

The Sundial

Issue 1 | Fall 2022

INSIDE THE RAINBOW

DATING AS A GAY MAN

POET PANELS





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SCAN HERE



Cover photo by Taylor Arthur

Letter from the editor



On the gay agenda today we will be honoring our LGBTQ community in this month's issue. Pride is not just for June here at The Sundial. As a member of the community myself, this issue is something I am very proud of our team for pulling together on such a tight schedule. We hope you learn something that you didn't already know about the LGBTQ community in this month's issue.

As a queer journalist, I am constantly learning something new about the world. When it is centered around LGBTQ topics, it continues to blow my mind how much more there is to discover.

That's the most beautiful thing about this community. We are constantly learning about ourselves and others. The one thing I see as a common link among all the letters in the rainbow soup, is our ability to come to terms with having to learn who we are in a world that never taught us what it means to be an individual.

Everything we are told to be is a copy and pasted version of a narrative we did not sign up for. This is a community full of people who were brave enough to question the pages that someone else wrote for them. This is a community where we are given the space to identify who we are internally and given the vocabulary to express it so our story can finally feel seen.

You can learn so much from the LGBTQ community. Whether you are gay, straight, or anything in between, the fundamental foundation of the rainbow community is simply love.

Love for others, love for each other, and most importantly, love for yourself. You don't have to have it all figured out, you just need an open mind and willing heart. You hold the pen: how will your story end? Welcome to the inside of the rainbow.

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Editor-in-Chief

The Sundial

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Put a pin in it:

how CSUN's library shows year-round LGBTQ support

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY
KAITLYN LAVO



Rows of one-inch circles filled pages of paper at the University Library, ready to be cut out for students and staff alike to make button pins that promoted one's identity. Designs decorated with pronouns, gender identity symbols, and sexuality imagery spread across the table ready to be cut and made into buttons.

Wearing a trio of pins consisting of pronouns reading "she/they," along with a progress pride and asexuality flag, Melissa Cober's eyes lit up as she helped folks in creating wearable ornaments of self-identity.

"Pride Month is very near and dear to my heart, and since I'm on the outreach committee which helps plan events for the library, I just saw an opportunity to get involved and give something back to my community," said Cober, a CSUN reference and instruction librarian.

While it may seem like a small act, the action of publicly displaying one's gender identity and sexual orientation may be an empowering one for some.

After coming out in 2020 before the COVID-19 lockdown, Eje Iyam decided to make a pansexual flag pin.

"I realized at some point that I am sort of coming out to everyone who

looks at my shirt today," Iyam said, a student assistant at the University Library. "It was scary and also really exciting and empowering. I loved it."

Safe spaces that support the LGBTQ community is something that holds value for students and staff members, including Cober and Iyam.

"Representation is extremely important and just knowing that is accepted not just in a school

environment but in my work is something that I never experienced overtly like that," said Iyam.

Pride month, however, may often be confined to the idea of celebrating representation without acknowledgment or action that contributes to the past and present-day fight for equal rights in the LGBTQ community. This can be seen in the form of what some call "rainbow capi-





talism,” as companies sell merchandise in pride colors and make their original logos taste the rainbow for one month.

The version of pride Iyam sees being pushed is not what she and other members of the LGBTQ community feel pride is about. Many of the large pride events are sponsored by companies that have collectively donated a total \$1,604,440 to anti-LGBTQ campaigns.

“People don’t focus on what pride is about. They don’t focus on Stonewall. They don’t focus on discrimination that still exists in our country. They just think it is a parade, it’s just a big party and that’s not the point,” Iyam pointed out.

Iyam expressed the complexity of feelings she had surrounding pride as a whole, from living in the closet to recently coming out and finally having the opportunity to celebrate with the world opening up again.

“Living in the closet made pride difficult for a long time in my life,” Iyam said. “It’s always been something I wanted to participate in, but again right now the corporatization, it doesn’t feel like the celebration I want to engage in. I become more focused on what’s going on

“Living in the closet made pride difficult for a long time in my life.”

Eje Iyam

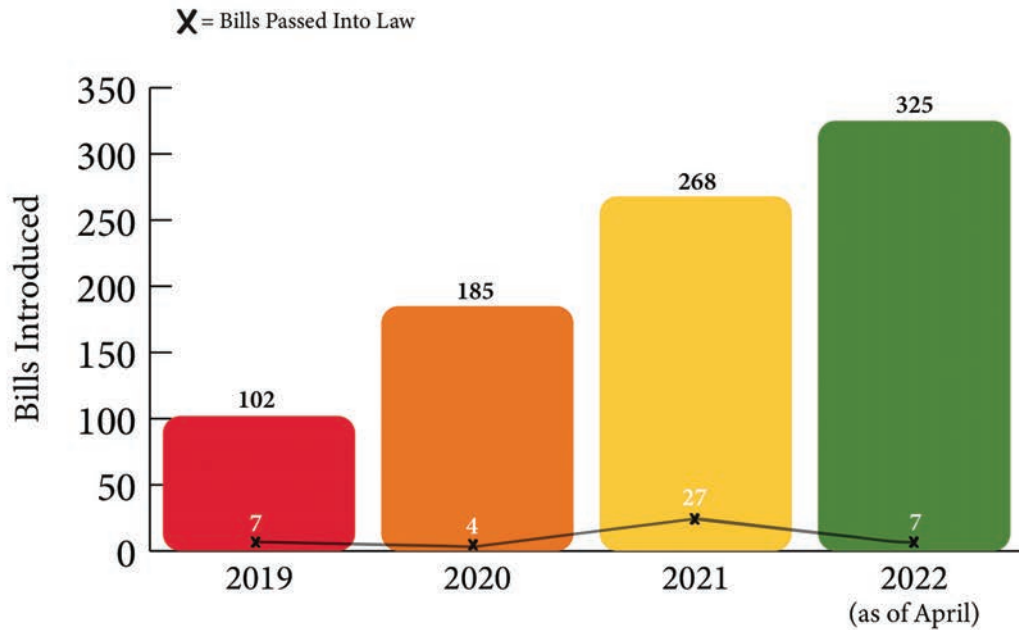
in civil rights when it comes to the LGBTQ community right now and I think that’s a better way to focus on pride,” Iyam said.

Though the simple act of wearing pins symbolizing one’s identity shows members of CSUN’s LGBTQ community that they are supported in their educational environment, the same may not be true once they step foot outside of the school setting. There may be the harm in ending LGBTQ celebrations at the door of representation if the hard work and struggle behind the marches are dismissed.

As Iyam questioned, “What do we not have to stand for right now?”



Anti-LGBTQ Bills Introduced in the U.S.



Source: Human Rights Campaign

Legislation targeting the LGBTQ community has increased annually since 2019, with 2021 marking a record year of anti-LGBTQ bills signed into law. Examples of legislation includes laws aimed at transgender youth, such as bills preventing gender-affirming healthcare access and restricting the ability to participate in school sports.

One of the most controversial laws signed this year was Florida's HB 1557, also known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill. Criticized for its vague terms, the law prohibits discussions on gender and sexual orientation in K-3 classrooms, or in a way that is "not age appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students." Anti-LGBTQ legislation has continued to rise, with 2022 having seen the most bills introduced in a single year.

BRANDON SARMIENTO

On the Grindr:

dating as a gay man in the modern world

(OPINION)

WRITTEN BY ROCKY WALKER

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROCKY WALKER

Dating as a gay man can be described with the quip of trying to find a needle in a haystack. Or a diamond in the very thick rough.

Being gay is a much lonelier experience in dating; trying to find a date in a coffee shop or a bookstore seems too dangerous an effort.

Gallup reports that around 7% of U.S. adults self identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or something other than heterosexual, with less than 1% of U.S. adults married to a same-sex partner.

While the number of adults identifying as queer has doubled within the past 10 years, with the historic criminalization and persecution of LGBTQ individuals, gay dating has always required safe grounds and space for companionship.

Spaces free of the judgment of society have all become mainstays to any gay community; for a form of dating freedom, there need to be overt LGBTQ spaces.

Thankfully, my current partner was someone I met in real life, but this came after years of creating our community of friends in which we were free of judgment. Our connection was already long in place before we started dating.

In times when homosexuality was illegal, these spaces came from cruising grounds, underground gay clubs, bars and bathhouses. One man would meet another for an intimate moment of pleasure before leaving into the night, or a drink would lead to a public restroom, with meaningful encounters being ones sought after for their rarity.

Nowadays, being gay is much more accepted, but the long term effects of marginalization still stand, and in many communities this marginalization still thrives in public.

In an age of technology, these gay spaces have come into their own through apps such as Grindr, Jack'd and Scruff.

As someone who is somewhat traditional, the idea of making a meaningful connection in a bar or club seems to be for the naive, or those open enough to let it happen.

So online dating is where many of us end up. Tinder and Bumble have gay features, but they don't really offer a sense of community, so back to Grindr many go.

These apps have the purpose of "helping guys feel connected, and get connected into their community and what's around them," as Grindr creator Joel Simkhai said during the app's early creation.

Over 10 years after the debut of the app, now boasting 13 million monthly users, Grindr has become inarguably the largest platform for gay men to meet in modern times.

"As a gay man navigating the dating world in the Grindr era, the effects of the app linger in the lives of those seeking a same sex connection."

The creator, Simkhai, stated that he "never had any master plan to shift a culture," but that was what he did.

With the app's goal of minimizing the time between first contact and first meetup, the purpose of dating and community get convoluted with the purpose of a hookup.

As explained above, dating in public has always been dangerous for gay men. This comes from very few men being LGBTQ and many rejections of unwanted advances coming in the form of violent attacks.

So, a middle ground is required.

This still comes in the forms of gay clubs and bars, but cruising is slowly dying out and online geospatial dating apps

such as Grindr are becoming its replacement. As a gay man navigating the dating world in the Grindr era, the effects of the app linger in the lives of those seeking a same-sex connection.

This blurring of purpose for community and hookups has caused Grindr to become the app with the most unhappy users. A recent Time Well Spent survey found that 77% of users felt regret after using the app.

This regret comes from reflection on shallow conversations and a sense of guilt for the explicit photos shared, or the emotionally devoid sexual encounters that ensue.

As someone who has shared this regret, I have found disdain for apps like Grindr.

Like many others, I have found hookups on the app, but never found that sense of community the app strives for.

In 2022, dating for the LGBTQ community is shifting to being more like those of our straight counterparts, but spaces that are intrinsically queer are still needed.

Queer-friendly spaces create a culture of acceptance for a free roam of dating, taking the source of the community off a hookup app, and back into the spaces LGBTQ folks congregate.

With time, and further acceptance of queer people, the reality of violent rejections will no longer plague gay men dating in public, but until that point is reached, the need for gay spaces and a separated queer community still stands.





ILLUSTRATION BY : DAVID MESQUITA

Q&A

with the Pride Center

INTERVIEWED BY WARREN LOPEZ

1 What kinds of resources do you have for LGBTQ students?

Whitney Workman, Acting Pride Center Coordinator:

We have the physical space for them to relax, hang out, study and meet new people. We also have different events and programs. We have a trans, nonbinary, genderqueer and gender-questioning discussion group called “Tea Time” and that occurs weekly. We also have LGBTQIA+ coffee nights which are every Thursday. That space is open to everyone [both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+]. They drink coffee, do crafts, meet other people, and build community.

Within the space, we also have sexual health resources. We have rapid take-home HIV tests, external and internal condoms, lube, dental dams, pads and tampons. We have information on different departments around campus, such as Title IX, which includes gender and sex-based discrimination. [Students] can meet one-on-one with [me] or [our temporary operations supervisor] Seychelles for support. If someone’s going through [a] housing crisis due to their LGBTQ+ identity, facing food insecurity, or if they’re facing difficulty with a professor, we’re really just here to support them. We will also do legal name and gender change clinics.

2 What do you have available to help students with their physical and mental health needs?

Workman: We have “Let’s Talk” where we have two counselors from UCS come in and make themselves available for anyone who is looking to access mental health care, whether it’s through UCS or being referred out to another location. We have HIV testing monthly and a lot of connections to get people in for STI testing. We also provide opportunities to build communities, which is a really big part of mental health, as you’re not feeling alone and isolated.

Seychelles Mizel, Temporary Operations Supervisor:

We have the library as well, so if there’s a specific subject a student is looking for, we have a library for them to check out books and materials on that.

3 What cost, if any, would students have to pay for these resources?

Mizel: It’s free!

Workman: Yeah, it’s already included in your tuition. We are a part of the USU, which is student-funded. You’ve already paid it in your tuition, so they’re all free to you. Now, if you

decided to access one of the outside organizations, for example, [a paid resource can be] if you got information about testing off-campus. We typically try to only include resources that are free or sliding scale, so those would be the only things outside of us that would cost money.

Mizel: Also, if you need contraceptives or pads [or] period products, you could take as many as you need. You don’t have to come in and tell us. Just come in and take it! Same thing with our coffee, snacks and books.

4 How do you aim to keep LGBTQ students feel safe and welcome?

Workman: I think something we’ve been working on recently is expanding into the main campus. I’ve heard from a lot of students that they feel safe and heard in our space, but a lot of their time is not within the Pride Center. So, we’ve been trying to partner with other departments and campus organizations to make sure we’re creating that supportive and safe environment across campus.

Mizel: Just the environment itself when you walk in. It is colorful and welcoming. We have music playing and people are always ready to have a conversation, so I think it’s just the welcoming space that we create when you come to our door.

5 What does it mean to be a safe space for queer students?

Mizel: Being open, available, honest, welcoming [as] I’ve said before, and genuine.

Workman: Transparency is a big thing. Being honest [about] what we can fulfill and how we can serve and being honest when we don’t have the resources to do something, but let me connect you to somebody who can. Always [be] ready to step in and bridge the gaps to make sure someone’s basic, emotional needs are met because that is when you are feeling well.

We are looking at students holistically and making sure they’re well in all regards. We don’t just sit in our offices. We learn what’s going on with them and that they know our faces.

The last part is the accountability. Did that person feel like they got justice? Did that person feel that their needs were met at the end of the day? Making sure we’re accountable, making sure that we’re meeting students’ needs and if there are areas where we’re not, we’re exploring how we’re able to meet them.

Mizel: Also, if you need contraceptives or pads [or] period products, you could take as many as you need. You don’t have to come in and tell us. Just come in and take it! Same thing with our coffee, snacks and books.

HIV/AIDS

MYTHS AND FACTS

MYTHS

HIV/AIDS can be spread through physical touch such as kissing, hugging, or sharing utensils or cups.

Pregnant women with HIV can't lower their chances of passing HIV to their unborn baby.

Only the LGBTQ community can catch HIV.

HIV and AIDS is the same thing.

References:

Hall, Caleb, and Community Access Network.
"11 Myths and Facts About HIV and AIDS."
Community Access Network.

"Facts about HIV and AIDS." Facts about
HIV and AIDS | Office on Women's Health

FACTS

HIV/AIDS can only be spread through bodily fluids: blood, breast milk, pre-seminal fluid, rectal mucus, semen, vaginal fluids, unsterilized tattoo needles with infected blood.

In order to reduce their chances of passing HIV to their baby, patients work with their doctors and take antiretroviral (ARV) medicine.

HIV/AIDS is not limited to those in the LGBTQ community. In fact, heterosexual people make up 23% of HIV diagnoses.

If not treated, or left untreated for a significant amount of time, HIV can potentially lead to AIDS.

WHAT DOES PRIDE MEAN TO YOU?

INTERVIEWED BY ARIEL GIL AND KAMRYN MARTELL

Desiree

That means being proud of who I am or how somebody expresses themselves, pride means you don't judge anybody and that's how I see what pride is.

Madison Walker

I don't know, I hate being on the spot and that's how you know I'm gay.

Nick

To me, it means showing your true colors. Not being afraid of what other people think about you. Knowing your self-worth, knowing that you are a warrior. You're gonna go out into the world and you're gonna be prideful of what you love and what you want to do and be the true person that you want to be.

Anthony Norcus

Just accurate representation and like everyone is equal as long as everyone's equal there shouldn't be a problem.

Jonathan Sweeney

I'd say diversity and individualism. Really just being authentic to yourself.

Andrea Cole

Pride means being able to show your true colors and who you really are and being prideful about it.

Ben Newberry

Pride to me is having faith that everyone is accepted for who they are and can express themselves as an individual. And show that they are proud of who they are.

Vince Monico

To me, pride means being able to stay humble in certain moments by having to swallow it when needed and not being too prideful in other moments. Staying true to yourself.

Julia Gonzalez

Pride to me is being able to express myself and show my true colors in my relationships and life.

Anonymous

To me, pride means self-respect. However, too much of anything isn't good and pride is no exception.

Donavan Beck

The space to express love how you see fit.

Qaadir Muhammad

In my opinion, pride is self-given respect to do whatever your heart desires.

Ahallah Muhammad

To me, pride is upholding the beliefs that you choose to follow.

Brian Rubio

Pride is the ability to be proud of who you are.

Ashley Lopez

Pride means the ability to love without judgment.

Q&A

with the Women's Research and Resource Center

INTERVIEWED BY WARREN LOPEZ

1 What kinds of resources do you have available for transgender women on campus?

Juniper Cottrell, Student Director:

We are a super queer-friendly space! I am a trans woman and a student director, and our faculty director is a lesbian. We promote sexual health, which I think is very much needed in the LGBTQ+ community, as well as resources we promote through our Instagram such as the gender clinic that is offering free name and gender marker changes.

2 What could transgender and queer women expect while walking in?

Cottrell: So, when you walk in you'll be greeted by me most likely and I'll just be there asking, "What's up?" and what you're here for and I'll direct you to our pantry and toiletries. It is all for students and you just walk in. It is a nice, air-conditioned space led by students, for students without interference from faculty.

3 How much do students have to pay for these resources, if there's any cost?

Cottrell: Everything we offer is free, apart from our vending machines that sell Plan B for \$25 instead of \$60 at CVS. That is our only paid thing; but in terms of our actual, physical center, everything is free. Just come in and put your student ID number and grab whatever you need.

4 What are some ways you help trans women feel safe at CSUN?

Cottrell: A lot of the times, resources that are meant to be LGBTQ+ friendly are a little bit dismissive of queer identities. They tackle the service of LGBT individuals as, "We serve whoever! It doesn't matter who you are." To us, it does matter what you are. You're not going to get

discriminated against, of course, but we're going to recognize who you are and tailor our resources for you. We have a ton of resources on our wall as well, specifically trans-friendly resources to help in whatever way we can.

5 What does being a safe space mean for transgender women on campus?

Cottrell: A safe space on campus for trans women needs to be inclusive of trans bodies, inclusive of trans issues. It can't see trans women as men like the way a lot of trans-inclusive spaces tend to do. Without reaffirming the identity of the trans women that are coming for resources, you're not doing your job. In order to provide a safe space for trans women, you need to reaffirm them as women in whatever way that works.

PANELS

by Genesis Perez

I have a new thing to associate with the color green

It's a scene

We are kissing at your kitchen table

One eye still open in case your father turns around

I am always stealing kisses from pretty girls

But you make every kiss feel like an inside job

The guards have been alerted

They have been told to stand down

It's a scene

We are on public transportation

You are staring into my tired eyes

They whisper 'almost home'

I am always stealing kisses from pretty girls

But this time I won't get into trouble

I won't have to run extra laps

There is no one letting me take a beating

It's a scene

You are focused on your reading

Groaning and griping at every opportunity

I am casting sly smiles as I write something for you

I am always stealing kisses from pretty girls

But never like this

I've never been invited to crawl under the covers at night

I've never been held so tight in the morning

THE SUNDIAL'S TOP 15 MUSIC "GAYLIST"



- 1- Careless whisper by George Michael
- 2- Prada by Arca
- 3- Bad Dream/No Looking Back by Syd
- 4- Wo Fie by Angel Maxine
- 5- Girls by girl in red
- 6- It's Not My Choice by Mykki Blanco ft. Blood Orange
- 7- Honey By Kehlani
- 8- You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real) By Sylvester
- 9- Son Of A Preacher Man By Dusty Springfield
- 10- Miss You So Bad by Frank Ocean
- 11- Dancing with a Stranger by Sam Smith & Normani
- 12- PUPPET by Tyler, The Creator
- 13- Rocket Man by Elton John
- 14- Time Waits For No One by Freddie Mercury
- 15- Stayback by Omar Apollo

Created by Ashley Orellana

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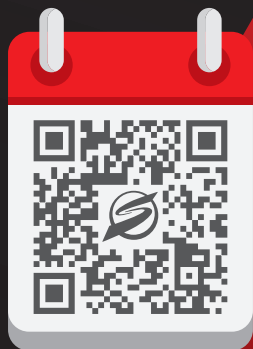
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 VISIT THE FULL USU
 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events subject to change



FEATURED EVENTS



VRC: Monday Night Football Watch Party

Monday, Sept. 26

🕒 5:15 – 8:30 p.m. 📍 Veterans Resource Center



Tech Tips: Prezi

Wednesday, Sept. 28

🕒 1 – 2 p.m. 📍 Computer Lab



Pride Center: Around the Block with QTPOC

Wednesday, Sept. 28

🕒 2 – 5 p.m. 📍 Black House



Black Male Scholars: Barbershop Talks

Wednesday, Sept. 28

🕒 3 – 4 p.m. 📍 Tujunga Room



DREAM Center: Welcoming Social

Friday, Sept. 30

🕒 4 – 6 p.m. 📍 Grand Salon



SRC Swim Challenge

Register by Monday, Oct. 3

📍 SRC Rec Pool



Games Room: Billiards Tournament

Wednesday, Oct. 5

🕒 5 – 9 p.m. 📍 Games Room