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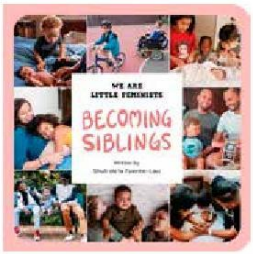
5 New Queer-Inclusive Picture Books of Family, Love, and Community

by Dana Rudolph | drudolph@mombian.com
contributing writer



In our current era, reading can be an act of resistance. Five brand-new LGBTQ-inclusive picture books out this month celebrate families and people diverse in many ways—a simple goal, but one with powerful repercussions. Add them to your family's bookshelf or seek them at a library near you (and suggest them if they're not there yet).

Let's start with two books that feature photographs of real children, offering important reflections of the real world. "We are Little Feminists: Becoming Siblings," by Shuli de la Fuente-Lau (Little Feminist), follows previous board books in the LGBTQ-inclusive We are Little Feminists series in using simple text and photos to illustrate a theme. Here, readers encounter children and their new siblings from a

see **MOMBIAN,** *page 4*

The GOP plays with fire

No magic eraser for Trump

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

Pardon my use of a fire metaphor when entire neighborhoods in southern California have been destroyed by wildfires. The sad fact, however, is that political arson is the only thing Donald Trump does or knows how to do.

His own response to the wildfires is a case in point. While they spread destruction from celebrity mansions in Malibu to multi-generation African-American homes in Altadena, Trump exploited them to launch a lie-filled smear of Democrats. He has neither the capacity nor the inclination to bring Americans together in the face of tragedy.

Meanwhile, Republicans insisted that strings be attached to any federal aid for rebuilding after the fires. For example, they demanded that Democrats support raising the debt ceiling to permit another round of tax cuts for needy billionaires. This despite the fact that red states on average receive more in federal aid than they contribute, while blue California contributes billions more in taxes than it receives.

Egalitarianism is not a thing for

see **ROSENDALL,** *page 4*

Fenway Health Statement on Executive Orders

Federal Government Only Recognizes Two Sexes, Restricting Federal DEI Initiatives

Submitted by Fenway Health

On Monday, executive orders were issued restricting the federal government's recognition of gender to two sexes, male and female, and restricting federal diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

"Efforts to roll back existing civil rights protections and restrict the federal government's ability to address the needs of transgender and intersex people represent an attack on the very values of equity, dignity, and justice that Fenway Health has championed for more than 50 years," said Fenway Health CEO Jordina Shanks. "On a day when many in our community feel uncertainty and fear, we reaffirm our commitment to being a beacon of hope and a refuge for the LGBTQIA+ community. The work ahead is urgent, and we are working in coalition with our partners to stand up against actions that threaten our rights and to ensure everyone has access to care and support."

Executive Order Stating That the Federal Government Only Recognizes Two Sexes and Restricting Federal Recognition of Human Diversity

An executive order was issued lim-

see **FENWAY,** *page 5*

NEWS FROM...

Congressman Seth Moulton, (D) MA 6

Photo courtesy of Congressman Seth Moulton.

Vote Explainer - H.R. 28: The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act

On January 14, 2025, the Republican majority brought up the "Protection of Women and Girls and Sports Act" for a full House vote. Just as I did in the 118th Congress, I voted NO.

This is not the sort of balanced, fairness-oriented policy I've advocated for, and I won't vote yes on this

see **MOULTON,** *page 7*

On day one, Trump pits his administration against transgender people

This story was origianally published by The 19th.

His administration will likely run into legal trouble as it implements policies on federal identity documents and housing in federal prisons.

By Orion Rummler and Kate Sosin
The 19th

President Donald Trump on Monday signed an executive order signaling his administration's opposition to gender diversity and transgender identity as a whole. Trump wants to re-establish multiple policies regarding trans Americans that were in place during his first term, including housing trans people in federal prisons based on their sex assigned at birth, while seeking to cement a broader message: In his administration's view, trans and nonbinary people don't exist.

"As of today, it will henceforth be the official policy of the United States government that there are only

see **TRUMP,** *page 7*

"You're a lot more interesting than I thought."

- Cher to Josh Brolin after he discussed his memoir on "The Graham Norton Show" in December. After Cher promoted her memoir, Josh said, "You remind me of my mom!" Before you ask, he meant his biological mom, not his stepmom who he refers to in the book as "a singer". You know her as Barbra Streisand.

more in Billy Masters on page 6!

Photo via Cher, Facebook.

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NEW ENGLAND

NH Man Faces Civil Rights Charges Over Pride Sign Thefts

By Bay Windows Staff

The New Hampshire Department of Justice has filed civil rights violation charges against a Goffstown resident accused of repeatedly stealing LGBTQ+ pride signs during Pride Month last year.

Frank Hobbs Jr. was caught on camera removing signs supporting gay rights from a public intersection in Goffstown, according to Senior Assistant New Hampshire Attorney General Sean Locke. The signs had been legally placed by a local resident who, after noticing their disappearance, installed a trail camera to document the thefts.

According to published reports, the resident was able capture a person on video coming to the intersection removing the signs and driving away. Local authorities reported that Hobbs was easily identifiable in the footage due to his prominence in the community.

When confronted about the incidents, court documents show that Hobbs initially denied any involvement. However, when informed of photographic evidence, he claimed that Town Hall officials had given him permission to remove signs containing what he described as "pedophile symbols," adding that he found the signs offensive.

The case will proceed to a hearing where Hobbs could face thousands of dollars in fines, depending on the judge's ruling. Multiple attempts to reach Hobbs for comment have been unsuccessful.

NATIONAL

Supreme Court will hear case of Maryland parents who object to LGBTQ books in their kids' classes

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear an appeal from parents in suburban Washington who want to pull their children from elementary school classes that use books featuring LGBTQ characters.

The justices will review an appeals court decision that went against parents in Montgomery County, Maryland. The parents claim that the policy violates their constitutional religious rights by not allowing them to opt out of lessons that include the storybooks.

The stories include a family's attendance at a pride parade, a girl's introduction to her uncle's husband-to-be, a prince's love for a knight amid their battle against a dragon, a girl's anxiety about giving a valentine to another girl and a transgender boy's decision to share his gender identity with his family.

The parents argue that public schools can't force kids to participate in instruction that violates their faith. They point to opt-out provisions in sex education and note that the district originally allowed parents to pull their children when the storybooks were being taught, before abruptly reversing course.

The policy led to protests in 2023. Dozens of parents testified at school board hearings about their religious obligations to keep their impressionable young children from lessons on gender and sexuality that conflicted with their beliefs.

The Washington Post reported in October that two of the books, "Pride Puppy" and "My Rainbow," were pulled from the school system's English language arts curriculum.

Lawyers for the school system, in urging the justices to stay out of the case, wrote that the books are a small part of the curriculum and that they "tell everyday tales of characters who experience adventure, confront new emotions, and struggle to make themselves heard." They touch on the same themes found in classic stories that include Snow White, Cinderella and Peter Pan, the lawyers wrote.

It's not clear whether the case will be argued in the spring, or not until the court's new term begins in October.

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GLAD Law Welcomes New Board Members and Newly Elected Leadership

Submitted by GLAD

GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD Law) announces Joseph Metmowlee Garland as the new President of its Board of Directors, Dallas Ducar as Vice President, and Beth Myers as Clerk. The three join Marlene Seltzer who continues as Treasurer, and Shane Dunn, who will remain in leadership as Immediate Past President.

The organization also welcomes new board members Nima Eshghi, an experienced leader in higher education and a former GLAD Law staff attorney; and Matt Wilder, a communications and media strategist with expertise in LGBTQ+ focused campaigns.

"GLAD Law is ready for a challenging political and policy landscape in the coming years and the new Board leadership has the experience and capability needed to aggressively defend and advance protections for LGBTQ+ people and people with HIV," said Immediate Past President Shane Dunn. "Joe, Dallas, and Beth have been effective and conscientious Board members. Marlene has been an outstanding Treasurer for several years. The entire Board will continue to partner closely with new Executive Director Ricardo Martinez and the most talented staff in the movement to defend, protect, and advance the rights of our community."

GLAD Law's biannual Board elections come amid a coordinated nationwide effort to erode, roll back, or restrict rights for LGBTQ+ Americans, especially transgender people and LGBTQ students. In response, with the support of the Board, GLAD Law has grown its legal team and expanded its work both in New England and nationally.

"I'm honored to serve as President of GLAD Law's Board of Directors during this pivotal chapter in the organization's and the LGBTQ+ movement's history. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Shane for his service and the example of his thoughtful and consistent leadership," said Board President Joe Garland. "We're also thrilled to welcome Nima and Matt, each of whom brings valuable skills and experiences to the Board that we need to further expand GLAD Law's national reach and ensure our dedicated staff have the tools and resources to sustain the challenging work ahead."

"The fights to come may be some of the toughest of our lives. Election results across the country, including in New England, may mean an increase in laws that seek to limit or strip away our fundamental rights and freedoms," said GLAD Law Executive Director Ricardo Martinez. "We're confident in the strategic vision and leadership of Joe, Dallas, and Beth to keep us moving forward. GLAD Law is also grateful to have Nima and Matt on the Board, as each possesses a commitment to justice and equality for LGBTQ+ people that's produced tangible benefits for our community."

Joe Garland, MD AAHIVS (he/him/his) has served on GLAD Law's board since 2016. He is the Medical Director of the Infectious Diseases and Immunology Center and the Corliss Street Clinic, both at Brown University Health in Providence, Rhode Island. He also serves as a clinician and a member of the Medical Advisory Board at Clínica Esperanza, also located in Providence.

Dr. Garland is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. As a physician, he provides both primary care and infectious diseases specialty care, with a focus on the prevention and treatment of HIV. He is board certified in Infectious Diseases and Internal Medicine and is a practicing HIV Specialist of the American Academy of HIV Medicine.

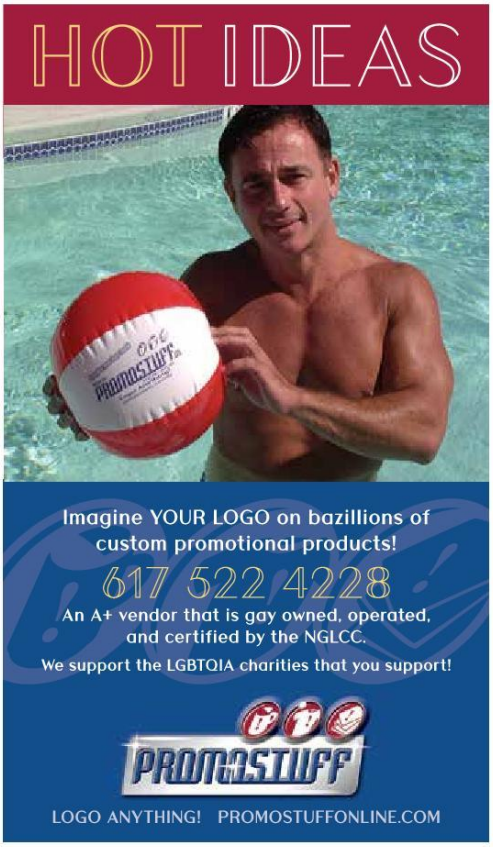
Dr. Garland received his Doctor of Medicine degree from Harvard Medical School and completed residency and fellowship training at the University of Pennsylvania.

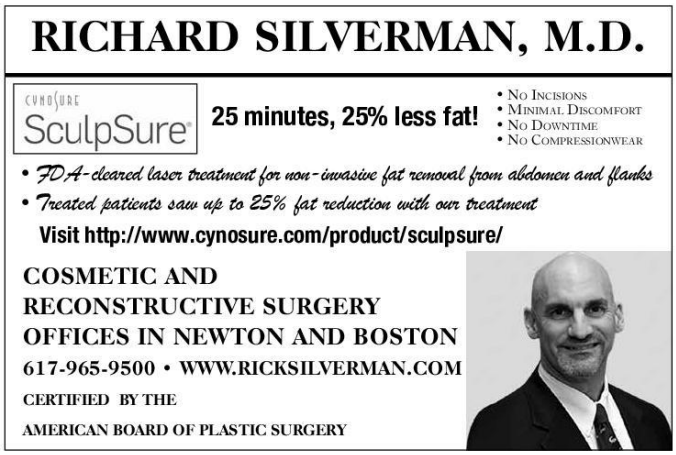
Dallas Ducar, MSN, RN, NP, CNL, FAAN (she/her/ella) has served on GLAD Law's board since 2022. Dallas Ducar (she/her/ella) is the Executive Vice President of Donor Engagement and External Relations at Fenway Health, a leading LGBTQ+ healthcare center. In the past she served as the founding President and CEO of Transhealth, establishing the first independent, comprehensive transgender health center in Western Massachusetts.

A Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, Dallas serves on the boards of GLBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders (GLAD Law), Healing Our Community Collaborative (HOCC), and the University of Virginia IDEA Fund. Dallas is on faculty at Columbia University, the MGH Institute for Health Professionals, and the University of Virginia. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and holds degrees from the University of Virginia and a certificate in Public Leadership from the Harvard Kennedy School. She has formally advised state government leaders, served on the Attorney General's Official Transition Team, and her advocacy focuses on creating inclusive healthcare systems.

Her writings have appeared in outlets such as The Boston Globe, The Hill, Newsweek, and STAT.

Beth Myers (she/her/hers) has served on GLAD Law's board since 2022. She is a Founding Partner at Zucker Law Group LLP. Beth is respected in her field as a zealous advocate for employees and an experienced litigator. Beth represents individuals in every aspect of the employment relationship, with a particular concentration on litigation in state and federal court in cases involving discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation, as well as wage and hour laws, contract and common law. Beth highly values her role to affect real change in individual's lives by advocating on their behalf in situations where they have been mistreated in the workplace due to their gender, age, sexual





Mombian

Continued from page 1

varied group of families. The text talks of the changes big and small—and the upcoming fun and joy—for everyone in the families, and reassures readers that the families' love will grow.

Some of the images show the siblings simply enjoying family life, while others hint at how the family grew: We see parents who are pregnant; a two-dad family and son holding an ultrasound photo (presumably of their surrogate and sibling-to-be); a mom-dad family at court, smiling in front of a judge (presumably having just completed an adoption). There is also a two-mom family and ones that could be solo-parent families. Sometimes the siblings and parents look alike; other times they don't. Backmatter also includes helpful Family Discussion Questions for children of different ages.

And in the simple but powerful "Love Is a Big Feeling," by Shelley Rotner (Holiday House), National Geographic photographer Rotner uses photos of a diverse group of real children and families to explore the concept of love, "a big feeling that comes from deep inside." We see some of the many ways to express love—through a smile, a hug, a dance, and more—and that love can be about spending time with friends, reading a story, or caring for the earth, among other things.

Love is also "a big feeling for family," shown via photos of several different types of families, including ones with single moms, a mom and a dad, two moms, and two dads. And while love is about kindness and peace towards others, the book asserts, it concludes by urging readers to "Love who you are!" Add this volume to your collection along with Rotner's earlier, queer-inclusive "Families" and "True You: A Gender Journey."

Moving on to books with drawn illustrations, a gender-expansive indigenous boy stars in "Raven's Ribbons," by Tasha Spillett, illustrated by Daniel Ramire (Little, Brown), a lovely and evocative story of finding affirmation in family and community. Raven loves the round dances of his people, and his favorite part is watching the swirling ribbon skirts. When he asks his grandmother if a boy could wear one, though, she replies that she's never seen that. Later, however, thinking of all the individuals who have worn the unique ribbon skirts she's made, Grandma sews—and the next morning, presents Raven with a rainbow-colored ribbon skirt of his own. At the next round dance, Raven (in his skirt) and Grandma are the first on the dance floor.

Author and poet James Baldwin gets a second recent picture book biography in "Go Tell It: How James Baldwin Became a Writer," by Quartez Harris, illustrated by Gordon C. James (Little, Brown). "The first time James Baldwin read a book, the words clung to him like glitter," begins the lyrical narrative. The book takes us from his childhood with a supportive mother and strict preacher stepfather through the publication of his first novel, "Go Tell It on the Mountain," which showed the world "the conditions and fullness of Black life." Baldwin's queerness is not mentioned in the main text, but is discussed in the backmatter. Harris beautifully evokes the power of Baldwin's own words, while Caldecott Honor–winning illustrator James's lush oil images offer dynamic snapshots of Baldwin's life.

Pair this title with 2024's "Jimmy's Rhythm & Blues," by Michelle Meadows, illustrated by Jamiel Law (HarperCollins), which offers a little more detail about Baldwin's life and his queerness in the story itself (as opposed to the backmatter), and takes us into his later years; "Go Tell It" is a little more impressionistic and focuses on his earlier period, while still giving young readers a sense of some key moments, motivations, and accomplishments (and perhaps inspiring them to learn more, starting with the backmatter). Both are

excellent.

Finally, a timely title for Valentine's Day is "Bobby and the Big Valentine," by Timmy Woitas, illustrated by Addy Rivera Sonda (Penguin Workshop). Bobby and Eddie do everything together in this sweet book about a first crush. Bobby even dreams of the two of them someday living in a castle as a prince and knight. Now, he wants to create a Valentine's card for Eddie—but can he make one as big and special as his feelings? (Spoiler: yes.)

This isn't the first picture book about a two-boy crush, but is one of few that doesn't include anyone's disapproval; it's just pure joy. Pair Bobby's story with 2021's "Love, Violet," by Charlotte Sullivan Wild, illustrated by Charlene Chua (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), a Stonewall Award-winning Valentine's Day tale about a girl with a crush on another girl. They're great reading for the upcoming holiday—or really any time you want to celebrate queer love.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a two-time GLAAD Media Award-winning blog plus a searchable database of 1,700+ LGBTQ family books.

Rosendall

Continued from page 1

Republicans, who treat the diversity of America's population as a leftist plot, feel entitled to hold power exclusively in perpetuity, and assume any election they lose is rigged despite a lack of evidence.

There is no point in soft-peddling the takeover of the United States by fascists, racists, religious fanatics, and conspiracy theorists, especially considering their own addiction to vicious and fact-free rhetoric.

With our nation in peril, the least we can honorably do is stand for the truth in defending our constitutional republic against the flood of right-wing disinformation.

Two owners of social media platforms, Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg, have justified their abandonment of content moderation by invoking free speech.

One of the most dangerous lies in today's politics is the pretense that fact-checking is a threat to free speech. It is no such thing.

People are entitled to their own opinions, but not their own facts. Trump, however, acts as if he is entitled to have reality alter itself to suit him.

It can hardly be a surprise that a man who autographs bibles harbors delusions of godhood.

Many people in the news media appear convinced it is their duty to help normalize this nonsense. No. An election victory—especially Trump's mere plurality of the popular vote in 2024—is not a magic eraser.

Trump remains a convicted felon. A grift remains a grift. Climate change remains a global threat. Demanding territory belonging to other countries remains a form of imperialistic aggression. Tulsi Gabbard remains a Russian asset. Demonizing people for their gender identity remains dishonest and cruel. Continually stoking social division remains the opposite of leadership.

President Lincoln once said, "If you call a tail a leg, how many legs does a dog have?" The answer is four. Calling a tail a leg does not make it one.

As I write this, it is not known how many proposed members of Trump's cabinet of saboteurs will be confirmed by the Senate; but it does not look promising if one holds the old-fashioned view that people should be fit for their jobs.

Defense secretary nominee Pete Hegseth at his confirmation hearing repeatedly dodged questions about drunkenness and sexual assaults. Meanwhile, Trump wants to jail former House Republican Conference chair Liz Cheney, who remains stoutly conservative while most of her former GOP colleagues have abandoned their principles in favor of a personality cult.

Let us not pretend we didn't see this coming. We spent the past decade witnessing Trump's relentless, successful appeals to voters' lowest impulses.

The only hope for stopping a slide into oligarchy, which President Biden rather belatedly warned about in his farewell address, is to reaffirm Lincoln's call for his fellow citizens to heed the better angels of their nature. This requires swimming against the political current.

At my Catholic elementary school in the 1960s, the nuns and lay teachers insisted that students behave like sheep rather than use our human brains to think for ourselves. It did not take hold in my case. Decades later, I helped win civil marriage equality in the Nation's Capital over the protests of the Archdiocese of Washington.

Now I have the satisfaction that Washington's outgoing archbishop Cardinal Wilton Gregory and incoming archbishop Cardinal Robert McElroy are both welcoming toward LGBTQ Catholics.

Many battles for the soul of our nation lie ahead. This war will be waged not on a distant front, but all around us and unavoidable. Standing against Trump's willfully mindless rabble will be hard; but we will feel better for doing it in the long run.

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

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PO BOX E14,
Boston, MA 02127

Publishers Emeritus:
Jeff Coakley
Sue O'Connell

Editorial:
Editor-in-Chief
Sue O'Connell
sue.baywindows@gmail.com

Contributing Writers:
Judah Leblang
Billy Masters
Richard J. Rosendall
Dana Rudolph
Rev. Irene Monroe
Jules Becker

Letters to the Editor:
letters.baywindows@gmail.com

News tips:
news.baywindows@gmail.com

Calendar listings:
news.baywindows@gmail.com

Announcements:
announcements.baywindows@gmail.com

Advertising:
Display Advertising
sales@baywindows.com

Classified Advertising:
classifiedads@baywindows.com

Editorial Design Manager:
Julie Walker Palmer

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Fenway

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iting the federal definition of gender to two sexes, male and female, and seeking to restrict federal funding for gender affirming programs. This order is unfortunate and harmful and denies the existence of more than 1.6 million transgender, intersex, and gender diverse Americans.

The executive order goes against polling from Data for Progress finding that 80% of voters strongly or somewhat agree that "both Democrats and Republicans should spend less time talking about transgender issues and more time talking about voters' priority issues like the economy and inflation."

"Transgender and gender diverse people are real. Intersex people exist. Gender dysphoria is a diagnosis in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual V," said Julie Thompson, PA, Interim Associate Medical Director and Medical Director of the Transgender Health Program at Fenway Health. "Stating that sex is exclusively binary ignores the lived experiences of transgender and gender diverse people and intersex people. It is out of touch with science and medical standards of care of all the major medical associations."

The PRRI (Public Religion Research Institute) 2022 American Values Atlas Survey found that 80% of Americans support sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) nondiscrimination. Research from The Fenway Institute shows that anti-transgender policies have a negative impact on the mental health of transgender and gender diverse people. Other research from The Fenway Institute documents the negative mental health impacts of anti-transgender policies on the mental health of transgender and gender diverse people.

Executive Order Banning Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives in Federal Agencies

The executive order banning diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in federal agencies undermines efforts to increase the hiring and promotion of people who are women and/or underrepresented racial and ethnic minoritized individuals, particularly in sectors where they have historically experienced discrimination.

"Striking racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes, health insurance coverage, income, wealth, policing, criminal justice involvement, educational opportunity and other areas persist in our country. Women's inequality continues, with underrepresentation and pay disparities in many professions. People who are both women and racial and ethnic minoritized individuals experience an impact that is compounded by the layers of discrimination that come with holding both identities. Our society has only recently come to explore and acknowledge the inequities that lead to these disparities, taking steps to reduce and eliminate them, such that all Americans have an opportunity to be healthy and thrive," said Adrianna Boulin, MPH, Fenway Health's Director of Racial Equity, Social Justice & Community Engagement. "In the absence of federal leadership in this area, it is essential that health care organizations and other parts of civil society continue to prioritize understanding and addressing racial and ethnic inequities, and gender inequities, to create a fairer society for all."

In 2023, researchers from Public Agenda found that 91% of Americans believe everyone, regardless of race or ethnicity, deserves an equal opportunity to succeed, and 60% of Americans support efforts to combat racism. According to the Pew Research Center, strong majorities of the general public support DEI policies and say that DEI trainings are helpful to them, and believe that the country has not gone far enough to ensure gender equality.

Fenway Health is committed to working with our patients, their families, our partner organizations, elected officials, and the communities we serve to ensure that the changing political and regulatory context does not negatively affect lifesaving care and services. Our policy team is hard at work in coalition with local and national LGBTQIA+, HIV/AIDS, and health center partners planning how we can best respond to political and policy attacks on LGBTQIA+ health equity, racial equity, and gender-affirming health care. We encourage you to sign up for our email list so that we can help keep you informed about advocacy efforts moving forward.

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billy masters

People like to bash the so-called Hollywood elite, but those privileged few know how to band together when the going gets tough. Numerous fundraisers have been organized to help those decimated by the LA fires. **Josh Brolin** is one of the stars spearheading "LA Wildfire Relief LIVE"—a telethon with a glittering lineup. No word yet if he's convinced his stepmom to step up (or, for that matter, his new pal Cher). Then there's "FireAid", a benefit concert taking place in not one but two LA venues. Others are involved with the "SoCal Fire Fund" on Charitybuzz. There's also a virtual benefit called "LA Check In"—which sounds like something you do at a Best Western!

Also victims of the fires were "influencers" **Max Emerson & Andres Camilo**. Hours after their home succumbed to the flames (a home they renovated and heavily documented online), they announced they were separating. Which begs the question—"Who?" Actually, that's somewhat unfair—I have at least heard of Max Emerson. And one must applaud the posting of their separation announcement. It was nestled between footage of their house burning down and a montage of near-nude photos of them in happier times. Putting it into context, Max's previous post was a video talking about becoming a sperm donor—for $15K a pop. At that rate, he'll be in a new house before you can say "Roll over!" Some people got it and make it pay—some people can't even give it away!

Pope Franny is all for welcoming gay men into the priesthood on one condition—if they are willing to have "an orientation towards celibate life." Now, I'm no authority on Catholicism, but aren't all priests—gay or straight—supposed to be celibate? I looked it up and found this information: "The Catholic Church considers the law of clerical celibacy to be not a doctrine, but a discipline." And I've known my share of priests who like to be disciplined! Anyway, the Pope has his own views: "The objective of the training for priesthood in the emotional-sexual sphere is the ability to welcome chastity in celibacy as a gift, to freely choose and to responsibly live it." It's a gift? As I tell most people when it comes to gifts, I'd rather have the cash!

I am never surprised at the stupidity of people. But this chick in France takes the cake...or the gâteau! She willingly handed over $850K to someone she met online who said he was **Brad Pitt**. Let's first start with this point—who out there believes a random message they get online is from the real Brad Pitt? Hands? OK, let's say you believe it is really Brad Pitt—God only knows why. Is there any universe in which you think he's asking strangers for hundreds of thousands of dollars? And riddle me this—if **Max Emerson** is getting $15K a pop to jerk off, how much could Brad Pitt make in a couple of hours? Anyway, Frenchie says "Brad" told her he had cancer—but, shhh, it's a secret he'd only tell random strangers online. He needed money for treatment, and that bitch Angelina froze his accounts. Is there any part of that story you would believe? Max Emerson—sure. Brad Pitt—I don't think so.

This column is being written prior to the Coronation...er, the Inauguration. I don't have lots of thoughts—other than I think it's amusing that El Presidente believes Hollywood is in another country. Why else would he need Special Ambassadors to Hollywood? Next, I really don't care about **Carrie Underwood**, but I think anyone who can make a lot of money and get international exposure is lucky. Good for her. Yes, I know how many gay people feel. One such fan posted this to Carrie: "Don't ever call yourself an LGBTQ ally again, you're supporting the man that wants to abolish LGBTQ rights, you should be ashamed." I'm ashamed that this person doesn't know the difference between a comma and a period. I have no problem with Nancy Pelosi sitting this out. But I'd pay good money to watch her try to do "Y.M.C.A." without breaking a hip!

You know what does shame me? Seeing **Joe Manganiello** hosting "Deal or No Deal Island". First off...REALLY? I don't have oodles of respect for him as an "actor", but even I think he's better than this. Apparently one of the trades thinks so—in writing about the show, they called him a "veteran actor"! Well, any chance one gets to see Joe shirtless is fine by me. But I've seen lots of reality shows, and I've rarely seen the hosts topless.

It's the end of an era. When acclaimed gay party promoter **Jeffrey Sanker** died in 2021, one thought his empire would crumble. But it continued...although in a somewhat diminished capacity. Last week, it was announced that the legendary White Party in Palm Springs (which typically takes place around Easter weekend) was cancelled. They are not saying it's gone for good, but it sure sounds like it. "While it's bittersweet to take a pause, this gives us an opportunity to reflect and explore new ways to innovate and evolve".

Someone else taking a pause is **Bobby Berk**. The former "Queer Eye" host sold his home in the Hollywood Hills. First he's drummed out of the show, then he's drummed out of Hollywood. We hear he will not relocate in the area.

Some people take a pause against their will. Take **Wendy Williams**. She's been (allegedly) locked in a facility against her will with limited contact with family and friends. Her crime? None that I can think of. People say they are doing it for her own good—but I don't know how selling someone's home, giving away their pets, confining them to a facility, and keeping them away from their father's 94th birthday is good. Wendy found a way to get her message out directly—via **Charlamagne Tha God** and "The Breakfast Club" (you can hear the full interview on BillyMasters.com). She called into the show last week sounding surprisingly lucid—aside from repeating "you know what I'm saying" about two thousand times. I am Team Wendy on this. Even if she is mentally compromised, why shouldn't she be able to choose where and how she wants to live? It's a world gone mad.

Two Broadway babies are lobbying for Bravo to get into the theatre game. **Megan Hilty** recently pitched **Andy Cohen** an idea—"The Real Housewives of Broadway". Andy said the idea had previously been discussed with **Kristin Chenoweth** and said he'd love to do it. The Broadway/Housewives combination is not as outrageous as you'd think. Quite a few Housewives have appeared on Broadway—including **NeNe Leakes, Kandi Burruss and Erika Jayne**. Admittedly, they all appeared in the musical "Chicago", but it's a start.

We hear that Golden Globe winner **Ariana DeBose** has a plum project on the horizon. She's in discussions to lead a new production of "Evita" at the London Palladium. You'll recall that this is where the acclaimed revival of "Sunset Boulevard" with **Nicole Scherzinger** started. In fact, this "Evita" will be directed by **Jamie Lloyd**—who directed "Sunset". Previews begin June 12th.

Tom in Arizona provides this week's "Ask Billy" question: *"I saw **Tom Holland** on the cover of 'Men's Health'. He looks amazing. Has he ever posed nude??"*

Well, there's nude and then there's nude. While promoting one of those "Spider-man" movies, he told **Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos**, "Essentially I'm naked in those movies because the suit is so skintight." And in "Men's Health", he certainly looks like a superhero. However, it should be noted that he's a little bit of a thing—not to be confused with having a little bit of a thing. He's 5'8" (barely) and weighs about 145 pounds—but can "bulk up" to a hefty 155. That's not a whole lotta body to whip into shape. One of my favorite former porn pups is the buff and beautiful **Tory Mason**—who I think of as an adorable Muppet of the gay porn galaxy. He likes to remind me that he's perfectly proportioned (talk about someone who's made big bucks taking and receiving sperm). Anyway, if you'd like to check out Mr. Zendaya's bod, head on over to BillyMasters.com.

When "influencer" is another term for "sperm donor", it's definitely time to end yet another column. In the "Men's Health" article, I was struck by something **Timothée Chalamet** said: "Tom is the ultimate rizz master." In my haste, I thought Timmy was making some bold confession referring to Holland as a "jizz master", which would have fit into this week's column quite nicely. Alas, "rizz" is a word the kids use for "charisma". For more bits that are lost in translation, check out www.BillyMasters.com—the site that brings you the rizz and the jizz! If you want to share either with me, reach out and touch me at Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Babs shows up at that telethon! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

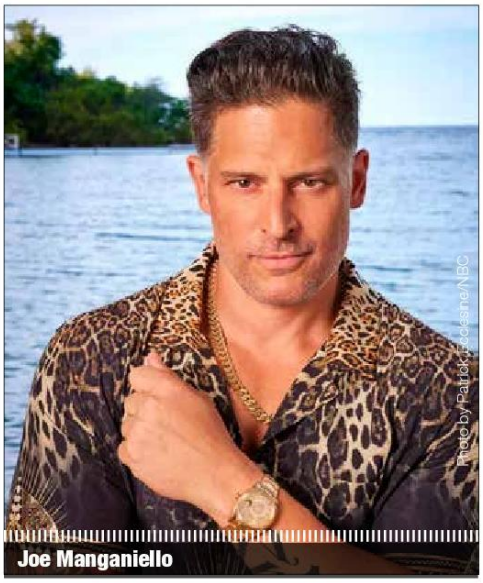

Photo by Patrick Roesne/NBC

Joe Manganiello

Photo by Gage Skidmore, via Wikimedia Commons.

Kristin Chenoweth

Photo by Somewhere In Toronto, via Wikimedia Commons.

Timothée Chalamet

Moulton

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bill just because it is the first option that comes to the floor.

To be clear, I firmly believe that there should be reasonable restrictions on transgender athletes in competitive sports. This is a matter of safety and fairness for female athletes who have worked exceptionally hard to compete. There is no denying that there are biological differences that result from being born male. Ignoring this scientific fact and opposing any attempt at regulation is not only wrong, but it undermines what I believe should be a broader effort to enshrine core civil rights protections for transgender Americans.

The problem with this Republican bill, however, is that it is too extreme; it simply goes too far. Because it fails to distinguish between children and adults and different levels of athletics, school-aged kids who simply want to play recreational sports and build camaraderie like everybody else could be targeted by the federal government. My kids play co-ed sports today just as I did when I was their age, and I don't want any kids their age subjected to the invasive violations of personal privacy this bill allows.

Under this law, a 10-year-old girl who seems "too tall" or even just "too good" could be targeted by officials and forced to release medical information or have her private parts inspected, which is disturbing to say the least and a slippery slope for school policy and youth athletics.

While I'm a proud Democrat, I've stated my belief that our party has failed to come to the table in good faith to debate an issue on which the vast majority of Americans believe we are out of touch. We should be able to discuss regulations for trans athletes in competitive sports, while still staunchly defending the rights of transgender Americans to simply exist without fear of danger or oppression. But instead, we've run away from the issue altogether. As a result, Republicans are in charge and continue to set the agenda with extremist bills like this.

Trump

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two genders, male and female," Trump said during his inauguration speech. In a list of priorities published to the official White House website on Monday, the president's wish to "establish male and female as biological reality and protect women from radical gender ideology" is given as an example of how Trump plans to bring back American values.

While the federal government has no control over how people identify, it can control whether they have access to federal identity documents that match their gender presentation — namely, passports and Social Security identification cards. This executive order directs federal agencies to revoke policies issued under the Biden administration that made it easier for trans people to update their gender markers on federal identification.

Inaccurate identity documents expose trans people to harassment in daily life, and it can hinder travel, especially without access to a passport that matches their actual physical appearance. It is unclear exactly how Trump's executive order will affect Americans with an "X" gender marker on their passport, which became available in 2022, but Trump's administration seems poised to stop issuing passports with that marker.

The order also calls for transgender women to be housed with men in federal prisons and for an end to any gender-affirming care being provided to trans people incarcerated in federal facilities. The federal government has long denied transition-related surgeries to detainees, including under the Biden administration. Although Trump campaigned on ending transition care access for trans inmates, U.S. prisons offered gender-affirming care during his first term.

Trump is also directing federal agencies to exclude transgender people when enforcing laws that protect against sex discrimination — but this declaration does not mean that trans people are left unprotected. Federal judges across the country have found that discrimination against transgender people is a form of sex discrimination, citing Bostock v. Clayton County, the Supreme Court case that found LGBTQ+ people are protected against workplace discrimination.

The Trump administration will likely run into legal trouble as it works to implement these rules.

The order directly contradicts a 2009 law passed unanimously in Congress called the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), which provides transgender people who are incarcerated a say in where they are housed if their safety is threatened. The law is intended to apply to all facilities where people are detained, including prisons, jails and detention centers, but reporting shows it has historically been ignored.

Still, PREA is more powerful than Trump's executive order, as it was passed by Congress.

In 2018, the Trump administration rescinded President Barack Obama's Transgender Prison Manual, which aimed to enforce PREA in federal prisons. President Joe Biden reinstated the guidance in 2022.

The Trump administration could also face legal challenges in its efforts to restrict federal identity documents. The first U.S. passport with an "X" gender marker was issued as the culmination of a six-year legal battle between an intersex and nonbinary Navy veteran and the U.S. State Department. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit ordered the agency to reconsider its prior refusals to issue the veteran, Dana Zzyym, an accurate passport — noting that forcing intersex people to pick a male or female gender marker creates inaccurate data.

Trump's executive order could run up against the Zzyyym ruling and other laws and precedents. One such precedent is in the International Civil Aviation Organization Treaty Standards, which mandates that sex be listed on passports and that the three permissible options are "M," "F" or "X."

Jennifer Pizer, chief legal officer at Lambda Legal, which fought and won Zzyym's case, said it's unclear if the Trump administration can prevail in arguing any legal basis for its executive order. Pizer's organization sued under the Obama administration and fought for their "X" gender marker through Trump's tenure. They were finally granted a passport under the Biden administration.

"We had multiple rounds of this litigation, and the government kept failing to be able to justify requiring somebody like Dana to be inaccurate, insisting on giving an inaccurate identity document," said Pizer "I don't think there's any reason to think that the Trump administration is better suited now to justify that kind of a rule."

Logan Casey, director of policy research at the Movement Advancement Project, a nonprofit that tracks LGBTQ+ legislation, pointed out an executive order being signed doesn't equate to immediate policymaking or new laws. Instead, executive orders typically direct federal agencies to begin changing their policies — and these orders can be easily challenged in court.

"They will issue executive orders and actions and other directives, but it will still take time before those things actually become law, if they ever actually go into effect," he said.

As the second Trump administration takes shape, Maha Ibrahim, a program managing attorney at the nonprofit civil rights group Equal Rights Advocates, wants young LGBTQ+ people to continue to pay attention, demand action from their elected officials and remember that they deserve the rights that they have.

"We've got a lot of students in university right now, where all of their formative years, with the exception of one small gap, were spent under an administration that was trying to erase them," she said. "I'm less concerned about the force of law — I'm more concerned about the will and the energy and belief in LGBTQIA students that these rights have been fought for for decades in their name, and that we're here to continue the fight and we haven't abandoned them."

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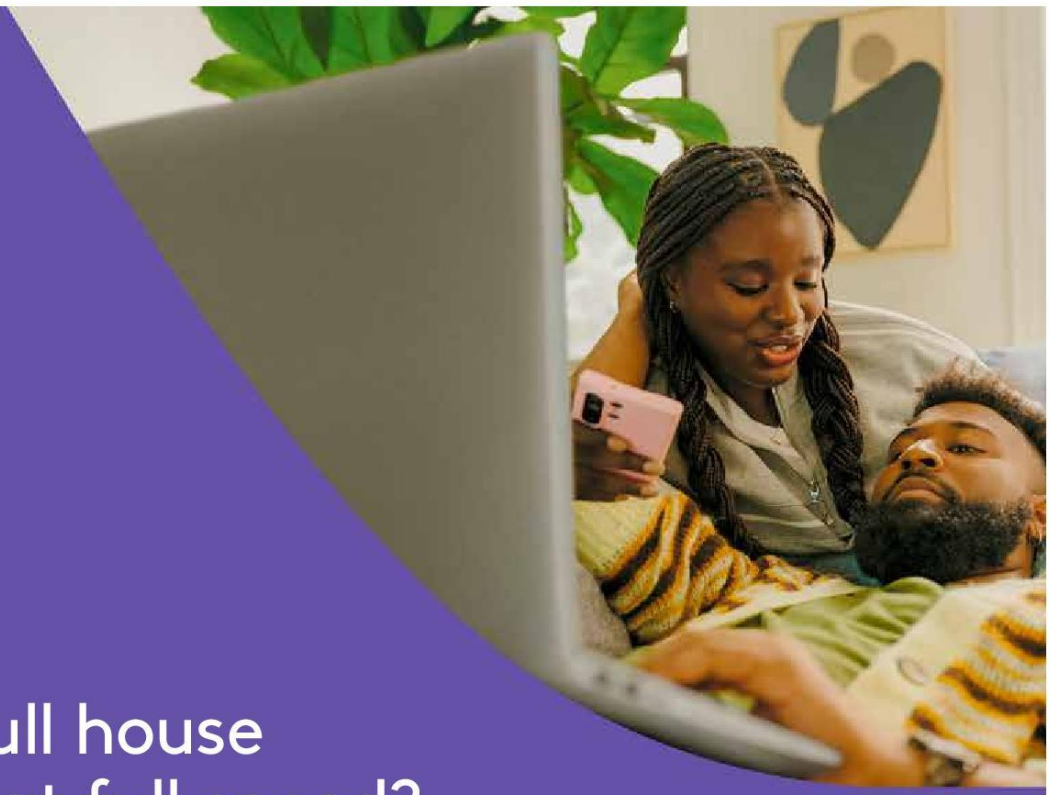

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