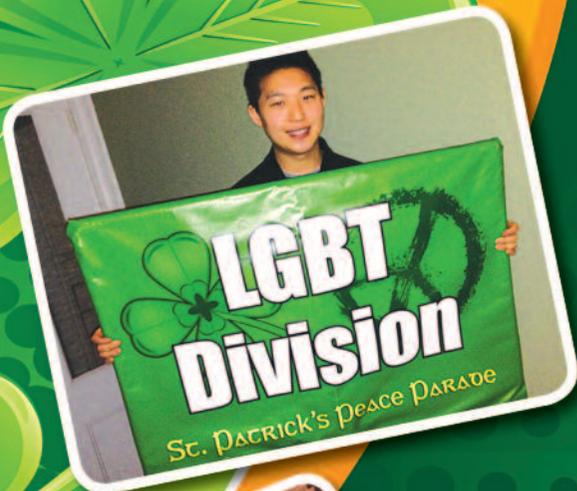
Until next time—¡Mucho Gusto!, ¡Muchas Gracias! y ¡Buen Provecho!

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Assembly

Date: March 16, 2014 (Sunday)

Assemble Time: 1:00 p.m.

Parade Start: 2:00 p.m.

Start Location: D Street and West Broadway, South Boston

Contact (for RSVP or info.)

Rev. Lara Hoke

(minister of the UU Congregation in Andover, Sec. of the local Veterans For Peace chapter),

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Web: StPatricksPeaceParade.com

Religious extremists, persecution & LGBT rights: What would Jesus do?

By: **Deja Nicole Greenlaw***/TRT Columnist

TRANS NEWS



Ted Cruz is currently championing a bill that will allow the state of Texas to regulate marriage to not include same gender marriage.

Groups in California are pushing a referendum to stop AB1266, the transgender student rights bill, which guarantees the student's right to attend school as to be consistent with their gender identity. Mathew Staver (<http://tiny.cc/rmosbx>), founder of the conservative law group Liberty

Counsel, is quoted saying "I believe the greatest threat to religious liberty is the clash between religious liberty and LGBT rights." Rick Santorum (<http://tiny.cc/rmosbx>) warns that there is a clash between "man's laws and God's laws." These are some of the beliefs that politicians and religious leaders have on their agenda today. Many folks who back these beliefs say that there is a war on religion and religious liberties.

I am a member of the LGBT community. I follow the news and I can safely say that there is no war on religion and religious liberties. I believe that this "war" concept was dreamed up by someone within the religious

extremist element designed to appeal to the emotions of the American people. After all, a war on religion is akin to a war on God, and how can anyone in their right mind wage a war on God? Like many causes, these leaders use emotion rather than logic to appeal to the mainstream.

entries written by the Romans, the Corinthians, Leviticus, and others, but I have yet to see one entry written by God. I've also never seen an entry written by a woman. They've all been written by men.

So what exactly is this war on religion, and why are some religious folks so up in

I believe that religion is designed to control the masses ... Personally, I wish that these religious extremists would back off from the controls a bit and not seek to persecute people.

From what I gather, what these "war" people really want is for everyone to obey the laws of their religion. Many of them think that these laws are God's laws and there really is no other way to look at them, so we all need to respect and follow them. After all, we are not above God's laws, are we?

Yes, they can point to laws in the Bible and other religious documents, but they cannot prove that these are actually God's laws. The simple fact is that God did not write any of these laws, not a one. These laws were written by men and were made to look like God's laws. If I'm wrong about this please correct me, but I have perused the Bible and other religious documents and I have seen

arms about it? What these religious folks really want is to continue to have their right to discriminate against LGBT folks. For one, they don't want to let any same gender couples have the right to marry, a ludicrous line of thought. Can you imagine singling out a group of people and telling them that they cannot marry? It's utterly amazing to me that some people think this type of discriminatory thought is correct.

Once in a while, we might hear one of these people say that the same gender couple's right to marry should be put to a vote. Again, this is ludicrous. You simply cannot vote on the rights of the American people. Furthermore, how would these people feel

if a vote was held to determine whether or not they can marry? I'm sure they would raise holy Hell if that ever happened. What I would like these people to do is put themselves in LGBT people's shoes, just for a minute. I would also like to remind them that this is the United States of America.

There is no war on religion. It's all just hype dreamed up to sway people through their emotions. What the extremist religious people really want is plain and simple: they want the right to discriminate against their fellow Americans. This is a travesty, and they should be ashamed of themselves for even thinking it, let alone pushing such ludicrous beliefs and demanding them to be laws. These are not true American people with true American beliefs. These are not true Americans. These are religious extremists.

I believe that religion is designed to control the masses and to give the masses guidance in times of trouble. Personally, I wish that these religious extremists would back off from the controls a bit and not seek to persecute people. Instead, they could put their energies into guiding people in times of trouble. I think that would be the right thing to do. After all, what would Jesus do?

**Deja Nicole Greenlaw is a local transwoman who has three grown children and works at 3M. She can be contacted at dejavudeja@sbcglobal.net.*

Ask a Transwoman: A Trans Woman reviewing Jill Soloway's "Transparent"

By: **Lorelei Erisis***/TRT Columnist



I've just finished watching the new Amazon Originals pilot "Transparent" for the second time. The first time I watched, I was impressed enough to immediately write a rather lengthy review. I now feel I have to scrap that in its entirety, though not because I've come to different conclusions. I thought it was quite good the first time and recommended that people give it a chance. I still feel much the same.

If you aren't familiar with the setup, "Transparent" is a new sitcom pilot created by Jill Soloway, who was a writer and producer for the show "Six Feet Under." It stars Jeffrey Tambor, who folks will be familiar with from the show "Arrested Development." Tambor plays the father of a pretty typical Angeleno family. A son, two daughters, an ex-wife played by Judith Light and many of the characters who orbit this core family all make appearances.

Also, Tambor's character is a transgender woman in the early stages of transition. I have deliberately phrased this as "also" because although that is the central conceit of the show, at least in the pilot it comes secondary to the relationships between these characters. As a transgender woman myself, and an actor, I found this to be absolutely wonderful.

Normally, I find it upsetting when cisgender (not trans) actors are cast in trans roles. I am, however, prepared to give "Transparent" a pass on this for several reasons. First, I felt that due to the early transition time period of Tambor's character, his casting was entirely appropriate. Physically he fits. Also,

I think Jeffrey Tambor is a fine actor and his performance in this was honest, sensitive and rang very true to me.

Additionally, there was at least one scene of a support group that appeared to have genuinely trans actors. One was the trans

will be cast with trans actors."

The thing I found truly exciting and impressive was the amazing economy of the show. Nothing is wasted. Every shot, every line of dialogue is filled with such a wealth of detail. There is so much conveyed about

We hope to allow Jeffrey's cis-ness to become a prism through which, in series, we can examine the issues for older transwomen about passing/not passing, medical vs. social transition, and how some people prefer the label 'crossdresser.'

male comedian Ian Harvie, who I recognized in a brief shot.

Most importantly, to me as a trans woman and an actor, when I asked creator Jill Soloway (who it turns out I have quite a few connections to from my time at Second City in Los Angeles) what she intends to do about the issue of trans inclusion in the cast she told me this: "We're absolutely aware of the politics of casting a cisgender actor in the lead role as Maura. We hope to allow Jeffrey's cis-ness to become a prism through which, in series, we can examine the issues for older transwomen about passing/not passing, medical vs. social transition, and how some people prefer the label 'crossdresser.' Other than the role of Maura, in series it's our plan to have multiple arcs for trans characters and of course, those roles

who these people are and how these characters relate to each other and exist in the world. I feel as if I know these people, and I want to know more about them.

In 30 short minutes, there is enough happening to fill an entire feature film. Even supporting characters are treated with an eye for emotional detail. On second viewing, one character who has not a word of dialogue gives a strong enough performance that it literally brought tears to my eyes, in a scene that had nothing directly to do with being trans no less!

Right from the opening credits, which have a sort of throwback, 70s sitcom style to them, I was hooked. The show wastes absolutely zero time getting right into things. If nudity or sexuality bothers you, you should just skip this, because by the very

second scene we see a couple in bed—naked. You know, like real people are when they sleep together, especially in a warm city like L.A. Again, in a shockingly brief amount of time, this show explores several different models of relationships and adult sexuality. This includes, simply as a matter of course, a queer relationship, which made this queer writer enormously happy.

I very rarely watch anything twice, certainly not television shows. My own ADD generation attention span rarely allows it. However, this show was so rich in detail and wonderful performances, that if anything, I was even more drawn in the second time around. This is not just a good show about trans people and our experience in the world.

It's everything that television, good television, can be. By the time you folks at home read this, Amazon will likely have made its decision as to whether or not to produce more episodes of "Transparent." So far though, viewer reactions and media coverage have been overwhelmingly positive, so the prognosis is good that we'll get to see more of this show. I certainly hope so. I think lots of people would really like to see what happens next.

Either way, it's a very positive step for media portrayals of trans people. Perhaps the most telling reaction for me was from a trans friend on my Facebook page who commented that "Transparent" wasn't her cup of tea. And you know? That's pretty darned positive in itself! A show with a trans character that isn't offensive or demeaning or controversial, but simply not someone's cup of tea? Now *that's* progress! Slainte!

**Lorelei Erisis is an actor, activist, adventurer and pageant queen. Send your questions about trans issues, gender and sexuality to her at loreleiersis@gmail.com.*

Lambert on 'Same Love,' Grammy night & Madonna drying her tears

By: Chris Azzopardi*/Special to TRT

"I'm not crying on Sundays," Mary Lambert assures herself on the song that got her to the Grammys. But this Sunday was different. This Sunday was better.

Singing the heart-lifting chorus to Macklemore's "Same Love," which was nominated for Song of the Year, Lambert made her Grammy debut on Jan. 26.

That's when she lost it. But these weren't tears of sadness or shame. These were tears of joy. Tears of being inspired and moved and all those things you feel when you share the stage with gay couples who are finally able to get married, a monumental celebration that took place at the awards show, with Queen Latifah officiating.

Emotions ran high that night, but Lambert, 24, had a new friend nearby — a new friend by the name of Madonna. And the icon didn't just sing Lambert's words, but, like something out of a fever dream, swooped in and wiped away her tears.

Lambert, who just released her own solo EP called *Welcome to the Age of My Body*, was still emotional when she spoke about that unforgettable night.

Chris Azzopardi: You must be pinching yourself. What was your Grammy experience like?

Mary Lambert: It was really emotional from start to finish. I already feel like Cinderella because I was bartending last year and didn't know how I was gonna pay rent. Now I've been nominated for a Grammy — and I took my mom, which was a dream of mine — but then to be able to do this song, and to do it on this magnitude with this beautiful choir and fucking Madonna and Queen Latifah, are you kidding me? It's just stupid, dude. If I really think about it, I lose it.

Q. You cry?

A. Yeah, like, "I don't deserve this." I'm still working on my positive self-talk. (Laughs)

Q. What was it like being part of the wedding ceremony?

A. Honestly, that was the most emotional part. Being in rehearsal and hearing Madonna sing my words and hearing the choir come in, that was emotional, but being in the dress rehearsal at the Grammys and watching the couples come in, I couldn't get through the song for almost every rehearsal. I wasn't sure how I

was gonna perform because it was so beautiful. You saw on their faces how much it meant to them, and I knew how much it would mean to the viewer. How do you process that? It's the most beautiful thing that exists in the world.

Q. What were rehearsals with Madonna like?

A. We had long rehearsals — and I wouldn't say we're close, but we got to know each other's mannerisms and how we operate. I consider her a friend. She was very kind to me, and because we had to work together, I had to be like, "Hey, this is how I sing the song." (Laughs)

Q. Is it weird telling Madonna how to sing?

A. Uh yeah! Everybody froze when I was like, "Hey, Madonna, do you think you could try singing it like this — the way I sing it?" (Laughs)

Q. Were you at all intimidated by that?

A. I was a little shaky when I first met her because her

MARY LAMBERT WELCOME TO THE AGE OF MY BODY



entourage came in and she said, "I'm Madonna." But, I think it was during dress rehearsal, she had her leather gloves on and I'm sobbing watching these people who are about to exchange their vows and she leans over — and she's wiping the tears from my face with her leather gloves and looking at me! I'm like, "What the fuck is my life?" Like, what do you do? You just let Madonna wipe your tears, that's what you do. (Laughs)

Q. Your first performance was when you were a kid, for a gaggle of Beanie Babies. What's it like performing for real people?

A. It's how it should be! I feel like I was made to be a performer and I just depend so much on the energy — like, warm, breathing bodies.

(Laughs)

Q. You struggled with your sexuality when you were a teenager. And, really, in many ways you epitomize the "it gets better" story, don't you?

A. Yeah, but I had a really amazing support system. The conflict was not external; the conflict definitely had to do with reconciling my faith and my sexuality. There was no enemy, you know?

Q. Just yourself?

A. Yeah. When I was a kid, I wanted to be in love so badly. It was more of this obsession with being in love, and so I always had a boyfriend, but I knew that I found girls much more physically appealing. Honestly, everything that I thought I was is how I thought everybody else felt. I thought that other girls would try to make out with their friends too! (Laughs) I just thought that was something that girls did — that they fantasized about boobs! I just thought that was a thing. I thought everybody preferred to be with women, but the weird thing is that my mom is gay so it's not like it wasn't OK. It just didn't occur to me that I could be that way. I questioned it a lot. Like, "I think I could see myself having sex with a woman" — and this is me at 12 years old saying these things. (Laughs) I was highly analytical.

Q. At 12 years old?

A. Yeah! (Laughs) I've always been sure of who I am. In high school, there was one bi girl who was like, "I date girls." I was like, "You can date girls and that's OK?" The real turmoil of it happened when I was 18 or 19. I was attending an Evangelical church and I

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<http://wp.me/p22M41-2ld>

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10. The Perfect Wedding

St. Patrick's from page 3

columnist weighed in on the matter. The New York Times also had a news story.

Altogether, LGBT people voiced plenty of reservations. Through social media, for example, Boston attorney Scott E. Squillace urged Facebook users to "Tell MassEquality to Reject the Backwards St. Patrick Day Parade Deal." So far, the Facebook page has 192 likes.

"Don't forget...there IS an alternative to the homophobic St. Patrick's Day Parade," wrote M. Lara Hoke, in a posting. "You can be in the parade that follows immediately afterwards, the inclusive St. Patrick's Peace Parade."

Also posting on Facebook, Boston attorney Tim Schofield wrote, "I love MassEquality and I truly appreciate the hard work by Mayor Walsh and others and I really, really hope it is successful in opening the parade to everyone, but open does not mean one group gets to march on behalf of a diverse community, even if that group can wear and say whatever it wants. The boycott has meaning because we ALL say, NO, we will not march if you continue to exclude our families and friends and neighbors. Token representation is not only offensive, [but also] it undermines and divides our community. The point of the boycott was never to get one group or another into the parade; it was and is to show that we will stand together against discrimination until we are all allowed to march."

In a subsequent post, he added, "Tokenism is not equality. One group can march IF they do it in the closet? So, our pride is the price of equality?"

Still, Randy Foster of South Boston, a gay Iraq war veteran, offered a different point of view.

"At some point we have to stop being gay activists," Foster wrote in a March 1 Boston Globe letter-to-the-editor. "I've fought my entire life to be accepted as normal, to fit in, and to belong. The Allied War Veterans Council has asked only that I not wave the gay flag as a political statement to distract from its day, just as they ask the same of anti-war and anti-abortion protesters. For Saint Patrick's Day I go by their rules, and for Gay Pride they follow ours."

But other LGBT veterans were more resolute in standing firm against invisibility and ostracism.

"If the compromise is LGBT people can walk behind the banner of MassEquality, but cannot display in any shape, way or form

what kind of equality we are about, it is a huge step backwards into the closet," said Janice Carney through e-mail correspondence. "As a transgender, disabled Vietnam Vet for peace, I invite MassEquality to do the right thing and walk in the peace parade. I invite Mayor Walsh to do the right thing and walk in the Peace parade."

Like Mayor Walsh, Carney is Irish American. She also has roots in various Boston neighborhoods, including the Colombia Point housing project, Fields Corner, Roxbury, Charlestown, and Jamaica Plain. A Vietnam War veteran of the 101st Airborne, she served more recently as past president of the New England LGBT Veterans Inc., which disbanded last year.

"I grew up in an era when gay bashing was a sport practiced most weekends," she told the mayor in email correspondence to him.

Yet another LGBT veteran offered her perspective. Writing in The Rainbow Times, Erica Kay-Webster of Barnstable said she, too, was bothered by the Allied War Veterans restrictions on signs and T-shirts.

"This is a message that being an LGBT person carries a certain condemnation and says that we are less," Kay-Webster wrote in an op-ed piece.

Reached by phone and asked what kind of LGBT identity marker would be fitting, she said, "The Rainbow flag."

"Not everybody knows who and what MassEquality is or what kind of equality it stands for," she explained, adding that in the gay community, many would recognize the advocacy group, "but not every in the straight community."

Chief executive officer of the Foundation for International Justice and Promise Place School for Homeless Youth, Kay-Webster, 63, is also a veteran of the Stonewall Rebellion, a spontaneous uprising that occurred June 28, 1969 at a New York City gay bar between police and patrons and which propelled the growth of the modern LGBT civil rights and liberation movement.

Asked also about the AWVC's restrictions on identity makers of sexual orientation, Boston Pride's Bruni said, "There should be no restrictions on what people can say on their signs or T-shirts as long as [the message] does not violate [standards of] decency and are not calling for violence or hatred."

"[Parade organizers] should lift the ban on anything gay related," Bruni explained. "If people want to have a sign that says 'I'm gay and Irish and proud,' I just don't get it. What's the problem?"

But as Walsh, Boston's first Irish American mayor in 20 years, told local media, "Signs are not permitted by anyone in the parade."

Negotiations and conversations among the mayor, parade organizers, and leadership from MassEquality are expected to continue this week.

MassEquality's Coredini has said the conversations are a step in the right direction.

"At this point, my mind is open, and I am hopeful we can get to a place where we can end the exclusion," she told the Globe. "This is huge."

For his part, Philip J. Wuschke, Jr., a parade organizer for the AWVC told The New York Times in an interview, "It will happen," referring to a "solution."

Repeated attempts to reach Wuschke were unsuccessful.

Walsh has consistently said he would not march in the parade if gay groups are not permitted to participate.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts condemned parade sponsors' invitation to MassEquality, calling it "a cowardly abandonment of long standing principles, a disgraceful surrender to political pressure, and a callous betrayal of all those, living and dead, who fought to defend their constitutional rights," according to a statement on the group's website.

The AWVC's annual parade has been a signature event in the City of Boston's celebration of St. Patrick's Day for years and is believed to be the nation's second largest. Each year, the parade draws more than half a million people into the iconic South

Boston neighborhood. Marchers trek the more than four-mile parade route, which begins on West Broadway (Broadway Station T stop), continues onto East Broadway, making its way back via East Fourth, East Fifth Street, and G Street, around Dorchester Heights, and onto Dorchester Avenue (Andrew Station T stop).

The AWVC parade is not the only parade in South Boston. In fact, two parades have trekked through the same neighborhood streets since 2010 when the Veterans for Peace first applied but were rejected. Peace Vet Scanlon said parade organizers used not wanting the word "peace" connected to the word "veteran" as reason enough to ban the group from marching.

All told, "Participation by gay groups in the South Boston parade, scheduled for March 16, would mark a significant cultural shift in 'Southie,'" noted Katharine Q. Seelye in the Sunday *New York Times*. "Long an insular Irish enclave known nationally for the riots stemming from court-ordered busing in the 1970s, the neighborhood has changed in recent years, with a renovated waterfront and an influx of young professionals."

The annual St. Patrick's Day Parade is scheduled for Sunday, March 16, with a kick off time of 1 p.m.

**Chuck Colbert marched in the 1992 and 1993 South Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade as one of 25 participants in the Irish American Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Group of Boston.*

Letters to the Editor from Page 2

I'm a trans-woman and engaged to be married to a non-trans guy. He has never had any problem with me knowing his mother and family. I admit I have not told any of them and they may or may not know I am not sure. I don't care and if they were to find out he would never disown me. It also does not take any extra effort for us to keep our relationship going, he is actually quite understanding. Also I have found that when you get far enough in your transition that you become a woman first and trans later you talk about and have fewer issues that are trans specific so it's possible that moving on and being happy as a normal man or woman can really help. The preoccupation with being trans can really make things so much harder when really trans or not we are normal men and women. So my ad-

vice is to get comfortable as the man or woman you are and see how much easier it is in every aspect of your life. It's not about passing it's about comfort. I am not even sure if I pass or not, but I am secure in myself as a normal woman and therefore people also see me that way. If you want a relationship be aware that it's hard for anyone and everyone has to go through lots of 'frogs' to find their prince or princess as the saying goes. Being trans can make it harder but understanding that everyone has this problem will make you realize in the greater scheme of things it's not really any different. Have high standards and never settle for less or let yourself be treated in a way that you do not deserve and in time you will find the right person for you. Yes I am optimistic.
—Jennifer Lorence

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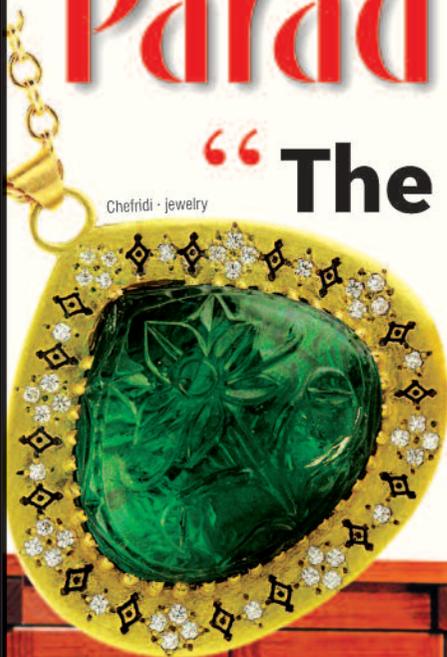
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