

Edith Windsor



Edith "Edie" Windsor was an American LGBTQ rights activist and the plaintiff in the 2013 Supreme Court Case, *United States v. Windsor*. This case overturned section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which was signed into law by Bill Clinton in 1996 and banned federal recognition of same-sex marriage by limiting the definition of marriage to being between one man and one woman.

After being engaged to a man in her earlier life, Windsor became engaged to her partner Thea Spyer, despite nowhere in the United States they could legally marry. In June 1969, Windsor returned home to New York from a vacation with Thea to the Stonewall Riots having begun. She and Thea started to become increasingly involved in LGBT rights activism during this time and in the following years. In 1993, they registered for domestic partnership in New York on the day it became available, becoming the 80th couple to do so. Spyer passed away in 2009 after a battle with several chronic health complications, and Windsor became the sole beneficiary of her estate. However, because the federal government did not recognize their marriage, Windsor had to pay a significant amount of money in estate taxes. She sought to claim the estate tax exemption for surviving spouses, but the IRS found that this exemption did not apply to same-sex couples due to the definition of marriage outlined in DOMA. In 2010, Windsor filed a lawsuit against the federal government for treating same-sex couples differently without justification. In 2012, a judge ruled in her favor, citing that section 3 of DOMA was unconstitutional due to rights granted by the 5th Amendment. This prompted the Supreme Court to hear oral arguments regarding this case and, in 2013, handed down a 5-4 ruling that section 3 of DOMA was unconstitutional. This ruling effectively eliminated federal restrictions on same-sex marriage, granting same-sex couples the same rights and benefits that had been afforded to opposite-sex couples. This also meant same-sex couples could legally marry in states that recognized same-sex marriage. This also allowed the Obama administration to extend other benefits through executive action.

Black Activists' Contributions to Queer Liberation and Culture



Similar to many other human rights movements, Black queer people have historically been at the forefront of queer liberation and culture. The gay liberation movement that culminated around the Stonewall riots in 1969 was primarily led by Black lesbian and transgender activists, including Marsha P. Johnson, Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, and Stormé De Larverie. Johnson, for example, founded the trans advocacy organization Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) with another well-known trans activist, Sylvia Rivera. DeLarverie served as the vice president of the Stonewall Veterans' Association. Many BIPOC activists risked violence and persecution to advocate for and serve their community, and many of them died while doing so. Without the leadership of Black women and trans folks in the early days of gay liberation movements, queer folks would likely not have many of the rights that exist today.

Further, as LGBTQ+ folks gained rights over the years, the majority of the benefit was extended to white cisgender queer folks. Even now, racial inequity in the queer community is rampant. Unfortunately, despite all they have done and continue to do for the community, Black folks still experience significant racism in queer spaces. Queer people of color are much more likely to experience poverty, sexual violence, HIV, and other problems, and high numbers of Black trans women are murdered every year.

Beyond liberation, much of queer culture is owed to the innovation and creativity of people of color. Art and performance, including voguing, ballroom, and what we know as mainstream drag, originated in Black queer spaces - this can be seen now in fashion campaigns, music videos, and shows like Pose and RuPaul's Drag Race. At the beginning of queer liberation movements in the 60s and 70s, drag and cross-dressing were seen as interchangeable with trans folks, all of which were not legal in public spaces. Beyond art, many of the languages we see as central to queer culture additionally originated in Black spaces. Terms like "yes," "read," and "slay" are now widely used by many folks in the queer community, but this is slang appropriated from African American Vernacular English (AAVE). AAVE partially grew out of the need for Black people to communicate within their communities. The use of this by white folks in the community is problematic because of this appropriation and because this is often seen as "unprofessional" or "intellectually inferior" when used by Black people.

Ethical Non-Monogamy and Polyamory



Ethical Non-Monogamy (ENM) is the umbrella term for relationships in which partners give explicit consent to engage in romantic, sexual, and/or otherwise intimate relationships with other people. ENM is not only practiced by people in the LGBTQIA2S+ community, though many people who do practice ENM identify with some aspect of queerness. ENM can take many different forms! Some couples identify as "monogamish," meaning they are primarily monogamous but occasionally have sexual relationships with others. Swinging, which is group sex or swapping sexual partners with other couples, is another form of ENM. Some will simply define their relationship as "open" and define specific rules and communication guidelines for themselves; this may mean romantic monogamy with various forms of sexual non-monogamy, depending on the couple's preferences. Common rules people may employ include: no bringing other partners into the shared home, no sexual intimacy with mutual friends, no long-term sexual partnerships (e.g., only "hooking up" with people when out with friends), etc.

Polyamory is a form of ENM that typically means a person is open to relationships with multiple people simultaneously. These relationships can be sexual and/or romantic and might have different rules, depending on people. Those who identify as poly typically see this as a lifestyle they practice in contradiction to monogamy. Polyamory practitioners may have a "primary" or "anchor" partner

with whom they could be married, have children, and generally build a life with. However, others choose to have no "primary" or "anchor" partner and instead treat all of their relationships with equal importance and weight.

People may choose ENM relationships for a number of reasons, including to explore their sexuality while maintaining the relationship they are in, to meet needs (and acknowledge that one partner should not have to or may not be able to meet all their needs), or simply have variety in their sexual/romantic life. Others may feel that they have the capacity to love more than one person at a time and feel most fulfilled in multiple relationships. Practicing ENM is increasingly common and simple to be inclusive of - consider asking patients about whether they have one or multiple partners!

Zoey Zephyr



She/Her

Zoey Zephyr is a Montana House of Representatives member representing Missoula, MT. She was elected in 2022 as the first openly transgender person to be elected to the state legislature in Montana. Zoey decided to run after several years of LGBTQ+ activism and testifying against bills opposed to LGBTQ+ rights, as she felt that her words were not heard by existing legislators and thought that she needed to "get into the room where the laws are being written." Recently, Rep. Zephyr has made headlines after being sanctioned on the MT house floor following her vocal opposition to a bill prohibiting gender-affirming medical care for minors in MT. After telling the GOP bill sponsors that they will "have blood on [their] hands," she was immediately censured; Speaker Matt Reiger refused to recognize her and let her speak on the floor. Two days later, the House voted to officially sanction her by removing her from the house floor and refusing to let her speak for the remainder of the session. She has recently filed a lawsuit on behalf of herself and her 11,000 constituents, claiming that she and their first amendment rights have been violated.

Adoptions LGBTQIA2S+ Couples



Families nowadays are more diverse than ever, particularly in the adoption community, because adoption is frequently used to form transracial, multicultural, same-sex, and single-parent families. Statistics on same-sex adoption indicate that gay couples are adopting at an increasing rate. Families nowadays are more diverse than ever, particularly in the adoption community, because adoption is frequently used to form transracial, multicultural, same-sex, and single-parent families. Statistics on same-sex adoption indicate that gay couples are adopting at an increasing rate. In contrast to heterosexual couples, same-sex couples are four times more likely to raise adopted children and six times more likely to raise foster children. Gay and lesbian parents are raising 4% of adopted children and 3% of foster children.

Same-sex couples have frequently encountered obstacles to starting families throughout the history of homosexual adoption, and they have fought for equal adoption rights. Thankfully, same-sex unions and adoption are becoming more accepted, and all states permit LGBTQ adoption. Mississippi was the final state to repeal anti-LGBT adoption restrictions after a federal judge ruled that they were unconstitutional in 2016. In conjunction with the federal marriage equality decision from 2015, this court decision now safeguards homosexual couples' ability to adopt across the country. Nevertheless, there can still be limitations on adoption legislation for gay couples depending on marital status, varying from state to state, much like for opposite-sex couples.

Please visit this link (https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/foster_and_adoption_laws) for more information on lgbtqia2s+ Foster and Adoptions Laws specific to each state.

Schulyer Bailar



He/Him

Schuyler Bailar is the first transgender athlete to compete in any sport on an NCAA Division 1 men's team. He was recruited to Harvard's women's swim team and made the choice to potentially give this NCAA opportunity up by transitioning during a gap year. However, he was offered a spot on the men's team and became the first publicly documented transgender man to compete in any sport. He is now an educator, author, and advocate for trans inclusion, radical body acceptance, and mental health awareness. Schuyler offered to consult for DEI programming, transliteracy, and gender competency training and is often invited for both speaking engagements and workshops on allyship, advocacy, and mental health. In addition to this, he holds monthly support groups for the LGBTQ+ community, including a trans-masc support group, a mixed-race LGBTQ+ group, and a trans+ group.

Chase Strangio



He/Him

Chase Strangio is a nationally renowned authority on transgender rights and the Deputy Director for Transgender Justice with the ACLU's LGBT & HIV Project. Chase's work on behalf of LGBTQ persons and those living with HIV includes impact litigation as well as legislative and administrative advocacy across the United States. Before joining the ACLU, Chase served as the Sylvia Rivera Law Project's Director of Prisoner Justice Initiatives, representing transgender and gender non-conforming people in incarceration settings. Chase was also an Equal Justice Works fellow. Chase co-founded the Lorena Borjas Community Fund in 2012, a nonprofit that offers LGBTQ immigrants in criminal and immigration issues direct bail/bond assistance. Chase is a Grinnell College and Northeastern University School of Law graduate.

Throughout his career, Strangio has progressed from working at an LGBTQ+ legal aid organization that provides direct services to queer and trans New Yorkers to handling cases that have an impact on the LGBTQ+ community as a whole in the nation's highest courts. Along with

building up his reputation as a civil rights advocate, Strangio has used his own celebrity and the following of friends to change public perception. Examples include:

- Walking the Emmys red carpet alongside Laverne Cox.
- Partnering with Ariana Grande to raise \$3 million.
- Hosting a number of Instagram live events.

It is a comprehensive, round-the-clock defense of LGBTQ+ rights at a time when trans rights are being attacked the most severely.