

2019-20

JANUARY 28 - FEBRUARY 22, 2020



THEATRE CALGARY IN ASSOCIATION WITH MARY YOUNG LECKIE PRESENTS

# THE LOUDER WE GET

BY **KENT STAINES** | LYRICS BY **AKIVA ROMER-SEGAL** | MUSIC BY **COLLEEN DAUNCEY**

BASED ON THE TRUE STORY OF MARC HALL

# PLAY GUIDE

*theatre:*  
**CALGARY**  
Stafford Arima, Artistic Director

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## THE LOUDER WE GET DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

*Prom Queen: The Musical* was developed at the Canadian Music Theatre Project, Michael Rubinoff, Producer in 2014 at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario, Canada.

Originally produced (as *Prom Queen*) by The Segal Centre for Performing Arts (Lisa Rubin, Artistic and Executive Director; Jon Rondeau, General Manager) in Montreal. Opened on October 27, 2016, directed by Marcia Kash.

*Prom Queen: The Musical* was presented at the National Alliance for Musical Theatre's Festival of New Musicals in New York in 2017.  
<https://namt.org>

*Prom Queen: The Musical* was developed in part at the Johnny Mercer Writers Colony at Goodspeed Musicals in 2018.

*Prom Queen: The Musical* was presented at The Other Palace in London, England on July 2, 2018, directed by Paul Taylor-Mills.

*Prom Queen: The Musical* was supported in part by: Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, and Citadel Theatre's Play Development Program. Selections were first showcased at The Canadian Music Theatre Project at Sheridan College, Oakville, with the support of the Toronto Arts Council. Subsequent development took place at Theatre Aquarius, Mirvish Productions and the Segal Centre, with the support of UNIFOR Humanitarian Fund.



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theatre:  
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Calgary, AB T2G 5C4  
[theatrecalgary.com](http://theatrecalgary.com)

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# THE LOUDER WE GET

BOOK BY  
**KENT STAINES**

LYRICS BY  
**AKIVA ROMER-SEGAL**

MUSIC BY  
**COLLEEN DAUNCEY**

DIRECTOR  
**LONNY PRICE**

CO-DIRECTOR  
**MATT COWART**

MUSIC DIRECTOR &  
NEW DANCE ARRANGEMENTS  
**JOSHUA ZECHER-ROSS**

ORCHESTRATIONS  
**JUSTIN GOLDNER**

CHOREOGRAPHER  
**REBECCA HOWELL**

SET DESIGN  
**JAMES NOONE**

COSTUME DESIGN  
**CORY SINCENNES**

LIGHTING DESIGN  
**JASON HAND**

SOUND DESIGN  
**JOSHUA D. REID**

ASSISTANT CHOREOGRAPHER  
**LIA GIVEN**

CASTING  
**DAYTON/WALTERS CASTING, CDC, CSA**  
**TARA RUBIN CASTING, CSA**

COPYIST    **JOSEPH TREFLER**  
VOICE & DIALECT COACH    **JANE MACFARLANE**  
REHEARSAL PIANIST    **MARK LIMACHER**  
REHEARSAL PERCUSSIONIST    **JEFF FAFARD**  
SET DESIGN ASSISTANT    **LINDSAY FUORI**  
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## THE BASICS

# CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

### IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

MARC HALL  
EVAN KINNANE

EMILY HALL  
KIRA GULOIEN

AUDY HALL  
LEE MacDOUGALL

MRS. WARRICK  
NAOMI COSTAIN

ENSEMBLE  
RYAN MASCHKE

ENSEMBLE, DANCE CAPTAIN  
ALEXANDRA GRATTON

ENSEMBLE  
ROEL SUASIN

ENSEMBLE  
SARA HINDING

NAPOLEON  
JAMIE MAYERS

TRIPLE  
JOEL SCHAEFER

KRISTAL  
DEVIN CECCHETTO

TIFF  
ISIDORA KECMAN

CARLY MONTEVERA  
KATIE McMILLAN

MISS LAWRENCE, ROXY  
RIELLE BRAID

JASON POWERS  
NICK DOLAN

MIKE SHIELDS  
GLEN MILLS

FATHER HOPKINS, HANK  
SCOTT OLYNEK

OTIS DAY  
FIONN LAIRD

PEGGY DEMARCO  
ALEXA ELSER

BOOMER BRONSON  
KOLTON STEWART

LUCINDA PILCHER, JUDGE  
DEANN DEGRUIJTER

LONNIE WYNN  
THOM ALLISON

PAUL VINCENT  
KEVIN COREY

---

STAGE MANAGER  
JENNIFER SWAN

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER  
SARA TURNER

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER  
KENNEDY GREENE

HEAD OF LIGHTING  
CATHARINE CRUMB

HEAD OF SOUND  
BRONWYN BOWLBY

HEAD STAGE CARPENTER  
SCOTT MORRIS

HEAD DRESSER  
RACHEL MICHELLE SHERIDAN

HEAD OF VIDEO  
DAN PLUMTREE

HEAD OF WIGS  
BRENDA BOUTET

ASSISTANT HEAD STAGE  
CARPENTER  
ANDREW KERR

STAGE HANDS  
MELISSA LABINE,  
JOSH SEMOS,  
GEOFF BUCHANAN

FOLLOW SPOT OPERATORS  
MIKE BOOTH,  
TRISH HERBERT

RF TECHNICIAN  
CARISSA SAMS

DRESSERS/WIGS  
DEBORAH DAY,  
MOLLIE ELIZA ROBERTSON,  
TRACY BAIN



# THE BASICS

# MUSICAL NUMBERS

## ACT I

SAY YES.....MARC & STUDENTS  
SAY YES (REPRISE).....MARC  
SO RIGHT..... MARC & JASON  
INSIDE OUT.....MARC, CARLY, KRISTAL, TIFF & ENSEMBLE  
GAME FACE.....BOOMER, CARLY & STUDENTS  
GAME FACE (REPRISE).....BOOMER  
INFINITE.....MARC  
THE LOUDER WE GET.....JASON, CARLY, MARC & STUDENTS

## ACT II

WYNN.....LONNIE & STUDENTS  
THE OLD YOU.....CARLY & BOOMER  
MOTHER MARY.....EMILY  
SMILE FOR THE CAMERA.....LONNIE & ENSEMBLE  
SMILE FOR THE CAMERA (REPRISE).....JASON  
INFINITE (REPRISE).....AUDY  
NO EXCEPTIONS.....MARC, CARLY & STUDENTS  
WYNN (REPRISE).....LONNIE  
ONLY A BOY.....MARC  
SAY YES (REPRISE 2).....JASON  
THIS DANCE.....COMPANY

## MUSICIANS

CONDUCTOR, KEYBOARD	<b>JOSHUA ZECHER-ROSS</b>
VIOLIN	<b>LAURA REID</b>
VIOLA	<b>LIZA SCRIGGINS LOWRY</b>
CELLO	<b>MORAG NORTHEY</b>
BASS	<b>ARETHA TILLOTSON</b>
KEYBOARD	<b>MARK LIMACHER</b>
GUITAR 1	<b>DARREN YOUNG</b>
GUITAR 2	<b>CARL JANEN</b>
DRUMS/PERCUSSION	<b>JEFF FAFARD</b>
ORCHESTRA CONTRACTOR	<b>DAVE REID</b>
ELECTRONIC MUSIC DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING, INCIDENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	<b>JOSHUA ZECHER-ROSS</b>

## THE BASICS

# SYNOPSIS

It's graduation time and Marc Hall wants nothing more than to take his boyfriend to the prom. The only problem is the Principal and the School Board Trustees won't allow it under any circumstances. Suddenly, Marc finds himself fighting not only for his right to choose his prom date, but also for the right to be different and have his voice heard. The media swarms and turns him into an unlikely activist for gay teens everywhere. The Superior Court of Ontario gets involved, and all eyes are on him...But will Marc have the courage to face the battle ahead? This feel-good story of a young boy who overcomes prejudice and preconceptions will leave no one indifferent.

## WHO'S WHO

### **MARC HALL**

A gay teen, an idealist, eager for his life to begin

### **JASON POWERS**

Marc's working-class boyfriend

### **EMILY HALL**

Marc's Acadian Mom.  
A feisty woman of faith

### **AUDY HALL**

Marc's strong and silent working-class Dad

### **CARLY MONTEVERA**

Marc's best friend, a firecracker who likes to take charge

### **BOOMER BRONSON**

A "bad boy" who's smitten with Carly

### **NAPOLEON**

A movie geek

### **TRIPLE**

A computer nerd

### **KRISTAL**

Carly's friend, an angry amateur actress

### **TIFFANY (TIFF)**

Carly's pragmatic friend, a stage manager

### **OTIS DAY**

A righteous religious student, with a secret

### **MR. WARRICK**

An uncompromising principal

### **MISS LAWRENCE**

A quirky teacher with liberal religious views

### **FATHER HOPKINS**

A priest with conservative religious views

### **LUCINDA PILCHER**

The earnest schoolboard representative

### **LONNIE WYNN**

Marc's overly vain lawyer

### **PAUL VINCENT**

The schoolboard's tough lawyer

### **MIKE SHIELDS**

A factory worker and union representative

### **HANK**

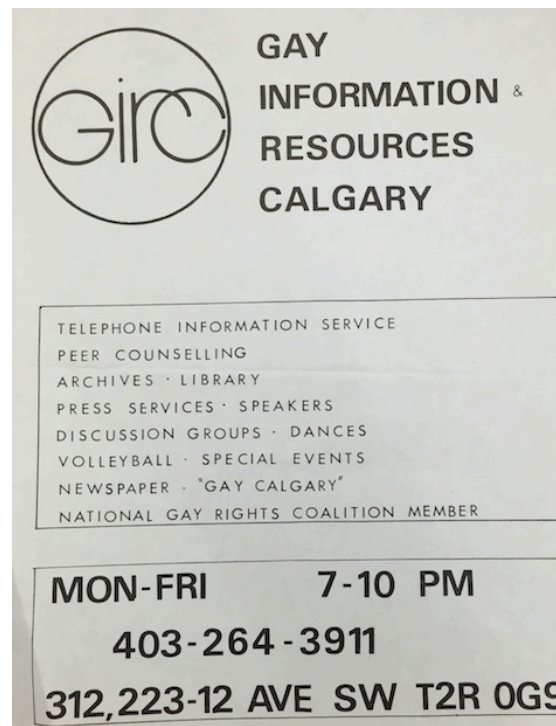
A young Dad and factory worker

# EXPLORATIONS

## OUR PAST MATTERS

A LGBTQA2S+ HISTORY OF CALGARY | BY KEVIN ALLEN, RESEARCH LEAD, CALGARY GAY HISTORY PROJECT

- 1939** The Pansy Club, a jointly rented apartment by a group of gay men, is found by Calgary Police.
- 1942** 12 men are investigated and convicted in a "homosexual sex ring" in Edmonton.
- 1952** Homosexuality is officially classified as a mental disorder by the American Psychiatric Association and treated as a disability.  
  
The Canadian Government formally bans gay and lesbian immigrants.
- 1957** The Wolfenden Report in the U.K. recommends decriminalizing homosexuality.
- 1960** A gay Calgary bus driver, Everett Klippert, is convicted of gross indecency for the first time.
- 1963** The Canadian Government develops the "Fruit Machine," a gay detection machine to test on the public service. The RCMP targets over 9000 Canadians.
- 1965** The Cecil Hotel is the bar for lesbians, and the Palliser Hotel's Kings Arms Tavern is the bar for gay men in downtown Calgary. Customers have to be discrete.
- 1967** Everett Klippert is ruled a dangerous sexual offender by the Supreme Court of Canada and incarcerated for life. Pierre Trudeau says: "Take this thing on homosexuality, I think the view we take here is that there's no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation."
- 1969** Homosexuality is partially decriminalized in Canada by the Trudeau Government.
- 1970** Club Carousel begins:  
Calgary's first community gay club at 1207 1 St. S.W.
- 1972** A Gay Liberation Front chapter is started at U of C by grad student Rick Sullivan.
- 1973** Homosexuality is removed from the American Psychiatric Association's list of Mental Disorders.
- 1975** Gay Information and Resources Calgary (GIRC) is founded:  
Calgary's first local gay peer support organization.





1978

Canada gets a new Immigration Act. Under the new act, homosexuals are removed from the list of inadmissible classes.

The Alberta School Trustees Association pass a resolution requesting that the provincial government not prevent local school boards from dealing with proven incidents of homosexuality.

1980

Gay Information and Resources Calgary (GIRC) hosts the annual National Gay Rights Conference.

1981

Newly elected Calgary Mayor Ralph Klein proclaims he is a mayor for everyone, including the gay community. He quickly distances himself from gays due to public outcry.

1983

The first case of AIDS is reported in Calgary. Thousands will die in Canada and Calgary will record the fourth-highest death toll after Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

1985

A survey of 6500 Canadian male soldiers finds that 62% would refuse to share showers, undress or sleep in the same room as a gay soldier.

1988

The United Church of Canada, the country's largest Protestant denomination, votes to ordain homosexuals.

1989

For the first time, a Canadian court accepts sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Canadian Charter in Ontario.

1990

Speak Sebastian Gay Radio Program begins on CJSW.

The Calgary Lesbian and Gay Political Action Guild (CLAGPAG) hosts the first gay pride rally in Central Memorial Park.

1991

CLAGPAG hosts Calgary's first Pride Parade. Mayor Al Duerr famously proclaims gay pride week in Calgary but then denies future proclamations due to public pressure.

Theatre Calgary stages a gay-themed play, *The Sum of Us*, which is so successful it travels to Toronto after its Calgary run.

1992

LGBT people are allowed to serve openly in the Canadian Military.

1996

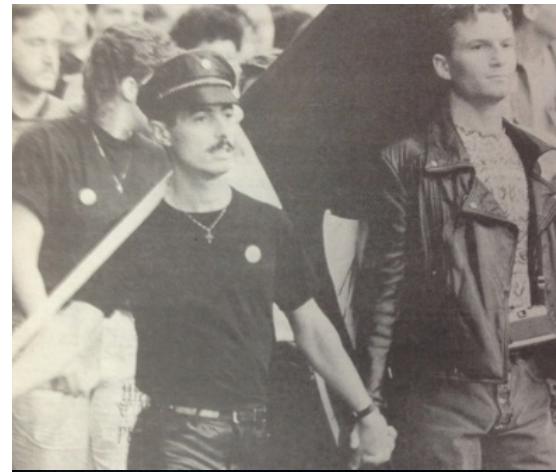
There is a firestorm of controversy when Alberta Theatre Projects mounts *Angels in America*. The show proves to be one of the best-selling plays in the company's history.

1998

The Alberta Individual Rights Protection Act does not include sexual orientation as prohibited grounds for discrimination until a Supreme Court case forces it to be included (*Vriend vs. Alberta*).

1999

The Fairy Tales Queer Film Festival is founded.



## EXPLORATIONS

# OUR PAST MATTERS CONTINUED

2001

Former Conservative Prime Minister, Joe Clark, is Calgary's Pride Parade Marshall.

2002

Marc Hall fights a successful legal battle against the Durham Catholic District School Board to bring a same-sex date to his high school prom. The case makes Canadian and international headlines.

Goliath's, a gay bathhouse in Calgary, is raided for being a common bawdy house. The Crown stays the charges in 2005, citing changing community standards.

2005

Same-sex marriage is legalized in Canada. A minority Liberal Government passes Bill C-38, titled Law on Civil Marriage, in a 158-133 vote, supported by most members of the Liberal party, the Bloc Québécois and the NDP.

2009

Pride Calgary moves the parade from June to the September long weekend, and transitions from a grassroots collective to an incorporated non-profit society.

2011

Mayor Naheed Nenshi is the first Calgary mayor to march in Pride Parade, and is Parade Marshall that year, making national headlines.

2012

Wildrose candidate predicts 'eternity in the lake of fire' for gays and lesbians; sabotaging a predicted Wildrose victory in the Alberta Provincial Election.

2017

Transgender rights proclaimed in the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code. Bill C 16 passes protecting gender identity and expression as prohibited grounds for discrimination.



CECIL HOTEL SIGN - PHOTO BY DEL RATH

CLUB CAROUSEL PATCH - CALGARY GAY HISTORY PROJECT

GIRC FLYER - CALGARY GAY HISTORY PROJECT

1991 CALGARY PRIDE PARADE NEWSPAPER CLIPPING - CALGARY GAY HISTORY PROJECT

GORDON PINSENT & TED ATHERTON IN THEATRE CALGARY'S PRODUCTION OF *THE SUM OF US* (1991). PHOTO BY TRUDIE LEE

ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECT'S PRODUCTION OF *ANGELS IN AMERICA* (1997) - PHOTO BY TRUDIE LEE (GLENBOW ARCHIVES M-9760-70-14-1)

DELWIN VRIEND (RIGHT) GETS A CONGRATULATORY KISS FROM PARTNER ANDREW GAGNON AT A POST-VERDICT RALLY AT THE EDMONTON LEGISLATURE - VIA CALGARY GAY HISTORY PROJECT, PHOTO BY THE CANADIAN PRESS/KEVIN FRAYER

JOE CLARK IN CALGARY'S PRIDE PARADE, 2001 - PHOTO BY GRANT NEUFELD

MARC HALL WITH HIS-THEN BOYFRIEND JEAN-PAUL DUMOND IN 2002 - PHOTO BY AARON HARRIS/CANADIAN PRESS

MAYOR NAHEED NENSHI LEADS THE PRIDE PARADE IN CALGARY, ALBERTA, SEPT 4, 2011 - PHOTO BY TODD KOROL FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

ELINOR HOLT AND KENT STAINES IN ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECT'S PRODUCTION OF ANGELS IN AMERICA PART ONE - THE MILLENIUM APPROACHES - PHOTO BY TRUDIE LEE



## EXPLORATIONS

# A DECADE IN THE MAKING:

### BEST FRIENDS AND SONGWRITING PARTNERS SHARE THEIR MUSICAL JOURNEY

Colleen Dauncey and Akiva Romer-Segal, the music and lyrics team for *The Louder We Get*, were destined to create music together. The duo first met at Henry Wise Wood High School in Calgary through the drama program, where they sat right next to each other on the first day, and became fast friends.

Both Colleen and Akiva grew up with families who embraced the arts. Colleen was raised in a musical household, with parents who were both musicians and school teachers. Akiva's parents were also both teachers, and as a family, they attended the theatre, opera, art exhibitions and museums together. Both of their early experiences with art and music piqued their interest in pursuing careers in the arts.

Following high school, the pair went their separate ways. Colleen began her degree in International Business at the University of Calgary while Akiva pursued a career in Set and Costume Design at Ryerson University in Toronto.

Once Colleen graduated, she made a move to Quebec to become fully fluent in French, complementing her pursuit of a career in international business. During this time, Akiva began meeting artists in Toronto through the musical theatre and cabaret scene. One night Akiva attended a cabaret, and a certain performance set the stage for Colleen and Akiva's partnership together.

"I connected to a performer that night, Sara Farb. I loved her voice and her unique musical sensibility, and I was inspired to write lyrics for her," says Akiva. "Once I sent her a draft of a song, and she said if I best friends and songwriting partners share their musical journey could have music written for my lyrics, she'd perform the song at her next cabaret."

Akiva called his best friend in Quebec to share his dilemma. While Colleen had never considered a career writing musical theatre, she had been writing pop music as a passion project, so she suggested that she could try writing the music for Akiva's lyrics. And that is when the musical writing team was born.

"We managed to write this song together using video chat. Me on my piano in Quebec, and Akiva on the other end in Toronto," shares Colleen. "As promised, Sara Farb ended up performing our song at her next cabaret, and we started to get interest in our work."

Shortly after, Colleen visited Akiva in Toronto, where she immediately fell in love with the artistic scene. She quit her job in Quebec and moved to Toronto one month later.

"We didn't set out to do this, but the reaction to our work encouraged us to pursue this career together," said Colleen. "The fact that we had set out on completely different paths and still ended up where we are now, in a career that challenges us and brings us so much joy... it kind of makes me believe in destiny."

Over the following decade, Colleen and Akiva would write more than 100 songs together and create the music for six full-length musicals, including *The Louder We Get*. Colleen and Akiva's success led them to meeting producer Mary Young Leckie and playwright Kent Staines of *The Louder We Get*.

"Mary and Kent met with us and told us about their idea for the project, and we were instantly intrigued," said Colleen. "Marc's story resonated with us. We went to high school at the same time as he did, so we followed the story when it was happening, and of course the themes of the show are meaningful to us."

"WE'VE SPENT A LOT OF TIME SINGING THESE SONGS TO EACH OTHER IN A SMALL STUDIO APARTMENT, BUT NOW WE HAVE 23 CAST MEMBERS SINGING THEM TO US, AND IT'S TRULY AMAZING TO BE HERE AT THEATRE CALGARY."

#### COLLEEN & AKIVA

To make sure Colleen and Akiva were a good match for the production, they wrote three songs on spec, inspired by moments of Marc's story. The first song they ever wrote is the title song of the show, *The Louder We Get*, along with *Mother Mary* and *Inside Out*. They performed these songs for Kent and Mary, and a few weeks later, they got the call that they had been selected.

Now after six years of working on the score, their vision has come to life on the Theatre Calgary stage.

"Writing a musical is a commitment, because it is such a collaborative art form, it takes a lot of time to hone it and make sure everyone involved is telling the same story," states Akiva. "When you're writing



COLLEEN DAUNCEY & AKIVA ROMER-SEGAL. PHOTO BY

a new musical you need to make sure it's something you're passionate about, because it's a story you'll be telling for a long time."

And passion is what has driven Colleen and Akiva to creating the inspiring music and lyrics for this production.

"We've been working on this project for years, and yes I get to write with my best friend, but it can sometimes be a lonely existence as a significant portion of our work is done in isolation," shares Colleen. "We've spent a lot of time singing these songs to each other in a small studio apartment, but now we have 23 cast members singing them to us, and it's truly amazing to be here at Theatre Calgary."

Both reflect that the truth of this story is what inspired the music. Anytime they felt

stuck along the way, they would always go back to Marc and his experience, and would frequently call him to ask what it was like going through certain parts of his journey. Each time, his words would help them move forward. They have kept the truth and essence of his story top of mind in the music they've created.

Both Akiva and Colleen hope the show has a meaningful impact on audiences, and that the messages resonate regardless of their generation.

"We sometimes forget a lot of these issues are still at the forefront, I want people to be able to see something on stage that may or may not be completely comfortable with, but recognize that this is a human being and their story," said Colleen. "I hope the music helps people find a way to understand that someone

like Marc is just trying to be a human with human rights, and that they walk away with more empathy."

"I'd love for those who come into the show feeling voiceless and powerless to leave understanding the power they have to spark change," states Akiva. "You're not as voiceless or powerless as you may think. You matter. There are people who share those same concerns, and the same passion to inspire change. Change can start with an individual, grow to involve a community, and eventually affect the world." ●

## TERMS TO KNOW

### 1 COMING OUT

A lifelong process of self-acceptance. People forge a LGBTQA2S+ identity first to themselves and then they may reveal it to others. Publicly sharing one's identity may or may not be part of coming out.

### DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

The democratic process assures that each member can think and act democratically. Fairness, respect of the rules, are produced by equal consideration, implying that some rights are fundamental to human existence and should not be alienated by any person or institutions.

### 2 GALILEO GALILEI

An Italian astronomer and mathematician who was the first to use a telescope to study the stars. He is often referred to as the "father of observational astronomy."

### INJUNCTION

A judicial order that restrains a person from beginning or continuing an action threatening or invading the legal right of another, or that compels a person to carry out a certain act.

### LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

A document in which the writer assesses the qualities, characteristics, and capabilities of the person being recommended for a job, scholarship, or admission into institutions of higher education.

### LIBERTINE

A person who rejects accepted opinions in matters of religion.

### MON DIEU!

French for "my God!" Often used to express surprise, exhaustion or disgust.

### MON LOUP

A French term of endearment that means "my wolf." In *The Louder We Get*, it is used towards Marc Hall by his mother, Emily Hall.

### NON DUCOR, DUCO

A Latin phrase meaning "I am not led, I lead."

### 3 NORTH STAR

The North Star, or Polaris, is the brightest star in the Ursa Minor constellation (also known as the Little Dipper). Since Polaris lies nearly in a direct line with the Earth's rotational axis above the North Pole, Polaris stands almost motionless in the sky while all the stars appear to rotate around it. It makes an excellent fixed point from which to draw measurements for navigation.

### ONTARIO SUPERIOR COURT

A superior court in Ontario, sitting in 52 locations across the province. The Superior Court has inherent jurisdiction over civil, criminal and family law matters at common law.

### 4 PINK SLIP

A notice of dismissal from employment.

### 5 PROM

A formal dance held by a high school at the end of the academic year, typically for students in their junior or senior year.

### 6 PROMPOSAL

An elaborately staged request to be someone's date to a prom.

### SACRAMENT

A religious ceremony or ritual regarded as imparting divine grace (baptisms, the Eucharist etc.)

### SCHOLARSHIP

A grant or payment made to support a student's education, awarded on the basis of academic or other achievement.

### SCHOOL BOARD

A local board or authority responsible for the provision and maintenance of schools. The elected council determines the educational policy in a small regional area, such as a city, county, state, or province.

### SIN

An immoral act considered to be a transgression against divine law.

### TABARNAK

Meaning "tabernacle" in French, it is considered to be the most profane *sacre* (swear word) that can be heard in Québecois.

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KRAKOW PRIDE PARADE (2018) - WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

PORTRAIT OF GALILEO GALILEI BY JUSTUS SUSTERMANS (1640)

STARS AROUND POLARIS (2006) - PHOTO BY STEVE RYAN - WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

PINK SLIP - PUBLIC DOMAIN VIA FLICKR

CROWDED DANCEFLOOR - WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

PROMPOSAL - PHOTO BY MIKE SEBAZCO



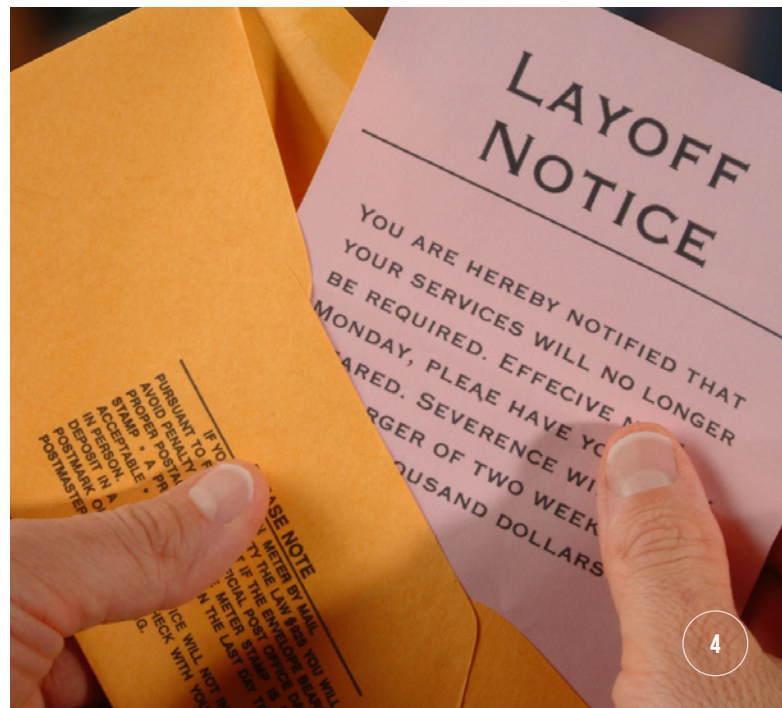
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2



3



4



5



6

## EXPLORATIONS

# “IF YOU LOOK HARD ENOUGH, THERE ARE PEOPLE THERE TO HELP AND SUPPORT YOU.”

**MARC HALL, THE TRUE LIFE HERO, SHARES HIS JOURNEY OF WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET LOUD**

When we look back to grade 12, most of us do not have the memory of filing a court injunction to bring our date to prom. For former Ontario native Marc Hall, that is exactly what his senior year at Monsignor John Pereyma Catholic Secondary School looked like in 2002.

Towards the end of Grade 11, the excitement of prom began to build. Everyone is abuzz with the usual topics of themes, what to wear, who will you dance with, and of course, who will you bring to prom. Marc had been dating his boyfriend, Jean-Paul (JP) Dumond, for about one year and wanted JP to be his date. While Marc took into account he attended a Catholic school, he also knew his teachers and mentors to be liberal, and never thought bringing his boyfriend to prom would be an issue. Marc confided in his grade 11 English teacher who agreed with Marc but offered to ask on his behalf.

The summer passed and the new school year had begun, and while Marc never

heard back from his teacher he had forgotten all about it. That was until January 2002 hit, and the topic of prom resurfaced. He began visiting the Principal's office to speak with him about his prom date, but continued to be told the Principal was busy or wasn't there, and after multiple attempts, he could see that his Principal was avoiding him. Then one day during class, Marc was called to the Principal's office, and he knew immediately what it was about.

“My Principal sat across me and told me the School Board had denied my request to bring my boyfriend to prom stating, ‘they cannot condone homosexual behaviour’. I was shocked and devastated, and could not find the words to respond,” said Marc. “My school was my second home, it's where we spend most of our time next to our family homes. I couldn't believe I was rejected by them for being myself.”

But this didn't stop Marc. After sharing what happened with his parents, they

“AND TO ANYONE WHO IS STRUGGLING, WHATEVER YOU'RE GOING THROUGH, THIS IS A REMINDER THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE.”

**MARC HALL**

scheduled a meeting together with the Principal. This time Marc came prepared with a speech to defend himself and his position, and with his parents alongside him, he believed this would be the end of it. But Marc was once again told he would not be allowed to bring his boyfriend to prom.

Marc was upset and feeling defeated. He called his friend best friend Cassy (known as Carly in the production) to the office. This marked a pivotal moment in Marc's journey. After Cassy and friends heard how the school had reacted, they came together over the weekend creating a website sharing Marc's story, including his speech he shared with the Principal, welcoming feedback from the public realm on his situation. Marc's friends surprised him with the website on Monday, and watched the website's popularity grow. The hits kept coming in, attracting the attention of a radio reporter. At the young age of 17, he was nervous to speak to media, but decided to try one interview. Marc's interview was a success, and from this moment, Marc's story became prime time evening news. The interest in Marc's story blew up.



MARC HALL WITH HIS-THEN BOYFRIEND JEAN-PAUL DUMOND IN 2002 - TORONTO STAR FILE PHOTO





PHOTO SUPPLIED BY MARC HALL

"The following days at school were a media circus. There were cameras, reporters running around, satellite trucks on the street, and my first reaction was to run and hide," shared Marc. "Once lunch hour hit, reporters started to leave the school grounds, and there was one left outside. My best friend encouraged me to try one interview."

After this moment, Marc learned quickly how to work with the media, taking daily scrums and interviews sharing his story and desire to be able to take his boyfriend to prom. It quickly grew from an Oshawa and Ontario story, to one that reached people across Canada. Marc was encouraged by the support of media, local politicians, community organizations and advocates, peers, friends and family, to continue to fight for his right to bring who he wanted to prom. It was this amazing outpouring of support from this network that gave him the strength to continue.

"I always say I was an accidental activist, not to diminish what I fought and stood for, but I was 17, I had only come out to my family one year prior to this, and facing all the media was

nerve wracking. It was largely because of village standing behind me that I was able to overcome my fear and keep standing my ground."

And while he had an entire community banding together, there were still many who held homophobic attitudes, and made it difficult for Marc to keep moving forward. He received death threats, hate mail, and threats against his family. When his family's safety was in jeopardy, and he was considering ending his fight, he received a phone call from a teen who was reaching out to Marc for help. The boy hadn't come out to his family, but shared that Marc's story was giving him strength. Marc spoke to him for an hour, and a week or so later, he got a letter from this boy sharing he had come out to his family and it was all because of him. Marc realized what he was fighting for was bigger than himself.

Given the School Board continued to deny Marc's request, and ignore his voice and the community of people behind him, his family made the decision to retain legal counsel. It was this lawyer who made Marc aware that his high school and the School Board had violated his human rights and had discriminated against him, and his case would be taken to court.

"My team of lawyers had two main tenants, one was the fact you cannot discriminate against tax payers' children, and also their decision violated Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which states you cannot discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation."

His lawyers knew they could win based on these arguments, but it was one month before the prom so they had to file an injunction, literally trial by fire. What followed was a series of cross-examinations at the School Board. Marc remembers it was highly intimidating, as the room was full of people who told him 'no' and it was an environment where he didn't feel safe.

But in the end, it all paid off. The court's decision came three hours before the prom started. Marc could finally celebrate his prom with the person he wanted to.

Marc continues to share his story through motivational speaking with school groups, showing young people no matter what kind of struggle you're going through, if you look hard enough, there are people there to help and support you. He also reminds people that what he accomplished was a large act of change, but it's also about the small things you can do that can propel our society forward.

With *The Louder We Get* coming to life on the Theatre Calgary stage, Marc still finds it surreal.

"It's incredible to be able to tell my story in this fun and beautiful way. Even though this happened 18 years ago, the story and the messages behind it are still relevant today. There are still individuals struggling with how to feel safe in today's world being themselves."

Marc is hopeful that this show helps audiences think critically about what's happening around them. He hopes that people understand that while we have progressed a lot since 2002, we still have a long ways to go.

"And to anyone who is struggling, whatever you're going through, this is a reminder that you're not alone." ●



## CONVERSATIONS

# THE LOUDER WE GET MOVIE NIGHT

### 1 PRIDE

LGBT activists in the U.K. work to help miners during their lengthy strike of the National Union of Mineworkers in the summer of 1984.

**STARRING** BILL NIGHY, IMELDA STAUNTON, DOMINIC WEST

2014 | Feature Film | 14A | 1h 59m | Director Matthew Warchus

### 2 MILK

The story of Harvey Milk, and his struggles as an American gay activist who fought for gay rights and became California's first openly gay elected official.

**STARRING** SEAN PENN, JOSH BROLIN, EMILE HIRSCH

2008 | Feature Film | 14A | 2h 8m | Director Gus Van Sant

### 3 MOONLIGHT

A young African-American man grapples with his identity and sexuality while experiencing the everyday struggles of childhood, adolescence, and burgeoning adulthood.

**STARRING** MAHERSHALA ALI, NAOMIE HARRIS, TREVANTE RHODES

2016 | Feature Film | 14A | 1h 51m | Director Barry Jenkins

### 4 THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT

Two drag performers and a transgender woman travel across the desert to perform their unique style of cabaret.

**STARRING** HUGO WEAVING, GUY PEARCE, TERENCE STAMP

**DID YOU KNOW?** THOM ALLISON (LONNIE WYNN IN THE LOUDER WE GET) HAD HIS BROADWAY DEBUT IN THE PRODUCTION OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT - THE MUSICAL

1994 | Feature Film | R | 1h 44m | Director Stephan Elliott

### 5 BOYS DON'T CRY

A young man named Brandon Teena navigates love, life, and being transgender in rural Nebraska.

**STARRING** HILARY SWANK, CHLOË SEVIGNY, PETER SARSGAARD

1999 | Feature Film | R | 1h 58m | Director Kimberly Peirce

### 6 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

The story of a forbidden and secretive relationship between two cowboys, and their lives over the years.

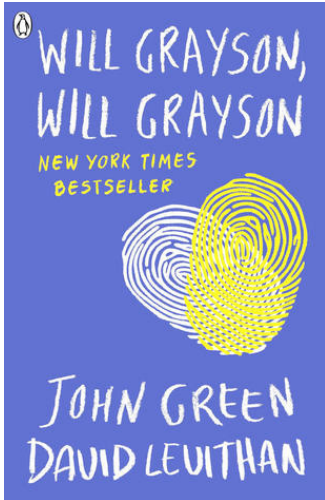
**STARRING** JAKE GYLLENHAAL, HEATH LEDGER, MICHELLE WILLIAMS

2005 | Feature Film | 14A | 2h 14m | Director Ang Lee

## LOOKING FOR MORE?

*My Own Private Idaho* (1991), *Heavenly Creatures* (1994), *But I'm a Cheerleader* (1999), *Before Night Falls* (2000), *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (2001), *Call Me By Your Name* (2017), *Carol* (2015), *Torchsong Trilogy* (1988), *Love, Simon* (2018)

FURTHER READING

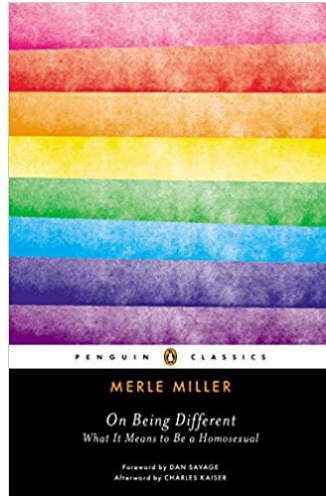


**WILL GRAYSON,  
WILL GRAYSON**

BY JOHN GREEN &  
DAVID LEVITHAN

Will Grayson meets Will Grayson. One cold night, in a most unlikely corner of Chicago, two strangers are about to cross paths. From that moment on, their world will collide and lives intertwine.

2010  
Fiction

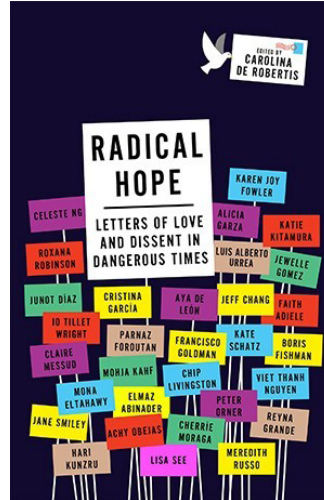


**ON BEING DIFFERENT:  
WHAT IT MEANS TO  
BE A HOMOSEXUAL**

BY MERLE MILLER

Just two years after the Stonewall riots, Merle Miller wrote an essay for the *New York Times Magazine* entitled “What It Means To Be a Homosexual” in response to a homophobic article in *Harper’s Magazine*. Miller’s writing, described as “the most widely read and discussed essay of the decade,” along with an afterword chronicling his inspiration and readers’ responses, became *On Being Different* — one of the earliest memoirs to affirm the importance of coming out.

1971  
Biography

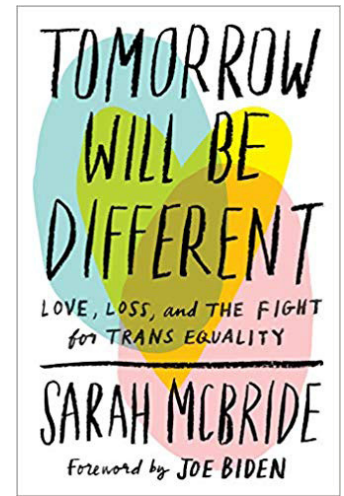


**RADICAL HOPE:  
LETTERS OF LOVE  
AND DISSENT IN  
DANGEROUS TIMES**

MULTIPLE AUTHORS

Provocative and inspiring, *Radical Hope* offers readers a kaleidoscopic view of the love and courage needed to navigate this time of upheaval, uncertainty, and fear, in view of the recent US presidential election.

2017  
Collection of essays

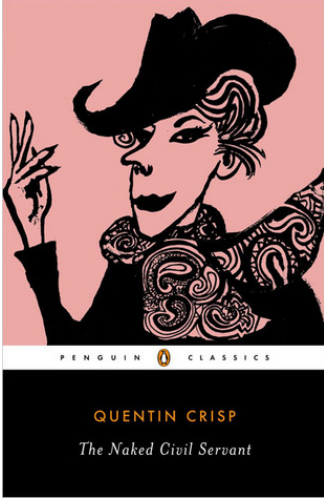


**TOMORROW WILL BE  
DIFFERENT: LOVE,  
LOSS, AND THE FIGHT  
FOR TRANS EQUALITY**

BY SARAH MCBRIDE

A timely and captivating memoir about gender identity set against the backdrop of the transgender equality movement, by a leading activist and the National Press Secretary for the Human Rights Campaign, the nation’s largest LGBTQ civil rights organization.

2018  
Biography

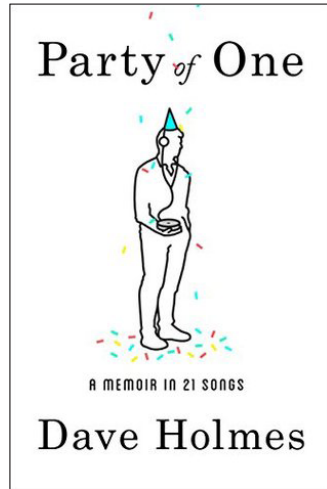


## THE NAKED CIVIL SERVANT

BY QUENTIN CRISP

In 1931, gay liberation was not a movement—it was simply unthinkable. But in that year, Quentin Crisp made the courageous decision to “come out” as a homosexual. This exhibitionist with the henna-dyed hair was harassed, ridiculed and beaten. Nevertheless, he claimed his right to be himself—whatever the consequences.

1968  
Non-fiction



## PARTY OF ONE: A MEMOIR IN 21 SONGS

BY DAVE HOLMES

Dave Holmes has spent his life on the periphery, nose pressed hopefully against the glass, wanting just one thing: to get inside. Growing up, he was the artsy son in the sporty family. At his all-boys high school and Catholic college, he was the closeted gay kid surrounded by crush-worthy straight guys. And in his twenties, in the middle of a disastrous career in advertising, he accidentally became an MTV VJ overnight when he finished second, naturally, in the Wanna Be a VJ contest, opening the door to fame, fortune, and celebrity—you know, *almost*.

2006  
Non-fiction

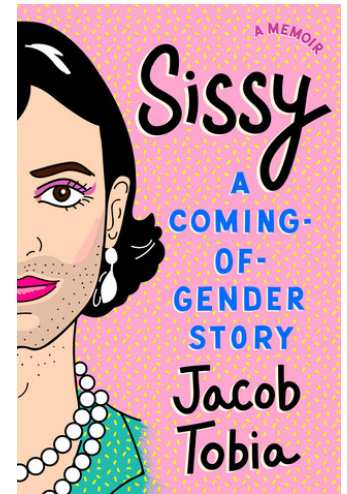


## ASK A QUEER CHICK: A GUIDE TO SEX, LOVE, AND LIFE FOR GIRLS WHO DIG GIRLS

BY LINDSAY KING-MILLER

Based on the long-running and popular advice column for *The Hairpin*, but featuring entirely new content, *Ask a Queer Chick* cuts through all of the bizarre conditioning imparted by parents, romantic comedies, and *The L Word* to help queer readers and their straight/cis friends navigate this changing world.

2016  
Non-fiction



## SISSY: A COMING-OF-GENDER STORY

BY JACOB TOBIA

From Jacob's Methodist childhood and the hallowed halls of Duke University to the portrait-laden parlors of the White House, *Sissy* takes you on a gender odyssey you won't soon forget. Writing with the fierce honesty, wildly irreverent humor, and wrenching vulnerability that have made them a media sensation, Jacob shatters the long-held notion that people are easily sortable into “men” and “women.” *Sissy* guarantees that you'll never think about gender--both other people's people's and your own--the same way again.

2019  
Fiction

## CONVERSATIONS

# CONVERSATION STARTERS

In *The Louder We Get*, Marc Hall is surrounded by supportive friends, teachers, and his family. Who makes up your support system? How do they support you, and do they do so in different ways?

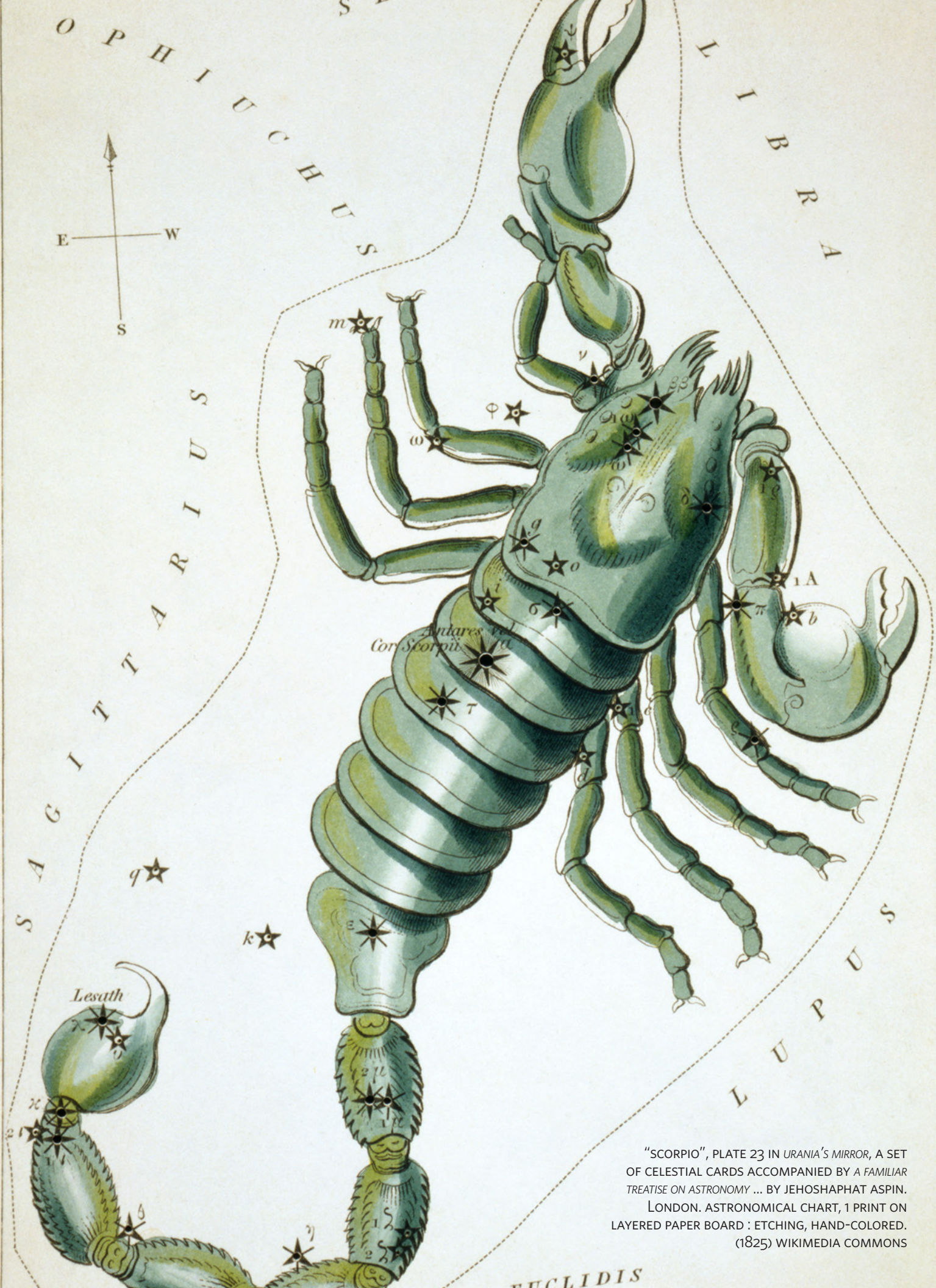
Do you agree with the court's decision to allow Marc Hall to take Jason Powers to prom? Why or why not?

If you haven't attended your prom or graduation yet, what are you looking forward to? What does it mean to you?

If you have attended, what was your prom or graduation like? Is there something that you would have done differently, someone else you would have taken as a date, etc.?

What does it mean to live life "authentically?" How important is self-expression to you?

Can you name something you truly believe in? What issue, cause, or belief makes you "get loud"?



"SCORPIO", PLATE 23 IN URANIA'S MIRROR, A SET OF CELESTIAL CARDS ACCOMPANIED BY A FAMILIAR TREATISE ON ASTRONOMY ... BY JEHOSEPHAT ASPIN. LONDON. ASTRONOMICAL CHART, 1 PRINT ON LAYERED PAPER BOARD : ETCHING, HAND-COLORED. (1825) WIKIMEDIA COMMONS