

EQUAL

magazine

JULY 2014

PINK
SLIP

YOU'RE GAY? YOU'RE **Fired!**

MARRIAGE EQUALITY COMES TO PA BUT LGBT
PROTECTIONS ARE STILL NOT IN PLACE

ALSO

PEOPLE PLACES & PRIDE
PHOTOS OF PITTSBURGH PRIDE 2014

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM
BODY IMAGE AND THE CULTURE OF PHOTOSHOP



LGBTQQIA WTF
HOW MANY MORE LETTERS CAN WE ADD?

OCCUPIED
NEW APP LOCATES UNISEX RESTROOMS

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Thursday, July 10th

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Friday, July 11th

Cruze 3-Day 3rd Anniversary Bash
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Saturday, July 12th

Cruze 3-Day 3rd Anniversary Bash
DragQueen LubeWrestling
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Thursday, July 17th

DJ Digital Dave & Jesse Ryan Present:
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Saturday, July 19th

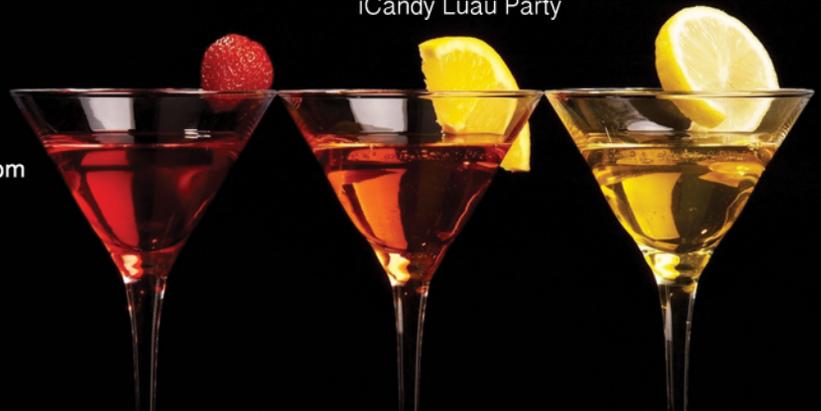
Jesse Ryan & DJ Seth Gold Present:
STUDS'n'SUDS An Epic Foam Party
New & Improved Foam System!

Sunday, July 20th

Third Sunday Tea Dance with Kierra Darshell

Friday, July 25th

iCandy Luau Party





G. Michael Beigay is a free-lance photographer and special education professional for Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

His photography has provided educational tools to aid students with cognitive disabilities. He also has worked with a media specialist at his LGBT-friendly church to develop various multi-media productions. Michael has shot for Cue, Whirl, and now Equal. He is one of the hosts for G2H2 and also the main photographer.



Stacey Federoff is a Sutersville, PA native, Penn State alumna, and reporter living in Park Place near Regent Square. She has written

for The Daily Collegian, The Chautauquan Daily, and Trib Total Media. She loves music, vinyl records, coffee, running, and volunteerism.



Philip Ezzo, one of the tallest men in Pittsburgh, is currently a pastry cook at the Duquesne Club downtown. He has been a writer and columnist

in LGBT publications for over four years. He is known for his sense of humor and charming personality. In his spare time Philip is a chapter leader with Gay for Good, Pittsburgh chapter, where he is an outreach coordinator.



Jonathan Fobear is a native of Cass City, MI. For 12 years he has been an art director branding non-profits, corporations, destinations, and city

festivals. He has worked with clients as big as The Dept of Agriculture and NASA and as small as his mom & dad. Jonathan has presented branding workshops both in Pennsylvania and New York and currently resides in Pittsburgh's South Side.



Mara Rago specializes in portraits, fine art, pets, events, model portfolios, legal, and corporate photography. She has a studio in the East End

of Pittsburgh and shoots in-studio as well as on location. Photography is Mara's life. It's a passion. Capturing visions in her little black box is a gift and, every day, she is grateful.



Jay P. Obertance is a food, quality, and entertainment addict; a gourmand/chef with a passion for fine dining and a love of company to

enjoy and share it with. As his motto goes, "Life is too short to eat mediocre food."

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Are YOU interested in writing for Equal Magazine?
 Email joek@equalmagazine.com

EQUAL
 magazine

The Delta Foundation of Pittsburgh
is pleased to announce that the following

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We are soliciting grant applications for the following Focus Areas:

Collaboration

Consideration will be given to organizations that collaborate with at least one other group on a project or event that directly focuses on the LGBT or HIV/AIDS community.

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Dear Friends:

Welcome to the July issue of Equal Magazine. We kick off this month's issue with an important cover story that affects every LGBT person living in Pennsylvania...discrimination in the workplace. Yes, while history was just made last month with marriage equality, there is still much work to do and we've got some important information to share with you on page 36 as we move forward into a new era of change, acceptance and visibility.

This issue also addresses another important topic about acceptance on page 28 with a story on body image and the naked truth about photo shopping and how we all look at beauty.

As our gay family grows and continues to expand to welcome more and more fabulously different queer as folks, so does our moniker and we've got an interesting read on page 32 that may have you talking about all the letters that make up our gay alphabet.

Equal Magazine also has packed this issue with tons of full color photos from last month's numerous Pittsburgh Pride events including Fabulous Gay Friday, Equality on Ellsworth, Pride in the Street, the Pride March and Pride Fest. You may be surprised who you'll see making appearances in this issue including community leaders, volunteers, allies, friends and family members.

I'm also excited to tip you all off to an exciting feature we are already hard at work on for next month...in honor of marriage equality in Pennsylvania we will be presenting our first gay wedding issue and are excited to bring you everything you may need to plan your nuptials including something old, new, borrowed and YOU!

Love is indeed in the air now more than ever! Thank you for helping us to bring LGBT visibility everywhere.

With Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe King." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joe King
Editor-in-Chief

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EQUAL magazine

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9 PM
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11 Fri



August Wilson Center
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11-20 Fri-Sun

*Pittsburgh
Vintage
Grand
Prix*

Schenley Park
pvpg.org



19 Sat

EXCUSE MY BEAUTY

featuring

*Gia
Gunn*



10 PM
Brillobox
[etsy.com/shop/
themoonbabysmoonden](http://etsy.com/shop/themoonbabysmoonden)

20 Sun

**XTREME
BINGO** with
EDA
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Pittsburgh Opera
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deltafoundation.us/tickets



23 Wed

Boyz II Men

with the Pittsburgh Symphony
7:30 PM
Heinz Hall
trustarts.org



26 Sat

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LIFESTYLE EXPO**

Point State Park
whirlmagazine.com/yogafest



7 Mon

PAUL MCCARTNEY

8 PM
Consol Energy Center
ticketmaster.com



10-12 Thurs-Sat

Cruze Bar's 3rd Anniversary Bash!

Thursday: Glow Stick College Party
Friday: iCandy Party
Saturday: Drag Queen Lube Wrestling

11 Fri

I-DENTIFY: THE TRUTH LIES WITHIN

An All Butch Fashion Show
Andy Warhol Museum
showclix.com/event/
whatisbutchpittsburgh

12 Sat

Stephen Foster Music & Heritage Festival

Allegheny Cemetary
11 AM-4 PM
doodahdays.com



17 Thurs

Stayin' Alive:

ONE NIGHT OF THE BEE GEES
WITH THE PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY
7:30 PM
Heinz Hall
trustarts.org

18-19 Fri-Sat

Imitation of Wife

Starring Eda Bagel
8 PM
Arcade Comedy Theater
arcadecomedytheater.com



21-27 Mon-Sun

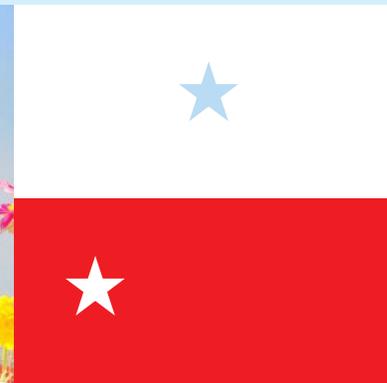


**PITTSBURGH
BLACK PRIDE**
Pittsburgh
Black Pride Week
pittsburghblackpride.org

22 Tues

KATY PERRY

7 PM
Consol Energy Center
ticketmaster.com



26 Sat

Bill Maher

8 PM
Heinz Hall
trustarts.org



26 Sat



**PITTSBURGH POWER VS.
PHILADELPHIA SOUL**
5 PM
Consol Energy Center
pittsburghpowerfootball.com



What's Gay and Goin' on?

Photos by G. Michael Beigay

Lucky After Dark @ Future Tenant



Tea Dance Kick-off @ Cruze Bar



Art for Change @ Wyndham



Decision Day Rally on Ellsworth Ave.



G2H2 7th Anniversary party @ 5801



HOT PICNICS & COLD COCKTAILS

By Jay Obertance

Summer is synonymous with entertaining and for good reason. Warm summer days and long summer evenings make the perfect backdrop for gatherings with friends and family on the deck with some delicious cocktails.

How do you take a simple picnic from shelter house pool party to the talk of the town? Instead of typical busy patterned linens and party decor, use simple color schemes to convey summer holiday themes with sophistication.

Truthfully, although it is the outdoors, you can't go wrong with white. Decorate your table with monochromatic fresh flowers in red, white or blue, accent with crisp white linens, and add bowls of fresh red strawberries and blueberries. Be sure to locally source your berries so they are perfectly ripe. You can also string white lights in trees and foliage to add a simple glow. As the sun sets, the lights will add an element of twinkling elegance.

To ease your burden of summer entertaining, make your picnic a

casual potluck. Your guests will arrive and see your gorgeous table scape and immediately expect something just as elegant. So throw them a culinary curve ball and do the classics grilled up to perfection. I always love to do something slightly more casual when I know my guests are expecting something over the top. That being said, whatever you're doing make sure you do it right. Don't skip steps and don't rely on "Sweet Baby Rays!"

Keep the cocktails simple and elegant. Everyone knows my love of Italian Prosecco. It's light, crisp, bubbly, dry, and delicious. It gives the illusion of delectable champagne without breaking the bank. Go super simple and just float some of the berries from the table in a flute glass with the wine. You can also get a nice collection of spirits and create a handcrafted drink to get people talking. Here are a few unique and delicious sparkling cocktail recipes that are sure to please your guests.

PICNIC PERFECT PROSECCO

Ingredients:

4 ounces Prosecco
1 ounce bourbon
3/4 ounce homemade sweet and sour (recipe follows)
1/3 cup sliced strawberries
1 whole strawberry for garnish

Directions:

Muddle the sliced strawberries with bourbon and strain the liquid into a serving glass. Combine with sweet and sour and top with 4 ounces of Prosecco. Garnish with the whole strawberry and serve. Makes one cocktail.

HOMEMADE SWEET AND SOUR

Ingredients:

1 cup sugar
1 cup water
1/2cup fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup fresh lime juice

Directions:

Combine all ingredients and stir until sugar is dissolved. Store in refrigerator. Makes 2 cups and can be chilled for up to 2-3 weeks.

ISLAND SUMMER

Ingredients:

4 ounces Prosecco
1 ounce coconut rum
1/2 ounce triple sec
Fresh coconut garnish

Directions:

Open a fresh coconut, remove a portion of the flesh and cut out a star-shaped garnish (don't be scared). Add the coconut rum and triple sec to a serving glass, followed by 4 ounces of Prosecco. Garnish with the coconut star and serve. Makes one cocktail.

FRESH BREEZER

Ingredients:

4 ounces Prosecco
1 ounce gin
1/4 ounce elderflower liquor
Squeeze of a lemon wedge
Fresh blueberries for garnish

Directions:

Combine the gin, elderflower liquor, and lemon juice in a serving glass. Top with Prosecco. Garnish with fresh blueberries and serve. Makes one cocktail. **EQ**



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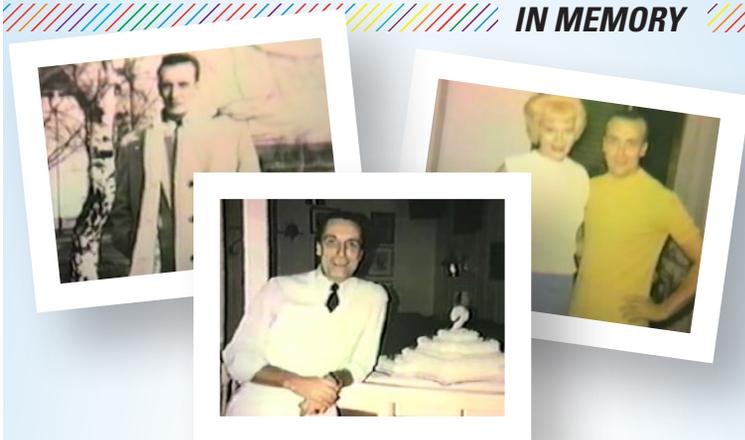


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IN MEMORY



Robert "Lucky" Johns

Robert "Lucky" Johns passed away peacefully on the morning of June 18th, 2014. He was born to Italian-American parents in Pittsburgh's Northside in 1935, at which time his mother nicknamed him "Fortunato." "I've been Lucky all my life," he said. The charismatic Johns was influential for forty years, helping to form Pittsburgh's gay and lesbian community.

Except for his military service, Lucky spent his entire life in Pittsburgh. Working in bars and restaurants in the 1950s and '60s, he formed alliances with other gay men and eventually altered the 'twilight world' that gay men and lesbians inhabited.

Johns opened the city's first gay social club, the Transportation Club or "T.C." in 1967, at a time when commercial establishments were prohibited from serving known homosexuals. While there were always sympathetic bars and nightspots, Johns's clubs – the T. C. Club, The House of Tilden, Travelers, and the eponymous Real Luck Café – became sanctuaries for Pittsburgh' gay community for almost forty years. In its heyday, his clubs boasted 30,000 members across the tri-state area.

Johns's work for the gay community extended well beyond the clubs he established. Along with other bar owners, he helped produce numerous community events including annual picnics for the LGBT community, and provided seed money for gay and lesbian social services, including the Lambda Foundation, the Tavern Guild, and the Gay and Lesbian Community Center. He is survived by the community he helped create.

Johns is also the subject of "Lucky After Dark," the first inaugural show produced by the Pittsburgh Queer History Project. Harrison Apple, the Project's curator said: "The bars were there before anything else, and Lucky was the key player in that world for decades. We owe him a great deal." The Project is now collecting and archiving the material left by Johns.

A celebration of life for Robert "Lucky" Johns will be held Wednesday, July 16 at Donnie's Place at 1226 Herron Ave., Pittsburgh from 5-8 PM. [EQ](#)

PITTSBURGH PRIDE

Be BRAVE

FABULOUS GAY FRIDAY
IN MARKET SQUARE

Photos by John Altdorfer
and Mark Simpson



Be BRAVE

EQUALITY ON ELLSWORTH

Photos by Mark Simpson

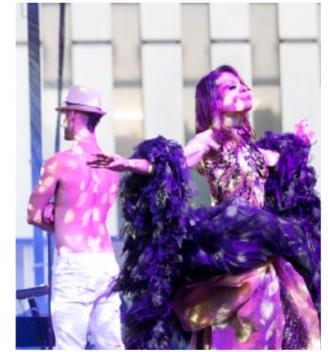
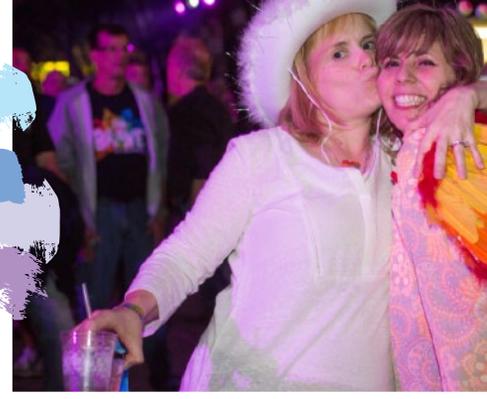




Be BRAVE

PRIDE in the STREET

Photos by Mark Simpson

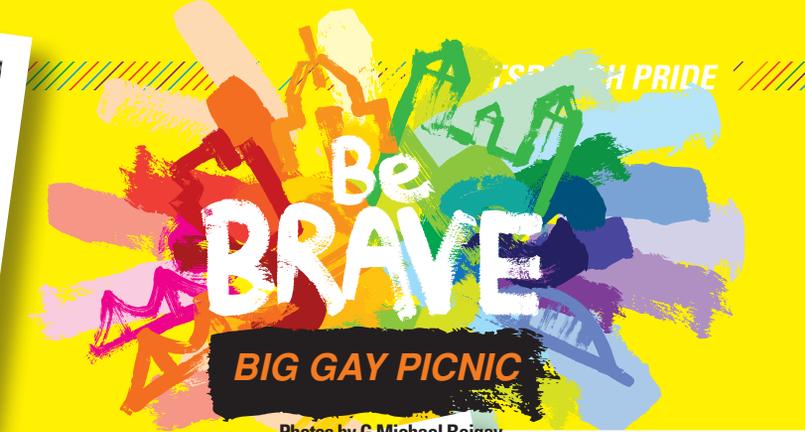






Photos by Mark Simpson





Photos by G Michael Beigay

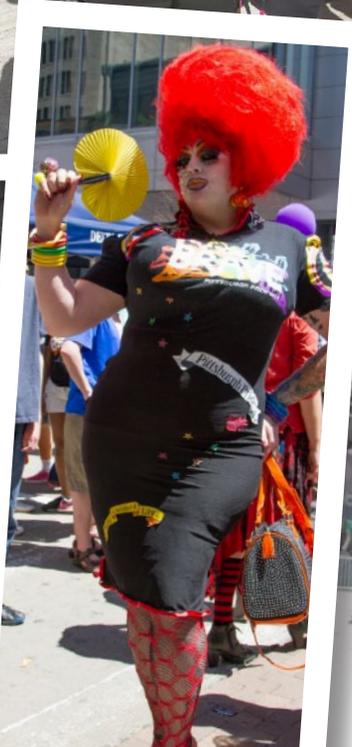


PITTSBURGH PRIDE

Be BRAVE

PRIDEFEST

Photos by Mark Simpson





Be BRAVE

SPLASH

Photos by G Michael Beigay





EUROPE

*Planning a trip to Europe this year?
Check out these hidden gems for gay & lesbians travelers*

By Carlos Kytka, Executive Director of the Gay European Tourism Association

Europe is the world's number one tourist destination and every year millions of gay people flood to our cities, beaches and countryside. London has some of the world's best gay nightlife. Paris is one of the world's most beautiful cities. Berlin is renowned for its harder gay clubbing. Gran Canaria, Ibiza and Mykonos are sunshine islands of gayness.

But what about some of the less well-known destinations for gay travelers that add something different to your tour of Europe? Here are my top tips for 2014 and 2015.

Sitges

This great little Mediterranean seaside village, just 20 miles from Barcelona in Spain, is like a gay paradise in the summer. The main streets are packed with gay bars and clubs. You can party all night and in the day you can chill and watch the boys and girls on the gay beach right in the center of the sea front. And no need for taxis – you can walk everywhere. For a bit of culture, Barcelona is just a 20 minute train ride away.

Vienna

The historic capital of one of Europe's great lost empires, Vienna is sublimely elegant with beautiful buildings and oozing with culture. Mozart wrote and performed many of

his masterpieces here. It is consistently ranked as one of the world's best cities to live in and it's great for gay people too. There are plenty of bars, clubs and saunas and "The Life Ball" in May is Europe's largest AIDS charity event.

Stockholm

Sweden's elegant capital is built on a myriad of islands and has just opened the ABBA Museum. What more could a gay man or woman want?

Reykjavik

Stop in Iceland's capital on the way over to Europe and you will be amazed at how much there is to do on this volcanic island. Bathe in the naturally heated Blue Lagoon, snow-bike



over glaciers, quad-bike over volcanoes, whale-watch in the Atlantic and enjoy one of the warmest welcome in Reykjavik's gay bars.

Antwerp

Diamonds, fashion, Belgium chocolate and a great gay dance club called Red and Blue, make this Belgium port well worth a visit.

Milan

This northern Italian city has, at its hub, one of the most stunning cathedrals you will ever see and in the streets surrounding it the stores of some of the world's top fashion designers. A visit to the gay clubs is like watching beautiful models on a catwalk. And, it is close to the stunning Alpine lakes.

Cruises

Over the past few years Europe has fallen in love with gay cruises, from the big dance cruises of Atlantis and Demance to smaller

more intimate voyages. Cruises are a great way to visit many beautiful European destinations without having to pack and move to a different hotel every day.

WILD CARD:

Tel Aviv

Although not strictly in Europe, the Mediterranean city of Tel Aviv is worth visiting. As if beautiful boys and girls, a surprisingly gay friendly atmosphere, and partying on the beach weren't enough, then day trips to float on the Dead Sea and visit the historic sites of the Holy Land make this one of the most memorable destinations ever. **EQ**

For more info, visit gaywelcome.com, where you will find the most comprehensive coverage of Europe's gay destinations, events, cruises and holidays, and over 4,000 gay and gay-friendly hotels.

Thanks for cheering us on at Pride!

*Because of you, all 14 of the kittens we brought are **PROUD** to have new homes!*

Animals don't care who you love. Neither do we.



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The
ELEPHANT
in the Room

To encourage the growing body positive movement, Equal Magazine now allows our models to opt in or opt out of airbrushing.

By Jonathan Fobear
Photos by Mara Rago

The first time I realized just how unethically Photoshop can be used was when one of my instructors told our class that her first job was working for a lawyer's office, airbrushing off the bruises and black eyes of women in domestic abuse cases. That was supposed to be "inspiration." Behold the wonders of Photoshop.

Make a Market, Fake a Market

When I was a student at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, Adbusters Magazine was my own personal off-the-status-quo bible that went against everything I was learning to do. Every page indicted the evils of marketing and was also the reason I took a vow to research clients before doing work for them. I understood the power of imagery and I didn't want to be a propaganda artist for the wrong cause.

But even as a designer who chooses socially responsible clients, could airbrushing be wrong no matter who I do it for? In one of my marketing classes we were discussing the invention of modern day deodorant and perfume. The lesson was this: "You can't sell a product to people that are happy and content. You have to make them feel insecure or inadequate to make them want to buy your product, which solves the problem you created." Needless to say I wasn't inspired by that marketing pep talk either...I was creeped out.

The Blame Game

Every publication I've ever designed has always had some amount of airbrushing, whether the images are of nature, products, or people. Photo manipulation can start out harmlessly enough by deleting a couple stray hairs or fix a makeup mark on a shirt, but it can also change eye color, smooth wrinkles, make longer legs, shrink feet, make whole bellies disappear, and totally change skin color.

Online content creators like Jezebel, Spleid, Gizmodo, Yahoo, etc. are giddy to put the blame squarely on "the industry" or "Hollywood beauty standards." The problem with a culture of body shaming is that it is a self-perpetuating cycle. I'm happy to take my share of blame, but are you? I've had models ask me after a photo shoot to take pounds off of them. I've had models ask me to Photoshop their hair, their eyes, and "make them pretty."

Some people we have featured in our magazine have criticized me for airbrushing their photos too much and some people have criticized me for not airbrushing their photos enough. Some have even suggested that "leaving them in as is" is a passive aggressive slap in the face. I've had friends wag their finger in my face and say my Photoshopping is the problem, then criticize a cover model's weight in the same breath.

As someone who works with Photoshop every day and often takes the brunt of criticism, here are some questions to consider this: What is sexy to you? Who are you attracted to at the bar, and do "beautiful" people sell you on a product or service better than "realistic" looking people?

Perhaps my Photoshop efforts can be compared to mom's delicious snacks. As an act of love, whenever I visit, my mom will bake me something delicious like cookies or brownies but it's knowingly unhealthy.

Local **Burghers** take on body image



"Growing up a "fat kid," I expected the bullies who called me "Piggly Quigley" to go away – but I'm still fat-shamed, usually by former fat kids. They shed the weight but not the insecurity. If the media would show that average-bodied guys can be sexy, we'd stop expecting to be Adonis and just be human instead."

– Michael Quigley



"No one really cares about thin shaming. Gay guys almost universally hate when ultra thin guys talk about their body issues or body dysmorphia. I just avoid the topic because people will comment on my body to either attack themselves or me."

– Jan Gerling



"You should be happy with where you are, and strive to be where you want to be. Other people will try to make you feel less than, or straight up tell you you're fat, gross, ugly. You gotta carry on. You can get whatever or whoever you want as long as you know you can get it. Cause you can, and that's all that matters."

– Gage Colangelo

Local **Burghers** take on body image



"I think across the board (big, small, tall or short) everyone is beautiful. Truly. And in that same breath, each person has insecurities, no matter what they look like. Society has set up really unrealistic physical goals, when in reality, no one has it much better than the other, it's just all about perception."

- Jess Porter



"I've been insecure about my body since the derisive taunts of my childhood peers. Trying to get and to maintain a positive body image as an adult has been just as hard if not harder. When I was overweight, I'd receive comments like, "you've got a handsome face..." while I could see their judgmental eyes scanning over my body. When I'd finally lose weight and be thin, I would often hear, "You've lost weight, your face looks thin. Is everything okay?"

- John Edward Kandray



"People were thin shaming me when I lost a lot of weight on purpose. They'd just come right up to me and say you're too skinny. It really blew me away. I was so proud of how I looked and felt and was eating very healthy and walking a lot. I thought maybe people don't really know what a normal human body looks like with proper diet and exercise."

- John Colombo, photographer

WHO IS TO SAY THAT WRINKLES, EXTRA POUNDS, OR FRECKLES ISN'T SOMEONE'S INDIVIDUAL BEAUTY? THAT SCAR ON YOUR FACE TELLS A STORY – WOULD YOU ASK US TO AIRBRUSH IT OUT?

And in the same vein, as an act of love, I'll Photoshop someone (especially people I know personally) to "look their best," but who decides what that means? Who is to say that wrinkles, extra pounds, or freckles isn't someone's individual beauty? That scar on your face tells a story – would you ask us to airbrush it out?

The Heaviest Burden of All

Body image, specifically weight issues have personal significance for me. Several of my family members have struggled with obesity. They've had knees replaced, had gastric bypass surgery, struggled with depression, suffered health complications, and weight has been the cause of most of it.

My extremely funny and well-loved Uncle Mark committed suicide three years ago because of the depression and health issues that come with being over 400 pounds. As a child, I remembered my uncle weighing moderately overweight, then a little bigger each passing year. Over time, the extra weight he carried wore down his joints, then his back and bones, then eventually his hope to ever lose the weight. So despite my desire to stand on a mountain and yell "be proud of your body no matter what size you are!" I feel it's naive. I support a body positive culture where shame is discouraged, but I can't support anyone maintaining a level of obesity that is detrimental to physical and mental health, not after what my family has been through.

Insecurity is Highly Profitable

We in the creative industry are often asked to hire, photograph, and airbrush everyone into being thin, fit and sometimes totally

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Local Burghers take on body image



"I am happier with the way my body looks at 31 years old and my current weight yet people still expect me to have the 8 pack abs I had when I weighed 118lbs and was way too thin. That is what our culture projects as the norm."
- **Chad Paul Petrillo**, December 2013
Equal Magazine cover model



"Dude, I just love myself. When I'm hungry I eat, when I'm not hungry, I don't. I think it's up to the individual how to respond to things people say. People briefly were calling me Moo Hog Body and I never considered it bullying, I considered it more like Mean Girls gossip. I will admit though that it was the wake-up call that made me start paying attention to my weight, and why I've lost a few pounds. I think people of all shapes and sizes are beautiful. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder."
- **Mahogany La Piranha**



"The one thing I've learned about my body is that no one is ever going to feel the way I do about it. Either too fat or too thin, hair or no hair, muscle or not, each person has their own thing they like. No matter what negative things anyone has ever said to me about being the way I am, I've thought something way worse about myself. But then I remember that I'm sexy, I'm fun, I like who I am and I'm a much happier person. I just keep doing for me. If you don't like it that's your problem."
- **Jason Seth Aloise**

unrealistic. Despite the 24 million Americans with eating disorders, and countless more who suffer from confidence issues, psychological damage, and bullying, if you keep the masses dissatisfied with their body image, then it will sell billions dollars of wrinkle creams, weight loss books, skin lotions, diet fads and much more.

Large scale surveys concluded that male body image concerns have dramatically increased over the past three decades from 15% to 43% of men being dissatisfied with their bodies; rates that are comparable to those found in women. Also, currently, 80 percent of women in the U.S. are dissatisfied with their physical appearance. Sounds to me like a widespread epidemic.

According to statistics released by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), 14.6 million cosmetic plastic surgery procedures were performed in the United States in 2012, up 5 percent since 2011.

Change your Mind, Change the World.

Recently however, there has been some high-profile pushback from part of the Hollywood establishment as well as online activism through social media. Celebrities like Kim Kardashian, Kate Winslet, Lady Gaga, Brad Pitt, and Beyonce have all spoken out against needless Photoshopping.

In 2011 the non-profit Global Democracy suggested a disclaimer to be put on all airbrushed images of people to help people stop trying to become living Barbie dolls. Cigarette marketing has a disclaimer on it about health consequences, so why aren't misleading marketing images treated with the same gravity?

If you're not totally happy with how you look, bad news - you're in the majority. What we need is a Pride festival... for our bodies. We've been shamefully hiding our crow's feet, uneven boobs, body hair, and thick waists for too long. This is why from now on, Equal Magazine will be allowing anyone involved with our photoshoots to opt in or out of being digitally retouched. Maybe if people are ok with how they look in print without being airbrushed, other people may start to feel ok with their bodies too. We hope the trend grows.

The bottom line is we want people to feel good about themselves in our magazine, whether that involves Photoshop or not. After all, there's no one more qualified to say what is beautiful about yourself than you. **EQ**

LOCAL SEEN

Queer Seen

Photographs by Masha Vereshchenko

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EXCUSE MY BEAUTY STARRING MILK @ CATTIVO



STEER QUEER MAGAZINE @ ASSEMBLE



LGBTQQIAA | WTF

Labels and Oversensitivity in the Gay Community

By Philip Ezzo

As a minority culture, those of us that identify as homosexuals, or go against the grain of gender norms have been using the acronym LGBT for years. For those of you that don't know, L stands for Lesbians, G for Gays, B for Bisexuals, and T for Transgender. Recently, a few more letters were added that seems to be causing a little bit of controversy within the community.

The letters in question are QQIAA. Standing for Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Allies, and Asexuals, respectively. While I can understand that Intersex individuals might want to be included in our community, due to their dual gender capacity, and Asexuals may want to be identified in our category, despite their lack of sexuality, those that are questioning and our

allies don't seem to fit as neatly.

Queer is a relatively new umbrella term. Originally meaning strange or peculiar, queer developed a usage as a pejorative term for homosexual in the late 19th century. More recently, it has been reappropriated to establish community and assert a political identity and it's gaining use as a descriptor of non-heterosexual identities. While it has gained acceptance in our community, ask any straight person to use it and many are concerned about offending.

In order to be questioning, the desire to be with either gender is already there, so why not simply identify as Bisexual? The bi now, gay later plan has worked for many over the years. It just seems a bit redundant to me. As for

the allies, I can't deny that we rely a lot on our heterosexual friends and family members for support, and to help bring the fight for equality to the rest of the world, but should individuals that identify as 100% heterosexual be given a slot in the gay community?

Where does it end? Will there be an F for Furies next year? Maybe there will be another F for Fetishists. Continuing to add letters may seem very inclusive, but it doesn't make much sense in the grand scheme of things. By adding different letters, are we actually creating mini-divides, continuing to point out the differences in each other? Should it matter which gender or sexuality I am? Do I need a letter to become a member? By the end, there just might be a rainbow of letters to match our rainbow flag.

There is a lot of power in labels. Humanity needs them to survive; to know the difference between safety and danger. But, we've become so used to playing the political game for equality that it's quite possible that we've gotten a bit swept up in the quicksand of political correctness.

In a recent interview, TV personality and drag queen extraordinaire, RuPaul spoke about our worst enemy being ourselves, not the conservative politicians. I paraphrase one of his quotes, by saying "Political correctness has put a stranglehold on us, and we have begun devouring ourselves from the inside out." He also compared the gay movement to the book *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. It seems to be the natural human trajectory to revolt, only to eventually forget the reason for the revolution in the first place.

RuPaul is no stranger to scandals of this kind. This season on his reality-television show "RuPaul's Drag Race," the use of the words "tranny," and "shemale" created quite a stir. As a result, a portion of one of the episodes

was removed, and the classic line "You've Got She-Mail" has been removed from every episode, ex post facto. This is only one example of the way political correctness has impacted the community in recent months.

Making others feel included and appreciated is an essential part of any community, but I feel that we've become so consumed with not treading on other people's feelings that we've lost a bit of our sense of humor. No matter who we choose to sleep with, whom we love, or with which gender we identify, we have to develop a thicker skin, and realize that our differences may be confusing to other people. By constantly taking offense to misuse of proper terms or labels, we promote a victim mentality, seeking attention through perceived persecution. Most of the time, these infractions are caused, simply, by ignorance, in the true sense of the word. We need to learn how to educate without taking ourselves too seriously if we ever hope to move forward equally. 

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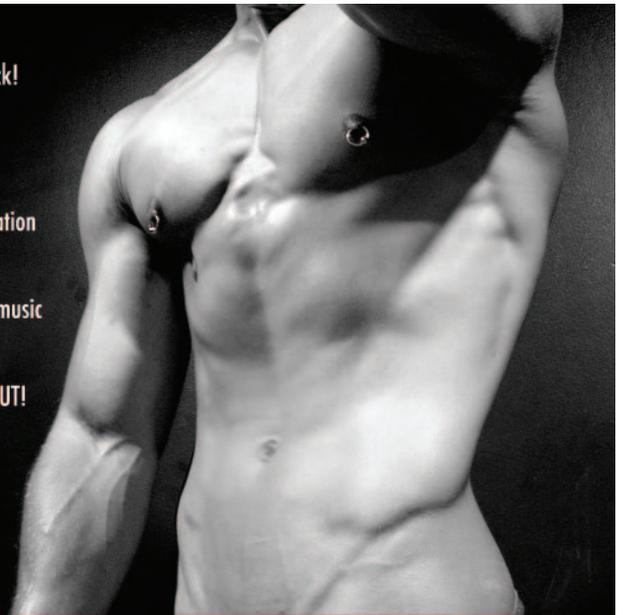
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Occupied

By Stacey Federoff

App lists gender-neutral restrooms to help highlight safe spaces

Different cultures represent gendered restrooms differently, but the ubiquitous figures denoting men's and women's restrooms are, at least, problematic and at worst, dangerous for some gender nonconforming people.

Incidents of transgendered people facing harassment in public places or disciplinary action at schools and college campuses when using the "wrong" restroom have been reported, when facilities that are gender-neutral can provide easier access not only for those who don't prescribe to a gender binary, but also those who do, says Lisa Brush, a sociologist at the University of Pittsburgh.

"Facilities that are there should preserve people's privacy and dignity while respecting their safety," she says.

A website and mobile app released earlier this year, Refuge Restrooms, was created by transwoman Teagan Widmer to index gender-neutral restrooms in places like public buildings, restaurants and coffee shops.

Users can contribute listings to the app, rate the restrooms and leave comments about the facilities. About 40 places in and around Pittsburgh are listed in the app, including some buildings at local universities.

Square Café at 1137 S. Braddock Ave. in Regent Square is listed among them with a comment calling it a "cute queer-owned neighborhood café."

Manager Ben Fine says the two small gender-neutral restrooms there were most likely a necessity of space and efficiency to keep lines down at the busy restaurant when it was built 11 years ago, but creating a safe space is an added plus.

"Whether it was intentional or not ... it makes me happy that it's a comfortable place and (customers) don't have to worry about any judgement or recourse because of it," he says. "I would think any little thing like that would probably make life a little easier. It shouldn't be

something that should be a cause of stress."

At The Mr. Roboto Project, a gallery and concert space at 5106 Penn Ave., the restrooms – not yet listed on the app – are marked with their fixtures, "toilet" and "urinal and toilet," without gender for much the same reason as Square Café, says Mike O. Roth, a founder and former board member.

When the space, founded in 1999, moved to its current location on Penn Avenue in 2011, it was at first marked with standard gendered signs. Board members removed them to help move traffic along during busy concerts, while recognizing that some visitors don't identify strongly with the gender binary, Roth says.

"If a bathroom's open, someone should be able to use it," he says. "It wasn't trying to make any grand statement at that time, but saying, 'yes, we recognize this.'"

In Washington, D.C., the city's Office of Human Rights launched a campaign in April to bring

attention to the fact that single-occupancy bathrooms are required to be gender neutral under a law carrying a \$500 fine.

The office enlisted the help of the public, asking for tweets using the hashtag #safebathroomsDC to notify the office of restrooms that could be improved.

Social media doesn't create the safe spaces, but encourages the commitment of people and institutions that do, or calls out those who don't, Brush says.

"It's both an important information network ... and it's a very important way of using the power of social media and social networks," she says. "What really matters is there are actually institutions that are creating this kind of space."

An app like Refuge Restrooms helps address public health, personal health and safety issues while also allowing people to use their buying power to choose more supportive spaces, Brush says.

While the availability of gendered spaces is sometimes essential for safety, like female-only

train cars in India and Japan, it needs to be available alongside a non-gendered space to better reflect equality, Brush says.

When people feel the need to officially or unofficially "police" another person's gender, it usually is not a reflection on the gender nonconforming person, Brush says, but the insecurities of the harasser.

"I think the point is to create a world where if people feel good in a (gender) binary, that's ok, and if they don't feel good in a binary, that's ok too, and nobody questions their dignity or their morality or their humanity either way," Brush says.

When people are too strictly pushed biologically or culturally into categories – no matter if it's feminine, masculine or androgynous – differences are enforced more than similarities, Brush says.

"I think the thing that really matters is what's between your ears and what's between your sternum and your backbone: your brain and your heart," she says. [EQ](#)

A WEBSITE AND MOBILE APP RELEASED EARLIER THIS YEAR, REFUGE RESTROOMS, WAS CREATED BY TRANSWOMAN TEAGAN WIDMER TO INDEX GENDER-NEUTRAL RESTROOMS IN PLACES LIKE PUBLIC BUILDINGS, RESTAURANTS AND COFFEE SHOPS.



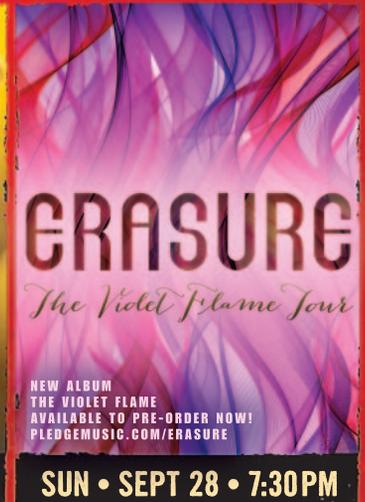
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YOU'RE GAY? YOU'RE

Fired

Employment Discrimination and the LGBT Community

By: Mariah L. Passarelli, Esquire



It has been an exciting year for advancements in LGBT rights. The Supreme Court struck down portions of the federal Defense of Marriage Act in *United States v. Windsor* in June 2013, and with that, the floodgates seemed to have opened. During the last 12 months, state after state has legalized same-sex marriage in one way or another. In October 2013, New Jersey became the 14th state to legalize same-sex marriage when its governor, Chris Christie, chose not to appeal a court ruling overturning the state's ban. The next month, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed an act declaring the rights of Illinois citizens to marry whomever they choose. Favorable rulings (some now appealed, some immediately effective) followed in New Mexico, Utah, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Virginia, Texas, Michigan, Ohio, Arkansas, Idaho and Oregon. Finally, on May 20, 2014, Pennsylvania joined 18 other states where same-sex marriage is legal when the Honorable John E. Jones, III (a judge appointed by President George W. Bush) ruled in favor of marriage equality proponents in *Whitewood v. Wolf* and the Commonwealth's ultra-conservative governor, Tom Corbett, took a pass at appealing.

But before you dust off your hands and declare the work of gay rights advocates in Pennsylvania completed, realize this: you can still get fired by your employer for being gay. That is true in Pennsylvania. That is true at the federal level. That is true in 28 other states. If you are transgender, it is true in 34 states, and the federal laws protecting you are as thin as Dick Cheney's hair. This, my friends, is the next frontier and, in many ways, is just as important (although decidedly less glamorous) than the same-sex marriage fight. If your employer can still terminate you with impunity based on your sexual preference, how safe is your family, your marriage, your financial security – all of the other things that our community has been fighting to protect? Here is the state of the law as we currently find it.

Federal Protections

The bread and butter of employee rights come from the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Known as Title VII, this act protects employees from discrimination and harassment based on their race, color, religion, sex and

national origin. Other similar acts (the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act) provide similar protections for employees discriminated against or harassed based on their age (over 40) or qualified disability. Unfortunately, none of these protected categories clearly encompass sexual orientation or gender identity.

Since 1994 (yes, 20 years ago), a law known as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act ("ENDA") has been introduced in every single Congress except for one. ENDA would specifically prohibit companies with 15 or more employees from discriminating against or harassing employees based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Notably, not all employees would receive these protections because the act exempts small businesses, religious organizations and the military. Although the bill passed the Senate by a vote of 64 to 32 on November 7, 2013, it remains awaiting a formal vote in the House of Representatives where, realistically, it is expected to fail.

If ENDA were to somehow pass, it would mean that employees who feel they were being discriminated against or harassed based on sexual orientation or gender identity could proceed with legal action against their employer using the Title VII framework. They would begin by filing a charge of discrimination with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC"), who would in turn conduct an investigation. At the conclusion of the EEOC's investigation (assuming the case was not resolved at that level), the employee would have the ability to proceed with a federal lawsuit, from which she could recover lost wages and damages for emotional pain and suffering caused by her employer. However, with ENDA stalled in the House, LGBT employees must rely on often non-existent state law protections.

Pennsylvania Law

Currently, 17 states and the District of Columbia prohibit companies from discriminating against employees because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Pennsylvania is not one of them. Pennsylvania is, however, one of several states where LGBT anti-discrimination legislation has been proposed.



Pennsylvania Senate and House Bill Number 300 would amend the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (“PHRA”) to include “sexual orientation and gender identity or expression” as a protected category. It would apply these protections to companies with four or more employees (a threshold notably lower than that of ENDA), and does not contain an exemption for religious organizations. Much like the quandary at the federal level, it appears that Bill No. 300 is stalled in the legislature, although Governor Corbett has stated that he will sign the bill if it ever reaches his desk.

Luckily, the two largest cities in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia and Pittsburgh), as well as 32 other Pennsylvania municipalities, have local laws already on the books that provide employment discrimination protections to LGBT employees. The Philadelphia Fair Practices Ordinance added a provision prohibiting employment discrimination based on sexual orientation way back in 1982. In 2002, the prohibition against discrimination based on gender identity was added to the Philadelphia law. In Pittsburgh, the prohibition against discrimination based on sexual orientation went into effect in 1997 and is

now part of the city’s Non-Discrimination Code. Unfortunately, the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh laws only apply to companies located in those cities. In other words, if an individual lives in Pittsburgh, but works in another municipality, the Pittsburgh law would offer that person no protection.

What’s Next?

The pathway forward for LGBT employees with regard to these protections is not entirely clear, although a creeping kind of slow progress does seem to be taking place. On June 16, 2014, a White House representative hinted that President Barack Obama is preparing to issue an Executive Order that would prohibit federal government contractors from discriminating against employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity. While this may not seem like a big deal, these protections could be significant since federal contractors employ a significant percentage of American workers.

Pennsylvanians who don’t work for federal contractors or in municipalities with local protections must be content to play the waiting game. Unfortunately, unless and

until ENDA and/or Pennsylvania Senate and House Bill Number 300 passes, the majority of Pennsylvania workers will remain unprotected from employment discrimination based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Such is the ironic state of LGBT rights today. In Pennsylvania (and in many states across the country), you can marry whomever you want; you can file both state and federal joint income tax returns; you can sponsor a same-sex foreign spouse as a U.S. Citizen; you don’t have to pay inheritance tax if your same-sex spouse dies; you can collect your same-sex spouse’s retirement benefits; you and your same-sex spouse can adopt a child; and you can get fired because of your sexual orientation or your gender identity. [EQ](#)

Mariah L. Passarelli, Esquire is a labor and employment attorney at BIR.

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Androgynous Pittsburgh: Genderfull

Pair begins photo project on gender presentations

By Stacey Federoff
Photos by Allie Wynands

Allie Wynands
PHOTOGRAPHY

Chelsea Zahn has learned about herself and her gender presentation just by discussing and supporting the process her roommate has gone through.

"She's a really authentic person, which I can really appreciate and understand," Zahn says.

When Zahn, 22, of Sheraden, met photographer Allie Wynands, the thought of planning a project to tell other stories of androgyny and gender became a reality.

"It's something that's close to my heart," says Wynands, 23, of Highland Park. "It's a term that people have gotten more familiar with in the last few years."

Beyond highly stylized representations of celebrities like David Bowie or Tilda Swinton, the pair put out a call online for androgynous models in hopes that they could show real human beings in their everyday lives.

"My kind of photography is very humanistic, emotive and real," says Wynands, a recent Point Park University graduate with a degree in photojournalism. "It's how they live their lives and it's how they're comfortable and that's what we want to portray."

Within a few days, they had about 20 people interested in participating with four shoots completed in the first weekend.

Among the first models was Zahn's roommate

and inspiration, Jennifer Hoffman.

Originally from northern Detroit, Hoffman has lived in Pittsburgh for about six years after completing graduate school and playing for the Pittsburgh Passion. Now, she is a fitness instructor and works for UPMC-Mercy's behavioral health department.

"For me, it's about being open and expressing the parts of me that I'm comfortable with," says Hoffman.

Gender presentation can be set apart from sexual orientation, she says. Straight men and women can present as androgynous, just as lesbians can present as femme, butch or in-between.

WYNANDS AND ZAHN BOTH AGREED THAT THEY HOPE THE PROJECT CAN INSPIRE OTHER PEOPLE TO BE COMFORTABLE WITH WHO THEY ARE IN ORDER TO BE CONFIDENT, PASSIONATE AND AUTHENTIC.

Challenging those gendered representations through clothes, makeup and hairstyles also doesn't mean someone who identifies as androgynous is transgender, Hoffman says.

"I enjoy being a female," she says. "I don't need to be a man with a woman, I want to be a woman with a woman."

Zahn says the project, which she hopes to launch in early July, will also include video profiles of each model to help connect viewers to their subjects.

"I hope when people see this they can relate and it helps them identify with who they really are," she says.

Wynands says that she is also learning while working on the project, like hearing one person say that wearing a dress was considered punishment when growing up.

"We get to learn and educate while we're doing it; it's a learning process for sure," she says.

Hoffman says she is impressed that her friends want to do something like this, but hopes that it can be meaningful for those that see it.

"I'm comfortable with who I am, it's just hard to believe other people would want to photograph who I am," she says. "We're here not for ourselves, we're here for other people and that's what's meaningful to me."

Wynands and Zahn both agreed that they hope the project can inspire other people to be comfortable with who they are in order to be confident, passionate and authentic.

Hoffman says being true to yourself is what allows you to grow as a person.

"Your imperfections make you perfect, that's what makes you beautiful and that's what makes you loved," Hoffman says. **EQ**

The project is titled "Androgynous Pittsburgh" and these photos are from the series "Genderfull." To participate in the photo project, email photographer Allie Wynands at ahwynands@gmail.com.

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Summer Skin Care:

By Joe Corcoran

How to avoid the burn

It's a relaxing summer day at the pool. The sun is shining, the drinks are cold, a campy top 40 pop song is playing on the radio and life is nearly perfect. That is, until later in the evening when your skin is red, your feet are sore and you're feeling uneasy about a little something down under. Don't let this turn of events scare you. It's not too late!

Whether you're soaking up the sun or swimming at the shore, biking your commute to work or tending to the flowers in your backyard garden, these skincare tips will ensure you avoid that summertime sadness by maintaining a beautiful face and sexy bod throughout summer vacation and into the fall.

Saving Face

Wearing sunglasses that provide protection from UV rays will reduce the likelihood of developing wrinkles around your eyes as well as skin cancer of the face and cataracts. Lips are also vulnerable. Remember to wear lip balm that has an SPF component. Some of the products you use to reduce acne or fight off

infections can leave your skin more vulnerable to the damaging effects of UV rays. Antibiotics like doxycycline and tigecycline, and skin care products containing benzoyl peroxide, retinoid or certain acids (lactic acid, hyaluronic acid, etc.) can increase your risk of sunburn. On the flip side, all natural products like Aloe Vera, adding oatmeal or baking soda to a cool bath, or applying corn starch or mashed potatoes to affected areas have been known to help reduce the painful, burning side effects associated with bad sunburn.

Below the Belt

When you swim in a public pool or use a hot tub, sauna or bathing facility, it's always a good idea to dry off completely, shower or change out of your bathing suit when you're finished. If not, you run the risk of contracting skin infections like folliculitis, and molluscum contagiosum, many of which can last several months to a year after the initial infection and may be transmitted sexually. Tea tree oil or a white vinegar compress can help relieve some of the discomfort these infections may cause.

Workin' on a Tan

While Katy Perry encourages you to get toned, tanned, fit and ready for action this summer, perhaps you might consider skipping the tanning part. According to skincancer.org, there is no such thing as a healthy tan. Tanning is "skin's response to the sun's damaging rays." However, as tall, dark and handsome seems to be the stereotype of male attraction, countless people hit the beach or the tanning bed year round to bake their skin a crispy golden brown. According to Harvard Medical School's Women's Health Watch, tanning beds give off three times the amount of UVA radiation than that of natural sunlight – radiation that can lead to skin cancers and early-onset aging of the skin (wrinkles).

Sissy that Walk

Summertime and sandals seem to go hand in hand, but little do you know, the flip flops on your feet could lead to your defeat. A 2013 study by the University of Miami found that flip flops may contain over 18,000 bacteria, many

of which could lead to athlete's foot, warts or boils.

Wear Protection

Wearing sunscreen is of vital importance to the health of your skin during the summer months. Anytime you are exposed to the sun, you are at risk of getting burnt, but according to the Center for Disease Control, the sun is the most "hazardous" between the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Applying a broad spectrum sunscreen works best as a preventative measure. A minimum SPF15 is recommended, but using a higher dosage like 30 or 45 will increase your protection during longer exposure. However, whether you use SPF 15 or SPF 100, the sunscreen will only be effective if it is re-applied every two hours or as labeled on its packaging.

With summer in full swing, take the time now to make sure you're doing everything possible to protect the skin you're in so you're not paying for it later. Happy summer! 



Imitation of Wife

An Unauthorized Autobiography
starring Ms. Eda Bagel

July 18 & 19, 2014
8:00 pm

- Arcade Comedy Theater
- 811 Liberty Avenue, Downtown

Benefits The Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble

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BRINGING PITTSBURGH OUT





Tyler Bogden

on *“Into the Wild”* by Jon Krakauer

Photo by Mara Rago

“Into the Wild” is about living your life without any attachments to our materialistic world. Just being free and as close with god, nature, and yourself as much as possible. The character Christopher McCandless abandoned all belongings and set off on a quest to be free. Chris would become unchained from society in the raw and unfiltered experiences that nature would give him. McCandless once said “The very basic core of a man’s spirit is his passion for adventure.”

I am currently a senior in high school and plan on attending Point Park University in the fall for creative writing. I have a burning passion for spoken word poetry and I hope after I graduate college to publish a book. It will consist of all the past experiences in my life of being a gay man. The book will include many pieces of spoken word that I have written throughout the years. So hopefully one day I will open Equal Magazine and see someone posing with my book on the same page where I once was years ago. [EQ](#)

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