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10 LGBTQ-Inclusive Picture Books You May Have Missed

by Dana Rudolph | drudolph@mombian.com
contributing writer

I love that more and more LGBTQ-inclusive kids' books are not just "about" being LGBTQ, but instead show LGBTQ people in the fullness of our lives. The downside is that sometimes these books can be hard to find. Here are 10 picture books you may have missed because the queer inclusion isn't evident from the cover or title and I haven't seen them on many lists of LGBTQ-inclusive books. These are all tales of daily life and gentle emotional lessons—but just happen to have queer protagonists or families!

"Too Green!" By Sumana Seeboruth, illustrated by Maribel Castells (Barefoot Books). A young child declares his dislike of the green vegetables his mama brings home. He'd

see **MOMBIAN,** *page 4*

Forging family across space and time

Our imaginations can bridge divides

by Richard J. Rosendall | rrosendall@starpower.net
contributing writer

Memory and imagination make much of our inner life nonlinear. Friends who vanished thirty and forty years ago remain as vivid to me as if we just met for dinner last week.

One of science fiction's strengths is that it can give us insights into ourselves by transporting us to other worlds. In "The Inner Light," a 1992 episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation, the Enterprise encounters a probe of unknown origin that transmits a "nucleonic beam" that scans the ship and renders Captain Picard unconscious for 25 minutes.

During that time, Picard experiences four decades of life and love on a planet whose civilization was wiped out a thousand years earlier when its sun went nova. A flute is recovered from the probe and given to Picard, who remembers how to play it. It is a classic science fiction tale, sad and beautiful.

Yesterday I received a text message from Kenya—only seven thousand miles distant, rather than centuries—from Priscilla, an HIV+ Ugandan

see **ROSENDALL,** *page 4*

Tim Scott's homophobic party queries him

by Rev. Irene Monroe
contributing writer

Tim Scott is running for president. It's an impressive feat as the only African American Republican in today's U.S. Senate and the first Southern Black senator since Reconstruction.

Scott checks off many boxes to win over Republican voters except one-he's unattached.

When you probe into this box, you discover that Scott, 57, is not publicly known to have ever been partnered. And as Boston Globe columnist Renee Graham points out in her article "Tim Scott has a woman problem," Scott's "bachelor status" is often code for "sexual identity."

Being married or single should not be the litmus test for presidential electability any more than one's religion; however, queries about his unattached status would go away, as it has for New Jersey Democratic Senator Cory Booker, 54, if he were not anti-LGBTQ+.

"The people of South Carolina have voted overwhelmingly to protect the traditional definition of marriage, and I stand with their decision," Scott

see **MONROE,** *page 2*

NEWS FROM...

The History Project: Documenting LGBTQ Boston

Photo via The History Project: Documenting LGBTQ Boston, Facebook.

We've almost reached our fundraising goal for the 2023 HistoryMaker Awards!

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see **HISTORY,** *page 7*

CALENDAR

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Thursday, September 28, 6:00 pm

"Where the Heart Is" will take place on Thursday, September 28, 2023, at The 521 Overlook at Fenway Park. The event promises to be an unforgettable night of inspiration and recognition, with a special focus on promoting the independence and well-being of older adults.

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https://www.ethocare.org/ethos50/

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https://newengland.hrc.org/events/new-england-dinner-and-auction

"The people had to meet a couple of criteria, but it was just kind of my personal interest and love of them. Insofar as the women, just none of them were as articulate enough on this intellectual level."

—Jann Wenner (co-founder of "Rolling Stone" magazine) discusses why there are no women featured in his new book, "The Masters". It bears noting that English is not Mr. Wenner's native tongue, which explains the awkward phrase "as articulate enough". Shortly after making this statement, Wenner was removed from the Board of Directors of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation.

more in Billy Masters on page 6!

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Monroe

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told his audience. As one who opposes marriage equality, a real stand-in or fictive female is requisite to deflect attention from the looming questions about his sexual identity.

"My girlfriend wants to see me when I come home," Scott is quoted in the recent Washington Post article "Tim Scott's girlfriend." And at an Iowa campaign stop, Scott called his no-named girlfriend a "lovely Christian girl."

These passing references to his girlfriend have become tantalizing since no one has seen or met her. The now dogged insistence by the public to know Scott's mysterious woman reminds me of my days of being closeted and engaging in compulsory heterosexuality with tales of dating guys - real and fictive - to keep a job, to go to church, and to stop the questions. My adventures got more elaborate to fit the needed heterosexual script people wanted to hear, as it appears that Scott is doing, too.

Being married or single should not be the litmus test for presidential electability any more than one's religion

Also, the trauma of a broken home life can make one uncommitted and unattached.

"As a guy who was raised in a single-parent household mired in poverty, I understand the devastation when a family breaks up. I had to live with the consequences of a father who was not there. I made a commitment to make sure that never happened in my life," Scott explained in his message about the importance of upholding family values.

However, Scott's tales of a girlfriend and having grown up in a dysfunctional home environment bolster his presidential bid in a Trump-controlled political party that fashions itself more on lies than the truth.

Closet Republicans have always had to tote the party line. Everyone knew how they comported in the daylight differed from how they crept in the night. For example, when Senator Lindsey Graham, a life-long confirmed bachelor, gets on the anti-LGBTQ+ bandwagon with his other homophobic Republican cohorts, rumors of his queer life as "Lady G" among D.C. male escorts surface.

In 2010, The New York Time Magazine flat-out asked Graham if he were gay. Graham smirked with this reply: "Like maybe I'm having a clandestine affair with Ricky Martin," he said. "I know it's really gonna upset a lot of gay men — I'm sure hundreds of 'em are gonna be jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge — but I ain't available. I ain't gay. Sorry."

However, in 2013, it was first reported that Graham allegedly hired male escorts. According to "Towleroad Gay News," gay adult performer and escort Sean Harding took to Twitter (now known as X) to out Graham.

"There is a homophobic republican senator who is no better than Trump who keeps passing legislation that is damaging to the lgbt and minority communities. Every sex worker I know has been hired by this man. Wondering if enough of us spoke out if that could get him out of office? Fellow sex workers, I invite you to stand with me during this crucial time. EVERY major news network is in my inbox, including high profile lawyers willing to take this case. There's strength in numbers – I KNOW you're out there because EVERYONE has a story about L.G. when we talk."

Back in the day, to point out the hypocrisy of gay anti-LGBTQ+ politicians, gay Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) threatened to out Republican colleagues in the late '80s in cases where these Republicans were using "gay" as a weapon to pass antigay bills.

Scott may be a confirmed heterosexual bachelor. However, he brought the queries about his sexuality- on both sides of the political divide- on himself with his strident anti-LGBTQ+ agenda since he took office in 2010. It seems apropos that the homophobic vitriol Scott legislatively employed to police the behavior and civil rights of LGBTQ+ Americans is now turned on him.

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Butterfly Soars

Madama Butterfly, a new BLO production, Boston Lyric Opera, Emerson Colonial Theatre, through September 24. Running time: two hours, 45 minutes (including an intermission after the first act). www.blo.org

Butterfly (Karen Chia-ling Ho, center) is a nightclub entertainer in BLO's new production of "Madama Butterfly at5 Emerson Colonial Theatre."(Photo: Ken Yotsukura)

Jules Becker
Contributing Writer

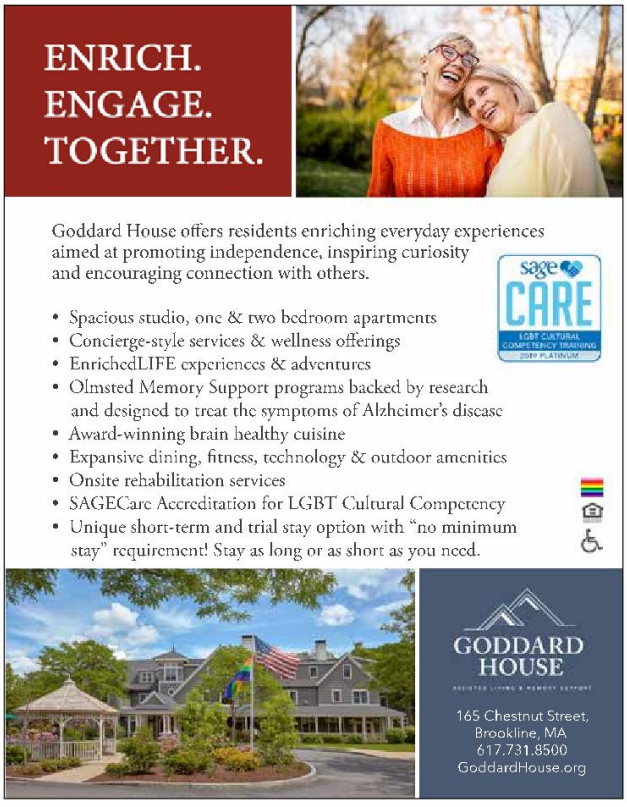
Gifted directors often reimagine classics—whether in theater or opera—and Phil Chan is doing the same for "Madama Butterfly," now in a powerfully haunting Boston Lyric Opera staging at Emerson Colonial Theatre. Describing the company season opener in his playbill note, stage director Chan explains, "Working alongside the brilliant Nina Yoshida Nelsen (BLO artistic advisor and dramaturg), we grafted Puccini's score onto a new setting but consistent story that re-centers an Asian-American experience in the 1940's." So-called 'purists' notwithstanding, Puccini's masterful score (1904, revised by the composer in 1907) soars in the gloriously sung and acted BLO production. Just as importantly, the envelope-pushing current effort does full justice to Asian Americans as well as opera lovers.

Tellingly, Japanese-American mezzo-soprano Nelsen (who has often sung the role of maid-confidante Suzuki in the opera) is the descendant of grandparents who experienced the indignities of the Poston, Arizona incarceration camp during World War II. In the BLO staging, that incarceration camp—a fittingly stark construct from inspired designer Yu Shibagaki—takes over the Colonial stage for the 1944 second and third acts. Archival images--some found in the very informative playbill—give historical context as well as true dignity to the more than 100,000 incarcerated Japanese –Americans. For much of the contrastingly colorful Club Shangri-La setting of the 1941 first act, the title singer Cio-Cio-San—eye-catchingly attired by costume designer Sara Ryung Clement—pretends to be Chinese to avoid discrimination for being Japanese. Once her irate Uncle Bonzo reveals her true identity and curses her, falling in love with navy lieutenant B. F. Pinkerton will not keep her from being incarcerated after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Butterfly takes on full tragic dimension as their child Dolore contracts tuberculosis and she holds on to the hope that Pinkerton will return to help him. When the now married Pinkerton returns with his wife Kate, that hope is dashed at the heart-breaking close.

Under the strong conducting of BLO music director David Angus, Karen Chia-Ling Ho richly captures the hopes, dreams and growing despair of Butterfly. She delivers her role's grand arias—particularly the famed "Un bel di, vedremo"—with fully sustained high notes and dramatic intensity. Her scenes with Dominick Chenes— properly dashing and conflicted as Pinkerton—possess superb duets, convincing chemistry and moving conflict.

Alice Chung is a touching standout as caring and supportive Suzuki. Chung and Ho have moments of pure poetry celebrating the joy of springtime and decorating with a rainbow of paper flowers in the flowerless camp. Troy Cook captures American consul Sharpless' concern for Butterfly and her son. There are moments, though, when this robust voiced-singer could do with more projection. Rodell Rosel has all of Goro's impresario expansion in the early going as Butterfly sings with an equally snappy entourage. Some musical theater buffs may find his dynamic efforts bringing together navy men and dancers calling to mind the over-the top efforts of the Engineer in the admittedly seedy showplaces of "Miss Saigon" (a work inspired by the opera). Hyungjin Son makes the most of Uncle Bonzo's fury. Neko Umphenour has the right vulnerability as Dolore. With Michael Sakimoto's stylish choreography, Cassie Wang proves a graceful solo dancer.

Chang closes his playbill notes with the hope that audiences will find themselves "swept into the story of a mother's unbreakable love." The BLO's sublime "Madama Butterfly" honors the magic of Puccini's music and brings real authenticity to the opera's iconic Japanese mother.



Mombian

Continued from page 1

rather have the bread his mum is making. But after his mama involves him in making soup from the vegetables and persuades him to try a sip, he discovers he actually likes it, and joyously asks for more. Also available in a bilingual English/Spanish edition.

"Awake, Asleep," by Kyle Lukoff, illustrated by Nadia Alam (Orchard Books). Lukoff, a two-time Stonewall Award winner and National Book Award finalist, in his first volume for the very youngest children, leans into his poetic skills with spare, gently rhyming text as we follow three families through daily family moments. There's also the occasional stumble or bump, quickly followed by a comforting touch—a subtle lesson on resilience. One family has two dads, one has a mom and dad, and in the third, the burly, tattooed dad happily pulls on pink hi-top sneakers to match his daughter's.

"This Is the First Book I Will Read to You," by Francesco Sedita, illustrated by Magenta Fox (Viking). A father expresses his nurturing, vulnerable thoughts as he gets ready to read to his new child for the first time. A photo on the wall in one illustration shows him and another man with their arms around each other; elsewhere, their photos are paired side by side. They could be brothers, but given that author Francesco Sedita is himself married to a man, it seems likely that the father here is, too. The other dad is not shown elsewhere, but solo moments between parent and child happen even in couples. Those who want to see queerness here can easily do so.

"Firsts and Lasts: The Changing Seasons," by Leda Schubert, illustrated by Clover Robin (Candlewick). A child talks about the different activities that start—and end—in each season for her, her sister, and her moms. This is a book not only about the seasons, but about the intertwining harmonies of nature and family life, and finding the new even as we bid farewell to the old.

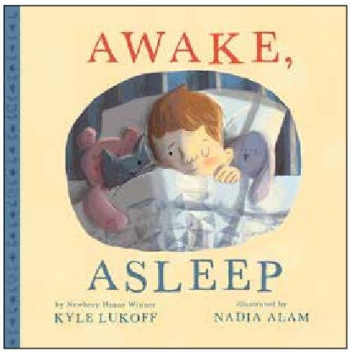
"Miguel's Community Garden," by JaNay Brown-Wood, illustrated by Samara Hardy (Peachtree). A young boy with two dads wants sunflowers for his garden party and sets off with his pet turtle to find them, encountering other plants along the way. A delightful book for early STEM learning, showing readers how to be careful observers of nature.

"A Home Again," by Colleen Rowan Kosinski, illustrated by Valeria Docampo (Two Lions). Told from the first-person perspective of a red house, this lyrical story begins as the building welcomes its first family, a mom, dad, and two (soon three) children. When they leave, the house falls into disrepair, until a new family—two men and (soon) their child—moves in and makes the house once more a home.

"Forever Home: A Dog and Boy Love Story," written and illustrated by Henry Cole (Scholastic). A moving, wordless tale about a boy who has two dads and wants a puppy—and an abandoned dog who needs a home. Cole, illustrator of the classic "And Tango Makes Three," brings his usual skill and warmth to bear here. The book offers a touching model of how to care for a dog but also conveys that many are in need of homes. Truly a delight.

"Hold That Thought," by Bree Galbraith, illustrated by Lynn Scurfield (Owlkids). A nonbinary child named Finn gets an exciting idea, depicted as swirls of thought above their head. Friends help shape the idea and it continues to expand. When a bully disparages it, however, Finn begins to doubt, until they realize they need to share it even further. Eventually, even the bully contributes, and the idea soars. The idea is never specified, which makes the story widely applicable and offers much opportunity for discussion.

"My Friend, Loonie," by Nina LaCour, illustrated by Ashling Lindsay (Candlewick). A girl's two moms give her a yellow balloon that becomes her constant companion—until one day, it floats away, leaving her bereft. Her moms try to comfort her, and after time passes, the girl finds a way to engage positively with her memories and even find brightness in the world again. A soothing book about connection, loss, and memory.



"How Are You, Verity?" by Meghan Wilson Duff, illustrated by Taylor Barron (Magination). Verity, a neurodivergent, nonbinary child, often replies with a slew of information when people ask, "How are you?" When their brother suggests that the question is just a social greeting, Verity decides to test this for themselves—but also learns when it's okay to share more about how they're really feeling.

If you want more books like this, visit my Database of LGBTQ Family Books (mombian.com/database) and filter by the "Incidental queerness" tag—or use other tags to find books specifically about LGBTQ identities, history, and culture, if that's what you seek.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a two-time GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory, plus a searchable database of 1300+ LGBTQ family books.

Rosendall

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refugee who like many was suffering ulcers because of a poor diet, faced violence in the street, and lost her housing because she couldn't contribute to the rent.

I told Priscilla she does not deserve the cruelty and hate to which she has been subjected, that she is better than those who persecute her. I added that if she gives up now, she may miss a new adventure that waits for her just around the next bend in the road.

A former refugee who now lives in America put me in touch with the managers of a safe house in Nairobi. Priscilla was able to tour the facility, and they offered her space. Now she just needs to retrieve her clothing from the place where she was previously staying. Life is precarious for these displaced LGBTQ+ people in terms of food, housing, medical care, and transport.

This morning I received a message from another refugee:

"Hello my name is Rani am a South Sudan resident I ran to Kenya for my life and safety and also for my sexuality. I lost my parents years ago because of civil wars in my country. Am struggling in Kenya for life and it's really hard for me to get a job or something to drink or eat or a house to live in. Guys take advantage of me because I am needy and poor. If you can support me with food or a small business or even fund my education I would appreciate. Am really struggling and lost with hope."

I reluctantly explain that the people seeking help exceed my capacity. Many international aid organizations are affiliated with churches unfriendly to our community.

Rani is reduced to looking through other people's discarded food. She writes: "Too much cold here. Too much shivering. Too much hunger. No sweater. No blanket. No mattress. No house. No brother. No mother. No father. I wish this ground would swallow me and these troubles will go."

I reply, "My dear, please don't give up. I can imagine wanting the world to swallow me up. But I just learned of your existence this morning. Please don't disappear so quickly."

She replies, "I will hold on till the end." With that brave spirit, she connects herself to pioneering ancestors. Shortly afterwards, a colleague identifies an available space in a safe house. In the meantime, a sympathetic shopkeeper provides her a hot meal, a few changes of clothes, and a job. Our network of volunteers, albeit inadequate, saves lives.

I told Priscilla she does not deserve the cruelty and hate to which she has been subjected, that she is better than those who persecute her.

Most of these people I will never meet. Sometimes, operating at such a distance, I feel like Picard and the family he grew to know while lying unconscious on the bridge of the Enterprise a millennium after they disappeared. As he told his daughter in that long-vanished world: "Live now. Make now always the most precious time. Now will never come again."

Cultural differences, language barriers, and trust issues complicate aid efforts. On the other hand, I have encountered many acts of grace by the displaced themselves. The caring I give returns to me many times over.

Anti-gay and anti-trans policies by governments in East Africa, often pushed by Western missionaries, make the future uncertain. More LGBTQ-affirming non-governmental organizations and focused diplomacy are needed. One reputable group is All Out (https://campaigns.allout.org/emergency-in-uganda).

One volunteer can inspire another and another until lasting change occurs. When our imaginations take us to other places and circumstances, they can nurture new familial bonds that help restore societies frayed by ignorance and fear.

Richard J. Rosendall is a writer and activist at rrosendall@me.com.

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Golden Rainbow TIMES

Serving LGBT Boomers and Pioneers September 21, 2023

Sitting Still

by Judah Leblang | www.JudahLeblang.com
contributing writer

I've never been one for sitting still; for me, my rare moments of peace come through motion. I have a sporadic once-or-twice weekly yoga practice, which, when I tune into my body and concentrate, centers and relaxes me. But those brief tastes of relaxation, of comfort in my own skin, are fleeting like a bullet train racing by in the night.

Back in my 20s and 30s, I assumed that most older folks had their lives figured out, and knew a lot of things I didn't. I believed that with a few exceptions (including, at times, my parents), age brought wisdom and some degree of calm. But now that I've reached my golden years, the truism seems less true — at least in my case.

I live in a multi-generational household of 20 residents, ranging in age from 23 to 68; I'm the second-oldest, just a few years behind a woman pushing 70. Sometimes, when one of my younger housemates is stressing about an upcoming exam or internship or complaining that their first job out of college is not everything they dreamed it would be, I stop and think — this is just the beginning BW230921JUof life's losses, and welcome to the real world.

Those moments remind me that I wouldn't want to go back to 25 or even 35, though I wouldn't mind having the body and the prodigious energy I had then. Still, much of my energy got sucked up into worry and fear, of things that might have happened. I came by that fear honestly after I watched my father recover from a massive heart attack when he was just 44, and I was 14. My Dad died of a second heart attack when he was 61. For years afterward, I was certain his fate would be my own.

Ironically, now that I'm 66, with a leaky heart valve and borderline high blood pressure, I spend much less time worrying about a possible heart attack. After all, I have plenty of other things to worry about; I've had melanoma twice, and I know that if my heart doesn't poop out something else will. But I also know that whatever my fate or good fortune, I have less of that precious commodity — time — than I did back then, and I don't want to waste it.

So, deep into my seventh decade that's my conundrum: I have both too much time and too little.

Now I know that I am much closer to the end than the beginning of my life, have gone beyond any reasonable definition of middle age, and have reached "Junior-Senior" status. Yet sometimes I have too much unstructured time — hours I could be writing, biking, planning my next writing class — and spend them sitting around, watching Netflix, or pining for the boyfriend/husband/companion I never had.

It's a gray rainy day in Boston at the end of a sticky summer that, like all New England summers, went much too fast. As the days grow shorter and darkness comes earlier, I reflect on making the most of the time I have left, however long or short that may be.

Judah Leblang is a writer, teacher, and storyteller in Boston. Find out more at judahleblang.com

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billy masters

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Every once in a while, I get a hankering—and, if there's one thing you know about me, my hankerings must be hankered. I was driving by an illuminated Krispy Kreme sign on US1 in Fort Lauderdale and decided to treat myself to a hot, original glazed donut. Just one—I do have some self-control. The voice in the speaker asked if I'd like another for half-price. No thank you, said I. When I got to the window, a woman approached me at a glacial pace—in fact, she had glacial proportions, but that's probably an occupational hazard. I produced a $20 bill, and she backed away offended. "Smaller?" she asked. No—that's all I had. She then peered at it and complained that it had a tear (it did in fact have a half-inch tear). She shook her head. I asked to speak to a manager. She slammed the window and walked away—with my donut! I probably didn't need it anyway, but still felt deeply offended.

I arrived home to find an email from Art in Seattle waiting for me—and you know it's serious if I'm addressing an "Ask Billy" question so early in a column. "I'm sure you may have legal reasons for not publishing anything of a factual nature about Hugh Jackman, but it seems the gossip has existed for most of his career. Now that he's separating, will the real Hugh come out (so to speak)? Or is there another party involved?"

In case you missed it, here is the statement issued by The Jackmans: "We have been blessed to have almost 3 decades together as husband and wife in a wonderful, loving marriage. Our journey now is shifting and we have decided to separate to pursue our individual growth. Our family has been and always will be our highest priority. We undertake this next chapter with gratitude, love and kindness. We greatly appreciate your understanding in respecting our privacy as our family navigates this transition in all of our lives." That's a statement which says virtually nothing. I haven't heard such an abundance of nothing since that non-coming-out speech Jodie Foster made at the 2013 Golden Globes. The Jackmans added, "This is the sole statement either of us will make." That goes on the assumption that they actually said anything.

Since they're not saying anything, allow me to add my two cents (which would have come in handy at Krispy Kreme). I've spent some time with Hugh and Deb, and I've not seen a couple more devoted to each other—if not in a hot, romantic way, then certainly as dear, loving friends. She's a "handsome" woman—more a Camilla than a Diana, if you catch my drift. More likely to muck out the stalls than play polo. And, obviously, gay rumors are de rigueur when you are as good-looking and genial as Jackman. The couple always made light of the whispers, while firmly denying them. "If he was gay, fine, he would say he's gay," said Deb a few years back. She added that if Hugh were gay, "He'd be dating Brad Pitt or whatever... not that Brad's gay." See, Deb, this is how rumors get started! Why make this non-statement now? There are two possibilities: 1) A story is about to break or B) There's another person involved. OK, Brad, the ball's in your court.

Then there's that Jonas divorce. No, not Nick. This is Joe—the one who looks like he's undressing everyone with his eyes (not that I'm complaining). He's divorcing Sophie Turner, although I've noted that he's still sporting some jewelry on his so-called ring finger. Who knows—maybe he dug out that old purity ring. Once again, we have a couple claiming that the split is amicable—although I dunno how "amicable" it is when there is alleged Ring Cam footage! Where, oh where, are those non-amicable splits? When the wife would call her ex a piece of shit? Or the husband would call the wife a cheating whore? Ah, the good ol' days.

I'm not particularly interested in Robin Roberts' marriage. Naturally, we wish them well. I was nonetheless amused to hear that former co-hosts Amy Robach and TJ Holmes were not invited to the nuptials—especially since Robin and Amy always purported to be very close. One insider claims, "Amy is furious about it. She and Robin were far more than work colleagues, they shared a deep friendship." Not so deep, apparently.

I am very interested in the upcoming wedding of Antoni Porowski and...well, some other hot guy who doesn't wear a shirt. Reportedly, the sexy "Queer Eye" had a bachelor party and only invited one of his co-hosts. Daytime talk host Karamo Brown told Andy Cohen that Tan France was the only "Queer" to make the cut. Brown was philosophical about the snub. "When it comes to events like that, family things, weddings, it costs money, so I don't take offense to it." He is hopeful that all the "Queer Eyes" would be invited to the wedding. "But if we were not, I would be OK."

Speaking of daytime talk shows, everyone's in a tizzy because Drew Barrymore is being picketed by SAG and WGA, but "The View" isn't. Let me explain the difference. ABC puts "The View" under the purview of both the news and entertainment divisions. As such, they are not performers, but personalities (like news anchors, for instance). Secondly, while "The View" employs writers, none have been used since the strike. All the co hosts are doing their own writing—vs. "The Drew Barrymore Show" which, I am told, has employed (dare I say) "scabs". Still, the buck stops with Barrymore, who defended returning to work by stating, "I own this choice." By the by, let's nip this bit in the bud—yes, Sherri Shepherd and Bill Maher are poised to also return to the airwaves. Since they are both comedians, they will be writing their own material.

Getting back to "Drew", her people have been taking things to the next level. While picketing in front of her studio, the WGA is handing out buttons and other literature. Last week, two members of the audience were asked to leave before the taping began. Why? Because they were wearing the WGA pins! They offered to remove the offending accessories, but they were already tagged for ousting. What did the ejected audience members do? They joined the picket line! This is like the best story I've heard all week! In fact, one of the people said, "It has changed my perspective on her and the show in general. I've been completely alarmed and disheartened by this whole process." YES!

It only got worse for Drew. She was abruptly dropped as host of an awards show in light of all the negative press. And those awards were being given out by the National Book Foundation! Oh, the indignity—to be dropped by books! Imagine how much more insulting it would be if she read! Drew released a video, tearfully defending herself. This prompted Bradley Whitford to say, "Drew Barrymore would like you to know that undermining union solidarity at the most crucial moment in Hollywood labor history makes her the victim. This has been, like, a super tough week for her." Enter Rosie O'Donnell, telling it like it is: "Stop taping the show. Stop asking audiences to cross the picket line. Then ask someone to help you craft three declarative sentences. They should follow along these lines: I made an error. I apologize to the WGA for disrespecting the work of professional writers. I apologize to all union members who are withstanding real hardship as I live a life of luxury."

And just like that...Drew broke. "I have listened to everyone, and I am making the decision to pause the show's premiere until after the strike is over. I have no words to express my deepest apologies to anyone I have hurt and, of course, to our incredible team who works on the show and has made it what it is today. We really tried to find our way forward. And I truly hope for a resolution for the entire industry soon." OK, four sentences.

When Drew has no words and the Jackmans have no further statement, we've definitely come to the end of another column. I'd like to share a few words on the passing of actor Billy Miller. He was adorable and the perfect combination of silly and sexy. Of course, that same combination can also be found on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that lets the pictures (and videos) do the talking. If you simply must hear from me directly, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I actually am served a Krispy Kreme! So, until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

Photo by Christopher William Adach, via Wikimedia Commons.

Hugh Jackman

Photo by David Shankbone, via Wikimedia Commons.

Drew Barrymore

Photo by MTV International, via Wikimedia Commons.

Antoni Porowski

History

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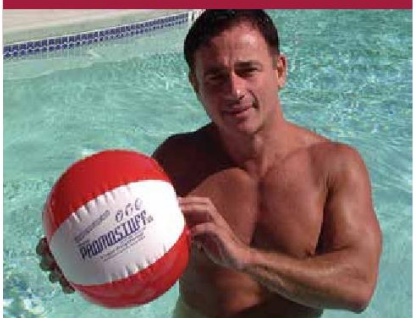

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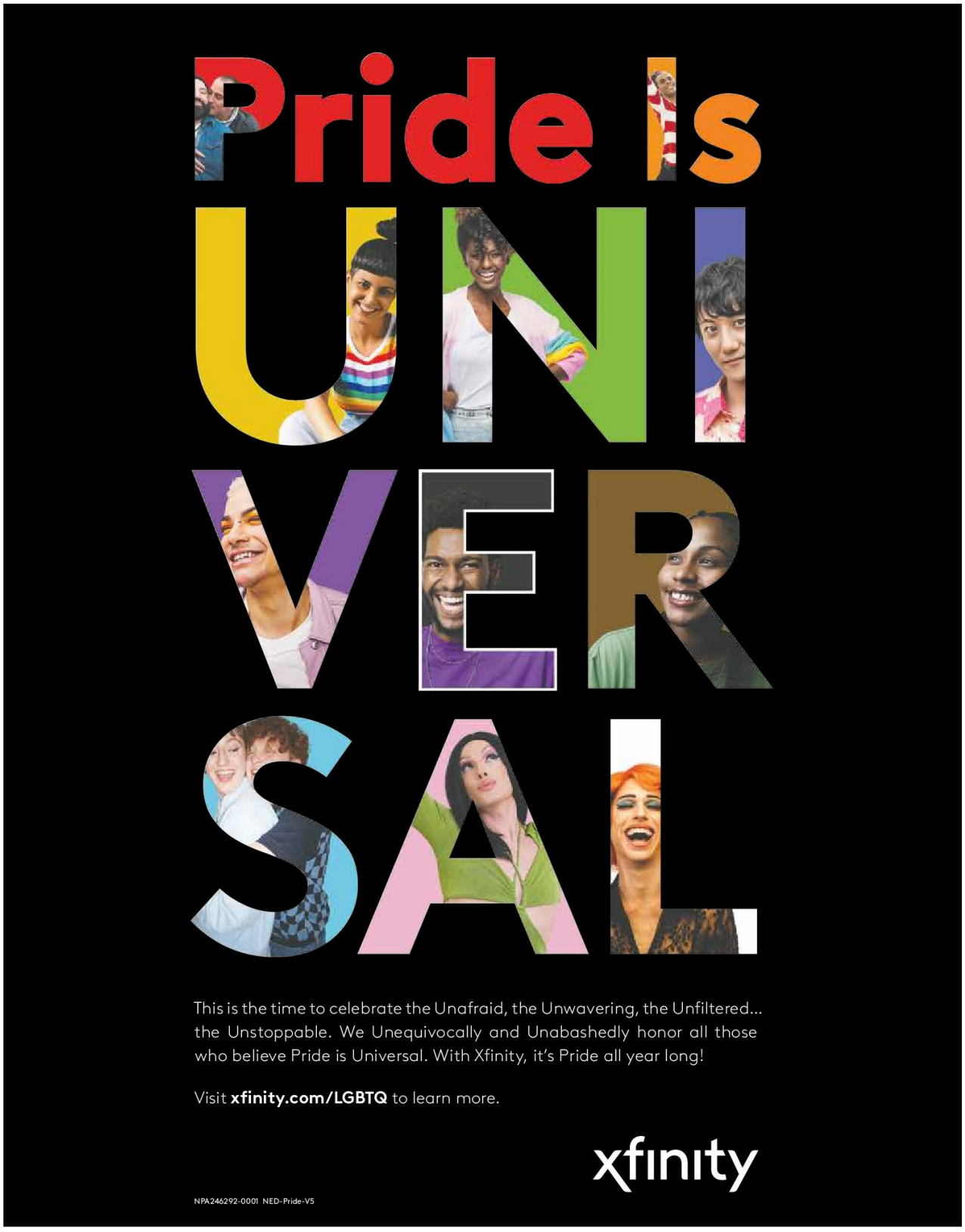
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