

# OUTWRITE

Totally Gay and then some Issue 7 — Dec. 2008

## THE OUTLINE



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Athens Proposition  
8 Protest Rally  
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## Big Turnout For Proposition 8 Protest

Students, Staff, And Community Members Gather In Athens



On Saturday November 15th, a crowd of over 100 people gathered at the Athens County Courthouse for Athens' Rally to support Marriage Equality and to speak out against California's passage of Proposition 8. The Athens protest was one of 300 held that day throughout the nation. More photos of the rally can be found on pages 8 and 9.

## A Look Back: The Gay And Lesbian Alliance (GALA)

Getting caught up in the hustle and bustle of campus life, students don't typically ponder the origins of groups and organizations at Ohio University. Case in point: if you were to use the acronym GALA today, probably no one would know to what you were referring. They would have good reason, too.

GALA, or the Gay And Lesbian Association, is one of the now-defunct cornerstone organizations of the Athens LGBT community. It was established in 1972 and was known as the "Gay People's Alliance" (GPA). The GPA brought with it a foundation for building the queer presence. In the mid 70's, the GPA changed it's name to GALA, and from the beginning, GALA and other organizations have been rather active. Thanks to their work in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, Athens has become a much safer, more welcoming place for the LGBT community.

Before 1979, Ohio University lacked a non-discrimination policy respecting the LGBT com-

munity. Unlike other minority students, who were protected by campus codes, LGBT students weren't included in anti-harassment policies. GALA fought for and won an inclusive discrimination policy in 1979 that included LGBT students.

From then on, LGBT students were guaranteed the same rights and protections as any other. The inception of the groundbreaking policy is but one of the progressive moves GALA, as well as other organizations, has made toward promoting parity.

Other OU LGBT related programs started in the 1980s include the "GALA Speakers Bureau" [Equivalent to today's "SpeakOUT!" project], and also the Gay/Bisexual men / Lesbian woman's support groups. Also thanks to GALA, the first "Out In Ohio" event was held in 1982. This event was very similar to our "Pride Week" in that the festivities had the purpose of promoting LGBT awareness and pride in the entire student

See GALA Page 5

## A Letter From The Editor:

OUTwrite is the LGBTQA journal and newsletter for students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University.

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### Submission Guidelines:

OUTwrite accepts submissions in the form of letters, features, reviews and poetry. Letters should be no more than 250 words. Features and reviews should be no more than 750 words. Poetry should be less than 20 lines. All submissions are subject to editing for length, content and clarity. OUTwrite reserves the right to deny inclusion of any submission at the discretion of the editor and/or publisher.

### LGBT Center Mission:

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center advances the diversity mission of Ohio University by creating a campus environment inclusive and supportive of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. We focus on the unique academic, cultural, and social needs of LGBT students, and strive to enhance these students' learning and engagement as well as increase their retention. Our broader influence emerges from providing resources, educational opportunities, and social justice initiatives to all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members at Ohio University and beyond.

"There's a first time for everything." How aptly this well-worn phrase fits the moment, as I'm sitting in our fabo, glamo LGBT Center, listening to my chattering peers, and wracking my finals addled noggin for something profound to say about the newness of my editorship.

Truth is I've never been in charge of anything so meaningful, until now. When Mickey first told me I would be responsible for coming up with a production schedule, feature concepts, and heavy editing of content, I thought: "Crap...How can little old me possibly do ALL this!" Well, it's been a daunting task for sure, but more than that—a formative experience I couldn't be prouder to have under my belt.

I came into this position wet behind the ears, but wanting to carry on EricA's legacy. As OUTwrite has become a venue for expression and valuable information for OU's LGBTQA community, I wanted to make this idea my prime objective and duty. I sincerely hope that you will all be along for the ride, helping me to portray an honest portrait of OU's LGBT people. Reader suggestions are very much welcomed.

We have a lot to look forward to this year. I see so much potential in our community. We must cooperate in order to foster stronger representation on campus and in town. I was surprised when I started working here to see so many people each day make use of the LGBT Center as a place for discussion, togetherness, and expression. Let's take this spirit from the Center, and into publication—where everyone can see how much we have to offer. I can only hope that this publication will reflect the variety and liveliness of spirit that greets me each time I come into work. I

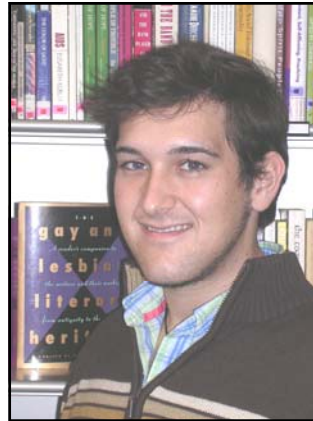
want to capture this energy in future issues.

That said, I remind our readership that OUTwrite always has room for original submissions and opinions. That means: poetry, flash fiction, letters to the editor, you name it, really. Just e-mail me at [sf152606@ohio.edu](mailto:sf152606@ohio.edu) with any questions about getting your voice represented, and I will try to help make it happen.

I REALLY want to have an opinion section in the next issue, since I know ya'll can argue and debate. I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to speak out, and I hope to present provocative questions and opinions for our readers' consideration.

I will conclude by thanking the LGBT Center staff, all of whom worked very hard on their individual assignments. I sincerely appreciate the effort of everyone who contributed to this project. Without them, this journal would just be me ranting.

*Sean Flynn, Editor*  
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LGBT  
CENTER



Celebrating  
10 YEARS

## Virginia Court Rules in Favor of Transgendered Woman's Discrimination Suit

A federal Judge sides with "former special forces commander," Diane Schroer, a transgendered woman, in a sex discrimination case. The TG woman's job offer as a terrorism research analyst at the Library of Congress was suddenly revoked when officials discovered that she was "transitioning from being a man to a woman." The lawsuit was first filed in 2005 under the auspices of the American Civil Liberties Union, but was finally decided when Federal Judge James Robertson ruled that officials had no grounds for denying her employment, and that their decision violated those rights outlined in the Civil Rights Act's prohibition against sexual discrimination.

## Iran: Homosexuality a Deadly Crime for one Young Man

A young man arrested nearly three years ago, at the age of sixteen, awaits the death penalty ordered in the Northwest Azerbaijan region of Iran. His crime: being found guilty of "sexual relations that were not admitted." Apparently, homosexuality is so reviled of an idea that even official court proceedings gloss over it. Commenting on the supposed absence of a homosexual problem in Iran, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited Colombia University last year and responded to a student's question that, "there were no homosexuals in Iran." Really? With such a brutal policy and an opaque political process that denies due process, its no surprise that advocacy goes undeveloped. Human rights violations in Tibet, Genocide in Darfur—all in all; Iran's just another brick in the wall.

*Compiled by Dominic Imondi  
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## OPINIONS

## Barack Obama Has Become The New President Elect! What Does This Mean In Regard To The LGBTQA Community?

If we look at Barack Obama's voting history and statements made to the press, we know that he:

- Opposed California's "Proposition 8" – one-man-one-woman marriage.
- Voted against a constitutional ban of same-sex marriage, says it should be left up to the individual states.
- Supports civil unions, such that provide equal legal rights to that of marriage, recognized at the federal level.
- Supports expanding the definition of hate crimes to include sexual orientation.



Senator Barack Obama was elected president on November 4th. In January 2009 he will become our first African American President

These facts show that the relationship between Barack Obama and the LGBTQA community is one of overall support. It appears that Obama wants to see the rights of the LGBTQA community expanded and solidified. The collective hope is that President Elect Barack Obama will push the platform of equal legal rights for LGBT people.

If left unchanged, the varying state-by-state policies on the definition of marriage/civil unions could pose problems regarding recognition of the rights of the couples in states who have voted for banning gay marriage. This is where a federal policy is needed to guarantee these rights across state lines. We will have to wait and see how President Elect Barack Obama addresses this issue once he takes office. For more information on Barack Obama's relationship with the LGBTQA community, check out [www.ontheissues.org](http://www.ontheissues.org).

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### Our History, Our Past : O the Gifts and Progressiveness of Walt Whitman

As we come upon the blustering cold of the holiday season, let us pause to consider the passing of another October. Sure, Halloween preparations and recuperation probably occupied a lot of your time, but October also happened to be LGBT History Month. This of course is a time for the LGBT community to celebrate our collective progress and pride as we highlight our queer forebears and their achievements. In a day and age when queer folk enjoy unprecedented liberty to discuss their orientations openly as writers, actors, and the like, it's important to look back and acknowledge those among the first to break rank and queer it up for the rest of us.

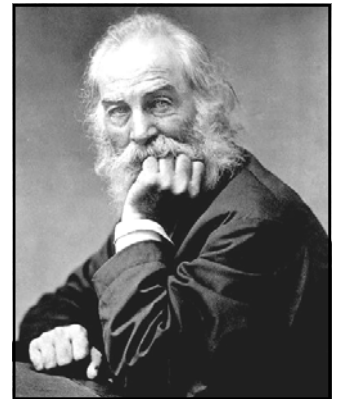
Of them, Walt Whitman, an American national treasure, is one of the first writers of American Literature to enjoy critical success in his life. Whitman documented in his work the beginnings of a national identity, cultivating an artistic spirit to which later American writers would pay homage. More than a mere wordsmith, he left an indelible mark on such diverse fields as education and journalism. In Whitman's early career as an educator, his beliefs in the individual's right to self-governance impacted the philosophy of American education. An independent spirit, an innovator, and a mouthpiece for change: Whitman fostered the growth of American culture. Oh, and tons of his works just happen to be totally gay, too.

Born May 31, 1819 in Hempstead, Long Island, Whitman's was a childhood fairly typical of the day. As compulsory education laws and implementation were lacking, Whitman, like so many other children, left a formal public school education by age 11. By way of patronizing libraries and museums, Whitman educated himself. This affected his independent artistic voice as much as his opinions on education. If one thing was consistent with Whitman, it was his disbelief in conventional thought within the social sphere, and the elitism of writing.

It was in his home state of New York that scholars believe Whitman experienced an eye-opening and probably sexual affair with at least one man. Whitman's poetry thereafter would confront his experience with gay ro-

mance. Gay intimacy, then as now, was a difficult subject to broach. This sort of romance didn't yet have a name. The terms "homosexual" and "gay" did not exist yet, the Temperance movement nonetheless attacked Whitman's romantic locus as immoral and condemnable.

Whitman's crowning work, *Leaves of Grass*, was published in 1855. The collected poems detail his conflicted and at times alienated intimacy. Whitman yearns for a "manly love," an exchange of passion and love between the closest of companions. Whitman had an intense relationship at this time with Fred Vaughan, a young Irish stage driver, perhaps inspiring the sequence of homo-



Walt Whitman Is An Influential American Poet

erotic love poems Whitman called *Live Oak, with Moss*. These poems record a despair about the failure of the relationship with Vaughan.

The collection was an eventual success, and drew as much harsh criticism for salaciousness as it did accolades for its original style and substance. However, Ralph Waldo Emerson, another lion of the American literary academy, was quite vocal in his advocacy of Whitman's capability.

Whitman wrote, published, and defended a work that went against convention because he believed in the tenants of freedom and individuality that defined the growing US as a nation of individuals liberated from the chains of aristocracy and monarchy. Whitman successfully criticized the nation that he loved while maintaining his dignity in the face of opposition. In today's admittedly screwy atmosphere

of oppression in politics, religion, and social convention, we must have as much pride and tenacity as Whitman should we want to be seen and heard.

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Editor's Note: For more information on Walt Whitman, consult the book *Walt Whitman*, by Ed Folsom and Kenneth M. Price.

An excerpt from Walt Whitman's

**Live Oak, With Moss**

And when I thought how my friend, my lover  
was coming, then O I was happy;  
Each breath tasted sweeter and  
all that day my food nourished me  
more And the beautiful day passed well,

And the next came with equal joy And with  
the next, at evening, came my friend,

And that night, while all was still, I heard the  
waters roll slowly continually up the shores

I heard the hissing rustle of the liquid and  
sands, as directed to me, whispering,  
to congratulate me, For the friend I  
love lay sleeping by my side,

In the stillness his face was inclined towards  
me, while the moon's clear beams  
shone, And his arm lay lightly over my  
breast And that night I was happy.

original transcript at:  
[www.whitmanarchive.org/manuscripts/liveoak.html](http://www.whitmanarchive.org/manuscripts/liveoak.html)

## 4 OUR HEALTH: Outdoor Adventures

Sometimes while stuck in class, I like to gaze out the window and see what nature's got going on. If you're like me, maybe it's time you get out of your room, and into the world. Here are a few places close to home that you can gather up some or friends, or go by yourself, and have some good clean fun outside. Let's play, shall we?

The first place to check out is Stroud's Run State Park, address: 1161 State Park Rd. Some activities there in which you might be interested include: camping, fishing, boating, hiking, and picnicking (good for dates!). Each season offers something different, but most visitors would say spring and summer are the best times to make

use of the facilities, because of the beautiful weather. However, don't be afraid to check out the fall foliage and enjoy the rustic atmosphere of the park's hiking trails. The trails vary in intensity and duration, but it's a guarantee you'll find at least one to call your own. Lake Hope is one of the main attractions, as it features a sand beach and volleyball pit as well as shelters for groups. It also provides space for swimming, boating, etc.

If you're just in the mood for hiking, or looking to get inspired, a really close place you can check out is the Ridges, which is owned and operated by the university. A quick walk

up Richland Avenue towards State Rt. 682 and a jaunt across the bridge over the Hocking brings you to this aesthetically remarkable, historic site. Hike up the steep hill to the top,

where you can take a foot tour of the expansive campus that now houses some of the university's art classes and studios. You can see more of Athens from this vantage point than most other places, since it affords such a crisp view of the Hocking and beyond. What's more, for those brooding types who enjoy a walk on the gothic side; The Ridges is the site where the former Athens Mental Hospital used to operate.

A little farther out, about a 45 minute drive West on St Rt. 33 to Logan, is Hocking Hills State Park. Here you can

have a weekend holiday in a cottage, or if you're a fan of camping, their amenities include: showers, bathroom and laundry facilities, a camp store, swimming pool, playground, and archery range. Remember, aim first then shoot. One of the park's most renowned natural treasures, Old Man's cave, is but one of the several unique geologic formations to which the park lay claim. Other caves/formations include: Ash Cave, Cedar Falls, and Cantwell Cliffs. Who knew sandstone could be so...majestic!

*Rachel McCullough  
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To warmer days ahead...  
outdoor enthusiasts enjoying Strouds Run

## The Evolution Of The Gay And Lesbian Alliance (GALA)

**GALA—Continued From Page 1**

population. At the end of the decade, an activist voice still rang strong throughout the OU LGBT community. In 1989 the first issue of the "Ohio University Gay And Lesbian Alumni Society News" was released, marking another groundbreaking venue for LGBT expression and networking.

Times change, and so do the needs of our community. So, in keeping with their desire to promote inclusion and progression, GALA eventually changed their name to GALABA (the Gay And Lesbian And Bisexual Alliance). Even after, the group derived the name "Open Doors," implying a safe haven for all walks of life. The title seems to have stuck, as the group still meets every Wednesday at the UCM. Over the their two hour meeting, participants discuss salient personal issues and reflect on the state of queer life on campus and in the larger world.

As the achievements of GALA and more contemporary groups testify, activism and community building have been two prime objectives for LGBT students. To this end, the Athens and OU LGBT population has established more groups and organizations than ever before. Ally, SHADES, Empowering Women of Ohio, and Open Doors—these are just a few of the numerous opportunities available to anyone interested in finding fellowship and support. The next time you attend one of these meetings, decide to go to a Casa dance, or even decide to check out the LGBT Center's website (Ohio.edu/lgbt), remember the founding members' dedication and perseverance in the face of opposition. However, the fight isn't over. It'll take just as much effort on behalf of LGBT and ally community members to maintain today's presence and foster tomorrow's growth as well.

*Bobby Landers  
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### MENTORS: Ohio University LGBT Staffers Offer Advice

For young LGBT people, it is not easy looking toward preceding generations and finding a whole slew of negative queer stereotypes of queer life. The future appears devoid of opportunities for personal growth, especially in a society in which sexuality so strongly determines our cultural worth.

Under the preponderance of such glittering, sweating torsos and torrid lesbian melodramatics that dominate queer television programming on (i.e. *Queer as Folk* and *The L Word*), impressionable young people feel a certain dissonance. Reality, their own desire for other alternatives, clashes with these caricatured sexual fictions to leave the individual questioning in their wake, "Is this all that there is for me?."

It's too often we see the unhappy homosexual instead of the levelheaded professional as our future selves. To this end, it helps to shed some light on a few "Friendly Faces" around campus—some OU faculty and staff members you might have seen, working and living like anybody else—who just happen to be queer as well as upstanding, successful individuals and mentors.

Harvey Eugene Ballard Jr:

**What do you do at OU?**

I'm an Associate Professor. I teach plant biology courses, and I'm heavily involved in study abroad opportunities.

**What brought you to Athens/OU in particular?**

A great job offer as professor at OU.

**Why are you out/an ally?**

Uh...not because it made me rich and famous! I'm out because I no longer feel like lying about who I am or who I love. If nobody's out, then anybody not an LGBT person could assume that we're



Associate Professor Harvey Ballard

"rare" or could be dismissed, and that's not true.

**Advice to new Ohio University students?**

Work quickly to make some new friends, establish a "home life" here, and explore the whole region.

**What is your most positive experience or memory as an LGBT individual on campus? Negative?**

On campus...well, it's probably generally the total acceptance I've had from my department and pretty much everybody else on campus. It helps that my partner and I live our lives as though everybody knows everything about us, but it's phenomenal and deeply moving that we don't have to

pretend about anything. (I'd tell people to &\*!% off if they demanded it, anyway.) Nothing really negative has ever happened to me here.

**Do you have any advice/suggestions to new LGBT students on campus?**

Get involved, immerse yourself, take reasonable risks, try everything at least once (except maybe heroin). Staying on the margin will guarantee that you won't feel like you belong. That's dangerous. It's hard enough to be a LGBT person without having a network of love and support. Also, make friends with LGBT faculty and staff; we're here to help and support you, and to be part of your network.

**What do you think the LGBT community could do in order to further promote a welcome atmosphere on campus?**

Continue to have (and have more) faculty-staff-student meetings for socializing, and fun events. I like those.

**Is there one major issue that especially concerns you in terms of campus conduct? Do you feel that representation (or misrepresentation) is an issue?**

Nope. [the LGBT center] has done a great job. We're incredibly lucky to have you.

Andrea Adams-Manning:

**What do you do at OU?**

I am the Residential Coordinator for Adams Hall in the department of residence life and off-campus living.

Harvey's Quick Facts

**Favorite coffee house:** Donkey

**Out Since:** 1984

**Favorite hangout:**  
Front Room Coffeehouse for working "out of the office"

**Pets:** None

Continued On Page 7



R.C. Andrea Adams-Manning

### **Why are you out/an ally?**

I am out because when I was starting Graduate School at Grand Valley State University I was asked the question while participating in an activity on my first week. That week was the first week that I really started living life out. I decided I can be more of a help to others and a better advocate for my students if I was living my truth and living out. Living life in the closet is tiring and depressing. I am in a very committed relationship with my wife Michelle and I do not want to hide or make up stories about our love.

### **Favorite thing about LGBT?**

We usually accept everyone for who they are.

### **What brought you to Athens/OU in particular?**

When I was looking for my next job experience/position I went to several conferences interviewing with various universities. At one of these conferences OU asked me to interview with them and I accepted because I wanted to include some Ohio schools in my search. At this time I was working in

Michigan and my partner Michelle was finishing grad school at the University of Toledo. After my interview I was offered an on campus interview and I accepted. Once I got on campus I felt such a warm and welcoming feeling that made it impossible to turn down the job.

### **What is your most positive experience or memory as an LGBT individual on campus? Negative?**

My most positive experience happened when I was able to have my commitment ceremony this summer and my entire department and several members from the university supported Michelle and I through ever step. Several people from the university were in attendance and the outside community was overwhelmingly accepting of our day. The Ohio University Inn hosted our event and they are by far our biggest supporters outside of family and friends. This community has been amazing.

### Andrea's Quick Facts

**Favorite coffee house:** You know... I have never been in the Donkey but I hear I would love it. Right now I just enjoy having coffee in the morning with Michelle in front of my TV.

**Out Since:** 2003

**Favorite Hangout:** Casa sometimes and just with friends at one of our houses.

**Pets:** Chauncey, my killer Chihuahua

As far as negative experiences go, I think just the foul language I hear from our ignorant students. Some of our students come to us not being educated on LGBT issues and when they use "Gay, Fag, Homo" in an intentionally offensive way I just feel

tired and a bit sad. I know my work isn't done.

### **Do you have any advice/suggestions to new LGBT students on campus?**

Get to know yourself and learn who you want to be. It took me a long time to get to know myself and learn what kind of person I wanted to be. There isn't a mold of what "Gay or Lesbian or Bi or Trans" means. You define yourself, don't let people label you. Make your own mold. Also, find a friend whom you can trust and build a wonderful friendship. You may need it to last through college.

### **What do you think the LGBT community could do in order to further promote a welcome atmosphere on campus?**

Become more involved in the residential program on campus. I think one of the scariest places for gay students is the residence halls. It is hard living in a community where you may not know how safe it is. Also, we need a gay hang out. We need a place to go and be gay. That sounded funny.

### **Andrew Stuart:**

### **What do you do at OU?**

I'm Assistant Head of the Reference Department at Alden Library, as well as subject specialist for Biological Sciences, Chemistry and Biochemistry and Environmental & Plant Biology. I've also served on Administrative Senate and been involved in the Out@Work group.

### **What brought you to Athens/OU in particular?**

My partner, Dr. Harvey Ballard, was hired for a faculty position in Environmental and Plant Biology and I came along as the "Trailing Spouse."

Continued On Page 10

# THE ATHENS OHIO RALLY



Students create posters in preparation for the Proposition 8 protest



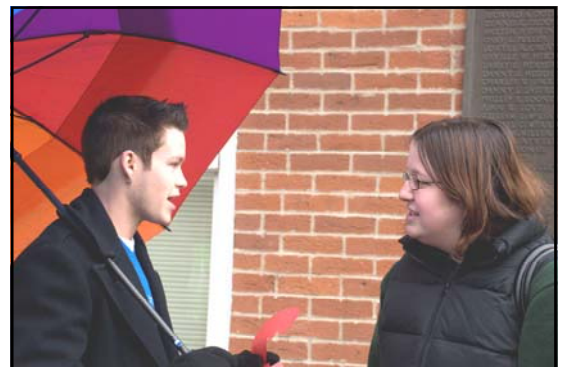
Nicaraguan grad student Cynara Medina discusses hardships involved with non-US citizens and their same-sex US partners



Speakers at the event included students Kate Steven and Eric Miller, as well as staff member Matt Peterson



Staff members Andrea and Michelle Adams-Manning, and their little dog too, show their support during the protest



Senior Joe Evans and staff member Stephanie Thompson converse at the protest

Photos Contributed By: Christina Snyder, Matt Peterson, and Mickey Hart

# PROTESTING PROPOSITION 8



Sophomore Kate Steven and Senior Logan Waldie listen as speakers protest Proposition 8



Paul Fetherolf was the M.C. of the event. Over 100 people attended the rally held on November 15th.



Graduate Student Dan Nelson is the initiator and a co-organizer of the Proposition 8 protest.



Messages like this one were clearly expressed throughout the rally.



Staff members Harvey Ballard and Andrew Stuart listen to speakers at the Proposition 8 protest.



Mickey Hart, director of the LGBT Center, acknowledges Athens as one of many protests occurring nationwide on Nov. 15th



Tim Williams, Gabriel Carnick, Lacey Rogers, and Holly Greenawalt all take a minute to smile for the camera.



LGBT Commissioner Kate Sayre was one of many in attendance during the Proposition 8 rally

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**Why are you out/an ally?**

I'm out because students need to know that we are everywhere and that they can come to us for support and help. I was grateful that folks were there when I came out in 1979. They helped me find my way.

**Favorite thing about LGBT people?**

That we represent a different way of looking at the world. That we demonstrate that there are other ways of seeing and being.

**What is your most positive experience or memory as an LGBT individual on campus? Negative?**

My most positive moment was being honored at last year's Pride Graduation with one of the LGBT center director's awards.

**Do you have any advice/suggestions to new LGBT students on campus?**

You should make use of the resources that are here to help. Open Doors and



Andrew Stuart is the assistant head of the reference department at Alden Library

the LGBT Center are places to get connected with other students. You can also go there just to explore and learn more.

**What do you think the LGBT community could do in order to further promote a welcome atmosphere on campus?**

I think it would help if the community just was more involved in the groups that are already going to lend their support and time.

**Is there one major issue that especially concerns you in terms of campus conduct? Do you feel that representation (or misrepresentation) is an issue?**

The major issue that concerns me is that the LGBT faculty are not more open and active. I think it can only help students when positive role models or advocates are available.

Andrew's Quick Facts

**Favorite coffee house:** Donkey or the Front Room if I have to choose.

**Out since:** 1979

**Favorite Hangout:** Baker Center? Home? I don't really have time to just hang out.

**Pets:** I have grandchildren instead. They're enough to keep me hopping.

## LGBT Center Celebrates 10 Years At OU!



The LGBT Center was first established as a quarter-time operation in 1998 as part of the Division of Student Affairs' commitment to a just and diverse community. Through the effort of many, the Center became a full-time operation for the Fall of 2003. In the Fall of 2005, our staff size increased with the addition of our first graduate assistant. After the building of the new Baker Center in 2006, the LGBT Center's office was moved, and opened up along with the new Baker in Winter 2007. The LGBT Center is now celebrating it's 10th year of operation.

# FEATURES

# OUTWRITE

Totally Gay and then some

## OUT OF THE CLOSET STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

with Jackie Price!



### 1) What brought you to OU?

During Hurricane Wilma, I suddenly decided that I wanted to travel to China and study the Chinese language. I also wanted to study Creative Writing, Linguistics, Philosophy, and Religion. Only two schools offered all of this. It was either here or California, and I was not about to take on earthquakes.

### 2) How and why did you get involved with the OUTgrads & Non-Trads group?

I got involved in OUTGrads & Non-Trads partly because I work in the LGBT Center, and partly because I am a Non-Traditional student. This is really important to me because I think that there needs to be environments for people at all stages in their life. Just as there are groups for people in stages involving sexualities, there should be groups that specifically cater to individuals by age, and by paper length.

### 3) What is it like being a part of this organization?

I get to meet lots of people who have such different perspectives. Despite my ripe age of 26, there are people in the group who have a lot of experiences under their belt that I have never attempted. It's exciting to hear all the things I have to add to my "Netflix of Life" list. Many people in the group approach me on the street and ask how I'm doing and tell me what they are up to, and I get inspired to try all these neat new adventures.



### 4) Any special events of note on the horizon?

There are all kinds of events being held. The list gets updated weekly, sometimes daily. We are always looking for people to host events, so if you have a great idea for an evening and need someone to help you plan it, feel free to contact me: [jp227206@ohio.edu](mailto:jp227206@ohio.edu).

### 5) What do you think could be done to improve LGBT life on campus?

Hmmm, let me think... What could I put here that wouldn't be considered a cliché? I think the one thing Athens needs is a queer venue, like a bar, restaurant and dance club kind of thing. It should have some kind of section for cheap, fine dining (yes I did just put those two words together), and another place for dancing. Since this town has such an eclectic group of queer individuals, I would suggest offering a broad variety of music, like oldies and international music, as well as hosting a lot of special events. This way everyone gets an afternoon or evening that caters to their flavor of queer. This might sound like a bit much to ask for, but honestly, enough people in this town have pulled off amazing events and entire weeks. I'm sure there would be no lack of support for our very own venue.

### 6) What is something about you that most people don't know, but should?

The one really important thing about me is that I am legally capable of performing marriages in the state of Ohio. While I have only had the time to perform one marriage, I want everyone to know that the minute any type of Queer Marriage becomes legal in the state of Ohio, I am ready and excited to perform them in bulk, pro-bono. Make-shift ceremonies available. But seriously, I am willing to put a lot of effort into catering the wedding to meet the needs of everyone involved, including in-laws, because I know that every wedding should be captivating and brilliant, especially when it is freshly legal. It is time that our country gets to see what we already know: how beautiful the spectrum of love can truly be.

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*Do you know an exceptional LGBT individual? Share them with OUTwrite!  
Email their name and a brief description to [sf152606@ohio.edu](mailto:sf152606@ohio.edu).*

## GIVE ME A BEAT

In America, pop culture is dominated primarily by Hollywood figures that our generation associates with accordingly. In the music scene, artists and bands are among the most popular public figures we see on an every day basis. Along with this comes a certain culture that has evolved over the past couple decades into what we see today.

The norm has turned these artists into millionaires, and while image should be important to these artists, it seems to have become a more important factor in their careers than the music itself. Turn to any popular music channel or magazine and you see it happening. Beautiful women in scantily clad garb, looking particularly starved seems to fit the mold of most female pop artists.

Similarly, muscle-toned men with boyish good looks are the standard for boy bands and male artists alike. Among all this, we lose a sense of what is important in the music industry. Talent is sacrificed for marketability. Likewise, the quality of performance seems to have slowly diminished over time.

But some remain unaffected by the trend. I have noticed especially that LGBT musicians seem to go against this corporate ideology. In

researching today's most popular LGBT musicians, I have found that their success comes from their extraordinary talent and industriousness.

Perhaps the most popular of all these is the legendary Elton John. He has been an LGBT icon for four decades, as well as an international pop star. His extravagant appeal as a singer, songwriter and brilliant pianist won him induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994. Furthermore, he was nominated #3 on Billboard's top 100 artists this past year. There's more than just this solo act.

The Scissor Sisters are a popular glam-rock band and a notable group of queer performers. Not only are 3 of the 5 founding members gay, but their first hit single "Take Your Mama," humorously describes a suggestion to those coming out of the closet: taking your mother out to the gay bar. The song went to #17 on the UK charts. The Scissor Sisters built their reputation playing in gay bars and now play sold-out shows across the U.S. and Europe.

Ani DiFranco is another LGBT music icon who has gotten to the top with hard work ethic and admirable musical talent. DiFranco has been an avid LGBT advocate, identifying as bisexual and writing songs about relationship issues with both men and women. She broke new ground representing non-traditional romances in such a widely accessed format.

Similarly, the lesbian folk-rock duo Tegan and Sara have received unusual popular attention lately. The two sisters attracted notice touring with popular bands like Weezer and The Killers,



The Scissor Sisters

and it wasn't long before their music started showing up on popular television programs. Recently, they appeared playing themselves on *The L Word*.

Amidst these LGBT music icons, there are unfortunately those who use "LGBT status" as a crutch to obtain notice. They adopt non-traditional or ambiguous representations of sexuality in order to make themselves stand out and appear trendy. One recent example of this phenomenon of cultural plundering includes the vomit-

inducing T.A.T.U. The duo posed as lesbians, selling a counterfeit image to persuade followers they were "edgy," exchanging kisses on screen and in public. We discovered later that each was, in fact, straight all along.

And let us not forget the most recent chanteuse to dabble in lesbian fantasy. What does everybody else see in Katy Perry's "Kissed a Girl?" The song's popularity undoubtedly comes from the salacious chorus, in which the singer brags that yes, she "kissed and girl and liked it." She then goes on to say that she hopes her boyfriend doesn't mind it and that the girl in question was her "experimental game."

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm all for a catchy chorus and beat, but does anyone else see the blatant offensiveness of the song for LGBT people? It's not a progressive representation of genuine lesbian romance. Instead, it fur-

thers the stereotype that members of the community are simply experimenting, or going against the norm intentionally.

In the end, we must conclude that the music industry at large encompasses many a talented LGBT performer. From Elton John to the Scissor Sisters, queer artists have carved out and cultivated a particular style. However, it's a field that should increase its social acceptance of its key players.

While Hollywood has always maintained a reputation for liberality, and likely will continue to do so, some studios and artists present questionable representations and models of queer life. There needs to be a more genuine breadth of experience represented in popular music.

Artists like Katy Perry and others aren't doing the job well. After all, for many people in Middle America, their perception of the LGBT community originates from the media. So, don't we want that message to be something admirable? I mean, I could be wrong, but if the public starts to think that *Kissed a Girl* is the typical mindset of an LGBT person, we've just devolved the movement for queer liberation by a couple of generations.

We're approaching a renewal of vicious misrepresentation and rampant heterosexism. Maybe I'm completely off, but unless Katy Perry revolutionizes the LGBT community in a sudden change of character, let us hope for an icon with a little more credibility. Actually being queer would be a big plus as well.

Jason Porter  
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## Make Your Vacation A Gay Ol' Time

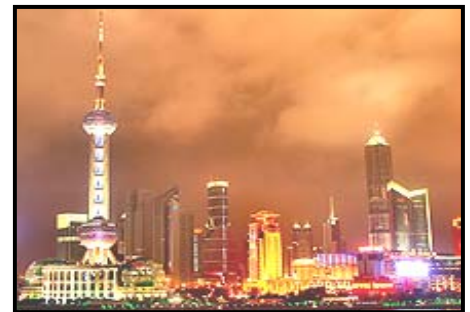
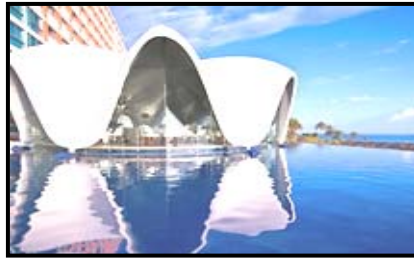
If you are still looking for places to retreat to over the holidays and into next year, here are some places you might want to consider. Most of these destinations are not so cheap, but you decide!

**Date:** February 6—9  
**Highlights:** Stay at the hottest beachfront hotel, four-wheeling and horseback riding, tour of Old San Juan, and more!

# 4

**China!**  
**Cost:** \$4,999 and up  
**Date:** May 24—June 3

**Highlights:** Travel in the comfort of a rickshaw, stay at a five-star rated hotel, travel to Beijing's major attractions, take some Chinese Calligraphy lessons, Chinese fine cuisine,



These LGBT Friendly Destinations are brought to you by: American Airlines. For more information visit: [www.AA.com/rainbow](http://www.AA.com/rainbow).

*Compiled by Jackie Price  
 jp227206@ohio.edu*

**1 Rio New Years!**  
**Cost:** \$2,799 and up  
**Date:** December 28—January 2  
**Highlights:** Mountain and sea travel, cocktail reception and Brazilian dinner, hot and cold buffet, hang-gliding, dances, and more!



dinner, hot and cold buffet, hang-gliding, dances, and more!



**3 Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras!**  
**Cost:** \$2,699 and up  
**Date:** March 4—10  
**Highlights:** Scuba Diving, free buffet, free Sushi, free exotic drinks, entertainment, Spa and Fitness Center, and more!

**2 Puerto Rico!**  
**Cost:** \$1,399 and up

## Calling Palin Fans! The Sarah-Cuda Pink Bow (and Arrow) is Here!

Do you remember the catchy song by Heart entitled "Barracuda"? The classic rock song has inspired a new line of female bows dedicated to Sarah Palin that are being manufactured in Ohio's very own city of Xenia!

Lakota Industries wanted to offer a pink weapon for females that represents what Sarah Palin stands for. According to the website, the bow represents women like Sarah Palin, including: "Women who face the challenges of adversity and demonstrate the courage and strength to survive in today's world, yet have the caring heart and tenderness of good wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters.

This is a tribute to women like Sarah Palin who, "bear the responsibility of family and work while strengthening the moral



**Oooh — Sarah-Cuda?**

fiber of society". The bow comes in various weight and draw ranges, and is adjustable.

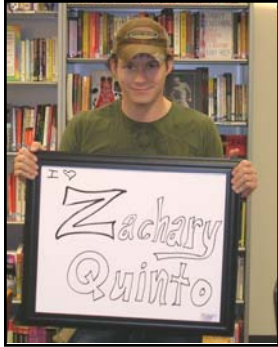
If you are interested in being a tender-hearted hunter and protecting your family against rabbits that jeopardize the moral fiber of your society with a large, pink, lethal weapon, please visit this website: <http://www.lakotacorp.com/Sarahcуда.As.px>.

Perhaps Lakota Industries next line of Palin-inspired weaponry will be an AK-47 called "Shot Through the Heart" that plays a MIDI version of Jon Bon Jovi's song every time a morally threatening deer is targeted.

*Jackie Price  
 jp227206@ohio.edu*

**WRITEOUT**  
students speak

**Q: WHO IS YOUR CURRENT CELEBRITY CRUSH?**



**Joe Evans**  
Senior  
Cellular & Molecular Biology



**Lacey Rogers**  
Junior  
Journalism



**Kate Sayre**  
Senior  
Organizational Communication

**GET INVOLVED!**

**ALLY**

For meeting times contact Nicole  
ns245205@ohio.edu

**EMPOWERING WOMEN OF OHIO**

For meeting times contact Lacey  
lr270306@ohio.edu

**OPEN DOORS**

Meetings Wednesdays at 8p.m. at United  
Campus Ministry (U.C.M.)

**OUT GRADS & NON-TRADS**

Meeting times & locations vary.  
Contact Jackie jp227206@ohio.edu

**SHADES**

For meeting times contact  
Esther or Micah  
eb193903@ohio.edu  
mb144205@ohio.edu

**Some Queer Trivia**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ is the order that targeted homosexuals during WWII. The movie "Bent," starring Clive Owen, tells the story of just such a victim of the code. It focuses on the issues faced by those who were assigned the pink triangle denoting their sexuality.
- 2) This nationwide political action committee was formed in 1987 in response to the perceived ineffectuality of other AIDS and gay PAC's.
- 3) The AIDS Quilt project, begun in 1987, holds which claim to fame:
  - a) It is the largest ongoing community project in the world.
  - b) Raised over 4 million dollars in funds for direct services for those with AIDS.
  - c) Has over 46,000 panels.
  - d) All of the above
- 4) The original gay pride flag had how many different colors: \_\_\_\_\_

Sources: Funtrivia.com and Gaygames.com  
Trivia Collected by Sean Flynn, Editor

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

December is Human Rights Month!

**January 28 - February 1**  
*Creating Change Conference*

**January 31**  
*QUEER PROM*

**February 9 - 14**  
*Empowered Women's Week*

**February 13 - 15**  
*MBLGTACC*

**February 13 - 15**  
*Lavender Languages Conference*

Trivia Answers: 1) Paragraph 175, 2) ACT UP, The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, 3) D, 4) 8