



First Friday News & Views



Iowa's LGBTQ+ Newsletter of the First Friday Breakfast Club

May 2024 | Volume 29 | Issue 5

Next Meeting
Friday,
May 3
7:00 a.m.



Location
Hoyt Sherman
15th & Woodland
Des Moines



Speaker
One Iowa

Courtney
Reyes &
Max Mowitz



Website
ffbc Iowa.org



Project 2025: A Threat to United States Democracy

by Byron Huff, Board President

Project 2025, a secretive manifesto reportedly orchestrated by a coalition of extremist groups, poses a significant threat to the democratic fabric of the United States. Their plan is to gut the federal workforce and install loyalists by making tens of thousands of civil servants fireable at the president's (Trump) will and allow the president to deploy the military against American citizens.

Central to Project 2025 is the manipulation of digital platforms to spread disinformation and amplify divisive narratives. Following the Trump 2020 playbook, Project 2025 involves a systematic effort to undermine the integrity of elections. Tactics range from voter suppression and intimidation to the spread of false information about the electoral process. By casting doubt on the legitimacy of elections, the architects of Project 2025 seek to undermine confidence in the democratic system itself.

Project 2025 has been criticized by LGBTQ+ writers and journalists for its intended removal of protections for LGBTQ+ people and declarations to outlaw pornography by claiming it as an "omnipresent propagation of transgender ideology and sexualization of children." Writing for *Dame* magazine, Brynn Tannehill argued that the 902-page document "The Mandate for Leadership" in part "makes eradicating LGBTQ people from public life its top priority."

The federal government will establish marriage between a man and a woman as the "ideal, natural family structure," withdraw federal anti-discrimination protections for transgender students, and reimplement Trump's transgender military ban and expel transgender service members and cease support for international organizations that promote LGBTQ+ equality.

This manifesto would continue the attack on immigrants and immigration by allowing ICE to conduct raids at schools, churches, hospitals, playgrounds, and other sensitive areas. This would be a frightening invasion of rights leading us down the path to a military state that tramples on the foundation of our democracy.



[continued on page 2]

Project 2025

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION PROJECT

Continuing the attack on climate initiatives, the U.S will withdraw from the U.N. Framework Convention on climate change and the Paris Climate Agreement. U.S. regulations will be gutted by repealing the Inflation Reduction Act, removing greenhouse gas regulations and clean energy programs, replacing the White House climate advisor with someone focused on boosting the fossil fuel industry. The president will also have the power to reject all climate science research directed by the Biden administration.

Following the conservative playbook, they plan to further lower taxes on big corporations and the very wealthy as well as put Medicare on a path to privatization. Without the Bush and Trump tax cuts, debt as a percentage of the economy would be declining permanently.

Abortion rights will face continued attacks by reversing the FDA's approval of abortion medication, invoking the Comstock Act to ban the shipment of abortion pills, compelling states to report the "reason" for every abortion performed within their borders, and allowing states to ban employers from providing health benefits that cover abortion care.

The implications of Project 2025 are profound for our country and the world. Left unchecked, it could erode the very foundation of democracy in the United States, leading to a crisis of legitimacy and governance. It underscores the need for vigilance and collective action to protect the integrity of democratic institutions and uphold the principles of a free and fair society.



**"May is the month of expectation,
the month of wishes,
the month of hope."** - Emily Brontë



Thanks to **Deb Madison-Levi** for introducing our April speaker, **Melissa O'Neil**, CEO for Central Iowa Shelter and Services. Thanks to **David Cotton** for managing our website, to **Nicholas Williams** for managing our Microsoft IT infrastructure, and to **David Wilfahrt** for managing FFBC's finances. Thanks to **Wade Petersen** for his work as our newsletter editor. *Thank you to all our newsletter contributors!*

The **deadline** for the 2024 **June newsletter** will be **May 27**. If you have something on your mind to share, type it up and email it to Wade (wadecpetersen@gmail.com) by the deadline.



Fundraising efforts are ongoing to fund our scholarship program. To date we have awarded over **\$450,000** for scholarships to Iowa high school seniors who have done remarkable, courageous things to reduce homophobia and teach about LGBTQ issues in their schools and communities. Please consider a tax-deductible **contribution** online or by sending a check.



A special **thank-you** to those FFBC members and friends who have chosen to designate FFBC through the **Donor Direct** program of **United Way**. Contributions through United Way are tax deductible. Those who have chosen this means of supporting FFBC have gone to the trouble of completing their United Way campaign worksheet by designating FFBC as the beneficiary of their generosity. FFBC is an eligible recipient of such funding designations.





Abortion in Arizona:

The Backstory 1864



by Jonathan Wilson

For a while now, my partner and I have been “snow birding” between Iowa and Arizona. We’re in Iowa about half of the year and in Arizona about the same amount of time. That has given this Iowa transplant a front row seat in the unfolding drama regarding legal access to abortion in Arizona. If you’re not in Arizona but think you’ve seen a lot of news coverage on the topic, keep in mind that the subject gets *national* news in Arizona as elsewhere and, also, *local* Arizona coverage – daily. That front row seat and the local news coverage have given me a glimpse into the “back story” in Arizona that I find at least interesting. Actually, I find it gratifying to witness karma at work.

For starters, circumstances in Arizona have changed in the last couple of years. While Republicans continue to have a majority in the legislature, Arizona now has a Democratic Governor, Democratic Attorney General, and Democratic Secretary of State. The Republican legislative majority is not enough to override a gubernatorial veto.

In 2022, *Roe v. Wade* was still the law of the Land; abortion was legal up to the point of fetal viability – the Rowe/Biblical standard, i.e., the ability to “draw breath” (Genesis 2:7). That was the law on abortion in both Iowa and Arizona, and everywhere else in the United States at that time. In that environment, the Republican-controlled Arizona legislature passed a law that adopted a 15-week threshold, after which time abortion would be illegal in Arizona. So far, so good. Other states have established a similar threshold. But then the Republicans got greedy; they had a majority in both legislative chambers, and Arizona had a Republican governor. The Republicans included in the 2022 legislation a self-operative provision saying that if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned, the 15-week threshold would NOT be the law in Arizona on the subject. Instead, the law adopted in 1864 (when Arizona was still a territory, not yet a state, where slavery was still legal, and when women didn’t even have the right to vote) would be operative, thus prohibiting virtually all abortions except for the limited circumstance where the continuation of the pregnancy would endanger the life of the mother. No exception for rape. No exception for incest. No exception for any other extenuating circumstances such as mere jeopardy to the woman’s ability to get pregnant again. The Republican governor dutifully signed it into law, including that potential, “automatic” throwback to the 1864 law on the subject.

Then, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. The “automatic” throwback provision was triggered in Arizona. Then, a lawsuit was filed to determine whether the operative law was the 2022 statute (abortion legal until 15 weeks of gestation) or the 1864 statute (abortion prohibited at any stage of pregnancy unless its continuation would jeopardize the life of the mother).



The Republican presidential candidate announced how proud he is to have gotten *Roe v. Wade* overturned and his belief that the issue should be decided by the individual states. *The very next day*, the Arizona Supreme Court issued its decision that the law on this topic would be governed by the Arizona statute adopted in 1864 – thanks to the over-reaching, “automatic,” self-operative clause that said that was exactly what should happen in the event *Roe v. Wade* was overturned.

Here’s where it gets really interesting. The Arizona Supreme Court decision caused an uproar. It prompted statewide protests. It prompted some fringe “Christians” to go into the Supreme Court chambers, get down on the floor, and proceed to audibly pray in tongues. We are left only to speculate what they were asking God to do. The decision had Republican politicians back-peddling from things like their vote for the 2022 legislation, or things they said in 2022 when they were lauding the inclusion of that provision. One such politician is Kari Lake, the election-denying, Republican candidate for U.S. Senate. The problem is that every time she issues a back-peddling statement, the media plays a video of her struggling to find sufficient words in 2022 to express her unflinching support for the 1864 statute.

There’s more. The Republican presidential candidate issued assurances that the Arizona elected officials would get it figured out reasonably. Not so fast there Donny, there’s one problem with that assurance – a Democratic governor of Arizona. The legislature could clearly revoke the 1864 law, but that alone would merely get the abortion law in Arizona back to the Rowe/Biblical standard of viability and the ability of the fetus to draw breath. The Democrats in the Arizona legislature introduced two separate bills that would do just that – a clean revocation of the 1864 statute. The Republicans blocked both bills. The Republicans could introduce a revocation bill that also adopts a 15-week threshold. The Republican majority could pass such a bill, but it would be vetoed by the Democratic governor, and the Republican majority isn’t sufficient to over-ride a veto.


Stalemate, but a stalemate leaves Republicans saddled with the highly unpopular 1864 statute. It serves them right; they’ve done it to themselves by getting greedy with their overreach in the 2022 statute. As Shakespeare would say, a classic case of “hoisting themselves on their own petard.” The stalemate will increase voter turnout among Democrats, Independents, and moderate Republicans. It will continue the trend toward a “blue” Arizona. That is the silver-lining that comes with the current stalemate. I can’t vote in Arizona, but I can celebrate. Stay tuned.



2024
CAPITAL CITY PRIDE
SPEAKER SERIES

THURSDAY, MAY 9, 6 P.M.
 TEMPLE THEATRE

Supported by Prairie Meadows
 Community Betterment Grant



PRESENTED BY
FG
 ANNUITIES & LIFE

ANTHONY RAPP
 Anthony is best known for originating the role of "Mark Cohen" in the Tony Award-winning rock opera *Rent*. Rapp also serves on the board of the non-profit organization, Friends In Deed, which provides emotional support for anyone with a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS, cancer or other life-threatening physical illnesses, their families, friends, and caregivers.

PREREGISTRATION REQUIRED

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 of ourselves




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DSM PRIDE CENTER GLOW

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PRIDE!

SATURDAY, MAY 18TH 6PM-8PM
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Princess Royal 31, Eudora Riverz & Prince Royal 31 Reggie Knight Present:

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A Spy's Ball

\$10 Suggested Donation

May 4th | Doors: 5PM | Ball: 6PM
 The Garden | 525 E. Grand Ave.

All Net Proceeds to Benefit The
 Hal Thompson Scholarship




FFBC Membership

FFBC membership is open to all members of the LGBTQ+ community and their allies. We welcome everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender. Meetings are held the first Friday of every month from 7:00 A.M. - 8:15 A.M. at Hoyt Sherman Place in Des Moines. The following membership rates help us cover our food and facility costs.

In-Person Meeting Rates

Annual Rate: \$180
 (12 consecutive meetings)

Quarterly Rate: \$48
 (3 consecutive meetings)

Month-by-Month: \$18

**First Time or
 One-Time Attendee: \$15**

Full-time Student: \$8

No charge to attend via Zoom


Payment Options

Cash or check at the meeting

Credit card prior to the meeting at www.ffbcia.org; visit the "Membership" tab

Meeting Schedule

6:30 a.m. - Doors open
 6:45 a.m. - Breakfast service begins
 7:00 a.m. - Meeting begins



“Homosexual”

Today in Gay History | White Crane Institute

Karl-Maria Kertbeny (or Károly Mária Kertbeny; born Karl-Maria Benkert) was an Austrian-born Hungarian journalist, memoirist, and human rights campaigner born on February 28, 1824 (died 1882). He is best known for coining the words **heterosexual** and **homosexual**.

The Benkert family moved to Budapest when he was a child -- he was equally at home in Austria, Germany, and Hungary. He has been described in these terms: "This moody, fluttering, imperfect writer is one of the best and undeservedly forgotten Hungarian memoir writers." He translated Hungarian poets' and writers' works into German, e.g., those of Sándor Petőfi, János Arany and Mór Jókai. Among his acquaintances were Heinrich Heine, George Sand, Alfred de Musset, Hans Christian Andersen, and the Brothers Grimm.

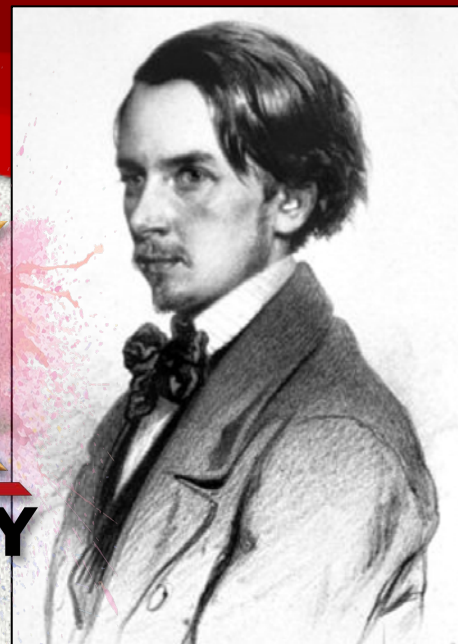
As a young man, while working as a bookseller's apprentice, Benkert had a close friend who was gay. This young man killed himself after being blackmailed by an extortionist. Benkert later recalled that it was this tragic episode which led him to take a close interest in the subject of homosexuality, following what he called his "instinctive drive to take issue with every injustice."

After a stint in the Hungarian army, Benkert made a living as a journalist and travel writer, and wrote at least twenty-five books on various subjects. In 1847, he legally changed his surname from Benkert to Kertbeny, a Hungarian name with aristocratic associations. He settled in Berlin in 1868, still unmarried at 44. He claimed in his writings to be "normally sexed." However, his diaries list a self-censored string of encounters with youths and men ("young barber lad"; "very much in love with the lad"; "I have done it"), and recurring fear following the arrest of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs with whom he corresponded ("Awful days!...Horrible nightmares. I have burnt all the dangerous letters"), which suggest he was secretly homosexual.

He began to write extensively on the issue of homosexuality, motivated, he said, by an "anthropological interest" combined with a sense of justice and a concern for the "rights of man." In 1869, he anonymously published a pamphlet entitled *Paragraph 143* of the Prussian Penal Code of 14 April 1851 and Its Reaffirmation as *Paragraph 152* in the Proposed Penal Code for the North German Confederation. An Open and Professional Correspondence to His Excellency Dr. Adolph Leonhardt, Royal Prussian Minister of Justice.

A second pamphlet on the same subject soon followed. In his pamphlets, Kertbeny argued that the Prussian sodomy law, *Paragraph 143* (which later became *Paragraph 175* of the penal code of the German Empire), violated the "rights of man." He advanced the classic liberal argument that consensual sexual acts in private should not be subject to criminal law. Recalling his young friend, he argued strongly that the Prussian law allowed blackmailers to extort money from homosexuals and often drove them to suicide.

H HISTORY



Kertbeny also put forward the view that homosexuality was inborn and unchangeable, an argument which would later be called the "medical model" of homosexuality. This contradicted the dominant view up to that time, that men committed "sodomy" out of mere wickedness. Gay men, he said, were not by nature effeminate, and he pointed out that many of the great heroes of history were gay. With Heinrich Hössli and Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, he was among the first writers to put these now-familiar arguments before the public.

During 1869, in the course of these writings, Kertbeny published the term (in German) **homosexual** (which, along with **heterosexual**, he first used in private correspondence on May 8, 1868), as part of his system for the classification of sexual types, as a replacement for the pejorative terms "sodomite" and "pederast" that were used in the German- and French-speaking world of his time. In addition, he called the attraction between men and women heterosexualism, masturbators monosexualists, and practitioners of anal intercourse pygists.

After publishing his two important pamphlets, Kertbeny faded from the scene. In 1880, he contributed a chapter on homosexuality to Gustav Jäger's book *Discovery of the Soul*, but Jäger's publisher decided it was too controversial and omitted it. Nevertheless, Jäger used Kertbeny's terminology elsewhere in the book.

The German sex researcher Richard von Krafft-Ebing, in his *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), borrowed the terms homosexual and heterosexual from Jäger's book. Krafft-Ebing's work was so influential that these became the standard terms for differences in sexual orientation, superseding Ulrichs' word *Urning*. Kertbeny did not live to see the wide acceptance of his terminology or his ideas. He died in Budapest in 1882 at age 58.

His gravesite was traced in 2001 by sociologist Judit Takács who conducted extensive research on his life. It is located in Kerepesi Cemetery in Budapest, the final resting place of numerous prominent Hungarians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The gay community set a new tombstone on it, and since 2002 it has been a recurring event at Hungarian gay festivals to place a wreath at his grave.



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Future Speakers



June 7:

Sarah Brown-Wessling

2010 National Teacher of the Year

Saturday, July 13:

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Donor-Member Summer Party

Home of John Schmacker

August 2:

Daniel Zinnel

C.E.O. Proteus

15th Annual

2024

GALA

BENEFITING: **oneiowa**

June 14
Vibrant
Music Hall

PRIDEFEST FUNDRAISER

Friday,
May 10th

6:00PM



The Garden
Restaurant and
Show Lounge

the Capital City Pride board gets a **DRAG MAKEOVER**

Get ready to unleash your inner diva and join us for an evening of empowerment, expression, and unapologetic fabulousness at Capital City Pride's Board of Directors Drag Makeover event!

Prepare to witness the stunning metamorphosis of our board members as they trade in their business attire for sequins, feathers, and fierce makeup, all in the name of LGBTQ+ pride! Experience the magic of drag as our board members step into the spotlight and undergo a glamorous makeover by seasoned drag performers. From bold makeup to fabulous costume selections, you'll witness firsthand the artistry and creativity that goes into crafting the perfect drag persona. Don't miss your chance to see Capital City Pride's board members like never before as they sashay, shante, and slay their way into the spotlight!



One Iowa

May Speakers



Courtney Reyes (she/her) is a stay-at-home mom turned executive director. After getting a degree from Iowa State in 2006, Courtney knew she would end up in a helping profession. Following graduation, she worked in a substance abuse treatment facility serving women and their children. As soon as Courtney began her work as office assistant at One Iowa, she started to take on new challenges and leadership, moving up in the organization and earning the role of Executive Director in 2019. Courtney’s leadership style is focused on empowering and caring for her team to be their very best. She wears her heart on her sleeve and leads with a motto of “I cry at work.” This passion paired with a drive to make actual change for LGBTQ Iowans throughout the state and her ability to connect with people on a real level make her a highly effective advocate and leader.



Max Mowitz (he/him; they/them) is Program Director at One Iowa, overseeing organizational programming, direct service, and community education. Max has been active in LGBTQ advocacy work since coming out in high school, focusing on comprehensive LGBTQ education to the broader community as a component of LGBTQ liberation. Max is a certified Community Health Worker and specializes in topics related to the Trans and Nonbinary community, LGBTQ birth work, LGBTQ-inclusive healthcare, and mental health. Max also is a board member for Iowa Trans Mutual Aid Fund. Max is passionate about justice and the liberation of all marginalized peoples.

Lavender Legal Center Seeks Board Member from Des Moines Area

by Kendra Weston, Executive Director Lavender Legal



Lavender Legal Center



Lavender Legal Center provides direct representation, advocacy, and referrals, with a priority for serving those with low income and our LGBTQ+ youth. Poverty is an enormous barrier to receiving legal services and related advocacy. LGBTQ+ people in poverty lack resources and power, which puts them at a perpetual disadvantage to living safe and healthy lives. It is well-documented that this community is disproportionately low-income and at a greater disadvantage for receiving legal services and other advocacy. Low-income LGBTQ+ people are affected by the same impacts that all low-income people face; however, with multiple intersections and poverty, civil legal needs are made worse.

As LGBTQ+ people continue to experience disproportionate rates of poverty and violence, Lavender works to address the root causes of these issues through compassionate legal representation. Lavender’s experience has shown us that even LGBTQ+ people with financial means shy away from seeking legal services out of fear for how they will be treated. Lavender provides a safe space for everyone in our community to access the legal system, a system which can either be a barrier or the key to living a safe and healthy life.

Lavender’s Executive Director, Kendra Weston, spoke to FFBC in August 2023. They were overwhelmed by the group’s compassion and commitment to the LGBTQ+ community. **Lavender has at least one board position opening up July 1.** We currently only have one board member from the Des Moines area. We would love to diversify the geographic location of our board members to better reflect who we serve (about 1/3 of our clients reside in Polk County). Being a virtual organization, this lends us the opportunity to have members from across Iowa represented. Board members need to be able to commit a minimum of 1 1/2 hours per month for meetings. Board members also help fundraise on behalf of Lavender, either directly or indirectly. We are also looking for members with strong ties to the LGBTQ+ community who can bring both personal experience and knowledge of the community in order to enhance Lavender’s services.

If you are interested in a board member position, please contact Kendra Weston at kendra@lavenderlegal.org. Thank you!

Melissa O'Neil Addresses First Friday Breakfast Club

by Gary Moore

First Friday Breakfast Club continued its streak of dynamic and influential speakers with **Melissa O'Neil** who was introduced by FFBC Board member Deb Madison-Levi. It did not take long to see what made Melissa a great athlete and later basketball coach. She obviously has done the work to understand human motivation and to lay out a well-thought-through plan that can lead whatever team she is working for. Today, that is the Central Iowa Shelter and Services (C.I.S.S.).

What drives her: "When I was a young student-athlete in eastern Iowa, I grew up watching the University of Iowa Women's basketball program. By the time I was in sixth grade, I made the decision I wanted to become a college women's basketball coach. While pursuing my dream, I quickly realized it wasn't the game that drew me to the hardwood, it was about finding and helping student-athletes from all across the country reach their dreams, developing young women as leaders, and about serving others."

C.I.S.S. operates out of a 42,000-square-foot facility that serves more than 5,000 individuals each year, offering beds, hot meals, clothing, food, and case-management services to its clients. Melissa is dedicating her life to those in need and encouraging others to do the same.

Not familiar with Central Iowa Shelter and Services? Here are the facts: C.I.S.S. has...150 beds, 138 in the shelter, four job training programs: farm, kitchen, maintenance, janitorial, 20 meal sites to serve in food insecure areas, 85 regular employees. At C.I.S.S., clients learn skills like selling lettuce to local restaurants and how to grow food for their own kitchen.

Her recurring theme for C.I.S.S. is "Light up Des Moines." Unable to be approved for a beacon of light emanating from the C.I.S.S. Campus, Melissa is challenging Des Moines to put the light on the talents and promise of those who find themselves homeless and food security challenged. "You will notice the light on in the greenhouse that now houses one of the inventive programs she has helped establish at C.I.S.S. And so for some people that drive down MLK, you may see a giant 3,600 square foot greenhouse in our backyard. It's our first attempt at lighting up Des Moines. If the lights are out, it is because I got that notice that a homeless person has been lost, we'll just turn the lights off. There's a stark reminder that we have got to do better.

"It all started because of the number of students that we have in our school system experiencing homelessness, and it's hidden. There are over a 1,000 students just in Des Moines public schools that are couch surfing because they are in lifestyles and environments where families and sleeping on couches is their only option. We taught our children that mobility and living out of a backpack is a lifestyle in a way of going about it; all of a sudden, we started to see more and more and more young adults living out of their backpacks.

"But our hope is actually to stop it at the door to reduce the number of people that are coming to our urban core seeking emergency shelter in supportive services. We're working now to help them in their hometown, where they have a social network, where they have community that's built and honestly where they want to be. So during that cold snap that we had, we literally had individuals who were living in their cars in rural Iowa, living in places not meant for habitation."

Melissa has become the "go-to person" on any and all issues regarding homeless policy. Her inventiveness in programming and cutting-edge approaches to problem-solving is getting noticed as well as interagency planning. As is usual with FFBC speakers, it is difficult to convey how well Melissa's address was received by all present, but you can listen to her presentation through FFBC's website. It would be time well spent. For this listener, one of the first things to pop into mind, "Wow, what a governor she would make."



Melissa O'Neil, CEO Central Iowa Shelter & Services

Deb Madison-Levi, Speaker Intro

April Speaker





Board Member, Phil Williams, represents FFBC at Pride Night at the Iowa Wild game on March 22 and also at the annual Trans Lives Festival on March 30.

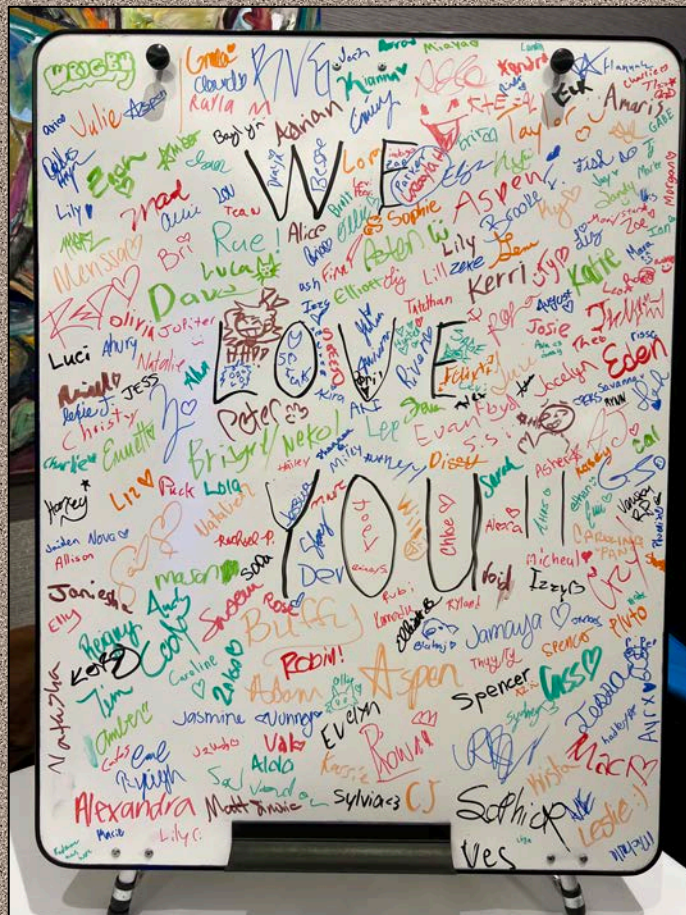
Central Iowa Trans Lives Festival





The Annual Governor's Conference ON LGBTQ YOUTH

Board Member, **Gene Larson**, and **David Phelps** represent FFBC to promote LGBTQ+ scholarships at the Iowa Safe Schools Governor's Conference on LGBTQ Youth on April 5.



Reynolds Continues to Wage War On Civil and Human Rights

by Supervisor Matt McCoy
Polk County, 1st District



Last month, Governor Reynolds signed a bill into law eliminating the requirement which mandates a balance of men and women on state and local boards and commissions. The gender balance rule will be repealed effective July 1, 2024. This was a well adopted principle in order to ensure equity and allow women a voice at the table. It's ironic that the first woman governor of the State of Iowa pushed this law. Additionally, at the time of this writing, the governor has neutered the Iowa Civil Rights Commission which hears cases about discrimination in housing, employment, and other areas under the office of Civil Rights. The bill would reduce the Commission membership from seven to five. Its members are appointed by the governor and essentially will dissolve the Civil Rights Commission as an independent quasi-government legal authority. The independence of the commission will now be subject to the appointment of a director who is a political appointee of the governor and the members are simply advisory to the director in their capacity.

Another change impacting minority groups is that the Commission on the Status of African Americans, Asian & Pacific Islanders, Persons with Disabilities, the Status of Women, Native American Affairs & Latino Affairs are all being transferred for their commission's duties to the

Human Rights Board which will be reduced in size. This move will dilute and minimize the important that these commissions have done for these marginalized groups.

The final bill headed to the governor's desk will eliminate 67 boards and commissions, merging a number of others and reducing membership in many of the boards. When Iowans' civil and human rights are violated in the future, it will become more difficult for marginalized Iowans to receive justice. The governor is doing everything she can to continue to marginalize people of color, women, gays, and those with disabilities, along with her efforts to dismantle public education, we will soon be erased from Iowa's history. The attack on diversity, equity, and inclusion is a stunning reversal of the progress that has been made in human and civil rights over the past couple of decades.

I've watched over the years since Republicans gained full control of state government that many of the laws which I championed are simply getting reversed. Make no mistake—the pendulum swings hard and the actions that the governor is taking are being implemented in Republican states across the nation and are part of a systematic and deliberate effort to dismantle civil and human rights. Their ultimate objective is to erase diversity and eliminate opportunity for those who are not white men.

Exchange
May

- 5/9 Cooking with Cadence 6-7:30
18 & Under
- 5/14 & 28 trans non-binary Youth Group
18 & Under
- 5/21 Rolling into Pride 6-8pm
Skateland North
- 5/24 Gay-me Night 6-8pm
ALL Welcome
- 5/31 Pride Spaghetti Dinner 6-8pm

100 E Euclid Ave Suite 107

SAND VOLLEYBALL

Monday Nights
6-10pm
May 6 - June 24
Campbell Recreation Area
Teams and free agents
welcome!
Rec and Competitive
Leagues - Register link in
Bio!

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OF CENTRAL IOWA

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Late Night with the Devil

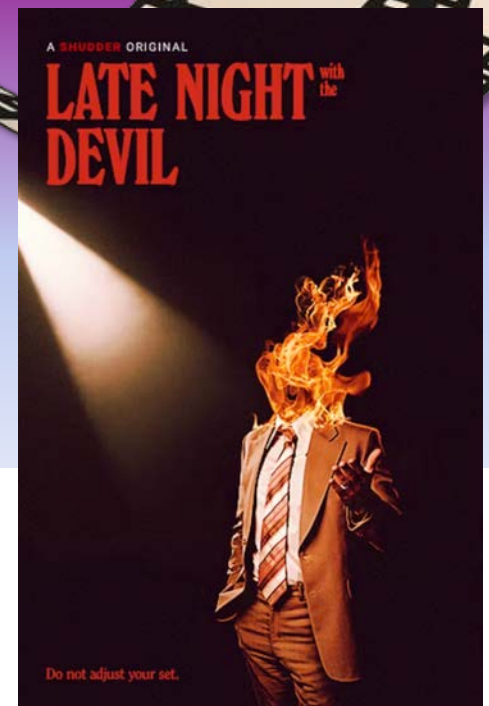
A Movie Review by Mark Turnage

A film's format is its own unique structure and "voice," responsible for aiding character and plot development, defining atmosphere through its editing and composition, and enticing viewers to enter its world. With directors Colin and Cameron Caines' horror film *Late Night with the Devil*, format becomes both function and feature in expanding beyond the often-tired exorcism/possession genre. Despite taking some liberties with the "found footage" format and its suspension of disbelief, a combination of engaging lead performances and capturing the "kitsch" of a 1970s talk show transform a lo-fi setup into a horror film to remember.

A short black-and-white expository documentary opens the film: in the late 1970s, Jack Delroy (David Dastmalchian) and his talk show *Night Owls* are famous late-night rivals to Johnny Carson. Part of Delroy's fame is implied to be the result of his visits to "The Grove," a (literally and figuratively) shady forest camp for the media industry's rich and powerful. After his wife passes from terminal cancer, a grieving Delroy temporarily stops production on *Night Owls*. When he returns to TV, Delroy brings on edgier guests and slimier topics for bigger Nielsen ratings, risking the format and prestige of his show for greater recognition. It isn't enough to beat Carson's viewing numbers, and desperate for a win, Delroy and his producer set up a live TV special—the

guest star a girl claiming to be possessed by a demon. On Halloween night 1977, Jack hosts the live special with his sidekick announcer Gus (Rhys Auteri), featuring medium Christou (Fayssal Bazzi); ex-magician and skeptic Carmichael (Ian Bliss); parapsychologist June Ross-Mitchell (Laura Gordon); and Lilly (Ingrid Torelli), June's patient and teenage survivor of a bloody cult ritual. The documentary segment ends with a "following footage warning" from what aired that night, and that its contents "shocked the nation." Then the talk show begins.

Late Night uses the talk show format to maximum effect: Delroy pounces on his guest's (and Gus') awkward stumbles for laughs while also keeping his attitude folksy and friendly with his audience, decked out immaculately in late 1970s fashion. Delroy sails through and cuts early to commercial breaks to manage dramatic pacing. Backstage, Delroy's producer ratchets up the pressure for him to manage an unhinged guest star or perform under peril in split-screen, black-and-white interludes that pull focus and build up to the film's scary moments. The guests are at each other's throats, and the audience is clueless yet can't look away. *Late Night* prefers psychological horror to jump-scares: that "can't look away" chaos of old-school live TV and Delroy's anxiety for ratings pushing him to increasingly endanger his guests and audience



despite his glib reassurances to the contrary. The movie audience having this dramatic irony increases the level of suspense and uncertainty for what might come next, as does Dastmalchian's palpable sense of desperation and barely-kept-together stress.

When the evil entity reveals itself, it's heavily (almost comedically) downplayed—cast by the guests as "a performance"; "a minor devil and not THE devil," and that "they [demons] thrive on our confusion." But when Delroy becomes a believer in what he's peddling onstage, reality breaks down into a Lynchian dreamscape, and the TV show/documentary format is no more. Although it's technically "breaking the rules," the surreal conclusion works as both a thematic shift and a reckoning: *Late Night with the Devil* argues the real villain is not a/the Devil, but those who give exposure and an audience to someone or something dangerous. See it in theaters, on the Shudder app, or on Amazon Prime.



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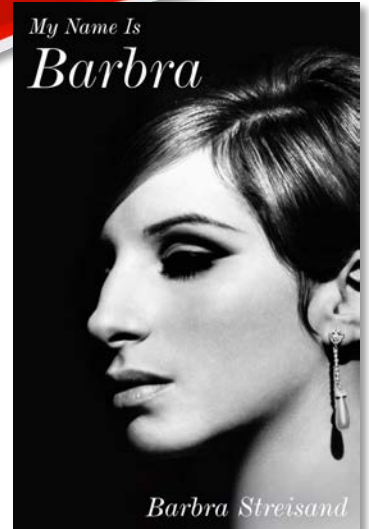
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First Friday Breakfast Club
P.O. Box 41611
Des Moines, IA 50311
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My Name is Barbra

By Barbra Streisand

**Book
Review**
by Steve Person



Before Taylor Swift, before Beyonce, before Lady Gaga, before Adele, before any of the big-name singers, there was Barbra Streisand. She was anointed “Super Star” for a reason. She’s mastered it all: stage acting, movie stardom, night club appearances, television specials, recordings, writing, directing, and producing. She had the natural gift of a voice that has never been equaled. Her 2023 memoir was ten years in the making. It is a mostly chronological retelling of her life experiences with a few off ramps along the way.

Perhaps the greatest disappointment of her life was not getting to know her father. He died when Barbra was just fifteen months old. “This book is dedicated to the father I never knew...and the mother I did.” Eventually her mother remarried, and Barbra and her stepfather mutually disliked each other. Her mother, though not cruel, rarely encouraged her and frequently downplayed her successes. Even well into adulthood, Barbra would be let down when her mother would not show up on her opening nights or find some excuse not to attend functions.

I was fourteen years old when I first saw Barbra on television. She appeared on the short-lived Judy Garland television program in the early 1960s. She and Judy sang “Happy Days Are Here Again,” the most stirring rendition of that song ever recorded, I think. These two were “belters” of musicals and could command a theater’s audience without the help of microphones. Perhaps it was a bit of futurism since Judy starred in the 1954 remake of *A Star Is Born* and Barbra starred in it for the third filming in 1974.

Barbra didn’t especially enjoy doing long-run Broadway shows. Her featured role in 1962’s *I Can Get It for You Wholesale* earned her a Tony nomination for her role as Miss Marmelstein. Ultimately, she didn’t win, and then went on to star in *Funny Girl* opposite Sydney Chaplin. He wasn’t the easiest leading man to play to, and she was relieved when she could finally leave the show.

Soon, she was off to Hollywood for the film version of *Funny Girl* opposite Omar Sharif. She earned an Oscar for her portrayal of Fanny Brice in an unusual tie for Best Actress along with Katharine Hepburn. Her second film had her totally miscast as Dolly Levi in the film version of *Hello, Dolly!* She tried her best to convince the producer of that movie to use Carol Channing who created the role on Broadway. He would have none of it, so she reluctantly did the part. Walter Matthau and she didn’t have the best on-screen chemistry, and the movie suffered.

In her third film, *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*, she loved wearing the costumes designed by Cecil Beaton. The dinner scene filmed in the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, England, oozed with sexual appeal with Barbra wearing a lowcut white early nineteenth century gown and headdress to the strain of “Love with All the Trimmings.”

Barbra chronicles all the men in her private life including Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, *Miami Vice* heartthrob Don Johnson, her first husband Eliot Gould, her second and current husband James Brolin, and many others. One of her most enduring friendships was with President Clinton’s mother, Virginia. She was the kind of mother she would like to have had.

The most telling sentence in this book of 966 pages includes, “And when you have the power, it’s lovely to give it away...and let others feel powerful too.”

Some of her interesting observations are about projects that were discussed but never got off the ground. One of them was a remake of the 1962 film, *Gypsy*. Barbra didn’t like that film at all, and she would have loved to play Mama Rose. It would have been an original interpretation, but Rosalind Russell would be hard to beat.

