

Anchor Health


VOL 2

2024

Pride Zine!



Presents
**QUEER JOY
OR BUST!**



The sharing of joy,
whether physical, emotional,
psychic, or intellectual, forms a
bridge between the sharers which
can be the basis for understanding
much of what is not shared
between them, and lessens the
threat of their difference.

- Audre Lorde

A B O U T

Anchor Health

Anchor Health is Connecticut's leading health center for the LGBTQ community. We provide the most groundbreaking, radically inclusive, gender-affirming, and sex-positive care possible in Connecticut and beyond. Founded in 2016, Anchor Health currently serves over 9,700 patients, more than half transgender and gender diverse, across full-service health centers in Hamden and Stamford.

Our approach to care understands how intersecting systems of oppression affect our patients' health and well-being. We offer primary care, gender-affirming medicine, HIV services, sexual health care, psychiatry, and more. Dedicated case managers help address barriers to care faced by patients. Our in-house pharmacy quickly and conveniently provides low-cost prescriptions.

Anchor Health continuously works to advance health equity for LGBTQ people through advocacy, community-building, education, and research.

We are health care for queer people by queer people!

2023

By the


NUMBERS

Anchor Health remains deeply committed to our mission of embracing and promoting the health and well-being of queer, trans, and gender diverse people. We appreciate the ongoing support that allows us to continue our life-saving work.

2,300 PATIENTS! AND 9,033 PATIENT VISITS!	 39,075 PRESCRIPTIONS *filled!*	5,459 e HIV e AND e STI e TESTS
281 MPOX VACCINES 454 COVID-19 VACCINES	646 MENTAL HEALTH requests =  !	3 NAME AND 4 GENDER MARKER 8 changes!



Thank you for being a part of our impact!



Queer Joy or BUST!

It's a rough time for queer and trans folks across the country. As we experience an unprecedented rise in state-sanctioned discrimination and violence against our communities, our joy is more important than ever.

Our 2023 Pride theme, "Queer Joy or Bust," centered on joy as a fundamental right and essential part of queer and trans existence. It challenged the idea that our lives are solely defined by struggles, pain, or trauma. Queer Joy or Bust was a call to action, spotlighting our determination to create a future where queer joy is celebrated and embraced without reservation.

Queer joy is an act of resistance in a society bent on our silence and erasure. It's a powerful and important tool. Radical queer happiness is a source of strength, resilience, and community.

Sexy, Queer, & Joyful

By Kim Adamski



Queer people are often left out of mainstream sex ed convos. Let's go through some of the basics of having safer queer sex!

For many people, sexual pleasure is a joyful part of life. Over 99% of Americans have sex at some point in their lives, and for most, it can be quite enjoyable. While information on safer sex is fairly readily available, information on sexual pleasure is harder to come by. If you're queer, there's even less information available. Anyone choosing to have sex should feel empowered to take control of their pleasure and cultivate a sex life that brings them joy.

One of the best things you can do to figure out what you like is to masturbate. Exploring your sexual likes and dislikes on your own will help you communicate them to your partner(s). Touching yourself without a direct goal beyond exploration can help you discover new things about yourself. Plus, masturbation is good for you! It relieves stress and tension, and for those of us who menstruate, it can alleviate cramps, too.

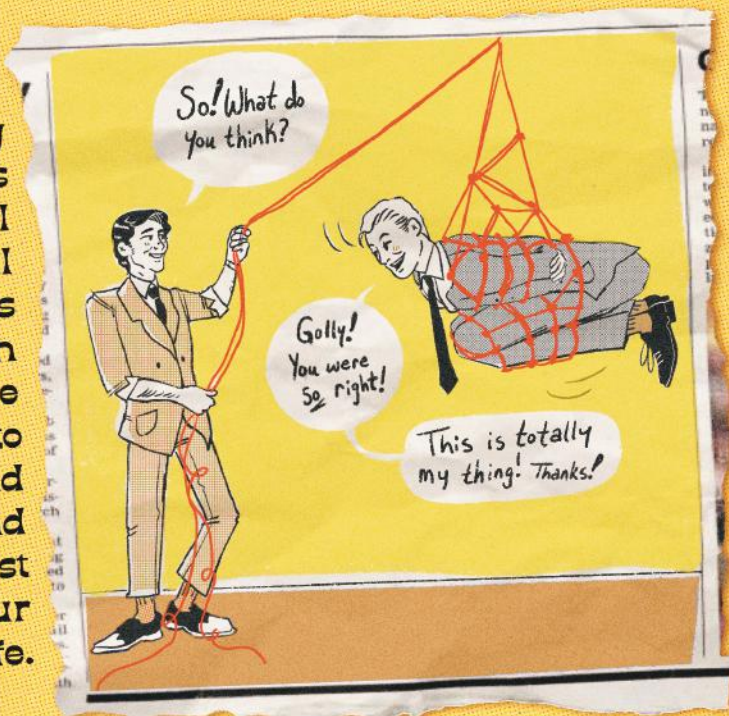
When you're with a partner, the best advice I can give is to communicate. Start with consent. **Consent isn't just a yes/no question.** It should be an exploration of what each partner is interested in doing and figuring out what works for all involved. For example, maybe you want to go down on a partner; this gives them an opportunity to tell you how they like it. On the other hand, maybe your partner wants to use a dildo, but you're not into that. You might suggest a vibrator instead. Consent means setting boundaries and respecting others' boundaries. The best sex is when everyone can express their desires, be heard, and negotiate a satisfying encounter.

Communication and consent should also be ongoing. It isn't one-and-done. Want to change positions? Ask if your partner is cool with that! Decided you prefer to use a condom? Let your partner know.

You can renegotiate boundaries or withdraw consent at any time.

A cool thing about queer sex is it can get really creative! While many of us are familiar with and enjoy oral and anal sex, those are a small subset of sexual activities. Some folks enjoy mutual masturbation; others just like to make out and dry hump. Another way to express sexuality is through kink – a consensual, "nontraditional" sexual taste or behavior. Common kinks include group sex, BDSM, and voyeurism. Almost anything can be a kink, though. Some people are turned on by monsters, tickling, or knee socks. As long as all involved consent, there's no shame in it!

Exploring your less conventional sexual interests is an awesome way to expand and add interest to your sex life.

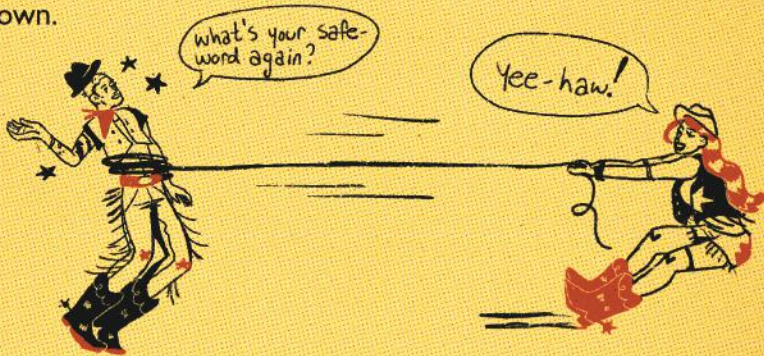


All that being said, it's important to take care of your sexual health through routine testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and finding safer sex methods that work for you. These can include using condoms and other barrier methods, taking PrEP to reduce your chances of getting HIV, and using lube. If you're having any kind of sex that is new to you, research safety beforehand.

For example, anal sex requires a lot more lube than vaginal. And yes, you can get STIs from oral sex! Many people have spotty knowledge about safety for queer sex, so get informed. When you practice safer sex, it can reduce worries about risks and allow you to enjoy the moment fully.



Safety is just as essential when it comes to kink. Getting hurt or hurting your partner puts a damper on the fun, to say the least. Want to try rope? Learn how to tie safely, preferably from a seasoned rope kinkster. Having a threesome? Talk about testing, safer sex methods, and boundaries before getting down.



Sexual pleasure is one of the biggest reasons people have sex, and there are so many ways to increase your enjoyment of sex exponentially. If you enjoy getting it on, take some time to think about what I've said, get creative, and learn what works for you. Trust me, it's worth the effort.

Kim Adamski is a Hartford-based professional sex educator. She's been talking about sex with all kinds of audiences for over 10 years, and it's her goal to help as many people as possible have safer, better sex. Her website is kimadamskieducator.wordpress.com.

TO ME, QUEER JOY IS MANY DIFFERENT THINGS.

It's the fact I'll be living to 18 when I didn't think I'd live past 13. It's finally being on testosterone. It's the fact that instead of flinching when I go out, I am ready to fight for myself and my siblings, who are also trans. It's the fact that I haven't harmed myself in years, and I'm happy to fight for my life and what I believe in. It's feeling safe with my friends. It's doing anything to secure my future.

ANDREW

GETTING MY FIRST BINDER AND FEELING LIKE MYSELF

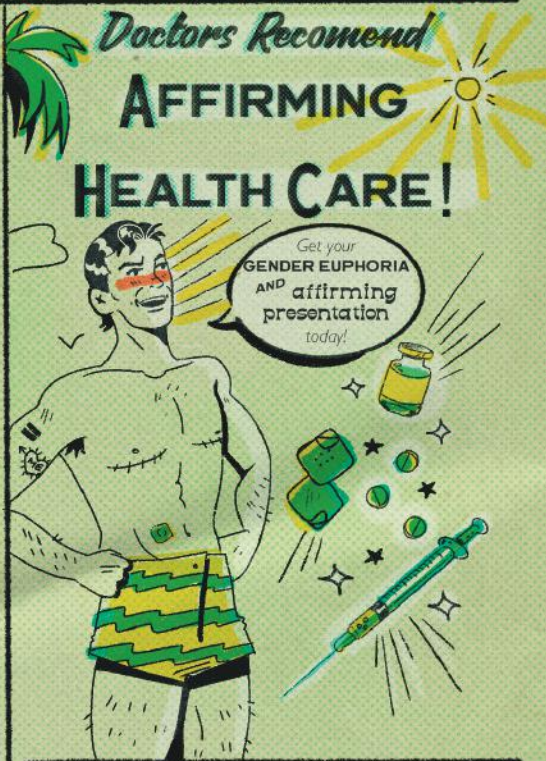


TRANS JOY ...



is finally seeing a doctor who I don't have to educate about my identity and doesn't blame everything on my hormones. Like, I'm sorry, but I don't think estrogen is making my ankle hurt?

priceless



AFTER EVERYTHING

After the doctors. After the questions. After the work. I am epitomizing joy through my transness. When all my effort pays off. And I am here. July 19th, 2023 at 12:45 pm. My journey will not begin, it will continue. My trans joy is found in myself, amplified by HRT. Because I did it. For me. I'm done.

FINN

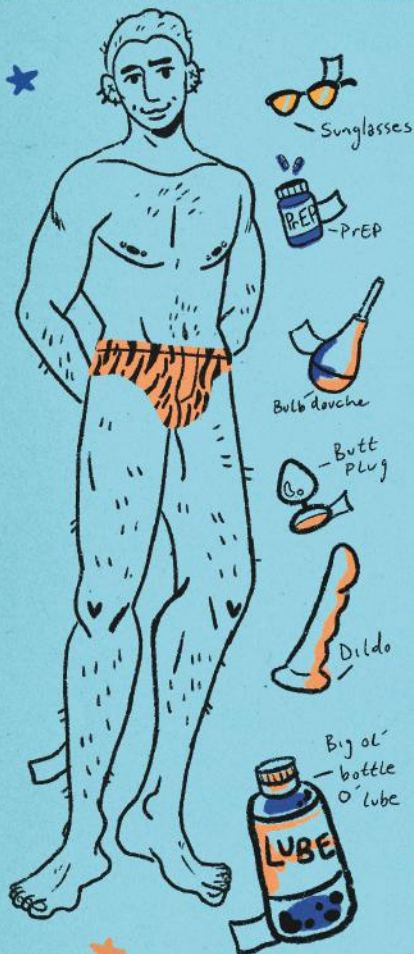
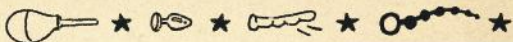
✱ INHALE & EXHALE ✱

KEEP GOING

CINDY

PLEASURE-MAXING: GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR BOTTOMING EXPERIENCE

BY JOSEPH CANARIE, MD, AAHIVS ★



For centuries, queer people have faced marginalization because of who we have sex with and how we have sex. Bottoming, or receiving penetration, is particularly stigmatized (“bottom-shaming”) due to misogyny and how the patriarchy shames people who receive sex. Bottom-shaming happens outside of and within our communities, and it’s gross either way. We need to break free of these toxic notions. Queer people coming together to pursue pleasure and intimacy is a radical act of resilience.

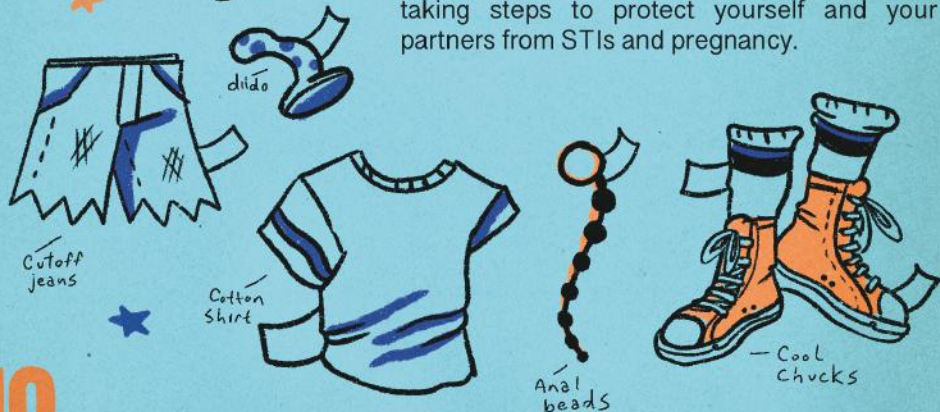
Anyone can enjoy bottoming, and we created this guide to help you get the most out of your experience. Our pleasure is our liberation.



CONSENT AND SAFER SEX

Consent is an agreement between you and your sexual partners that means you recognize and respect one another’s boundaries. It’s necessary to talk about consent before, during, and after sex. Consenting and asking for consent means everyone is clear about their wants and needs. Boundaries can change over time, so make sure to revisit them.

You should also discuss sexual health with your partners beforehand. Safer sex means taking steps to protect yourself and your partners from STIs and pregnancy.



THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO MAKE SEX SAFER, INCLUDING :

- ★ Using a barrier like internal/external condoms, dental dams, and finger cots.
- ★ Using effective birth control if you or your partner has a uterus and have vaginal/front sex. There are several different methods of birth control – many estrogen-free – including pills, rings, patches, implants, and IUDs.
- ★ Getting tested for STIs regularly.
- ★ Taking PrEP, a medication that reduces your chances of getting HIV. It's safe, effective, and available with little to no out-of-pocket costs. You can take PrEP as **daily pills, on-demand pills, or long-acting injectables.**
- ★ Seeking PEP if you had unprotected sex with someone who may have HIV or whose status you don't know. PEP is emergency medicine to prevent HIV after a possible exposure. You must take PEP within 3 days of exposure and as soon as possible.
- ★ Taking doxyPEP, antibiotic medication taken after sex to reduce the risk of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis.
- ★ Sticking to sex that doesn't spread STIs like **mutual masturbation and dry humping.**

Anchor Health is available to provide stress-free and sex-positive STI testing and sexual health care. To get tested, visit anchorhealthct.org.

Whatever you and your partners decide to do, remember that you have control over your sexual health!

ANAL BOTTOMING PREP

The most important part of preparing for anal bottoming is learning your body. It's definitely helpful to maintain a healthy, balanced diet, but knowing how your body responds to different meals and what gets your gut going makes a world of difference. Generally, fiber is your ride-or-die, so eat lots of fruits, veggies, and whole grains. You can also take supplements – we love psyllium fiber.

Don't starve yourself on the day of. It's bad for your health and ineffective. Contents stored in the colon are from 24-48 hours ago. Some individuals may want to avoid caffeine, foods high in fiber, spicy foods, and foods they are sensitive to, such as gluten, fructose, and lactose. Low-fat animal proteins like lean chicken and low-fiber carbs like potatoes are usually safe bets.

It's totally normal to worry about running into poop during butt stuff. Sometimes it happens! There's no reason to feel embarrassed or ashamed. Just make sure to wash off any body parts that touch poop with soap and water. Some people douche to help prevent this. Douching is a cleansing process in which you squirt water in your butt to wash away any leftover poop.

For many people, eating a healthy diet and having regular bowel movements is all that's needed to prepare for bottoming. Douching isn't necessary for a pleasurable bottoming experience. The small amount of research available suggests that douching may increase the risk of STI and HIV transmission.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO DOUCHE, FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO ENSURE YOU DO IT AS SAFELY AS POSSIBLE:

- ★ You can use a device specifically for anal douching (sometimes called a "bulb") or an empty enema bottle (dump out the saline solution first).
- ★ Fill the douche with **4-6 oz max** of cool tap water.
- ★ Unless you're fisting, don't clean past the rectum.
- ★ Put lube on the nozzle before you insert it, relax your hole, and go gently with low water pressure.
Douching shouldn't hurt!
- ★ Don't repeat the process more than **2-3 times** – the goal isn't crystal clear water.



Some people use an over-the-counter diarrhea medication like Imodium (loperamide) to slow down their bowels before bottoming. **Proceed with caution if you do this because there isn't much research on the effects of this.** Talk to your health care provider if you become constipated.



What's up Doc?





★ **Don't be afraid to sexperiment.**

Try out some different positions. Finding one that works for you is entirely personal, but cowboy – the top lies on their back and the bottom kneels on top, facing forward – allows the bottom to control the speed and depth of penetration. **Yeehaw!**

★ **No one likes a selfish top.**

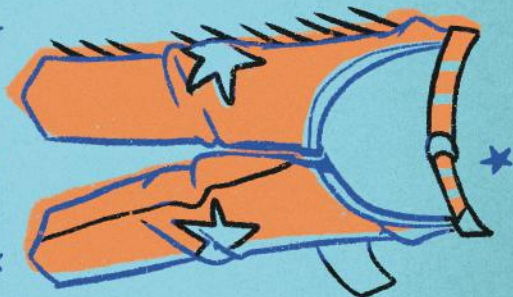
Make sure you're aroused, too. Masturbating or a reach-around from your partner can make bottoming more enjoyable.

★ **Use plenty of lube.**

Seriously – we cannot stress this enough.

★ **If you use poppers, make sure you – safely – feel the RUSH.**

Some people inhale poppers (alkyl nitrate) during sex to enhance the experience by relaxing their muscles. Poppers also give you a brief, mood-enhancing high. We don't recommend using poppers as they carry health risks. There's also a lack of research on their long-term effects. If you do use poppers, start slow. Never taste or swallow the liquid – only inhale. **Be wary of how poppers interact with your medications.** Never combine poppers with erectile dysfunction medications because this can cause strokes, heart attacks, or death.



Bottoming should be a fun and pleasurable experience for you, but it can certainly take time and practice to get there. Try not to stress and just enjoy the ride. ;)

Queer joy is AUTHENTICITY & VISIBILITY

Queer joy is accepting myself despite a world that would have me sit in my dysphoria. It is refusing to stay stuck in a state of self-hate and self-destructive behaviors when the existence of trans people has historically been defined as a sickness. It is recognizing self-love and community as the cure. It's defining what masculinity means to be as an individual, not just as a man. Queer joy is existing and loving out of spite. Queer joy is taking part in the act of creation. – Theo

CONFUSING PEOPLE WITH MY ANDROGYNY – Simon

BREAKING AWAY FROM WHAT'S "NORMAL" – Tate

IT'S WEARING MY FAVORITE BIKINI TO THE BEACH – Phil

Queer joy is sharing clothes with a partner. It's having so many pins you need new jackets. It's feeling safe enough to be serious and silly and yourself. It's smiling at every rainbow crosswalk and cloud. It's existing in the most colorful grey. It's learning to love all past and present versions of yourself. – Rzuch

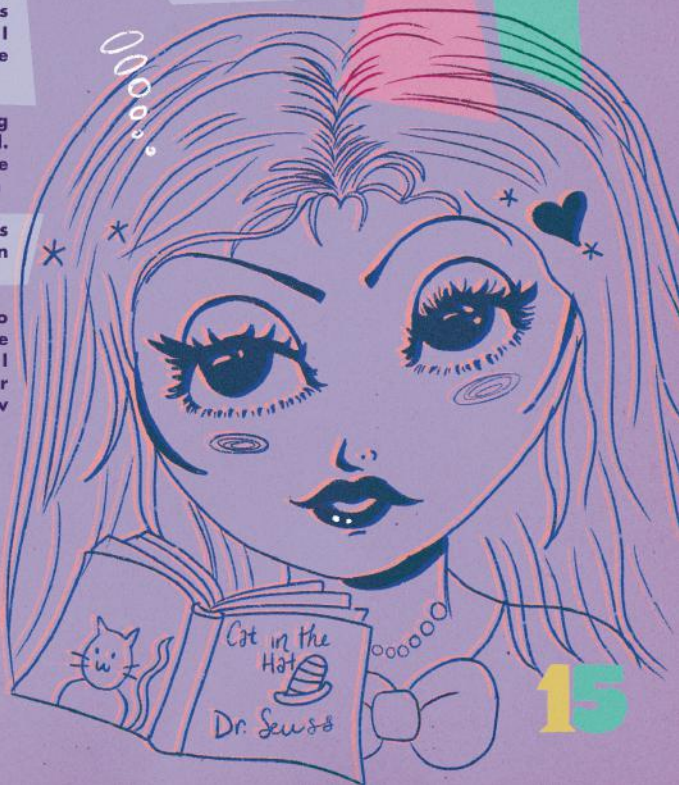
TO EXIST UNAPOLOGETICALLY; TAKE UP SPACE IN THE WORLD – Liz

Freedom to express my heart and my truth with the world. "Love is love" being so openly accepted in this day and age is a gift countless generations couldn't even imagine. I live bravely for those who came before. – Julianna

Learning to love yourself. Learning your needs and desires are valid. Realizing the world is waiting to love you as you love yourself. – Christian

Queer joy after living 60 years is telling my truth and living an authentic life! – Susan

Queer joy means being allowed to be myself after growing up in the '70s being made to feel "less than." I have fought for our cause for decades and am proud we are now an accepted community. – David



Queer joy is

education

Queer joy means creating safe spaces in my school and encouraging students to embrace who they are. – Lisa

Being the cool, visibly butch teacher for my middle schoolers and showing that there are other people like them. – Emily

Always using the name and pronouns my students ask me to use. – Liz

Listening to my students when they tell me who they are

Creating safe spaces. Teaching young children how to appreciate themselves and one another for the things that make them uniquely themselves. Teaching them that nothing is inherently a boy or a girl trait, skill, look/appearance, toy, clothing item, style, etc. Teaching them we are all humans and not referring to them as "boys and girls" but as "students," "preschoolers," and "humans." Teaching them to love everyone and that there's never too much love in our hearts or the world. – Wendy

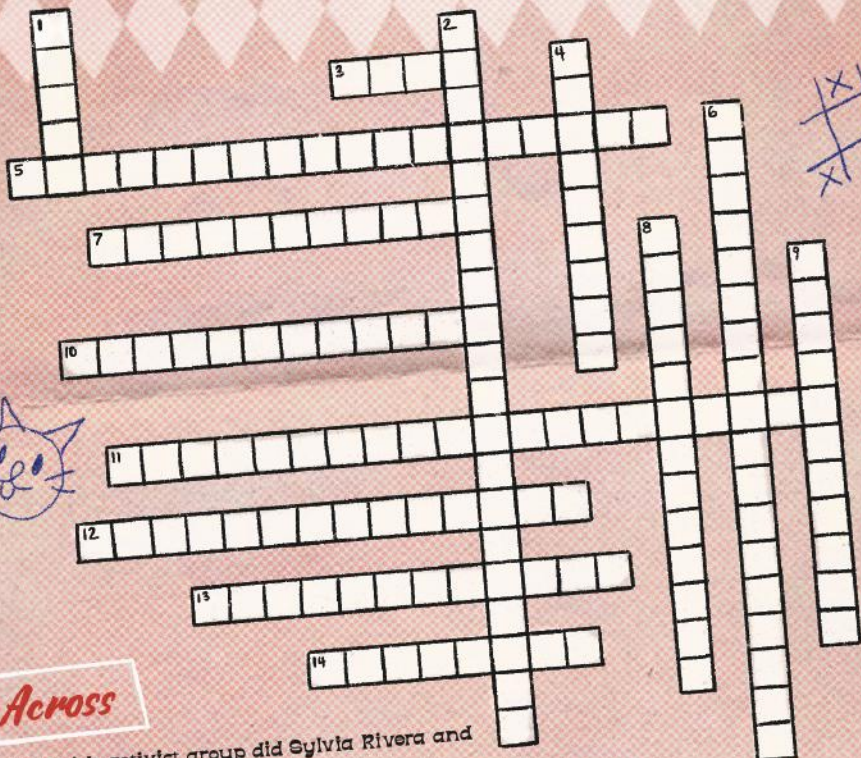
Reading banned books!



SEEING QUEER STUDENTS THRIVE!!!
-EMILY



Queer history Crossword



Across

3. Which activist group did Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson lead?
5. What was the first gay rights organization formed after the Stonewall Riots?
7. What does the "P" in Marsha P. Johnson's name stand for?
10. This host city of the 2016 Summer Olympics saw a record number of publicly out athletes.
11. In 1950, activist Harry Hay formed one of the first sustained gay rights groups in the U.S.
12. This documentary depicted New York City's ballroom scene in the mid-to-late 1980s.
13. This American teenager exploded into the spotlight when she was interviewed by Barbara Walters in 2007, becoming one of the youngest trans people to document her life publicly.
14. Often depicted androgynously, Hatshepsut was a ruler who assumed masculine attire, was represented as god and king, and wore a symbolic false beard. What nation did Hatshepsut lead in 1500 BCE?

Down

1. Which U.S. president signed a law banning discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in federal benefits?
2. What does the acronym TDOV stand for?
4. What does 2S stand for in LGBTQ2SIA?
6. How many soldiers in the American Civil War do historians estimate might be considered transmasculine or gender diverse?
8. In what U.S. state did the first legal same-sex marriage take place?
9. Who is the first openly gay Black man to be nominated and win in any lead acting category at the Primetime Emmys?

OPEN DAILY

YOU GOT THIS!

#17

BLACK KUIR JOY

By Andraya Yearwood

I knew that members of the queer community possessed different ways of speaking among ourselves, I just never had the knowledge or resources to name what I knew. When a professor at my university asked me if I would be willing to sit in a special topics course in language and literature, I immediately agreed. A month later, not only was I sitting in the class, but I was a registered student in a queer linguistics course. Merging my two personal and professional passions, queerness and language, I knew my dreams had been realized. Through an exploration of the intersection of language, gender, and sexuality, my academic world was introduced to the linguistic practices of marginalized and stigmatized speakers as I assessed the impacts of race, class, and ethnicity on language within queer communities in the United States. In just a few weeks of the semester starting, the imminent impressions that studying queer linguistics imposed on my personal and scholarly interests were more than apparent. It's only been pretty recently that I've found a love for learning, as well as the blending of both activism and education. I view queer linguistic resistance as intersectional Black Feminist resistance to systemic oppression, a type of intersectional resistance that decolonizes our linguistic access and resists the universal use of the dominant pejorative language. When queer people can learn about their history, their joy, their resilience, they arm themselves with the resources to (re)frame the interlinks between language, identity, and politics within queer communities. I've noticed the ways that I've located my own intersectional activism and queer self-identity in my academic career. A life of purposeful engagement with LGBTQIA+ activists of color to fight for their liberation and the liberation of so many others who share the same identities and experiences is the life that I intend to lead. As an African American trans woman, my lived experiences inform my passions and future aspirations at the intersection between foreign sociolinguistics and activism for my queer and gender expansive siblings. As I have endured various forms of discrimination and social ridicule just for existing as myself, the vitality of communal support and social uproar is not lost on me. Through developing a critical approach to perspectives within Black Feminist Theory, Queer of Color Critique, and language and power, my studies in gender and queer performativity are in direct correlation with my personal identity and lived experiences. By bridging the gap between the two departments, I will use sociocultural linguistics as community empowerment through which young Black femme-identified individuals can envision their roles in society.

This is my BLACK kuir joy.

Andraya Yearwood is a Nigerian-American transwoman passionate about linguistic anthropology, intersectional feminism, and trans liberation. Since becoming a national news story in high school as a trans athlete, Andraya has dedicated herself to fighting and advocating for queer youth in every aspect of her life.

Queer joy is family

Building a family of your choice – Mira and Emma

Queer joy is my children growing up in a world where they can be who they are without the worry of being hurt. – Ashley

To me, queer joy is having a mom and sister who love me and accept me for who I am. – Gaelyn

Ensuring that our children and family feel loved and safe no matter how they identify or who they love. They should feel more than just tolerated. We want them to feel appreciated and cherished for who they are.

– Joanna and Patrick

I support queer joy by showing up every day to love and affirm my daughter!! She is pure magic. – Jamie

Seeing my sibling smile because they feel safe and happy! – Lucy

Family made possible by love and science – Daniel

A home where my family never has to hide – May

Queer joy is my children trusting me, as a parent, to be who they are. To love who they choose without any fear of home. Home is always a safe space for them. I couldn't ask for more. – Dahlia



Resources

HEALTH CARE

Anchor Health

Location: Hamden and Stamford
Website: anchorhealthct.org

Apex Community Care

Location: Danbury
Website: apexcommunitycarect.org

Circle Care Center

Location: Norwalk and Glastonbury
Website: circlecarecenter.org

LGBTQIA-Responsive Services at Wheeler

Location: Bristol, Hartford, New Britain, Plainville, and Waterbury
Website: wheelerclinic.org

Middlesex Health's Center for Gender Medicine and Wellness

Location: Middletown
Website: middlesexhealth.org

Planned Parenthood

Location: Bridgeport, Danbury, Enfield, Hartford, Manchester, Meriden, New Haven, New London, Norwich, Stamford, Torrington, Waterbury, West Hartford, and Willimantic
Website: plannedparenthood.org

The Health Collective

Location: Hartford
Website: healthcollective.org

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

HIV/STI TESTING SERVICES

APNH: A Place to Nourish your Health

Location: New Haven
Website: apnh.org

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Mid Fairfield AIDS Project

Location: Norwalk
Website: mfap.org

Stamford CARES

Location: Stamford
Website: familycenters.org/Stamford-CARES

FERTILITY

Gay Parents To Be (Illuminate Fertility)

Location: Norwalk
Website: gayparentstobe.com

COMMUNITY CENTERS & PROGRAMMING

Bethel CT Pride

Location: Bethel
Website: bethelctpride.com

East Rock House

Location: New Haven
Website: eastrockhouse.com

Lighthouse (Kids in Crisis)

Location: Fairfield County
Website: kidsincrisis.org

Resources

New Haven Pride Center

Location: New Haven
Website: newhavenpridecenter.org

Our Trans Life

Location: Bridgeport
Website: ourtranslife.org

Out in the Corner

Location: Litchfield County
Website: outinthecorner.org

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

OutCT

Location: New London
Website: outct.org

PFLAG

Location: Enfield, Hartford,
Norwalk, Stamford, Tolland-
Mansfield, Waterbury
Website: pflag.org

Q Plus

Location: Hartford, Middletown,
New Haven, North Haven,
Portland, Southington, West
Hartford, and Wethersfield
Website: qplusct.org

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Queer Unity Empowerment Support Team (QUEST)

Location: Greater Waterbury
Website: questct.com

Trans Haven (PeerPride)

Location: New Haven, Hartford,
and more
Website: peerpride.com/transhaven

Triangle Community Center

Location: Norwalk
Website: ctpridecenter.org

SEX AND KINK

Debauchery CT

Instagram: [@debauchery.ct](https://www.instagram.com/debauchery.ct)

Queer Munch CT

Location: Central Connecticut
Instagram: [@queermunchct](https://www.instagram.com/queermunchct)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Sex Workers and Allies Network (SWAN)

Location: New Haven
Website: swanct.org

OLDER ADULTS

LGBTQ+ Moveable Senior Center (CT Healthy Living Collective)

Location: Greater Hartford
Website: [cthealthyliving.org/
explore-programs/lgbtq-moveable-
senior-center](http://cthealthyliving.org/explore-programs/lgbtq-moveable-senior-center)

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Tabletop
Gaming Center

ANCHOR
HEALTH
FUNDRAISING EVENTS

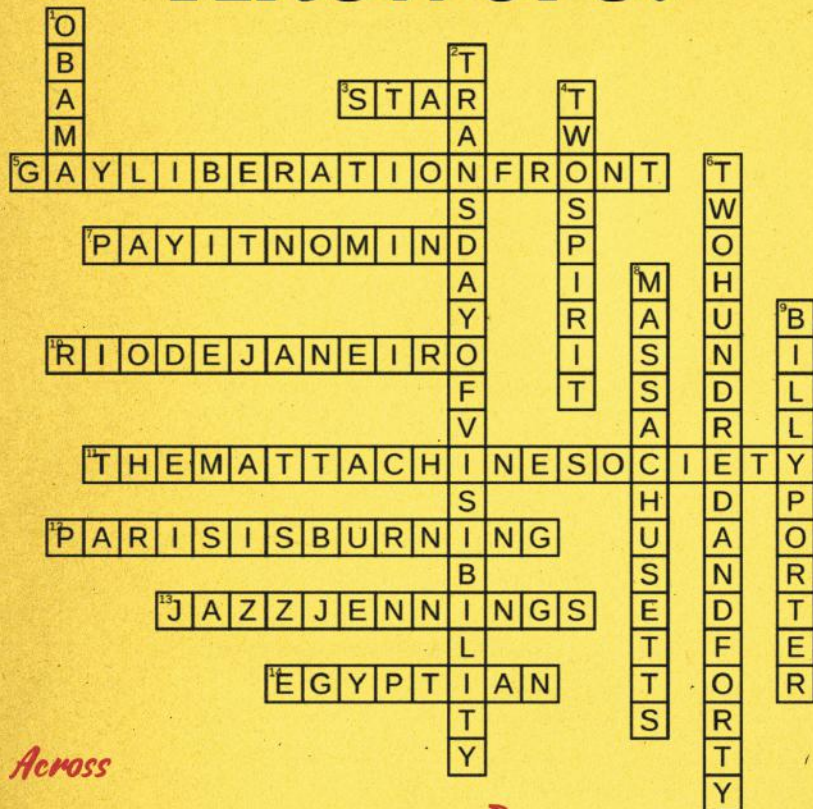
- 6/2 - PRIDE IRON COMMANDER
- 6/14 - LGBTQ+ BOARD GAME NIGHT
- 6/16 - LEGO TO THE DRAG SHOW
- 6/22 - TTRPG RAFFLE
- 6/23 - YOUTH BOARD GAME SOCIAL
- 6/29 - MTG LEGACY TOURNAMENT



More info



Queer history Crossword Answers!



Across

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- Who is the first openly gay Black man to be nominated and win in any lead acting category at the Primetime Emmys?

Queer
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ART BY:
**GHOU
SCHOOL**
@ghoulskool



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anchorhealthct.org
[@anchorhealthct](https://twitter.com/anchorhealthct)