

**WE WILL
NOT
PROTECT
YOU**

THIS IS



NOT A TEST



DOWN IS NOT UP
DAY IS NOT NIGHT
SITCOMS ARE NOT EQUALITY
COCKTAILS ARE NOT A CURE
MARRIAGE IS NOT FREEDOM
LIFESTYLES ARE NOT LIVES
FIGHTING IN THE MILITARY IS NOT A CIVIL RIGHT
WALMART IS NOT A LIVING WAGE
CNN IS NOT JOURNALISM
LOGGING PUBLIC FORESTS IS NOT ECOLOGY
EMERGENCY ROOM CARE IS NOT HEALTH CARE
INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS ARE NOT SOCIAL SECURITY
SAVINGS ACCOUNTS ARE NOT PENSIONS
DEFENSE CONTRACTORS ARE NOT DEFENSE
MERCURY CLOUDS ARE NOT CLEAR SKIES
PHOTO OPS ARE NOT TOWN HALL MEETINGS
FREE MARKETS ARE NOT DEMOCRACIES
FEAR IS NOT GOVERNANCE
U.S. FUNDAMENTALISM IS NOT BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE'S
FUNDAMENTALISM

THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL





The Truth Will Not Protect You

A Grim Fairy Tale

Once upon a time,

in the land of King George W. and his followers, so many different communities of LGBT people believed that if only the straight world knew the truth about them, they wouldn't be targets of hatred, that they would not be banished to a treacherous life marked by danger: the danger of living without rights to have or keep children, to have their physical safety protected by the government, to be given an equal opportunity at housing or jobs.

"If only they knew", the queer would lament, "that we're not really evil, demonic, perverted freaks of nature, then they would learn to love and accept us. If only we could make them see the truth about us, then we would be safe."



But the (straight) citizens of George's kingdom were led astray by their king, who was so power-hungry and so determined to control his subjects that he devised a simple but time-tested plan of action to inspire allegiance and turn humans into monsters: fear. He told them that queers were actually fire-breathing and children-eating dragons who menaced all upright citizens of the land.

These dragons, King George told his subjects, spread fire and disease, depravity and despair. In fact, King George swore, looking into dragon eyes would turn ordinary citizens into pillars of salt. King George's mythical dragons were so terrifying to the (straight) citizens of the land that they forgot that dragons were mythical creatures.



The existence of the dragons became an unquestioned truth upon which many more lies were built. It made sense to the (straight) citizens to plunge full-force into dragon-slaying, and so, armed with a constantly amended constitution/proclamation from the king banning dragons from the kingdom, with their guns, knives, and fake truths, the (straight) citizens set out to annihilate the threat of terror which King George told them was so real, and so very dangerous.



The truth did not matter anymore.
The myth was real. The dragons were real.

Mythical stories of their depravity traveled from (straight) mouth to (straight) ears, and it no longer mattered that the dragons did not exist. To the (straight) citizens' eyes, the fight against dragons actually looked like a protection against the threat of the dragons. And the dragons became real.


Even the queers stopped believing they were human; they started wishing they were human (straight) citizens. They seemed to forget they were, in fact, human all along. They forgot that being queer did not make them dragons. They forgot they were not, in actuality, nice dragons. They forgot that they were not dragons at all.

Trapped in a myth not of their making, the queers needed to demand their humanity against the poisoned ears and eyes and truths of the kingdom or forever remain non-human.



You see, these queers are us, the kingdom is the United States, Bush's myth has become reality, and there's a reason this is called a fairy tale.

We will not live happily ever, until after we demand to.



Marriage Won't Save You

America is in the grip of a religious revival. God's ravening flock are on the loose, and they're out for blood.

Our Crusader in Chief and his theocratic followers have surpassed their Reaganite models: clamping down on "obscenity"; pushing abstinence-only AIDS education; backing other "faith-based" social services; undermining the teaching of evolution; blocking stem-cell research; letting pharmacists refuse to dispense the "morning after pill"; drastically restricting access to abortion; stacking the federal judiciary with defenders of "traditional values"; demolishing the wall between Church and State.

And how have mainstream lesbian and gay activists responded? With an all-out campaign for same-sex marriage.

Sure, it's hard not to get behind something that pisses off religious conservatives so much. But must we pour precious time, money, and energy into everything evangelicals oppose? If Dubya told us not to jump off the Brooklyn Bridge, would we leap to our deaths just to spite him?

Of course straight opposition to gay marriage is fucked up. But any strategist worth her salt knows you've got to pick your battles carefully. Even if same-sex marriage were the good fight, it wouldn't be the smart one.

Without any help from us, marriage is the proverbial burning building. Instead of pounding on the door to be let in, we should be stoking the flames. And we surely shouldn't be spouting the same propaganda our enemies preach: idealizing lifelong, monogamous, procreative, property-owning couples.

Still, for some members of our community — including dedicated, passionate, lifelong gay activists — marriage is intensely meaningful. To you we say: If marriage is your heart's desire, then by all means, hire a band, invite your family and friends, have a ceremony, and call it a wedding. If marriage for you is a religious affair, demand that your church, synagogue, mosque, temple, zendo, or coven sanction same-sex marriage — or join a homo-accepting congregation. But check out your motivation: Are you fighting for straight society's blessing?

Or are you fighting for equal rights and opportunities? Because if you're concerned about hospital visitation, child custody, immigration and asylum, health insurance, and the hundreds of other material benefits marriage brings, then fight to make them available to everyone, not just married couples. The state should encourage bonds of mutual support with whomever we trust — friends, lovers, roommates, relatives, neighbors, comrades, you name it — not just husband or wife. Isn't a point of our movement to give people more options, not fewer?

Besides, there are life-and-death gay issues to work on:

Out of the millions of homeless youth in America, a quarter or more are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans. Ditto for teens who commit suicide. How about saving our children?

Almost anywhere in the U.S., you can be mocked, beaten, or killed just for being lesbian, gay, or trans. Why not march in a different city, suburb, town, or village, every single week, to "Take Back the Night"? Why not offer free self-defense courses for every faggot, dyke, triannie, and queer, all across America? Why not make antigay violence a national shame?

In most of America, you can still be fired, or never hired at all, kicked out of your home, or never allowed to live there in the first place, for being lesbian, gay, bi, or trans. Why not descend on Congress and every state legislature, again and again, demanding equal employment and housing protection?

HIV-transmission among young gay men continues to rise, especially among gay men of color. Shouldn't we make AIDS in Harlem, Miami, Detroit, and East LA as important as AIDS in Africa?

As for those material benefits marriage bestows, if there's anything queer history teaches, it's that we must decide how and with whom we love, fuck, set up house, form families, raise children, protect our lives, care for our sick. We should be fighting tooth and nail to wrest control of these issues away from the state. And from organized religion. Especially where sex is concerned.

Religious conservatives, of course, continue their venerable tradition of sexual immorality, whether fringe figures like Phelps gleefully proclaim that God hates fags and Matthew Shepard is in hell, or more respectable ones like Falwell declare, "AIDS is not just God's punishment for homosexuals; it is God's punishment for the society that tolerates homosexuals," or the Vatican calls homosexuality "an intrinsic moral evil" and teaches the developing world that condoms don't prevent



the transmission of HIV, that they may even be responsible for spreading it.

As for "progressive people of faith", the only sex they actually promote is between two adults in a committed, long-term, loving relationship. The most support they seem able to muster for any of the other forms of sex that can figure positively in a person's life is a defense of sexual privacy, a stance that, without support for sexual freedom, amounts to little more than "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." In a homophobic world, fighting for the right to privacy is not progressive. Which is why straight support for gay marriage, especially among religious liberals, is a mixed blessing at best. It's like their support for gays in the military or for "AIDS victims": they accept us when we fight for America or when we're dying — or both! Anything but when we fuck. Gay marriage is a godsend to straight liberals; they can stand up for gay love and forget about gay sex.

Yet queers have a lot to teach the world about sex: about taking it both seriously and lightly, about appreciating its beauty and power, but also its ordinariness, even its absurdity, and above all its variety. Over decades, even centuries, we've developed an ethic that, however imperfectly lived up to, doesn't just admit that sexual tastes vary enormously, and sexual activity can take countless forms and have countless meanings, but actually celebrates this variety. That's one of the reasons we should not be begging straight Americans to let us prove we can live up to their ideals. They ought to live up to ours!

Rightwing Christians have us on the defensive, scrambling to prove how nice and normal, how patriotic and churchgoing, we are. But we'll never convince our enemies we're just like them — and not because many of us aren't. That's true, but irrelevant. Homophobes don't hate us because we're different; they call us different because they hate us. When we romanticized promiscuity, they condemned us for not forming long-term, monogamous relationships; when we romanticize long-term monogamous relationships, they condemn us for "mocking" and "destroying" marriage. We're their scapegoats. They need to call us guilty to feel innocent. They need to call us dirty to feel clean.

Today's evangelicals and fundamentalists dream the same dream as the fanatics who landed on Plymouth Rock four centuries ago: freedom to persecute anyone who deviates from their religious beliefs, freedom to establish a theocracy. Trampling democracy is not a byproduct of the war on terror; for our homegrown Taliban, it's the aim. Sound exaggerated? Recall those achievements of Dubya & Friends: clamping down on "obscenity"; pushing abstinence-only AIDS education; backing other "faith-based" social services; undermining the teaching of evolution; blocking stem-cell research; letting pharmacists refuse to dispense the "morning after pill"; drastically restricting access to abortion; stacking the federal judiciary with defenders of "traditional values"

We've got to convince the majority of Americans that their freedom is threatened by religious fanaticism, at home as much as abroad, and that protecting their freedom depends on protecting ours. We've got to remind them, or teach them, that nothing protects all of us—the devout and the disbelieving, the prudish and the promiscuous, the straight, the gay, and the neither—like separating Church and State.

Demanding same-sex marriage may seem like that fight, but it's not. It strengthens both Church and State. For conservatives have framed the debate: whether gays are let in or kept out, marriage itself — its legitimacy, its virtue, its supremacy — goes unquestioned. If we win the fight, only "good gays" triumph, the ones who conform to the hetero norm. If we lose, all of us lose, for we'll have sanctioned the very system, marital dominance, which excludes us.

Should we just ignore the anti-gay marriage offense that's spreading homophobia across the country? Of course not. Instead, to every bill that bans same-sex marriage, let's attach an amendment addressing a more important queer crisis: the abuse of queer children, homophobic and transphobic violence, housing and workplace discrimination, immigration and asylum discrimination, the AIDS epidemic, particularly among gay men of color. Let states ban same-sex marriage, but at a price: providing explicit safer-sex education to every home, school, and workplace; adopting and enforcing anti-bullying policies that include homophobic and transphobic bullying; hospital visitation rights for anyone of our choosing; shared health insurance with anyone of our choosing; child custody rights; inclusion of LGBT material in public schools... Let the theocrats wrap themselves in the sanctity of marriage, let them hug it to their chests like a Confederate flag. Let them win their symbolic victory. Let's win the real one!

THE GAY GENE WILL NOT PROTECT YOU:

If you're one of the queers who think we'd be treated better if straights think we didn't choose to be gay, forget it.

Whether we were born gay or choose to be gay is irrelevant ... we are still the target of hatred. Queers are the final front of unrestricted discrimination in America, prejudice everyone can agree on. This is flat out bigotry and, since bias needs no reason, it's permissible to hate us.

The question of whether we were born gay should have no meaning: we are entitled to be who we are, regardless. We deserve to be out and given legal protection no matter how we walk, talk, look or what we do sexually. It shouldn't matter if you are a truck driver or a teacher, are butch or femme, use a dildo or a butt plug, have one lover or many.

We should not have to get laws passed to decide who can visit us in a hospital. No one should be able to deny us an apartment or a job or pass amendments to limit our rights or our family life. Our rights should not be dependent on getting married or being in the military or behaving the way someone imagines we should.

We need no permission to be who we are.

Besides, every queer knows the real "choice" in being gay is the choice to say it. It's the choice to acknowledge it that's at question - to yourself and to everyone else. The question isn't whether we are gay. It's whether we are out.

We don't have to figure out why we are queer. It doesn't matter. History shows that genes will not save you when someone with power wants to keep you down or to eliminate you.

Genes were the justification for the enslavement of African-Americans, for lynching and for segregation. Racists continue to consider African Americans "genetically" inferior and to imprison Black people more than white people.

- For part of the 19th century, the Irish were not considered white.
- Based on 19th century scientific presumptions, the U.S. had 600 separate anti-Asian laws limiting Asian citizenship. Whites could kill Asians with impunity, since they could not testify in court.
- Early sexologists supposedly proved "scientifically" that there were genetically based physical differences between the sex organs of homosexuals and heterosexuals that justified - among other things - incarceration in mental hospitals.

- By 1914, to prevent the inheritance of disabilities, 12 states had laws using genetics to justify the sterilization of the developmentally disabled, the blind, the deaf, the "deformed", and the drunk.

- Laws passed by the U.S. Congress in the 1920s, based on the supposed genetic "feeble-mindedness" of Eastern and Southern Europeans, severely limited the immigration of Jews fleeing Hitler in the 1930s.

- By 1928, Eugenics, the scientific study of breeding "good" genes, was so popular in the U.S. there were 376 separate college courses on it, with an enrollment of up to 20,000 students. Elements of the American Eugenics movement were models for the Nazis, whose radical interpretation of it led to the Holocaust.

Eugenics was also the basis for new arguments against inter-racial marriage. By 1915, 28 states had made inter-racial marriage illegal.

- Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924 included racial registration as well as a legal definition of "whiteness". Within 10 years similar laws were found in Nazi Germany.

- To preserve the Aryan race, the Nazis exterminated anyone they deemed genetically inferior: Jews, people born with disabilities, gypsies, and yes, homosexuals.

To develop a cheaper work force of women free from child care, The U.S. government and the local government of Puerto Rico sterilized 1/3 of Puerto Rico women between 1930 and 1965.

Puerto Rican women were also guinea pigs for testing contraceptive pills in 1956. The doses tested were 20 times stronger than the pill now on the market.

- In the 1996 bestseller, "The Bell Curve", Charles Murray argued that poverty is caused by genetic predisposition.

- The President of Harvard University recently suggested that genetic differences might account for the lack of tenured women scientists.

Face reality. Your genes will not protect you. The Rapture Right is out to get us. You are not safe. It doesn't matter if you were born this way. It doesn't matter if others think you were born this way. If they want to get you, you're screwed anyway.

Christian right wing propaganda has a solid critique of the "gay gene" research. They use its lack of scientific validity to say we are trying to manipulate people into thinking we were "born this way" so we can continue our "immoral life style". Many other religious leaders and politicians—maybe even your family—also think we are debauched, or at the very least, abnormal. For people who believe heterosexuality is the norm, homosexuality is still a deviation, chosen or not.

As long as America thinks gay and gay sex are the same thing the Choice or Birth argument is moot. They can't get past the sex factor. Even our liberal supporters think books about lesbian and gay families are not appropriate for young children. Somehow, they think they would have to explain queer sexual behavior to their children if they read a story about two mommies even though books about straight parents are completely non-sexual.

Right, left or center - no one really wants us to be who we are.

It's time to give up trying to explain our existence. So queers: Stop trying to prove we can't help it. Don't deny our differences. Revel in our unique cultural contributions. Forget your attempt to ape the straight world by pushing for marriage and military service as if these will make us more acceptable.

End this chronicle of self-hatred, of self out, of limiting our lives and the lives of the queers who come after us.

Quit explaining - Start expanding.

This time it's personal. It's survival. Arguing Choice or Birth will not save us.

Typical sex variant vulva and average

We the Radical Queers

of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union in this moment of domestic and international war waged by a lying, illegitimate pseudo-president; And in order to establish actual Justice by creating it Ourselves in a society constructed on injustice, lies, hate, and fear; And in order to insure domestic Tranquility even as our government wages cruel war against the nation's Peace by pitting the People of this country against each other and the rest of the world; And in order to provide for the common Defense of lesbian and gay peoples who have been denied Life & Liberty by a long Train of Abuses & Usurpations against their Safety & Happiness, or Worse, by a government that cannot represent them, and who have been attacked by the president and his far right hatchet men, many state governments across the Union, a savage and homophobic citizenry authorized to assault or murder us for our existence by official and religious sanction, institutions which deny us rights of visitation and rights of estate, false "emancipation" in the form of marriage rights that we do not want Ourselves; And in order to secure the blessing of liberty to Ourselves and to our Posterity which we do not fully enjoy but which we deserve and are taking Without Permission; We do proclaim that we Pissed-Off Queers stand in resistance to this Form of Government destructive of these Ends, and with this Declaration do Seize our Right and our Duty to throw off, alter or abolish such Government, and do finally assert and declare ourselves to be free and independent people, moving us closer to a New United States based on Peace, Love, and Justice instead of Domination, Money, and War.

Your Shit Will Not Protect You

THE CLOSE T WILL NOT PROTECT YOU

IT'S TRUE THAT WE HAVE MORE QUEER "THINGS" THAN EVER BEFORE-FROM WILL & GRACE ON NETWORK TV TO QUEER AS FOLK ON SHOWTIME; FROM THE WEST VILLAGE TO ALL-GAY CRUISES TO GAY DAY AT DISNEY WORLD; FROM QUEER STUDIES IN COLLEGES TO OUR VERY OWN CIGARETTE ADS. THE PROBLEM IS, HAVING ALL OF THESE "THINGS" HASN'T CHANGED THE WAY THE WORLD SEES QUEERS. WE ARE STILL RELEGATED TO SUBHUMAN STATUS IN THE MINDS OF SO MANY MIDDLE AMERICANS AND HIGH-LEVEL POLITICIANS. NEED EVIDENCE? LOOK AT THE VIRULENTLY HOMOPHOBIC ELECTED OFFICIALS WHO ARE IN OFFICE RIGHT NOW BECAUSE THEY PROMISED THE PUBLIC THAT THEY WOULD PROTECT THE "SANCTITY" OF MARRIAGE FROM GAYS AND LESBIANS.

HAVING "THINGS" HAS ONLY GIVEN US A FALSE SENSE OF SAFETY FROM THE VERY REAL DANGERS OF HAVING NO CLAIMS TO CIVIL RIGHTS INSIDE OR OUTSIDE OF ALL OF THOSE BARS, CLUBS, GAY DAYS, OR GENDER THEORY CLASSES.

ALTHOUGH BEING A TARGET MARKET MAY APPEAR TO BE A VALIDATION OF OUR LIVES BY POWERFUL ENTITIES IN THE UNITED STATES-LARGE COMPANIES-WE NEED ONLY LOOK AT MICROSOFT'S PRECARIOUS SUPPORT OF THAT CIVIL RIGHTS BILL FOR LGBT PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON STATE TO REALIZE THAT THESE COMPANIES DON'T ANSWER TO US, THAT OUR LIVES AND RIGHT TO LIVE ARE STILL A MATTER OF OPINION, THAT OUR CIVIL RIGHTS ARE ALWAYS SUBJECT TO THE WHIMS OF OTHER CONSUMERS WHO HATE US. THE POLICIES OF THESE COMPANIES ARE DICTATED BY MONEY, NOT PEOPLE, AND THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT HAS MASSIVE MOBILIZING POWER AND MONEY TO BOOT.

WHEN WE WALK DOWN THE STREET CLUTCHING OUR SHIPPING BAGS AND GAY MAGAZINES WITH BUDWEISER ADS IN THEM, WE MIGHT BE GAY BASHED AND MURDERED AS WE MAKE OUR WAY HOME FROM THE MALLS. THE TRUE MATERIAL REALITY OF OUR LIVES IS THAT IN MOST OF THE UNITED STATES WE ARE NOT PROTECTED FROM THESE KINDS OF ATTACKS BY THE GOVERNMENT, AND A GAY BEER AD DOESN'T MEAN OR DO SHIT, IT WILL NOT PREVENT THIS OR PROTECT US, WILL NOT HELP US PURSUE JUSTICE WHEN WE ARE VICTIMIZED, AND WE ARE VICTIMIZED ALL TOO OFTEN.

WE WILL LAY ALONE IN OUR COFFINS, OUR LOVERS WILL STAND ALONE OUTSIDE OF MICROSOFT OR OUR HOSPITAL ROOMS WHICH THEY ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER. WE CAN CONSUME THEIR PRODUCTS UNTIL WE DIE AND THESE COMPANIES WILL DO NOTHING BUT WITHDRAW THEIR PSEUDO-SUPPORT FROM OUR COMMUNITIES AT THE MOST BIGOTED DEMANDS OF HOMOPHOBES AND OUR MURDERERS IN RETURN FOR OUR PATRONAGE.

WE CAN BUY A RAINBOW COFFIN BUT WE CAN'T BUY OUR WAY OUT OF IT BECAUSE, WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT, BEING A TARGET MARKET WILL NOT PROTECT YOU.

IT NEVER HAS. AND IT NEVER WILL.

On February 19, 1999, Billy Jack Gaither, a thirty-nine-year-old gay man who worked at the Russell Athletics Apparel Company near Sylacauga, Alabama, was brutally beaten to death. His throat was cut, and his body was bludgeoned with an ax handle before being thrown on top of a pile of tires and set on fire.

In the weeks following the killing Ricky, one of Billy's 4 brothers, gave an interview about his brother. Ricky spoke of his younger brother's early denials of his sexuality, his devotion to his parents, and his discretion about his romantic life. "Billy Jack didn't proposition people. They may come up and talk to Billy, because Billy wouldn't approach anybody that didn't approach him. He didn't push himself on people. He didn't push the gay life on people."

ACCORDING TO NATIONALLY PUBLISHED REPORTS:

"Anti-gay violence is up 7% from the previous year"

"10% of gays and lesbians aged 21 or younger have experienced anti-gay violence"

"Lesbians and Gay men who experience violence and harassment reported lower self esteem and were twice as likely to report having thought seriously about suicide"

WANT MORE?

"Gay-hate homicides appear to be particularly brutal, being more likely to involve savage beatings, repeated stabbing, mutilation or dismemberment. The majority involve physical assaults, with 38% of victims beaten to death and 13% strangled or suffocated."

"The victim of a gay-hate homicide is more likely to be killed by a stranger 45.5% of the time."

"The nature of gay-hate homicides is particularly brutal and alarming. The majority of cases, 54.4%, involve more than one offender and a single victim."

STILL THINK YOU'RE SAFE?

"Many gay-hate murderers were exceptionally brutal, surprisingly young, and killed to support a society they believed approved of their actions"

"Weapons used in 2003 gay biased murders included a claw hammer, a saw, a fire extinguisher, a spade, a car wheel brace, and a crossbow and arrow. Most victims died from being kicked and punched with great force."

ALARMED YET? !? YOU SHOULD BE

So...you think that by being discrete, avoiding PDA's (public displays of affection) with your partner or maintaining your "straight acting and straight appearing" personae you will be magically shielded from the endless barrage of anti-gay hate and violence, the very glue that is currently holding together this great democracy of ours?

WE'LL THINK AGAIN!

From Capital Hill to Nob Hill hatred of gays and lesbians has become a popular American Value. We are kicked like footballs around the floor of Congress and used as effective organizing tools in get-out-the-vote efforts in mainstream churches and town halls all across the country. Gays and Lesbians are the great levelers; we are equal opportunity targets!

But despite this climate of extreme bigotry, media marketers have amped up depictions of our queer lives, spreading us across pages and screens for the entire world to gawk at and envy, providing the illusion of inclusion. Hey, I agree, what's not to like, we are prettier, smarter, have way better taste and know how to give awesome advice! But the thing to remember is its all just marketing, not real life. Real life for us is about survival. You would think with this plethora of "gay-positive" programming and

media saturation, that closet doors from coast to coast would be flung open forever. But contrary to this, many queers are deciding, whether they are in the slightly more tolerant big cities or small town USA, to keep things to themselves, to become more "discrete". This new discretion-differing slightly from the "deep" closet of the last century-is kind of a 21st century "Closet-lite". It directly reflects the cocktail of pop-culture media inclusion on one hand mixed with liberal amounts of extreme socio-political queer bashing on the other.

SHAKEN AND STIRRED UP

Unfortunately, this double edged sword of corrosive self-policing becomes so routine that over time it goes virtually unnoticed by those living with it, while destroying-and not protecting-the very people who established it. So, who is benefiting from this behavior prison? Does it really keep you safe from the aggressive society it is structured to appease? Does it really protect you?

THE CLOSET DOESN'T WORK

Sadly, the fortresses that closeted queers build, including Billy Jack Gaither, turn out in the long run to be nothing more than matchstick houses, easily stomped on and destroyed by the very society they are constructed to please. Moreover, no amount of corrected gestures, apparel regulations or lifestyle modifications will appease a majority intent on your destruction.

The closet doesn't make you safer, happier or a better candidate for that promotion. What it does do is dull your senses to what is really going on around you. Assimilation fantasies are just that, they are another way to distract ourselves from what the real issues are and should be; our queer community, our queer health and our queer happiness!

THE CLOSET NEVER PROTECTS YOU.

OPEN THE DOOR.

QUEERS ARE UNDER ATTACK.

make no mistake about it. We are marked as the enemy. The attacks grow more brutal every day, and more widespread. And they're being made in the name of Righteous Religious Piety in this period of absolute religious fervor.

The dogma of these attackers is being broadcast throughout the country: Queers want to shred the moral fiber of society, want to prey on its children, spread disease with promiscuity, secure "special" rights through our anti-social "agenda", obliterate the sanctity of marriage and blaspheme all that's held dear.

Throughout history, power mad, crooked governments and zealots have invented enemy threats to increase their authority. Frequently, the enemy at home is the enemy of choice. It means there are no wars to fight; no funds to secure; it's a great way to shore up the base; to reward the faithful; and it smothers the population in panic and fear.

In the name of "security", many groups have been targeted and attacked. The players change, but the basic formula is the same:

- Something terrible is happening to "the people", something they might not understand, something that frightens them, that threatens their way of life, their "security".
- Those with power whip this uncertainty into a tornado of fear, hammering at the people's fear, insisting they are in serious danger.
- Next, they identify the enemy - the people responsible for the situation.

It can be anyone "different", anyone unfamiliar.

In George Bush's America, these power hungry politicians and evangelical Christians have settled on a perfect enemy - one everyone agrees on, one that's worked well for generations. Homos. We're everywhere, but invisible; everyone's at least a little squeamish about us; we have no civil rights; and above all, few will come to our defense, not even our parents or families.

So while the extreme right leads a full out charge on Queer Americans, the Bush administration provides tacit support. The Rapture Right gets the taste of blood while Bush Inc. gets exactly what they wanted - less taxes for the rich, gobs of war profit, conservative judges on the bench, the privatization of social security, the end of the New Deal, a strictly

controlled media and a one-party government.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, which monitors hate groups, calls the religious right's anti-gay campaign a "30-year war". In those 30 years, there have been more than 100 anti-gay ballot initiatives seeking to repeal or prevent the passage of sexual orientation non-discrimination laws.

In 1977, Anita Bryant's "Save Our Children" campaign - the first anti-gay campaign to get national attention - overturned an anti-discrimination law protecting gay men and lesbians in Dade County, Florida.

That same year, the Moral Majority, a right wing group started by Rev. Jerry Falwell, issued a "Declaration of War" against homosexuality. Now, decades later, Falwell's still on the scene, along with his ideas - he partially blamed the 9/11 attacks on gay men and lesbians, directly linking homos with terrorism. The war against Queers is alive and kicking.

Karl Rove & Co. piggybacked on this homo-hatred to push Bush's economic and political agenda, painting anyone against their policies as "homo-lovers". When the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) came out against privatization of social security, the same right wingers who produced the "Swift Boat" attacks on John Kerry created a commercial falsely claiming the AARP supported gay marriage and did not support the military in Iraq. Their commercial showed two tuxedo-clad men kissing with the caption "The REAL AARP agenda" next to a picture of a soldier with an "X" through it.

The campaign against so-called "activist judges" began in earnest with the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling upholding gay marriage. Of course, right-wing judges—also "activist"—are just fine. Bush's recently ratified nominee for the federal bench is William H. Pryor, Jr. In a legal brief to the Texas Supreme Court in support of the Texas anti-sodomy law, he argued that decriminalizing gay sex would lead to legalized sex with corpses, sex with animals and child pornography.

"Justice Sunday", the recent national judge-bashing simulcast, was organized by a coalition of evangelical Christian organizations led by Focus on the Family and the Family Research Council - two groups with long histories of virulent hatred of lesbians and gay men. The central message of the event was that Democrats want to use the filibuster to block the confirmation of a handful of judicial nominees "because they are people of faith and moral conviction - whose only offense is to say that abortion is wrong or that marriage should be between one man and one woman."

Bill Frist, the Republican majority leader of the Senate and Tom Delay, the Republican majority leader of the House supported and spoke on Justice Sunday. With dwindling separation between church and state, the radical right is now a unified force of political born-again, including the President. In their version of the world, Queers are the enemy, out to steal, disrupt and undermine all they hold dear. Queers are the perfect scapegoat, since they SAY we threaten their definition of a "Christian way of life". The more they hate us, the more they fear us. And the more they fight us, the more "Christian" they become. So, hating us is not only good, it's holy. It secures their seat in the hereafter at the same time as it condemns us to hell. Perfect!

To make everyone else feel secure, we are offered up. They want us dead in our tracks, marginalized, dehumanized in every way possible. They want Queers deleted from the American landscape.

The Bush administration and its Rapture Right are masters at this Panic and Attack technique. Since the end of the Cold War and the removal of the communist threat, the political and religious right have been cultivating new demons to replace it. So for a grossly incompetent, do-nothing President, 9/11 was a gift from above. Now this Nitwit Non-thinker from Texas could throw on his hat and holster and magnify our fears with a global game of Cowboys and Indians. In his simplistic world of good and evil where "you're either with us or against us", he made an unfamiliar enemy crystal clear, extremely reassuring to our shell-shocked nation. He stoked our panic with the claim that Terrorism was everywhere, and all of it was aimed at America. Never mind that the rest of the world has dealt with the same terror for half a century, along with other terrorist threats, without freezing the earth on its axis.

This elaborate sleight-of-hand helped Daddy WarBush shape himself as the Great Protector. During a time of national panic he has capitalized on America's fear by feeding us simplistic answers to dupe us into "feeling" secure. But are Americans actually secure? As the facts roll in, it's increasingly clear the war in Iraq had nothing to do with terror. And since the war, acts of terrorism in the world have increased by 80%, and anti-American sentiment is greater than ever. So what we have instead of security is the illusion of security. Our nation is definitely terrorized—but the terror is coming from Washington.

With a one-two punch, Bush has manipulated America's insecurity into a frenzy of obedience. Some of it has been used to support the creation

of restrictions on our civil liberties, some on discriminatory immigration and deportation policies targeting anyone who might be Muslim or South Asian. The rest has been aimed at Queer America. But while queer existence is being used to fool the Bible Belt into feeling more "safe", who guarantees queer security? Who will protect us from the Bush administration and the Rapture Right? From the homegrown American terrorists, like the ones who bombed gay bars, abortion clinics, or the Oklahoma federal building? From the people and places that are supposed to protect us, like our families, our communities, our schools? How will we Queers keep ourselves safe?

Our LGBT political and legal organizations are putting all of their money into fighting anti-gay marriage amendments, as if marriage was the most pressing issue in our lives. But is marriage really the answer to healthcare, to housing, anti-gay violence or discrimination? While they focus on the tax-breaks benefiting the tiny percentage of married queers, the rest of us face the real problems of life. Only 10 states have laws banning discrimination based on sexual orientation. Six more also ban discrimination based on gender identity. It's still perfectly legal in 35 states to fire someone from their job solely because of their sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Only 13 states ban sexual orientation based discrimination in housing. Meanwhile, Bush's faith-based initiatives are diverting scarce funds for social programs to evangelical right wing churches, exempting them from following anti-discrimination legislation that might exist in their state.

So only closeted queers can earn a living? Only closeted queers get social services? We should continue to lose our children in custody battles? We should still live in fear of anti-gay violence?

On top of all this, the right wing is busy devising new ways to restrict us. Consider the following: Recently a lesbian in California was denied medical treatment because of her sexuality. It's a familiar scenario to queers all over America. But now the right wing wants to codify it into law.

In the Michigan legislature a bill passed their House chamber that would allow healthcare workers to refuse to service someone on moral, ethical or religious grounds. It hasn't passed the other Republican controlled chamber, but it could. Bills have also been introduced permitting pharmacists to refuse to fill prescriptions on the same basis. This not only refers to their anti-abortion stance; they could also refuse to treat gay people or to fill AIDS prescriptions.

We are also still being treated as if our sexual behavior is perverse and should lead to legal consequences. A gay teen in Kansas was sentenced to 17 years in prison for having sex with another 17-year-old boy. If his sexual partner had been a girl of the same age his sentence would have been 15 months.

The attack on LGBT youth is widespread. Many schools are refusing to allow gay-straight clubs. In the California assembly there is a bill pending that prohibits the "promotion" of homosexuality in public education. Meanwhile, lesbian and gay youth are more likely to drop out of school, face anti-gay violence, and to commit suicide.

Like the rest of America, Queers are also desperate for protection and security. And likewise, we think the only way to survive these attacks is to put our lives into the hands of those who pledge to keep us safe and secure. But just like the terrorist threat, what we really get is the illusion of security. And, for this illusion of security, for the "feeling" of protection, we settle for crumbs. We support so-called "liberal politicians" who do not stand up for us – Bill Clinton and his "don't ask, don't tell" policy; Hillary Clinton and Chuck Schumer, who both oppose gay marriage; Michael Bloomberg, who vetoed the Dignity for All Students Act to prevent bullying against gay youth and, when it was passed again over his veto, refused to implement it, dubbing it "silly" and "illegal". He also talks out of both sides of his mouth about gay marriage in New York City, saying he supports it but allowing his legal team to fight it at the state level.

Queers continue to support LGBT organizations that go after what they think they can win, not what we really need. We give money to the Human Rights Campaign, which said it might be willing to support Bush's privatization of social security in exchange for "survivors benefits" for gay couples. But since privatization will destroy social security, it won't be there for anyone – coupled or not. And, when only a miniscule percentage of gay people are in long-term monogamous relationships, are survivor benefits really the most pressing issue? What about PWAs and all the other disabled LGBT people relying on social security?

The truth is, these politicians and organizations are only concerned with their own political survival – not ours.

THE TRUTH IS:

Security is a lie.

Your genes will not protect you.

Liberal leaders will not protect you.

The military will not protect you

Marriage will not protect you

The government will not protect you

LGBT Organizations will not protect you.

Money will not protect you.

The closet will not protect you

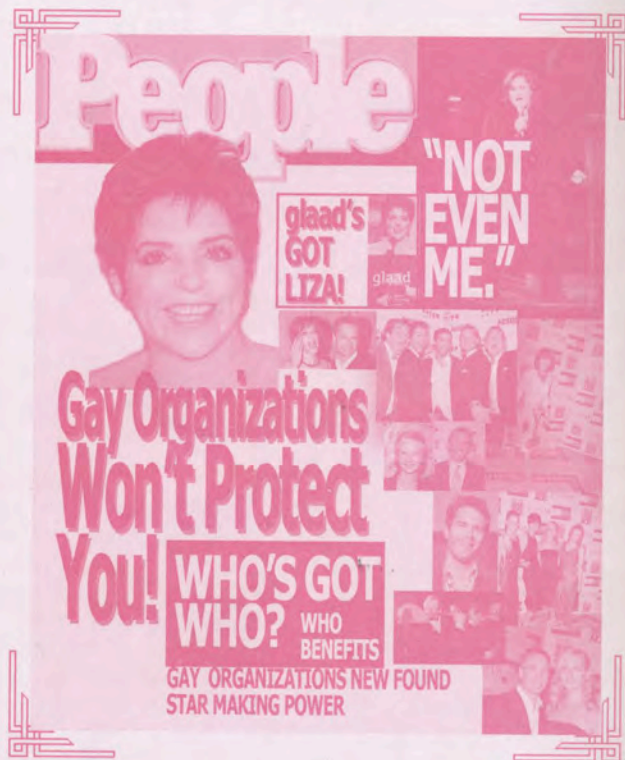
Assimilation will not protect you.

As long as Queers exchange the safekeeping of our lives for the myth of security, for the illusion of protection, our power will never be our own. Our future can't be left to someone else in hopes they will do right by us.

The answer to the constant and growing attack on Queer life in America won't be found in a Great Protector. The answer is to go beyond believing, beyond hoping that someone else will save our asses.

The answer is to do it ourselves. To protect our own interests. To fight for our own rights. To watch our leaders very closely. To pay strict attention to the world around us.

And be **EXTREMELY** visible..... and very, **VERY** Loud.



We Stand In Resistance to:

GOVERNMENTS THAT LIE
BULLSHIT TAKING HEADS PLANTED BY THINK TANKS
GOVERNMENT PRESS RELEASES MASQUERADING AS "NEWS"
POLITICAL HACKS
ANYTHING THAT QUESTIONS OUR SPIRIT
DISTORTIONS OF AMERICAN HISTORY
DE-GAYIFICATION OF ALL HISTORY
WILLFUL DESTRUCTION OF OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
HIRING MERCENARIES TO FIGHT IN OUR NAME
NAPALM ON FALUJA
DESTRUCTION OF WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS
DEMONIZATION OF GAY PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES
DESEXUALIZATION OF QUEER LIFE
TORTURE OF ALL KINDS
ANYONE WHO CLAIMS TO SPEAK FOR US
DRINKING YOUR KOOL AID
ASSIMILATION
CENSORSHIP
SELF-HATRED
ABSTINENCE MASQUERADING AS SEX EDUCATION
IMMORAL "MORAL VALUES"
RELIGION AS A WEAPON
DEATH ROW
GENOCIDE IN DARFOUR
RACISM CLOAKED AS EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
HOMO-HATRED AS A VALID RELIGIOUS BELIEF



we are Pink Tank