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Out and About, Fall 2012

Colgate University. Office of LGBTQ Initiatives

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Out & About

A NEWSLETTER FOR COLGATE LGBTQ COMMUNITY & ALUMNI

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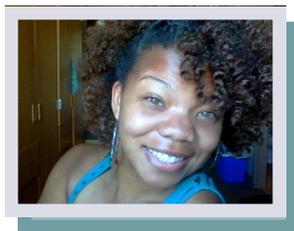
Moving Forward

This semester is about making moves. Each year feels like a new beginning with the great work of Colgate students and the always evolving LGBTQ minor curriculum—but this semester, action is our middle name. Across campus, faculty and students are working to make LGBTQ awareness and inclusiveness a priority. We could not be happier to see campus allies celebrating LGBTQ lives, and taking serious initiative to confront homophobia and misinformation whenever possible. In this issue we are introducing you to new faces, personal opinions, and reflections on the Colgate experience. This year's presidential election is going to shape the landscape for LGBTQ Americans after a host of monumental legislative advances, but more than ever we are aware of how far we have yet to go. The same is true on campus, and while we continue to celebrate major advances in queer diversity and acceptance, we are committed to doing it better, wiser, and more vigorously than ever. Please enjoy this issue of Out & About—Let's get moving!

—Jamie Bergeron



Meet the new LGBTQ Initiatives Interns!



Kori Strother '15 is in her sophomore year at Colgate. Growing up in Saint Louis, Missouri Kori has always been active in the LGBTQ community. It was only natural that she would continue to show her support and close alliance with the community here at Colgate. Kori is a member of the Women's Varsity Track and Field team, a member of the multicultural recruitment committee, and in the process of starting a mentoring program for women on campus. As one of the newest interns for LGBTQ Initiatives, Kori looks forward to learning more about the community and ultimately sharing her knowledge with her peers as the leader of the SafeZone training program!

Mallory Wagner '15 is a sophomore who is just starting out with the LGBTQ Initiatives team. She is helping in planning some of the many events for National Coming Out Week in October, as well as organizing a group to go see Kye Allums speak at Hamilton College. Originally from Michigan and Luxembourg, Mallory uses her French skills to tutor local elementary school children every week. She also participates in the Peer Health Educators team on campus. Mallory is excited to be involved with different aspects of Colgate and wants to learn and grow from all of her experiences.



Opinion

Election 2012: An Ally's Perspective

By Andy Philipson '14

I was relieved when President Barack Obama announced in mid-May "I've just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same sex couples should be able to get married." President Obama declared in a debate in 2008 that he did not support gay marriage, but did support civil unions, but this transformation over one term of his presidency displays his willingness to listen to the American public and support policy that favors everyone. It isn't a hard position for him to take, either: according to a Washington Post/ABC News poll that was released in the days before Obama's announcement, 53% of Americans said that gay marriage should be legal. This is reflected in the beliefs of the Democratic party as a whole: at the Democratic National Convention, the entire party endorsed gay marriage and called for the repeal of a law that calls marriage between a man and woman.

Mitt Romney, on the other hand, isn't so kind. According to Marriage Equality USA, a grassroots campaign to ensure marriage equality without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity, Mr. Romney is unfavorable to the LGBTQ community across 75% of major categories. Mr. Romney is not just against marriage equality, but also civil unions and domestic partnerships. He supports renewing the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), a law that defines marriage as between a man and woman, and has been quoted, "Call me old fashioned, but I don't support gay marriage nor do I support civil union." Above all else, Mr. Romney signed the '2012 Presidential Pledge' from the National Organization for Marriage (NOM). Signers of the pledge declare support for a constitutional marriage amendment and promise to appoint originalist federal judges. Signers reject the idea that the Founding Fathers believed gay marriage was a right supported in the U.S. Constitution. It is also important to note his silence at a debate in early 2011 in which a gay soldier appeared in a video clip asking Republican candidates whether or not they would allow him to serve. As the audience *booed* a member of the U.S. Army risking his life for our country in Iraq, Mitt Romney stayed silent. He did not ask the crowd to honor an American hero, nor did any person on the stage.

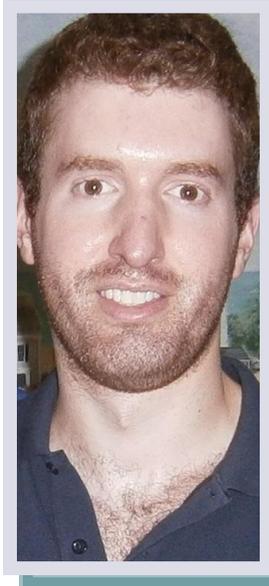
I really liked a brief article from the satirical newspaper *The Onion* published a week after Obama's public support of gay marriage: "May 8, 2012: VP Joe Biden sticks his head into Oval Office and asks, "What the — are you afraid of?" So that is my question to Mitt Romney and the Republican party. *What are you afraid of?* In a graph from Marriage Equality USA, I was intrigued to see the breakdown of support by party candidate. Of the four candidates running for Presidential Election from the Democratic, Republican, Libertarian, and Green parties, only Mitt Romney endorses limits on gay freedoms. Or better yet, the only national political party that does not fully endorse LGBTQ rights is the 'Grand Old Party.' Reince Priebus, chairman of the RNC said, "While President Obama has played politics on this issue, the Republican party and our nominee Mitt Romney have been clear. We support maintaining marriage between one man and one woman and would oppose any attempts to change that." It's time that the Republican party gets on the right side of history and backs inevitability. As an ally and a staunch supporter of LGBTQ rights, I firmly endorse President Barack Obama.

Andy Philipson '14 is a Political Science Major and currently the president of College Democrats. He is a member of Philanthropists at Colgate as well as The Blue Diamond Society.

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Faculty Spotlight

Noah Tsika is a Visiting Professor of African Diaspora and Film and Media Studies. He comes most recently from the NYU Tisch School of the Arts, and focuses on queer images and cultural representations in film. He is the author of *Gods and Monsters: A Queer Film Classic*, and a regular blogger on *Huffington Post*.



How did you begin looking at LGBTQ content in film?

I can't remember a time during which I didn't care about movies. I came out at an early age, and even made LGBTQ activism a part of my middle school experience, so conscious media reception was always enmeshed with questions of representation. I often visited the local video store to raid its "gay and lesbian" section, acquainting myself with a key queer filmography. I began dating at a cultural moment that saw a veritable explosion of queer media-making, so kissing boys was always bound up with admiring moving-image art.

Are you personally connected to LGBTQ work?

My global relatives are largely Muslim. My father is part of an Albanian diaspora that stretches from Mauritania to Maine, where I was raised. Learning about the complex dispersion of my multiracial and multiethnic family has made me sensitive to totalizing assumptions. At the same time, I recognize that my own queerness contains little wiggle room. Since puberty, I have identified as exclusively gay. That's not to say that I believe only in a monolithic homosexuality; it's to accurately and succinctly identify my own sexual history.

Tell us about some of your projects.

During the heyday of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," I dated a soldier and learned difficult lessons about the internet's simultaneously liberating and constricting qualities. I decided to devote part of my scholarship to understanding the relationship between the liberating potential of new media and the severely limiting effects of homophobic policies. My study of gay dating sites and active-duty soldiers' online activism is published in the anthology *LGBT Identity and Online New Media*. My dissertation examined a whole host of declassified World War II military documentaries devoted to the subjects of homosexuality, gender and racial integration, and film technologies. It explored the efforts of individual officers and soldiers to shape the social experience of service. My follow-up project led me to West Africa, a region in which I have family ties and where I find ideas about documentary arts and culture to be invigorating, especially as they relate to pro- and anti-military mandates. Also, for eight years, I have tracked the reception of the film *Brokeback Mountain* in a variety of global venues, and I publish those findings periodically.

What is a controversial topic that you find compelling in doing LGBTQ academic work?

I have spent a lot of time in West Africa, and I often watch some of the region's most popular television shows as well as local news broadcasts—I know all too well that the global reputation as thoroughly homophobic is unfounded. One way that progressive media producers get around the region's criminalization of homosexuality is by featuring coverage not of local lesbians and gay men but of prominent queer Americans and Australians.

These issues became especially apparent to me during the recent Olympics, when so many LGBTQ activists were calling for the International Olympic Committee to ban African and Middle Eastern countries from the games, based solely upon the criminal laws of individual countries, and not upon any direct experience of queer life in these regions. I'm always so sad to see queer activism tinged with racism, nationalism, or essentialism. The latter issue in particular, which the acronym "LGBTQ" is itself a direct response to, seems the hardest to combat, especially given Americans' lack of awareness of West African media policies and practices.

Is there an experience which is pivotal for you in your career/personal life related to being a queer person?

The gay scene in Dakar, Senegal, while "underground," offers a nightlife that to me is far more vibrant than that of New York City, where I lived for seven years, and where capitalism is king even (perhaps especially) among queers. But those LGBTQ activists who hear me speak appreciatively about my experiences in Dakar tell me that I need to devote all of my time to fighting the official criminalization of homosexuality. They say that enjoying an underground gay scene is regressive at best and traitorous at worst. Not everyone can spend time in West Africa, which is all the more reason to take seriously and speak openly about the region's globally circulating media products, which reflect far more experiential diversity than western stereotypes would seem to allow.

How has your transition to Hamilton treated you?

I am thrilled to be at Colgate this year, as the university has given me the opportunity to teach courses on West African media industries and access while integrating, with the help of the LGBTQ Initiatives, my longstanding queer concerns. Also, I am enjoying Hamilton tremendously. I consider myself a country boy and love living and working in such a beautiful rural setting.

Alumni Spotlight



Name: Amanda Paolucci

Graduation year: 2002

Major at Colgate: Art and Art History

Hometown: Binghamton, NY

Where did you go after graduation?

After graduation, I wasn't exactly sure what to do with myself. I had enrolled in a MFA program, but only lasted a day and a half. I had always loved coaching kids at camps and even had done some substitute teaching. After a year of being at home, I moved to Buffalo, NY and enrolled in a teacher certification program at Buffalo State College.

What have you been up to since?

In 2005, I started teaching art in Williamsville, NY, a suburb of Buffalo. It's the greatest job ever!

What's your favorite book or movie?

I'm a Harry Potter fanatic. I have been him for Halloween twice. Specifically, *Deathly Hallows* is my favorite one of the series.

What about your favorite Hamilton restaurant?

Slices come plain only!

When you think back to your undergrad experience, what do you think of as most memorable?

The most memorable experience for me was playing softball. I loved being on a team and having a group of friends who I related to. I also loved the lifestyle of a Division I athlete: Practices, games, traveling, etc. It's definitely something I miss the most about being at Colgate.

Which class/professor is the most meaningful to you now as you look back?

I was an Art and Art History major at Colgate. Lynette Stephenson made a tremendous impact on me as an artist. I remember having really great conversations with her about art and life and we would laugh hysterically.

Were you out as LGBTQ at Colgate?

I was not out at Colgate—but Colgate was the place where I really discovered myself. I met my first girlfriend my junior year. Prior to that, I pretty much lived in denial about who I was. Toward the end of my senior year, there were a few trusted friends who knew about me, but I was still somewhat closeted. It wasn't until I moved to Buffalo that I began living openly. Looking back I do regret not being out in college. I wish I had then the self confidence I have now. If was able to be more honest with people, I think I could have made stronger connections.

Is there an LGBTQ issue that you feel strongly about?

Same sex couples should receive the same state and federal benefits as heterosexual couples!

What are your hopes for LGBTQ students and alumni?

My advice to LGBTQ students at Colgate is to find your niche. Try out clubs, classes, and sports until you find that group of people who love and respect you. And if you're not finding what you need —Travel! Go spend a couple days in some metro areas and find some LGBTQ culture. And when Colgate hosts LGBTQ events, go to them! Good Luck!

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Course Reflections are Bridge from Colgate's Past

I began my academic career in East Hall in the fall of 1982 when I entered Colgate as a first year student. In January 2010 life brought me back to the place where my academic journey began. I returned to East Hall to teach in the Center for Women's Studies as part of the LGBTQ Studies Program. The place that was once my first Colgate residence now serves as the home of my campus office, classroom and the departments for which I teach.

With the eyes of a student I saw East Hall as a symbol of Colgate's proud past. Its strong stone structure has weathered harsh central New York winters, acid rain and the decay caused by time to stand as a monument to the students that had lived out their college days inside its walls.

But this time, East Hall is not as much a symbol of the past to me, as it is a bridge to the future.

The students I teach and interact with are hungry for understanding. They want to know how the courts make decisions, how legislatures pass laws and how people protect their liberty interests. Sure, those questions can be explored in traditional curriculums, but the students I work with want to take a different approach. They want to look at ways in which courts may have failed to get the answer right the first time; they want to understand how a legislature could pass a bill that was later deemed unconstitutional; they want to know why law enforcement can selectively enforce laws based on arbitrary factors such as race or sexual orientation.

In my course *Sexuality, Gender and the Law (LGBT 350)*, we review the U.S. Supreme Court cases that have shaped our country's treatment of women, the LGBT community and other minorities. We study these cases not only to understand the Court's holdings, but also to understand *how* the Court reached those conclusions. Sometimes we find that the Court's holding is based solely on legal reasoning and analysis; sometimes we see other factors at play that are outside the scope of traditional legal analysis. With every case we explore, I see my students developing the skills to critically analyze future Supreme Court decisions---decisions that will be handed down long after we have completed our course work here in East Hall.

East Hall is a bridge to the future because this is where my students are building a foundation in legal understanding, a foundation that they will build upon as they follow and analyze future Supreme Court holdings. I count myself blessed for having the privilege of starting them on this journey, and I will do all I can to insure that the foundation they are building is a strong one—just like East Hall's.

—Casey Sprock '86

Charles "Casey" Sprock '86 is an adjunct faculty member both here at Colgate University and Syracuse University (College of Arts and Sciences and College of Law). In addition, he is a partner at Baldwin & Sutphen, LLP, Syracuse, NY, where he practices in the areas of real estate, estate planning, adoption and other matters affecting the lives of his LGBT clients. Professor Sprock also serves as the President of the National LGBT Bar Foundation.



Fall Events

Weekly Family Dinners: Informal gathering every Tuesday, 6:00pm Frank Dining Hall

Welcome Back Social: September 4th, 4:30pm in the Center for Women's Studies

Coming Out Doors of Support: Share a message of support on the doors located in the Coop, Frank, Reid & Case-Geyer Library

WMST Brown Bag Series: Coming Out Stories October 2nd, 11:30am in the Center for Women's Studies

Annual BBQ & Sunday Brunch Hosted by Neal Rosenberg '74: October 21st, 11:00am at 46 Broad St., Hamilton NY

Kye Allums at Hamilton College: October 23rd, Bus leaves from HOP at 3:30pm

Transgender Day of Remembrance: November 20th, 6:00pm in the Chapel Garden Level

Student Interest

NoHomoPhobes.com

By Mitch Tucci '14



A friend passed along this website and I immediately realized how powerful the site was—powerful, and disturbing. The site *NoHomoPhobes.com* is an interactive site that links to twitter to create a live count of the number of tweets containing “Faggot,” “No Homo,” “So Gay” and “Dyke.” Not only can you watch the tallies steadily increase, but a live stream shows you exactly what was tweeted and by who. Each day begins a new count, with a total count from the summer as well. The huge numbers disturbed me to the core, and still have not left me. But what was worse was watching the live stream with

peoples’ names and pictures and the language that they might not realize is so offensive. I could only watch a few minutes (if that) before I had to exit out of the screen. That’s when I realized that I needed to see this; people need to see the prevalence of anti-lgbtq language. I’ve been spreading the word ever since: showing my friends at Colgate, uploading the website on social media sites, suggesting to incorporate it in to SafeZones, and now here, bringing the news to you all. We need to face the fact that anti-lgbtq language is pervasive and harmful to our community. *NoHomoPhobes.com* can be a tool to bring awareness to this issue, so please spread the word!

Alumni Points of Interest

Help us build our Alumni Database!

LGBTQ Initiatives is working to build our alumni database, so we can let people know about events and opportunities in their areas and at Colgate. Signing up is easy! Just email your full name and class year to **LGBTQ@colgate.edu** with the subject "Alumni database."

Interested in being featured in our next Alumni Spotlight?

Contact us for more information at **LGBTQ@colgate.edu**!

Interested in giving back to LGBTQ life at Colgate?

Sponsor student internships and conference opportunities by contacting Sara Groh of Colgate Annual Fund at **sgroh@colgate.edu**



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www.facebook.com/ColgateLGBTQ