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LGBT Asylum Project Helps Asylum Seekers Fleeing Persecution

San Francisco has become a beacon for many LGBTQ [asylum seekers](#) – and the LGBT Asylum Project is meeting the need, having provided legal representation for nearly a decade.

Why it matters: America's [immigration system](#) is complex, time-consuming and costly. Most people who are fleeing violence or abuse based on their sexuality and/or gender identity are not able to take on the legal fees needed to seek approval of their asylum applications, according to communications coordinator Andres Molina.

Details: The Castro-based [LGBT Asylum Project](#) provides legal services to LGBTQ people seeking protection at low costs.

- It launched in 2015, co-founded by a gay Turkish immigrant who'd sought asylum himself in the U.S., and initially focused on asylum seekers from Nigeria before broadening its clientele, who primarily seek out legal aid via referrals or online searches.
- The organization has a 98% approval rate, Molina said.

How it works: Staff will first gather evidence – such as medical records, police records, newspaper clippings,

HIV-related documents and letters from friends – to help the client prepare for their asylum interview.

- The interviews are a "full rundown of their life stories" with an immigration officer, who will ask questions to determine whether the asylum seeker would be persecuted if they returned to their home country, Molina said.
- It can be especially difficult for trans, gender-nonconforming and nonbinary people – who often also lack basic necessities like housing – to talk openly about their experiences, according to staff attorney Jhon Tesoro, who provides assistance with legal name/gender marker changes.

The big picture: Though the organization focuses on the San Francisco jurisdiction, Molina says he often fields requests for help from people in other states, especially [those with anti-trans legislation](#).

- "I can't put into words how much the Castro means to a lot of our clients, just seeing the rainbows and ... so many people holding hands and so much diversity," Molina told Axios.
- "It's a constant thing that we hear all the time about how meaningful and different that experience is."
- The organization served over 500 asylum seekers last year.

Census Bureau Wants to Test Asking About Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity on Biggest Survey

Published: Sep. 19, 2023 at 4:15 PM EDT | Updated: Sep. 19, 2023 at 5:40 PM EDT

(AP) - The U.S. Census Bureau asked the Biden administration Tuesday for permission to test questions about sexual orientation and gender identity for people age 15 and above on its most comprehensive annual survey of life in the country.

The statistical agency wants to test the wording, response categories and placement of gender identity and sexual orientation questions on the questionnaires for the American Community Survey, which collects data from 3.5 million households each year. The ACS covers a wide range of topics, from family life, income, education levels and employment to [commuting times](#), internet access, disabilities and military service.

Federal agencies are interested in the data for civil rights and equal employment enforcement, the Census Bureau said in a Federal Register notice.

Because of the American Community Survey's size, asking those questions will give researchers a chance to look at differences among LGBTQ+ people, whether some face bigger challenges than others because of their race, gender or where they live, said M. V. Lee Badgett, an economics professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

"We can learn about health, economic, housing and other outcomes that might be worse for LGBT people because of the stigma and discrimination that they face, and we can track changes over time to see

if laws and policies are leading to more equality," Badgett said.

For the sexual orientation test question, respondents will be asked how someone in their household is best represented, whether "Gay or lesbian, Straight – that is not gay or lesbian, Bisexual, and This person uses a different term," according to the Federal Register notice.

For gender identity, the test question would ask what sex was the person assigned at birth and what is their current gender.

As currently written, the census and ACS questions only ask about same-sex couples who are married or living together. Asking about sexual orientation or gender identity in the survey will also shed light on LGBTQ+ people who are single or not cohabiting with their partners, said Kerith Conron, research director of the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law.

"We anticipate having much more info about the LGBT people than is currently available – including about the demographic and socioeconomic status of LGBT people who aren't in same-sex couple households, including occupational status, industry and wages, and about LGBT people who were born outside the U.S. and LGBT people with disabilities, and their families," Conron said.

The Census Bureau already [has requested](#) millions of dollars to study how best to ask about sexual orientation and gender identity. The results could provide much better data about the LGBTQ+ population nationwide at a time when views about sexual orientation and gender identity are evolving. As the nation's largest statistical agency, the bureau sets an example for how other agencies and businesses ask these questions.

The bureau is particularly interested in examining how answers are provided by “proxies” such as a parent, spouse or someone else in a household who isn’t the person about whom the question is being asked.

Other federal agencies already ask about sexual orientation, primarily in health surveys conducted by trained interviewers with respondents answering for themselves. The much more widely circulated American Community Survey relies on proxies more.

“Younger LGBT people might not yet be out to their parents or others who are answering these questions as a proxy reporter, so the quality of the data might not be as good for younger people,” Badgett said.

LGBTQI+ Youth are at High Risk of Depression, Anxiety, Suicide: How you can help

By [Irene Cruz](#)

Tuesday, October 10, 2023 2:19PM

October is LGBTQ+ History Month, and on Mondays on ABC7 Eyewitness News at 7 a.m., we focus on mental health. This Monday, we focused on the mental health of LGBTQ+ youth.

Young LGBTQ+ people are at high risk of depression, anxiety and thoughts of suicide. We spoke to Terra Russell-Slavin, Chief Impact Officer at the [LA LGBT Center](#).

Why do we celebrate LGBT history month in October? And how is this different from Pride?

<https://abc7.com/lgbtq-youth-mental-health-care-la-lgbt-center-lgbtg-history-month/13886831/>

“Herstory” Walking Tour Highlights Lesbian Sites in the Village

The part of Seventh Avenue South where West Fourth Street meets Christopher and Grove Streets is one of the busiest corridors in the West Village. Trendy restaurants and gay bars line the tourist-filled sidewalks and neighboring side streets, while heavy traffic rumbles by on its way to the Holland Tunnel to New Jersey. Unbeknownst to most passersby, however, the southeast corner of Grove and Seventh Avenue South – now home to the trendy pizza chain Two Boots – was, from 1972 to 1982, [the Duchess](#), one of the city’s most popular lesbian bars at the time.

<https://gaycitynews.com/lgbtq-history-herstory-lesbian-sites-west-village/>

‘A Revolutionary Vision’: San Diego LGBT Community Center Celebrates 50 Years

by: [Danielle Dawson](#)

Posted: Oct 15, 2023 / 07:30 PM PDT

Updated: Oct 15, 2023 / 07:30 PM PDT

AN DIEGO – The [San Diego LGBT Community Center](#) celebrated its 50th anniversary on Saturday with a gala to honor the work the non-profit has done to support LGBTQ+ San Diegans.

Hosted at the Hilton Bayfront Hotel, hundreds attended the event to mark The Center’s decades of service with dance, live music, cocktails and a drag show. The event also served as a fundraiser to help

support the organization's work in the region for years to come.

<https://fox5sandiego.com/news/local-news/a-revolutionary-vision-san-diego-lgbt-community-center-celebrates-50-years/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNMKuFWRavA>

Is it Rainbow or LGBT?

[14 October 2023](#) [Tom Misch](#)

Understanding the Symbolism: Is it Rainbow or LGBT?

The rainbow, a natural phenomenon noted for its design and spectacular display of colors, has been a symbol of many things throughout history. In recent years, it has become synonymous with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. But how did this come to be? And what does it truly symbolize?

The rainbow flag, also known as the gay pride flag or LGBT pride flag, is a symbol of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) pride and LGBT social movements. The colors reflect the diversity of the LGBT community, and the flag is often used as a symbol of gay pride during LGBT rights marches.

The rainbow flag was first popularized as a symbol of gay pride by San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker in 1978. The different colors are often associated with diversity in the gay community, but actually have specific meanings. Each color has its own significance; red symbolizes life, orange denotes healing, yellow is for sunlight, green signifies nature, blue represents harmony, and purple stands for spirit.

The flag was initially created with eight colors, but pink and turquoise were removed for production purposes, resulting in the six-colored flag most commonly seen today. The flag's design has undergone several revisions since its debut in 1978, but it has always retained its rainbow motif.

The rainbow flag is not just a symbol of pride for the LGBT community, but also a symbol of peace. It is a sign of acceptance and understanding, a beacon of diversity and inclusivity. It is a symbol that has been embraced by many around the world, regardless of their sexual orientation, as a sign of support for equal rights for all.

However, the rainbow as a symbol is not exclusive to the LGBT community. It has been used in many cultures throughout history, often signifying a bridge between heaven and earth. In Christian tradition, the rainbow is a sign of God's covenant with Noah that he would never again flood the Earth. In Irish mythology, the end of a rainbow is said to be the hiding place of a pot of gold.

In the 1960s, the rainbow flag was used by the hippie movement as a symbol of peace. It was also used by the cooperative movement in the 1970s in the United States as a symbol of unity among different races.

In conclusion, the rainbow is a versatile symbol that has been used to represent a variety of ideas and movements throughout history. Today, it is most commonly associated with the LGBT community, serving as a symbol of pride, diversity, and acceptance. However, it is important to remember that the rainbow is a universal symbol that transcends cultural, political, and religious boundaries.

Whether it is seen as a symbol of peace, a sign of a divine promise, or a beacon of pride and acceptance, the rainbow is a powerful symbol that continues to inspire and unite people around the world. So, is it a rainbow or is it LGBT? The answer is both. The rainbow is a symbol that has been adopted by the LGBT community, but it is also a universal symbol of hope, peace, and diversity.

25 years ago, his Death Galvanized the LGBTQ+ Rights Movement. His Legacy is in Danger.

25 years after the brutal killing of a 21-year-old gay college student catalyzed the gay rights movement, advocates say hard-fought progress is at risk.

CASPER, Wyo. — It's been 25 years since [Matthew Shepard](#), a gay 21-year-old University of Wyoming student, died six days after he was savagely beaten by two young men and tied to a remote fence to meet his fate. His death has been memorialized as an egregious hate crime that helped fuel the LGBTQ+ rights movement over the ensuing years.

From the perspective of the movement's activists — some of them on the front lines since the 1960s — progress was often agonizingly slow, but it was steady.

Vermont allowed same-sex [civil unions](#) in 2000. A Texas law criminalizing consensual gay sex was struck down in 2003. In 2011, the military scrapped the [“don't ask, don't tell”](#) policy that kept gay, lesbian and bisexual service members in the closet. And in 2015, the U.S. [Supreme Court ruled](#) that same-sex marriages were legal nationwide.

But any perception back then that the long struggle for equality had been won has

been belied by events over the past two years.

Five people were killed last year in a mass shooting at an [LGBTQ+ nightclub in Colorado](#). More than 20 Republican-controlled states have enacted an array of anti-LGBTQ+ laws including bans on sports participation and certain medical care for young transgender people, as well as restrictions on how schools can broach LGBTQ+-related topics.

<https://www.9news.com/article/news/nation-world/lgbtq-activists-say-equal-rights-progress-is-at-risk/507-8e952bfc-95f9-44b4-b5e7-ffee4cd6402f>

Summit ran former LGBTQ+ bar His 'n Hers. She was known for giving her time, energy and money to countless community organizations that helped the LGBTQ+ community, according to the [Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame](#), which inducted Summit in 1993.

<https://blockclubchicago.org/2023/05/22/lesbian-icon-marge-summit-dies-at-87-if-you-messed-with-the-lgbtq-community-you-were-messing-with-marge/>

Seacoast LGBT History Project to Present Rainbow Symposium in Portsmouth

PORTSMOUTH — What was it like to grow up LGBTQ on the Seacoast? Michael Tobin, one of the speakers at the annual Rainbow Symposium on Oct. 15, has plenty to say on the subject.

"Everyone knew there were 'gays' in Portsmouth," the 1981 graduate of Portsmouth High School said. "And we may have been talked about behind our backs, but people left us alone for the most part. It wasn't until we found our voice and started coming out of the closet that

things started happening – and not for the better."

Tobin, who is executive artistic director at The Footlights Theatre in Falmouth, Maine, will be joined by Jim Splaine, a former Portsmouth city councilor and state legislator who sponsored New Hampshire's 2009 marriage equality legislation..

The 1965 Portsmouth High School graduate served three decades in the New Hampshire Legislature. Splaine was also Portsmouth's assistant mayor for six terms and served on the School Board and Police Commission.

<https://www.seacoastonline.com/story/news/2023/10/12/seacoast-lgbt-rainbow-symposium-portsmouth-nh/71140679007/>

India's Top Court is set to Rule on Same-Sex Marriage. Here's what that Could Mean for Millions of People

It wasn't love at first sight when Aditi Anand met Susan Dias at a book club in Mumbai.

"We didn't get along with each other at all," Anand, a filmmaker, said with a smile as she recalled the encounter. "We were always antagonistic toward each other's views on the books we were reading."

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/16/india/india-same-sex-marriage-ruling-lgbtq-intl-hnk-dst/index.html>

Daughters of Bilitis

A Herstory Lesson for LGBT History
October

<https://womenshistory.si.edu/stories/2023/02/how-daughters-bilitis-organized-lesbian-rights>

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<https://fox5sandiego.com/news/local-news/a-revolutionary-vision-san-diego-lgbt-community-center-celebrates-50-years/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNMKuFWRavA>

Queer Black Group Considers Hosting Kink Workshop

Individuals with homosexual or transgender inclinations have no shortage of clubs at the University of Pennsylvania.

QBlack is the latest opportunity for homosexual students. This group is

specifically for “queer black” students, according to a group representative.

“There’s plenty of Black spaces on campus, and there’s plenty of queer spaces on campus, but there’s not really any dedicated to both,” the marketing chair Yared Zegeye [told](#) *The Daily Pennsylvanian*.

“I want this club to be not just a club, but an institution that makes [queer Black students] know that they’re visible, that they’re loved, that they have a community to come home to, [and] somebody that they can confide in,” Zegeye told the student newspaper.

“The club is open to all undergraduate and graduate students who identify as queer and Black,” according to another representative.

The group is “looking to host a queer brunch event and sex education and kink workshop,” the student newspaper reported.

The queer black students have other LGBT clubs they can partner with, according to a *College Fix* review of organizations on campus tagged “LGBTQ+.”

At least 15 other groups on Penn’s club [website](#) specifically cater to LGBTQ students, with some also offering racially siloed opportunities.

For example, Asian American Pacific Islanders can join the “Spice Collective,” a “bi-weekly, student-led discussion space for gender minorities who identify as Asian American Pacific Islander.” This group should not be confused with the “Queer and Asian” club.

There is also a “Chinese Queer Women Group” at Penn along with a “NeuroQueer” club.

The university also offers a “sketchy comedy” troupe for “Anyone But Cis Dudes,” referring to “cisgender,” which means people who recognize the biological reality of their sex. This club should not be confused with “Penn Non-Cis,” which is for transgender students, meaning people who believe they are actually the opposite sex.

All of the clubs can share their experiences in Q-INE magazine, “Penn’s LGBTQ+ interest magazine.”

Rare Video of LGBT Group, Stonewall Participant Interview I Watch Our America: Pride in History III

WATCH here:

<https://abc7news.com/our-america-pride-in-history-iii-lgbt-month-gay-stonewall-uprising/13868956/>

Laphonza Butler, Newsom’s Feinstein Replacement, to make LGBT History

SAN FRANCISCO -- The woman chosen by Gov. Gavin Newsom to replace late Sen. Dianne Feinstein will be the first Black lesbian to serve in Congress in history and the first openly LGBT senator from California, his office said Sunday night.

Laphonza Butler has been selected to complete Feinstein’s term, who died Friday at the age of 90 after serving in the US Senate from 1992 until her death.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/laphonza-butler-newsom-feinstein-replacement-lgbt-history/>