



# HeartBeat



PFLAG Olympia, Washington

Issue 110 ~ March-April 2012

## LGBTQ ACCEPTANCE AND THE 21ST CENTURY

by Kathryn Coffman

LGBTQ rights have been a large part of the political conversations and psychological advancements in the past 100 years. There have been numerous leaders and influential groups that have shaped how we perceive equality and “mental illness” in the gay community, with conversion therapy by popular demand in the 1920s. Since then, many advancements have been made for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTQ individuals.

Starting with Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, individuals finally got an idea of “how to cure gayness.” Freud stated that homosexuality could be removable if someone set their mind to it, but suggested differently to a mother of a gay son that wrote a letter to him in 1935. Freud stated that she should not worry about her son and that homosexuality was not something to be ashamed of. Freud still stated that homosexuality could not be guaranteed a cure, but if one worked hard enough, it was possible to find relief.

Throughout the next 50 years, individuals around the world were still seeking out information and explanation for “gay issues.” Many published works were put out between 1957 and the Stonewall Riots in 1969, which brought about the assumption that being gay was “a sickness.” Many individuals such as Charles Socarides believed that homosexuality in men was caused by the father being absent for much of a male child’s life and that the men grew up in too strong of a female-dominated household.

After the claim of “illness” was introduced in the homosexual community, there were types of therapeutic approach, sometimes violent, to help individuals resist the temptations of a gay “lifestyle.” Love in Action was formed in 1973 and three years later formed the largest ex-gay organization, Exodus. Later groups included Homosexuals Anonymous, and PFOX (Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays and Gays).

Another organization that belittled the rights movement was American Family Association (AFA). In a 2011 article, the Southern Poverty Law Center lists AFA leader Bryan Fischer as the responsible party for stating:

“Homosexuality gave us Adolph Hitler, and homosexuals in the military gave us Brown Shirts, the Nazi war machine and six million dead Jews.” He also claims that homosexuality should be penalized the same as heroin use. Fischer believes that homosexual individuals should have no choice but to attend reparative and conversion therapy.



*(Continued on page 2)*



SUNDAY, MARCH 11, 2-4 PM

### Film: “De Colores”

Through moving personal stories we learn how families are breaking cultural barriers and how love always prevails. We will watch and talk about this 28-minute film about how Latino families are replacing the deep roots of homophobia with the even deeper roots of love and tolerance. It is part of the Unlearning Homophobia series.

Learn more at:

<http://www.womanvision.org/de-colores.html>

SUN., APRIL 8, 2-4 PM

### Welcoming Schools film:

**“What Do You Know?”** with a discussion to follow with guest **Tracy Flynn**.

### **“What Do You Know? Six to twelve year olds talk about gays and lesbians”**

is a new short professional development film directed by Ellen Brodsky, produced by Welcoming Schools for school staff and parents. The film features students discussing what they know about gay men and lesbians, what they hear at school, and what they’d like teachers to do.

Tracy Flynn, M.Ed. is the Pacific Northwest Regional Consultant for Welcome Schools, a program of HRC Foundation. Learn more at:

<http://www.welcomingschools.org/>

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Over time, organizations like PFLAG have changed the way everyone views gay "conversion therapy" and other matters of discrimination. The American Psychological Association has clarified that homosexuality is not a medical issue and opposes prejudice from psychologists towards individuals of a gay orientation, stating that it is wrong to try to cure homosexuality through therapy or physical harm of any form. Throughout the years, individuals have learned to accept LGBTQ individuals, but as with most movements, prejudice and homophobia still exist and there is a lot of work to complete before LGBTQ are considered equals, such as legalizing gay marriage and full gay rights around the world.

**HeartBeat** is a free publication of the PFLAG chapter in Olympia, Washington, published six times a year. The editors are Alec & Gabi Clayton.

Unsolicited articles are welcome and are due by the 15th of even-numbered months. The editors reserve the right to reject or edit material.

**The deadline for the next issue is 4/15/2012**

Mail submissions to:  
**HeartBeat**  
P.O. Box 12732  
Olympia, WA 98508-2732

Or email to: [newsletter@pflag-olympia.org](mailto:newsletter@pflag-olympia.org)

Equal marriage for same sex couples is now the law in Washington State, but parties opposed to it are seeking signatures to get it on the November ballot both as a referendum to approve what was passed and as an initiative to overturn the law. If they make it to the ballot, supporters of equal marriage rights must vote **FOR REFERENDUM 74** and **AGAINST INITIATIVE 1192**. Please get involved. Tell your friends and neighbors. The latest poll as of Feb. 24 showed 50% in favor of same sex marriage and 46% opposed. It's going to be a tough fight.

**"TO ME, BEING QUEER ISN'T WHO YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH; IT'S JUST AN IDEA THAT SEXUALITY ISN'T GENDER-BASED, THAT IT'S LOVE-BASED." ~ ANI DIFRANCO**

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**PFLAG**  
Olympia, Washington

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

**MEETS** at 2PM on the second Sunday of each month at First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE, Olympia. It is handicap-accessible. In August we meet at 1pm for a potluck picnic in a local park.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Sylvester Park on Capitol Way and Legion Way, go 12 blocks east on Legion Way to Boundary Street. Turn left around the church. Park in the lot at 5th Avenue and Boundary and enter through the glass doors.

Mailing address:  
PO Box 12732; Olympia, WA 98508-2732

For more information  
email: [info@pflag-olympia.org](mailto:info@pflag-olympia.org)

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