

Out and About

news for everyone from Colgate's LGBTQ Community

Issue No. 4

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"When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world, and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing." Adrienne Rich, 1986

2005-06: A very Queer Year it was ...

Films

During the Fall 2005 semester, the Office of LGBTQ Initiatives ran its own film series which attracted about 25 people at each showing. In the Spring of 2006, we moved to a collaborative effort with *CAB Take Two*, the *Sophomore Year Experience*, and the *Hamilton Movie Theater* in downtown Hamilton. These efforts allowed us to reach a much wider audience and integrated the film series into both the Colgate community at large and the local off-campus community.

The free showing of *Brokeback Mountain* in early February at the Hamilton Theater drew almost 200 people, including staff, faculty, students, and members of the local community. Several faculty members used it as an additional resource for their respective courses. The free showing of *Transamerica* in mid-March drew just over 100 people. The increased attendance at these films clearly demonstrates the potential for future collaborative efforts.

Films shown during the 2005-06 academic year in conjunction with the LGBTQ Initiatives Office in all formats included *Tarnation*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Rent*, *Transamerica*, *Kinsey*, *Monster*, *Bad Education*, and *Saving Face*.

Safe Zone Trainings

For three years, Safe Zone Trainings have been a staple of the LGBTQ Initiatives Office's efforts to reach out to Colgate and the local community. Due in large part to feedback from participants, the trainings have changed significantly over the past two years. Currently, they are largely student-run and include a number of active exercises geared to educate those with little or no knowledge of LGBTQ issues. Some aspects of the trainings this year were tied into courses such as PHED 124: Relationships and Sexuality, which allowed us to reach individuals that might not have attended on their own. Each of the 8 trainings held this year included approximately 25 participants. One training at SUNY Morrisville in the Spring included 75 of their Residential Life Staff Members, while the training on the Colgate campus in late February had around 40 participants.

Alumni Involvement

Following up on a successful gathering last year, Reunion 2006 drew over thirty alumni interested in learning more about LGBTQ programming on campus to a GALA reception at James B. Colgate Hall. Alumni involvement with students continued this past spring through the Alumni Speaker Series. Returning to campus to speak and connect were Jeff McMorris '84, Kyle Button '84, Rev. Sue Phillips '88, and Dean Keppler '92. Several alumni also attended and presented at the Big Gay Weekend event.

Special Events

This year was characterized by several exceptionally successful special events. The LGBTQ Initiatives Office, *Advocates*, and the *Rainbow Alliance* worked collaboratively on many projects and were able to reach a wide range of students in both the LGBTQ and straight communities. These collaborative events included: 5 social outings to Syracuse; an LGBTQ Community Dinner; National Coming Out Day; *Kinsey Sicks* at the Palace Theater; College Recruitment Fair in NYC; December Holi-gay Party; *Vagina Monologues* (co-sponsored with Women's Studies); Big Gay Weekend (*see below*); and the LavGrad Ceremony (*see page 3*).

Big Gay Weekend

One of the most significant events of the past three years was Colgate's First Annual Big Gay Weekend held in mid-April 2006. Initially conceptualized by Will Bernie '06, an out senior, to create a great weekend for the LGBTQ community on campus, the idea took hold campus-wide. Months of planning and preparation resulted in an incredibly fun, educational, and visible weekend for LGBTQ students and their allies.

President Rebecca Chopp introduced the keynote speaker, openly gay actor B.D. Wong (*see page 3*) and used the occasion to announce the creation of a full-time LGBTQ Coordinator position, which will be responsible for LGBTQ programming and activities beginning in the Fall of 2006.

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Over forty people from other schools attended the weekend, including students from Syracuse, SUNY Potsdam, and Vassar. Alumni, staff, faculty, and students were all involved in planning and running the weekend, and events took place both on campus and in the local community.

The weekend was funded almost entirely with monies from the Budget Allocation Committee – the budgetary arm of the Student Government Association. Events were planned in **collaboration with several other campus organizations**, including the Asian Awareness Coalition, ALANA Cultural Center, CAB Take Two, CAB Barge Series, College Republicans, and Career Services. Feedback has been very positive, with the only exception attributed to timing. Due to space restrictions, the event was held over Easter and Passover weekend, an unfortunate consequence that we hope to avoid in the future. The weekend's events included:

Friday, April 14

“Homo No Mo Halfway House” by Peterson Toscano (7 pm at 94 Broad Street) *Through five characters, Peterson took us on a humorous tour of the fictional Homo No Mo Halfway House.* Free showing of Oscar-winning film *Brokeback Mountain* (8 pm at Love Auditorium) LGBTQ Open Mic Night (9 pm at the Barge Canal Coffee House) Opening Reception and Maroon Party (10 pm at the Colgate Inn)

Saturday, April 15

Morning Workshops:

Disjointed Selves: Forced Choices for LGBTQ Students of Color (Ho Lecture Room) – LGBT students of color are often forced to choose to be gay or to be of color on campuses where harmonious interaction between identities seemingly cannot exist. This workshop offered insight for eliminating forced choices and strategies for building an inclusive campus environment.

Safe Zone: Train the Trainers Part 1 (ALANA) – a training to provide LGBTQ leaders with the resources and information that they need to conduct Safe Zone training sessions on their own college and university campuses.

Career Services (Lathrop Hall) - A discussion of how LGBTQ students can best market themselves in their job searches. When should you be loud and proud, and when should you not? How do you incorporate work you have done on behalf of LGBTQ issues into your resume.

11:45-1 - BBQ Lunch on the Quad

Afternoon Workshops and Panels:

What Works, What Doesn't (Ho Lecture Room) – A conversation between the leaders of LGBTQ organizations from different schools about which programs have worked on their campuses and which have not.

Safe Zone: Train the Trainers Part 2 (ALANA Cultural Center) – to provide LGBTQ leaders with the resources and information that they need to conduct Safe Zone training sessions on their own college and university campuses.

A Talk with the Chair of the Log Cabin Republicans (Lathrop Hall) – Tim Shoefler '88 discussed the future of LGBTQ issues in American politics.

Career Services (Ho Lecture Room) – A talk about how best to market yourself in job searches and when applying to graduate schools.

Coming Out Panel (Lathrop Hall) – A panel discussion with mental health leaders dealing with the emotions and consequences of coming out in today's society.

Keynote Address by B.D. Wong - Out Asian-American actor (noted for his Tony-winning performance in *Madame Butterfly*, his work in television and film including roles in *Father of the Bride*, *Jurassic Park*, *And the Band Played On*, HBO's *Oz*, and his current starring role on *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*) spoke about multiple identities.

Evening Entertainment: Improv performance by *Charred Goosebeak*; free showing of *Brokeback Mountain*; and the Second Annual Drag Ball at the Palace Theater: *Some Like It Hot*

Colgate's First Ever Big Gay Weekend won the **award for Outstanding Student Event for the 2005-2006 Year** from the Student Government Association. The weekend included more than **three dozen students from other colleges**, an attendance of **nearly 500 at the BD Wong keynote address**, and a heavily-attended **Drag Ball**.

Student Interns

Funding from the Dean of the College budget made it possible for three student interns to work 20 hours per week this year on LGBTQ programs. The student interns occupied the LGBTQ Office in the Center for Women's Studies and completed a multitude of tasks, including compiling Safe Zone Training Resources, documenting Safe Zone Training evaluation forms, communicating with local schools, planning various social events, connecting with alumni, marketing for events, and many important logistical tasks. This year's interns were:

Fall 2005: Richard LeBeau '06 (Rainbow Alliance); Ian Maron-Kolitch '07 (Rainbow Alliance and Advocates); Connolly Butterfield '07 (Advocates)

Spring 2006: Richard LeBeau '06 (Rainbow Alliance); Rae Reynes '09 (Rainbow Alliance); Amanda Harper '08 (Advocates)

Rainbow Alliance and Advocates

In the Fall of 2005, Ian Maron-Kolitch '07 and Connolly Butterfield '07 took *Advocates* into new and exciting directions. Instead of using meetings exclusively to socialize and plan future events, they used the weekly meetings to discuss various current events related to LGBTQ issues (e.g., state discrimination laws, “Don't Ask Don't Tell,” gay adoption rights, and the Catholic Church controversy).

By engaging various members in researching and reporting on these issues, the membership of *Advocates* became increasingly involved. The number of students at each meeting grew during the course of the year and eventually

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leveled off to approximately fifteen students per meeting. When Ian and Connolly left campus for their terms abroad during Spring 2006, a triumvirate of sophomore co-chairs – Amanda Harper '08, Steve Hayden '08, and Joe Madres '08 – took charge, ensuring its continued success.

Under the leadership of Richard LeBeau '06 and Carrie Lorenson '06, the *Rainbow Alliance* has also blossomed. In the past three years, membership has quadrupled. Meetings are generally used as a social outlet and involve movie nights, important discussions of what is going on around campus related to LGBTQ issues, ice-breakers, and event planning in conjunction with *Advocates*.

In October, *Advocates* and the *Rainbow Alliance* sponsored a number of successful events for Sex Week. In addition to a COOP table selling “Coming Out Day” t-shirts, the two groups worked together to bring to campus “America’s Favorite Beauty Shop Quartet,” *The Kinsey Sicks*, who performed their hit show “I Wanna be a Republican!” to over 200 people at the Palace Theater.

The Problem with Stereotypes

Vanessa Persico '09

My friend from home, who had recently cut her hair “boy-short,” shook her head in mild bafflement. “Vanessa,” she said, “Did you know that I’m 100% straight? Like, on the Kinsey scale, I am *straight*. And I am. I feel simply no attraction to women. But I’m a lesbian.”

This apparent coming-out scene was actually part of a longer, running joke about my friend being “too straight for her politics.” She is a feminist, an ardent nonconformist, an agnostic and a die-hard liberal. She has her own unique hodgepodge of a fashion sense, now topped off by that short, short hair and she has never felt even the remotest attraction to anyone female.

If a lesbian is defined as “A woman whose sexual orientation is to women,” (from Dictionary.com), then why would my friend say she was a lesbian if her confirmed sexual orientation is to *men*? The answer strikes to the heart of a problem that is too often overlooked by LGBTQ activists.

A young woman who, like my friend, finds herself pulled toward the activities and ideologies stereotypically associated with lesbians, but is not attracted to women, might experience an unpleasant period of questioning about her sexual identity from both inside and out; similarly, a young woman who begins to feel attracted to other women but is more drawn to Cosmo and Keystone than to protests and Provincetown will feel the same brand of cognitive and emotional dissonance.

And what of men? What of the straight but un-athletic theater enthusiast who everyone assumes to be gay, and of the questioning football player whose closet door is barricaded by the expectation that a gay male is a submissive, artsy creature

who shies away from “manly” activities? Their lot is a difficult one, to be sure.

Here at Colgate, as part of the “dorm programs” organized by *Advocates* and the *Rainbow Alliance*, students were invited to question a lineup of their classmates to guess which one was straight out of a predominantly LGBTQ panel. Questions usually centered on consumerism, politics, religious affiliation, and relationship with parents. Working only from their fellow students’ answers and physical appearance, dorm program attendees were resoundingly *unsuccessful* in their attempts to “guess the straight person.”

Are the stereotypes true sometimes? Sure. Are they true most of the time? Much more debatable. Are they *always* true? Instinct, probability, and experience agree: absolutely not.

Third Annual Lavender Graduation Ceremony Held

The Lavender Graduation is an annual event that aims to conclude the academic year with a celebration of all who contributed to LGBTQ life on Colgate’s campus, with special attention paid to those who are leaving us who have made a special contribution.

Honorees at the May 2006 reception and ceremony included Jaime Nolan, Director of Office of Undergraduate Studies; Nancy Ries, Professor of Sociology; Dr. Shelly Lear, Counseling and Psychological Services; Dominique Hill '05, Program Assistant, ALANA Cultural Center; Bill Jellison, Visiting Professor of Psychology; James DeVita '00, Center for Leadership and Student Involvement; and Class of 2006 students Juan Amaya, Niccos Andrade, Will Birnie, Richard LeBeau, Tara McDevitt, Carrie Lorenson, and Dan Welch.

Gay Victims of WWII

By Joe Madres '08

In the modern age, the victor no longer writes history, the survivor does. However, win or lose, human beings remain subjective whenever recording the past. Most of us know that millions of Jewish people were the victims of the Holocaust during World War II. Yet, many are unaware of the many other victims of Nazi concentration camps. These lesser known victims include the mentally and physically handicapped, gypsies, and members of the LGBTQ community.

If you’ve ever been to an event organized by the gay community, you may have seen the iconic

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Perspectives on the Big Gay Weekend

Ken Valente, Professor of Mathematics and CORE
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For me – as a big, gay faculty member – the Big Gay Weekend was inspirational. Peterson Toscano’s performance of “Doin’ Time in the Homo No Mo Halfway House” was clever, outrageously funny, and moving. I saw many familiar faces there, including alums, and met many new friends and allies.

I arrived at the barbeque lunch on Saturday to take part in welcoming our visitors and networking with other LGBTQ advisors; I did, however, decline to join the touch-football game! Parents of prospective students, attracted by the activity – and food – on the Quad, asked me to fill them in on LGBTQ issues on campus and were favorably impressed by the idea behind the Big Gay Weekend.

After lunch I attended two workshops: “LGBTQ Programming: What Works and What Doesn’t?” and “Coming Out.” The shared sense of purpose between facilitators and audiences was obvious for anyone to see. I particularly admired the programming workshop: students from several different campuses engaged in a focused, substantive, and productive session. I know that I learned a thing or two listening to these folks!

Finally, B.D. Wong gave a terrific keynote address to a very receptive audience. What a coup de grace! And to have President Chopp introduce B.D. only added to the significance of the event for me. She not only announced that we would be hiring a full-time LGBTQ program assistant for next year, but she also acknowledged – for the first time in public that I know of – the work being done to establish an LGBTQ Studies minor at Colgate.

Ultimately, the BGW confirmed what I already knew: Colgate is being transformed before our very eyes by LGBTQ-identified and allied students, faculty, and staff. In making this change happen, it’s easy to forget to celebrate and bask in our collective accomplishments. I thank Will Birnie, Richard LeBeau, and all of the students involved for giving us this opportunity to come together, laugh, play, plan, and reinvigorate ourselves. This was a real gift.

Karl Stewart ‘91
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When I was at Colgate (1987-1991), I spent most of the time afraid that I’d get beat up if anyone discovered that I was gay. What scared me even more was to be ostracized by the rest of the community. That I think would have been worse. Universe be praised for theater and dance. They were refuge.

So in 2006, during Big Gay Weekend, to be able to dance freely in the green room at the Colgate Inn with other Colgate folks, some LGBTQ and others just accepting of

the spectrum of sexuality on the planet, was awesome in of itself. To have the opportunity to network with people from Hamilton, Vassar, SUNY and other New York colleges who are cool with who I am, well, that was ecstasy.

I was moved to see student leaders from the LGBTQ community forming right before my eyes. What incredible contributions they will make to a society that welcomes difference! Who knew that leadership development in the area of diversity existed at Colgate? Business needs this kind of leadership in order to continue to succeed (having just met with our own Chief Diversity Officer at the office).

I can only imagine that they make Colgate safer for the students in the classes that come after. And one day, building on Big Gay weekend, and on the visibility of out students and alumni, we’ll witness a miracle: out LGBTQ students comfortable enough to hold hands and walk across the quad; students barely noticing because of a general acceptance of the diversity of sexuality. Heaven.

My favorite moment though, was probably telling a little of my LGBTQ story and singing Annie Lennox in the Barge, and forgetting all the words, and seeing only love reflected back at me from professors and students at dear ol’ Gate. Cheers, and three snaps up for alma mater.

Dawn LaFrance, Assistant Director of Counseling and Psychological Services
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Big Gay Weekend – what a terrific tradition to start at Colgate! I am proud of Colgate for hosting the First Annual Big Gay Weekend in April. The variety of events reached out to many different students, staff, and faculty. I decided to attend events on Saturday. In the morning, the workshop entitled “Disjointed Selves: Forced Choices for LGBTQ Students of Color” woke everybody up with some interactive components that challenged us to think about multiple identities. I was able to talk to some Colgate students as well as students from other campuses about how to better support diversity efforts. During a windy barbeque lunch, there was a feeling of enthusiasm in the air. People were excited for the afternoon and evening’s events. It was great to see students from other campuses taking advantage of this weekend and coming to learn, network, and celebrate. This kind

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of inter-campus networking has the potential of being very productive on a number of levels – socially, programmatically, and politically. I believe that some Colgate students have already made plans to travel to other universities as a result.

During the week following Big Gay Weekend, I heard a number of positive reactions to the B.D. Wong lecture, Peterson Toscano's performance, and the Drag Ball. I would like to applaud all of the people who worked tirelessly to pull off this weekend. Let's hope that this is the first of many Big Gay Weekends to come!

What Is at Stake in Today's Gay Marriage Debate:

Lessons from the 1967 Supreme Court Case *Loving v. Virginia*

by Ted Jacobs '96
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"Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the State." Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren, Loving v. Virginia, 1967

Substitute "THE SAME GENDER" for the words "ANOTHER RACE" in the above declaration, and one can see that not much has changed in the thirty-one years since the Supreme Court invalidated the State of Virginia's statutory ban on interracial marriage in *Loving v. Virginia*. In 1967, Mr. and Mrs. Loving, a white man and a black woman, committed – at least what was then – the unthinkable: they got married. For those of us born after *Loving v. Virginia*, it is hard to imagine a society where such an overt racist attitude was the norm.

The issue of gay marriage today is just as explosive and polarizing as the issue of interracial marriage was then. It is ironic that an act as private and intimate as marriage served then and serves now as a vehicle for civil rights – the very expression through which gays and lesbians in vast numbers are choosing to assert their public identities and the legitimacy of their relationships and chosen families. Marriage, after all, is a legal status that confers specific and tangible legal rights. As in the case with Mr. and Mrs. Loving, the issue is not so much about marriage itself, but rather about a society's attempt to deny a specific group of peoples' full and equal social status via public legal regulation of their private lives.

The Virginia trial judge who first convicted the Lovings most poignantly exemplifies this. In finding the Lovings guilty of the crime of interracial marriage, the Virginia trial judge stated the opinion that: "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix." The exact same logic and sentiment is alive and well today, in the voices of those gay marriage opponents who argue that Almighty God created different sexes for

a reason, and the fact that only a male and female together can procreate stands as conclusive proof of homosexuality's perversion of God's intended plan.

The problem with this logic is its inherent equation of marriage with procreation, as if procreation is the sole justification (or reason) for the institution. The Supreme Court and our Constitution recognize, nonetheless, that what is at issue is the very right of individuals to proclaim their love and fidelity to another and in doing so control their own destiny and identity. Perhaps this is what Chief Justice Earl Warren was thinking when he wrote: "Marriage is one of the "basic civil rights of man," [sic – and woman] fundamental to our very existence and survival." Hence, the act of marriage is perhaps not so private after all – it is a public expression and legal sanctification of our identities that some, who would seek to impose their own views on others, would like to suppress when those identities differ from their own.

Some who support a legal ban of gay marriage argue that such a ban is not discriminatory because it leaves the option of allowing civil unions open to the various states, while preserving the "sanctity" of the marriage tradition from homosexual assault. Additionally, some argue, everyone still has the right to marry, so long as it is to a person of the opposite gender. Similarly, the State of Virginia, arguing in support of the statute under which the Lovings' marriage was deemed criminal, claimed that the law was not discriminatory because it applied to blacks and whites equally in its attempt to "to preserve the racial integrity of its [Virginia's] citizens," as much as to prevent "the corruption of blood," "a mongrel breed of citizens," and "the obliteration of racial pride." Rejecting this argument, Chief Justice Earl Warren found the statute an obvious endorsement of the doctrine of White Supremacy.

In the case of the miscegenation cultural wars, it was not the institution of marriage itself at stake, but rather the purity of the races. Implicit in the miscegenation laws was a fundamental belief that non-whites are inferior. Likewise, in the same-sex marriage wars, opponents are not *really* concerned that heterosexual marriages all over the United States will collapse if gays are allowed to marry. Rather, they believe that homosexuals are not worthy of equal status in society. As such, civil unions are *not* marriages – they are inherently something less. A ban on same-sex marriage necessarily sends the same message, namely, that gays and lesbians are something less than human. As the Massachusetts Supreme Court recently observed, "[t]he history of our nation has demonstrated that separate is seldom, if ever, equal."

Even those sympathetic to gay marriage, private individuals and politicians alike, are urging gay activists to be patient and wait for public opinion to catch up to the protections guaranteed by the Constitution. Nobody likes an "activist," they say, and our cause will be much better served if we advocate for marriage in a more complacent manner. This logic flies in the face of what history teaches. Rights are seldom freely given – their rightful owners take them. Would segregation have ended had there not been marches, freedom rides, bus boycotts, lunch counter sit-ins, and all-out rioting in the streets? Without

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demanding civil equality, would blacks have been “given” their place at the table “in due time?”

But for the heroic and dispassionate intervention of the Supreme Court in the case of the Lovings, American society might be much different than it is today had the rights of blacks been left to the mercy of racist state legislatures and public votes. Some issues, especially those implicating rights fundamental to human dignity, are better not left to the mercy of the will of the people. Likewise, the outcome of the current social discourse on the question of gay marriage will similarly shape America’s soul for generations to come, and today’s heroes are quickly emerging – the Massachusetts Supreme Court and mayors of towns large and small alike. Even a casual read of our Constitution reveals that its framers intended for an independent judiciary to protect the rights of the minority from majority (legislative) rule by providing an ultimate check and balance on the naked will of the people – particularly when personal freedoms are implicated. As such, there is no such thing as an “activist” judge.

Stymied by the results of a legal apparatus that is functioning exactly as the framers of the Constitution intended, President Bush’s response is to propose an usurpation of the judiciary’s power by amending the Constitution. Responding to Vermont’s same-sex civil unions, the Supreme Court of Massachusetts’ ruling for gay marriage, and the Mayor of San Francisco’s issuance of marriage licenses to gays and lesbians, President Bush would prefer to debase and undermine America’s most sacred and cherished legal document rather than – in true conservative fashion – stand up for individual rights. President Bush’s Amendment would trump the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses under both the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments on the issue of gay marriage, the very provisions under which the Supreme Court found that the Lovings had committed no crime.

Bush’s proposed Amendment is tantamount to the re-criminalization of homosexuality in the shadow of the Supreme Court’s recent ruling in *Lawrence and Garner v. Texas*. In *Lawrence*, the Court struck down Texas’ statute under which the State could arrest individuals for sexual practices between consenting adults within the confines of their own home (read: homosexual sodomy). The President’s stamp of disapproval on gay marriage differs little from the Texas anti-sodomy statute and the Virginia statute at issue in *Loving* – all three representing attempts to penalize identity based on prejudicial animus. Only this time, President Bush will leave nothing to chance – instead of enacting a statute, he would amend the Constitution in order to strip the courts of their authority to provide last-ditch protections from Majority Tyranny and to cast the ban on gay marriage in stone. In doing so, President Bush hopes to permanently infuse the very document that promises liberty and freedom for all with hatred and discrimination.

Consequently, what is most disturbing about the President’s position is not merely that it closes the door to legal legitimization of homosexual relationships. Rather, it represents a *preemptive war* against civil rights via the perversion of the very document that ensures all Americans, regardless of race, gender, or creed, the right to vote, religious freedom, the right to free speech, and freedom from arbitrary State discrimination. For this

reason, all Americans – gay or straight – ought to be concerned. As such, every American – pro and anti-gay marriage – has a responsibility to fight President Bush’s Amendment.

In hindsight, America thanks the *Loving* Court for doing what the will of the people was unable to accomplish at the time – to cast out the ugly face of racism left over from a period in our nation’s history of which few are proud. With some foresight, let’s hope that future generations will look at this Amendment’s defeat with similar gratitude, and America’s true soul will once again prevail.

Ted Jacobs holds an A.B. in Philosophy and Political Science from Colgate University, a Masters of Theological Studies from Harvard University, and a J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center. Mr. Jacobs is currently practicing Securities Litigation at a private firm in New York City, and is also actively representing gay, HIV-positive asylum seekers from Cuba and Venezuela.

On June 7, the U.S. Senate rejected a proposed constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. The vote was 49 to 48 to terminate debate, falling short of the 60 votes required to actually end debate and the 67 votes required to approve a constitutional amendment.

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upside-down pink triangle representing gay men in specific. This symbol, now used proudly by gay men, was once used to label them by the Nazis, just as the yellow Star of David labeled Jews. This simple means of identification led to the suffering of thousands of gays.

The one-year-old Yad Vashem Museum in Israel features a special exhibit for gay and lesbian victims of Nazi Germany. It joins similar dedications such as monuments in San Francisco and San Sabba, Italy. Estimates range from 5,000 to 15,000 gay and lesbian victims after the Nazi regime banned intimacy between people of the same sex under paragraph 175 of the German penal code. Similar to Jews rounded up into concentration camps, gays and lesbians, along with other members of the LGBTQ community such as transgendered people were imprisoned. Living conditions were inhumane, and many gay victims were put through medical experimentation including lobotomies. They were also forced to work in labor camps and many were exterminated in gas chambers. Ultimately, they shared the fate of Jewish and other victims of Nazi Germany, yet were generally forgotten by history.

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However, I don't bring this to your attention expecting sympathy. More important than remembering each victimized group of every hateful atrocity is remembering how prejudice affects us all. If we are not all accepting and appreciative of the uniqueness of others, we are all in danger.

Voices of Clergy and Religious Organizations Heard in New York's Historic Marriage Equality Litigation

by Ted Jacobs '96

This summer, New York State could very well be the second state, together with Massachusetts, to permit loving couples to marry, regardless of gender. On May 31, 2006, the New York Court of Appeals (the state's highest Court) heard oral arguments in Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund's (Lambda Legal) lawsuit seeking full marriage equality for same-sex couples.

Lambda Legal filed *Hernandez v. Robles* in March 2004. The lawsuit seeks marriage for same-sex couples in New York and argues that denying these couples marriage violates the state constitution's guarantees of equality, liberty and privacy for all New Yorkers. The trial court issued a ruling in the couples' favor in February 2005, and New York City decided to appeal. The mid-level appeals court handed down its decision in the City's favor in December, and now this case and several others like it have been consolidated and are pending before the Court of Appeals.

As part of this historic lawsuit, I was privileged to be asked by Lambda Legal to prepare an *amicus curiae* or "friend of the court" brief, which my firm, Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP, agreed to prepare *pro bono*, on behalf of a diverse coalition of over 200 clergy and religious organizations throughout the state that support same-sex marriage as a civil right. An *amicus curiae* brief is a legal mechanism whereby a non-party to a litigation that has a stake in the outcome can have its concerns voiced to the court. This particular brief is very important as it demonstrates to the Court of Appeals that clergy and religious organizations from many different denominations support the right of gay men and lesbians to marry, and it also shatters the common misconception that religious organizations are lockstep in their opposition to marriage between same-sex couples.

"As a pastor who has served several congregations over the past 21 years, I've seen first-hand the loving bonds and beautiful families that have grown out of the lasting commitments of gay, lesbian and straight couples," says the Reverend Steve Clunn of the First United Methodist Church of Schenectady. "While the U.S. Constitution guarantees that various religious groups will always be free to marry whom they please, I and many of my colleagues

long for the day when the state will not stand in the way of our ability to marry same-sex couples."

In our brief, our clients argue that although marriage has both a religious and a civil meaning, it is civil marriage that establishes legal status and conveys the entitlements that New York provides to married couples. The law of New York State firmly supports the separation of church and state and requires that the question of marriage between same-sex couples be decided as a civil matter, not a religious matter, and without reference to any religious tradition.

Further, the clergy and religious organizations represented by the brief make the point that civil marriage in this context is a legal status conferred by the State. As such, allowing civil marriage between same-sex couples will not intrude on the rights of religious groups to decide whether to confer religious marriages to same-sex couples within the meanings of each of their own religious traditions.

Our brief generated unprecedented support among clergy from a wide and diverse array of religious traditions and denominations. The brief was signed by many large national religious organizations such as the Union for Reform Judaism, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, and the United Church of Christ. Also joining the brief were many individual clergy and congregations representing Episcopal, United Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ and Unitarian churches, and Conservative and Reform Jewish temples throughout New York State.

A copy of the brief and more information about the New York marriage litigation can be found on Lambda Legal's website at: <http://www.lambdalegal.org/cgi-bin/iowa/cases/record?record=204>.

Editor's Note: On July 6, NY's highest court decided in a 4-2 vote (3 judges signed the majority opinion, 1 judge filed a concurring opinion, and 2 judges filed a dissenting opinion) that NY's state constitution does not compel recognition of marriages between members of the same sex, but left open the possibility that the state legislature could decide to allow same-sex marriages.

More colleges including gender identity in nondiscrimination policies

Harvard University, the oldest institution of higher learning in the nation, announced on April 11 that it would be adding gender identity to its nondiscrimination policy, safeguarding transgender students and faculty.

Columbia University added "Gender Identity and Expression" to its Equal Employment Opportunity and nondiscrimination statements in May, followed by Dartmouth College on June 12. Princeton University already includes gender identity in its nondiscrimination policy, and Yale, to date, is the last Ivy League school which does not protect its transgender students, faculty and staff.

While Colgate includes sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination policy, it does not specifically include gender identity.

Bisexual and Questioning Support Group

sponsored by Counseling and Psychological Services

A support group at Colgate to help participants explore a variety of issues related to sexual orientation.

Topics will include same-sex attractions, issues of self esteem, multiple identities, and coming out to self, friends, and family, as well as other topics related to these issues. *Students* of all nationalities, races/ethnicities, genders, and religions are welcome.

To register:

Email Hsiao-wen Lo at hlo@colgate.edu or call Rose Novak at 228-7385 to schedule a brief individual meeting.

LGBTQ Alumni Network

If you are a Colgate alum who would like to receive information about joining our LGBTQ Alumni Network, please email rsummers@mail.colgate.edu and ask us to add you to our mailing list. We are currently 200+ alumni strong and always welcome new members.

We are also one of 64 alumni associations listed on the National LGBT Alumni Association organized through Princeton University's LGBT Alumni.

You can check out the website at <http://alumni.princeton.edu/~ffr-gala/>. Once on the website, click on events for current events and links for the listing of college alumni associations.

Did you know?

Over the past two years, there has been a distinct rise in the number of Colgate students who feel comfortable listing their names on the Rainbow Alliance website.

Since the Fall of 2004, the number has risen from 9 students to 45
– *an increase of 500%*.

A Hooray Moment

from the 2006 MTV Movie Awards:

Best Performance: Jake Gyllenhaal

Best Kiss: Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger

both from Brokeback Mountain

Get Informed!

Human Rights Campaign Foundation - works for LGBT equal rights - <http://www.hrc.org>

PFLAG - Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Persons - promotes the health and wellbeing of LGBT persons, their families, and friends through support, education, and advocacy - www.pflag.org

GLAAD - Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation - promotes and ensures fair, accurate, and inclusive representation of gay and lesbian people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation - <http://www.glaad.org>

GLBT Historical Society - <http://www.glbthistory.org>

Contact:

LGBTQ Supporters Network

Ken Valente, Associate Professor of Mathematics and
CORE - 7247
kvalente@mail.colgate.edu

Out and About Newsletter

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<http://bostwick.colgate.edu/advocates/>

Rainbow Alliance

jmadres@mail.colgate.edu
RainbowAlliance@mail.colgate.edu
<http://groups.colgate.edu/rainbowalliance>

Other Campus Resources:

Counseling & Psychological Services - 7385
Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Alliance - 7863
Campus Safety - 7333
Dr. Merrill Miller - 7750
Blackboard - LGBTQ Supporters

Article submissions from students, alumni, faculty, and staff are welcome! If you have something to say that would serve our educational and outreach efforts, email Chris Hoffman at choffman@mail.colgate.edu.