

—“There is some good in this world, and it’s worth fighting for.” —J.R.R. Tolkien—

The Tyrant Judge of Grand Jct.



By Nikoli Weir

The City of Grand Junction has long been waging a war against its unhoused citizens. From the shutting down of parks that were used by the homeless, to banning tents, evicting encampments, indiscriminate police harassment and even violence, no resource has gone unused in this vile campaign of dehumanization and dislocation. There is not a single government institution in Grand Junction that can claim innocence; they are all complicit in what amounts to a grand conspiracy to deprive the homeless people of Grand Junction of access to basic necessities and rights.

There is, however, one institution that can claim the title of most complicit, and that is the Grand Junction Municipal Court. In a recent letter to the Mayor and City Council of Grand Junction, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) delivers a thundering condemnation of the criminal activity of the local courts, and in particular that of Grand Junction Municipal Court Judge Tammy Eret; according to the ACLU, she

“persistently and illegally denies court-appointed counsel to incarcerated people, coerces uncounseled guilty pleas, and often imposes lengthy, uncounseled, illegal jail sentences.”

To translate this all into everyday English, Judge Tammy Eret has (allegedly) deprived United States citizens of their constitutional right to legal representation, strong-armed defendants into pleading guilty to crimes that they did not commit, and then locked them up in the county jail on the taxpayers dime for sentences longer than allowed by law; the majority of these defendants, as mentioned earlier, did not receive the legally required representation in court.

If this final alleged action had been done by someone who wasn’t a judge, it would be considered false imprisonment. This is a felony. But of course, because Judge Eret is an esteemed representative of the law, that means that she is above the law. But taxpayers are not. Under Colorado law,

TYRANT on Page Four

Leaving a Legacy: *The Rev* and Community Mourns the Loss of Aiden McVay



Trenten Saenz aka "Peter Pan Van Dyke" and Aiden McVay aka "Honey Van Dyke" at Grand Junction PRIDE 2023.

By Jacob Richards

The Revolutionist was honored to publish eleven articles and one poem of Aiden's before they passed away. This issue contains Aiden's last article and a center spread of their photography. Aiden left a legacy in this world, a legacy that continues to come into focus as we meet more and more people impacted by their work. *Rest In Power*

There are so many cliches that we as a society use to rationalize when people die young: "a flame that burns twice as bright burns half as long," "only the good die young," "they were one of God's favorites," "they are in a better place now," etc, etc.

And Aiden would have hated all of them.

Some for being cliché, some for being ableist, others for being diminutive, sappy, and even disempowering.

Aiden passed away on October 6 at Children's Hospital in Denver. They were seventeen years old.

Aiden was born in Texas in 2007 with a rare form of epilepsy. They were not expected to live but for a couple of years. In 2019, their mom, Morgan McVay, and sister moved to Colorado to access a program that fairly compensated full-time family care providers.

The certainty of an early death was always there. Their life was punctuated by near-daily seizures, the treatment for which left Aiden nonverbal, partially blind, and wheelchair bound.

But that's not how I knew Aiden

Announcing the Formation of a Mesa County Democratic Socialist of America (DSA)

"The DSA is the largest socialist organization in the United States with over 92,000 members."

The local chapter is holding meetings and organizing! Join them! Memberships are on a sliding scale! www.dsausa.org

Contact the local chapter: mesacountydsa1@gmail.com

Cortez Food Not Bombs

Serves a community meal every Sunday at Veterans Park. 12pm-2pm

Falconer Workers' Society

Anti-Capitalist and Revolutionary Book Club Grand Junction. Email for an invite. falconersworkerssociety@gmail.com

Be the Media! Help Edit, Write Distro The Revolutionist

therevolutionistgj@gmail.com

Trans Day of Remembrance Fashion Show

November 17 at 7pm
Colorado Mesa University
For more info contact Loving Beyond Understanding

Mutual Aid Partners' Distro Day!

Every Tuesday!
10am to 1pm Drop Donations
11am to 1pm Receive Donations
262 Ute Ave, Grand Junction

Solidarity Not Charity

Free Food for Free People
Feeds every Saturday at 4pm at the Resource Center. Grand Jct.
solidaritynotcharitygjinfo@gmail.com

Say Her Name!

Candle light vigil to remember and honor Amanda Overstreet, who went missing in to 2005.

Amanda deserves justice.
November 16 at 2pm
Longs Park 3117 F Road.
Grand Junction

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them, as that is their sacred duty.

To us moderns, both of these social structures seem absurd, tyrannical and maybe even unnatural. This is a view that is not entirely unjustified. But what about the system we live under today? Should we not undertake to view our system through the same critical eye that we view previous systems?

We can easily understand that all the ideological systems of the past were nothing more than elaborate justifications for the already existing social structures and institutions. They were conceived of after the fact, in much the same way that a businessman will, after buying expensive goods, “write them off” as business expenses in order to avoid paying taxes on them. In the same way, the kings and priests of old, over a period of many centuries, developed doctrines to justify morally what they could not prove intellectually.

We recognize all of this, but stop just short of the most important part; we fail to extend this critical analysis to our own social system. If we did, we would quickly realize that we never ceased “writing off” the expenses of our social system—capitalism—by means of moral subterfuge.

As an example, take the following talking point; “the rich have what they have because they worked harder than everyone else.” At first glance this seems to be nothing more than common sense. Those who work are rewarded, those who don’t aren’t. However, if this really was the case, you would expect to see rich people everywhere you look.

The average American works a ridiculous amount; according to a 2021 Gallup Survey, 41% of Americans work more than 45 hours a week. If it were true that hard work was the key to wealth, you would expect all of these Americans to be drowning in it, and yet they aren’t.

If it really were the case that hard work led to wealth, you would see millionaires who work as plumbers and school teachers. Yet you don’t see that. You see millionaires sitting on the boards of transnational corporations. You see millionaires who own hundreds of acres of land and dozens of houses that they rent out. You see millionaires whose only job is to manipulate the circulation of money so that they are able to make more of it.

Last time I checked, none of these “jobs” actually produce anything; they just manage and exploit what has already been made by people who do actual work. And it is people with these “jobs,” people who don’t actually work, who tell you and me that if we want to get rich that we should just work hard, glossing over the fact that they got rich not from their own work, but from the work of others.

If the great lie of the ancient world was that the ruling classes descended from the gods and thus deserved to rule, and if the great lie of the Middle Ages was that the kings were anointed to rule by the one true God, then the great lie of capitalism is a masterpiece of simplification. Those monsters of modernity, the Nazis, knew it well, and engraved it above the gates to many of their concentration camps: “Arbeit macht frei.”

November News Briefs

Gunnison Cop Charged with Incest Ends Own Life in Loma

Last month, Gunnison Police Officer Daniel Huff made our news briefs after being charged with sexual assault and incest following a Colorado Bureau of Investigations probe. After bonding out of the Mesa County Jail on September 27, he was found dead near Loma the next morning.

Quarter Pounder Kills Mesa County Resident

An E Coli outbreak linked to the onions on the McDonalds’ Quarter Pounder has killed one and poisoned at least nine others. People are not lovin’ it. The Center for Disease Control confirmed 49 cases of E. Coli across ten states. More than half the cases are in Colorado.

FBI Creates its Own Crypto Currency

In a sting operation that charged nine people and three “market makers” with crimes related to insider trading, the FBI rooted out “widespread fraud and manipulation,” by creating its own crypto currency, NexFundAI, on the Ethereum-based blockchain. Turns out the “pump and dump” is, in fact, illegal.

Highway 50 Reopens, Finally

After over six months of the closures, Middle Bridge has fully reopened, and the towns of Gunnison and Crested Butte now have regular, paved-road access to Montrose where the workers actually live. Some weight restrictions still apply. It is scary how major infrastructure failures are starting to feel normal.

Radical Settlers Claim Public Land; Then Regular Settlers Reclaim It

A group of Mormon extremists and survivors of the Fundamentalist Latter-Day Saints cult, calling themselves the Free Land Holders Committee, attempted to fence off and claim roughly 1400 acres in southwestern Colorado. The group posted notices and filed nonsensical fillings influenced by the debunked sovereign citizen movement. They cited the Homestead Act, the Treaty of Guadalupe, the Treaty of Ghent, and the Articles of Confederation in their claim. On October 10, under the watchful eyes of the sheriff, who was happy to consider the whole thing ‘a civil matter,’ local settlers reclaimed the land they rightfully stole first.

Colorado ACLU Sues Vail For Canceling Indigenous Artist

In June, we interviewed Danielle SeeWalker, an indigenous artists whose residency with the town of Vail was canceled for her unrelated work “G is for Genocide.” The piece makes connections to the violence faced by Native Americans and the ongoing slaughter in Gaza. Laura Moraff told Denver’s FOX 31, “It’s the constitutional violation here that once the government has granted this opportunity to someone, it can’t then say because of views you expressed, you’re no longer entitled to that opportunity.”

Delta County Tyrants

The *Rev*, has some juicy info that shenanigans on par with Judge Tammey Eret’s kangaroo court in Grand Junction, are happening in Delta. More info to come next issue.

Say Her Name: Amanda Overstreet

In January, human remains were found in a freezer of a recently sold house. Nine months later, the DNA test confirmed that the remains were those of 16-year-old Amanda Overstreet who has been missing since April of 2005. The former owners of the house were her birth mother, Leanne Overstreet Imer, and step-dad, Bradley David Imer. Bradley died of complications related to COVID in 2021. So many questions remain unanswered, and are not being investigated by the local law enforcement. Why?

Durango Students Walkout, Demand Inclusivity, and Win!

On October 15, 100 students walked out of classes at Durango High School and marched to Buckley Park in response to a school district edict forbidding staff from displaying flags, posters or items containing political symbols. The policy specifically singled out Black Lives Matter and trans pride flags. The policy was quickly suspended pending further review.

Mutual Aid Proves Vital after Hurricanes Helene and Milton

Leftists are at their best when we are doing mutual aid in the wake of disasters. From the

Praxis in Action: Events & Orgs

You can find The Revolutionist at the following business:

Lithic Books, Discontent, 1st Street Tattoo Parlor, Copeeka Coffee, Good Judy’s, Uncanny Valley, Loving Beyond Understanding, Desert Bloom Hydroponics, and more!

Free Palestine Rally

10am to 12noon @
12th and North
Grand Junction
November 9 & 23.

TYRANT From Page One

wrongful imprisonment is compensated at the rate of \$191.78 per day per person. Our community is on the hook for millions.

The letter sent by the ACLU highlights a particularly egregious example of Judge Erat's criminal behavior. This year, a homeless man by the name of David Schroeder was arrested by police on two petty theft charges—he stole food and a dog harness. He went before Judge Erat, who sentenced him to nine months in prison. According to Colorado law, as cited by the ACLU, “the maximum total penalty for these crimes is 20 days—10 days per count.” Not only that, but the defendant repeatedly made requests for an attorney to be provided to him, and was denied each time by Judge Erat. The ACLU states that “Judge Erat coerced an illegal, uncounseled guilty plea from Mr. Schroeder and then imposed an illegal, uncounseled jail sentence.”



Tyrant, Tammy Erat's
LinkedIn picture

Judge Tammy Erat is also employed as the lead council for School District 51 (D51), a full-time position. She gets paid over 200k a year by D51, and then she is spending three days a week working as the Grand Junction Municipal Judge. The Mesa Valley Educators Association, the union that represents teachers in D51, made their position on this matter very clear in a recent mass email sent out: “We are calling for a full ethics investigation into the terms of her employment.”

If this isn't the behavior of a thug and a petty tyrant, then what is? “Judge” Erat is not a judge; she is a criminal who hides behind a gavel and a black robe. David Schroeder is not the only victim of her criminal cruelty, and make no mistake, they are her victims. And just like any other serial criminal, Judge Erat has her preferred victims. It is typical for serial criminals to seek out the most disempowered victims, as they are the least likely to be capable of fighting back. And in this, Judge Erat is no exception; her pre-

ferred victims are people experiencing homelessness.

According to the letter by the ACLU, Judge Erat's behavior is not confined to the case of David Schroeder; she has done this so many times that she has turned the Grand Junction Municipal Court into “an endless revolving door to Mesa County Jail, repeating a devastating cycle of incarceration without connecting people to services, all at county taxpayer expense.”

This is a problem that is not unique to Grand Junction. A series of reports by *The Denver Post* has exposed a disturbing trend of charging defendants in municipal court after Colorado passed a series of criminal justice reforms; defendants around the state now face much stiffer sentences in municipal court than they would in district court.

Municipal courts were intended to handle the least serious offenses, such as petty theft and disturbing the peace; this now seems to be a thing of the past. Municipal court defendants now face sentences 15 to 20 times stiffer than they would receive if they were facing state charges.

Rebecca Wallace of the ACLU told *The Denver Post*, “Municipal courts are able to operate in a shroud of secrecy, where violations go unnoticed and unchecked.” This unchecked power has allowed these courts to become what amount to autonomous fiefdoms lorded over by petty tyrants who are accountable to no one but themselves.

Many of these so-called judges, such as our very own Tammy Erat, are appointed, not elected. If the people who they are supposed to serve feel that they are abusing their power, there is no democratic mechanism in place which can be used to remove them from power. Is that really liberty and justice for all?

The Poverty of Economics or Work Will Set You Free

By Nikoli Weir

It seems to be an immutable law that wealth and power are one and the same.

Since the beginning of written history human society has been divided into classes. These class divisions will be different depending on the particular society you are looking at and its peculiar conditions.

who owns no little to no land, you are a nobody, and as such have the rights of a nobody.

In some other societies, such as the various kingdoms and principalities of Medieval Europe, class is based on blood and family ties. If you are a member of a royal or aristocratic family, then you have power.



Photo by Honest Lens Photography

Some societies, like Ancient Rome, had class systems based on slavery and land ownership, with slaves and Plebeians at the bottom, and slave owners and land-owning Patricians at the top. In such societies, if you are a slave, or if you are a “free” Plebeian

Why? Because of something called “the divine right of kings.” In simple terms, they are powerful because they are blessed by God, and those without power must serve

ECONOMICS From Page Fourteen

Make sure to checkout our website for additional content, breaking news, and calls to action.

<https://therevolutionistgj.org>



HANGOUT From Page Eleven

fingers and say, absolutely, the city harassed them into closing. I mean, that's what Amos, I think, is kind of leaning towards, so it's definitely part of it.

"I don't know what the whole deal was, but there are definitely people that are—again, you've come back to Cody Kennedy and some of the police force things—there are people that are there to shut things down and to close doors without solutions. And I just view this as another one of those types of things that we've done that we've stopped something that appeared to be a threat with no solution to the people they were serving."

While the employees of the Hangout that I spoke with declined to comment on why Amos made the call to close the Hangout, the visitors I met were unanimous in their agreement that what they've seen over the past year is the city cracking down and the Hangout collapsing under the pressure. Also unanimous were the bleak prospects of how life would change after the Hangout closure the next morning.

"It's going to be hell," were the

words of one visitor. "The cops are running everyone out of their campsites. Homeward-Bound is already full, so where is everyone going to go? To the streets. Then the cops are going to fuck with them, and then they go to jail. Then it's winter, and everyone is sick."

As I left the Hangout that day, a heavy, nauseous feeling followed in my wake. It took me a week to think of a name for it. Dread-ja vu. The meeting place of *deja vu* and *dread*, it's the feeling that's brought on by watching the same terrible thing happen over and over again, and over and over until a sick suspicion rises within you that this is always how the story ends. The feeling intensified as I read the next issue of *The Daily Sentinel*, quoting councilmember Cody Kennedy calling the resource center I frequent to share hot meals and pantry items with my community as "a crack house", making the same claims of negligence and disturbance to the community that he made about the Hangout before it shut down.

As the nights grow colder and streets and jail cells grow more crowded, it's clear that this city can't take another closure.

BRIEFS From Page Three

Democratic Socialist of America to constellations of anarcho affinity groups, leftists across the impacted region and the country have come together to do what they do best. Groups like Mutual Aid Disaster Relief, Triangle Mutual Aid and Central Florida Mutual Aid are doing all the things without the need for bosses, profit, salaries or bureaucracy. Just people helping people. Contribute today at <https://mutualaiddisasterrelief.org/>.

SCOTUS to Hear Uintah Basin Railroad Case

On December 10, the United States Supreme court will hear, and likely overturn, the ruling that had put the brakes on this unpopular oil and gas project and railroad. If built, the Uintah Basin Railroad would route eight "bomb trains" through the Western Colorado every day.

Good Judy's Jesse Daniels Wins Prism Award

Local activist, entrepreneur, and owner of western Colorado's only LGBTQ+ bar, Jesse Daniels was one of four recipients of One Colorado's Prism Award. The award is well deserved, as Jesse's work with the community goes back decades. Thank you Jesse!

Canadian Firm Acquires Uranium Leases in Montrose and San Miguel County

C2C Metals Corp, a publicly traded Canadian firm, announced on October 23 that they had purchased five uranium mining "properties" consisting of 199 individual mining claims covering 5400 acres. Our region's toxic and radioactive legacy should give anyone pause about this coming uranium boom.

A Whore Looks at 40

By Mary Magdalene

Dedicated to the known murdered and missing sex workers from cities I have worked.

I'm not only a whore
I dabble with being a Madonna

I'm not only a whore
I'm a full honors graduate

I'm not only a whore
I'm a mother to all who enter my home

I'm not only a whore
I'm a master of the sarcastic arts

I'm not only a whore
I'm a friend with a listening ear and space to hold your wounds

I'm not only a whore
I'm a healing child

I'm not only a whore
I'm a passionate self taught baker

I'm not only a whore
I'm an empathetic human

I'm not only a whore
I'm a practical pessimist

I'm not only a whore
I'm an aspiring writer

I'm not only a whore
I'm the mother to six badass humans

I'm not only a whore
I'm a fourth generation immigrant

I'm not only a whore
I'm a partner to a man with a gorgeous soul

I'm not only a whore

I sometimes choose not to spread my legs

I'm not only a whore
I'm a human with a complex existence

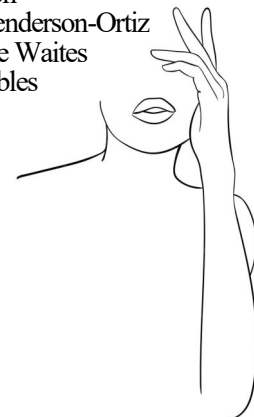
I'm not only a whore
But,
I will fuck like one

Murdered:

Paula Moore
Jacie Taylor
Paige Birgfeld
Monica Diana Candelaria
Victoria Ann Chavez
Syllannia Terene Edwards
Doreen Marquez
Veronica Romero
Jamie Caterina Barela
Evelyn JesusMaria Salazar
Virginia Cloven
Julie Cyndie Nieto
Cinnamon Elks
Michelle Gina Valdez

Missing:

Darlene Marie Trujillo
Martha Jo Lucre
Anna Love Vigil
Felipa Victoria Gonzales
Nina Brenda Herron
Jillian Elizabeth Henderson-Ortiz
Shawntell Monique Waites
Leah Rachelle Peebles
Vanessa Reed



AIDEN From Page Two

McVay. They had informed me about their conditions, of course, but I knew them as their editor.

I knew that they always met their deadlines!

I knew that they could be assigned a story to cover or develop their own and tell it equally well.

I knew that they were open to feedback and edits, and at the same time strong-willed about keeping their voice theirs.

I knew they saw beauty and humanity in everyone.

I knew that they had something to say—it was pouring out of them.

“They saw a place for themselves and went for it,” said Stella Rae.

“I found their work powerful and important. It was easy to read. I just wish there was more of it. They will certainly be missed.”

“Aiden would say ‘I use my disabilities to my advantage,’” said their mom, Morgan McVay. Their eyes were able to see light and shadow and harsh lines. “That’s why drag was a big deal. Aiden could actually see the makeup and artistry and bright colors.”

“I met Aiden at Ouray County Pride in 2023,” said Xavi F. Seanz aka Xavi Van Dyke. “I told them about the Van Dyke family and other queer events they could attend. After that, we were family.”

Aiden had found their people—their community. The LGBTQ+ community accepted Aiden for themselves, and Aiden became, through the pages of *The Revolutionist* and *Out Front Magazine*, a storyteller and advocate for their community. Aiden adopted they/them pronouns in 2021, and identified as non-binary and asexual.



Aiden McVay, Self-portrait. Oct. 2023

“Aiden’s art was photography and journalism. Aiden told stories that made us the stars,” said Seanz.

Every time Aiden would submit a story, I always thought to myself that they were the real story. I wanted to ask how they did interviews and took photos, but never did.

According to McVay, during a zoom interview with Jessie Daniels, owner of Good Judy’s in Grand Junction, Aiden had a seizure. After it was over, they excused themselves and continued with the interview. “I thought ‘that’s my kid,’” said McVay. “Aiden could do anything. They were indomitable.”

“Aiden always had to fight to be seen,” said McVay. Schools and doctors always doubted their capabilities. They wanted to be seen for their mind. “Aiden always knew they were brilliant.”

When their writing and photography started getting published in *The Revolutionist* in April, Aiden’s response was “finally,” according to McVay. They were finally being seen.

Their love and compassion was clear to see in their photography and writing. “Aiden would sacrifice themselves for others,” said McVay.

Even at the end, they were thinking of others, choosing to donate their organs so that others may live.

“If we can learn something from Aiden, we can learn to be kinder, and see one another through innocent eyes...They made a difference in my life,” said Seanz. “I have the bear and squishy mellow they gave me that sit above my desk. They will be a constant reminder to speak up and out. To live and be seen. Rest in power, Aiden.”

Dread-ja Vu: On Closures, Cops and the Coming Winter

By Columbarian

I visited the Amos Hangout for the first time on October 13th, the last day before its closure. The building was silent but for the footsteps of the few visitors and employees milling about the three rooms in the main area: a kitchen, bathroom, and open space with benches against the wall and a dining table. The crowd would come that evening for a gathering to commemorate the last night at the Hangout.

It didn’t take long to strike up a conversation with a fellow visitor, as I was offered a slice of microwave pizza almost as soon as I took my seat. The man who offered to share his lunch before

he learned my name introduced himself as Nathan Lipman, and we sat together and discussed the past three months he had spent visiting the Hangout.

“I came here so I can make real meals. Not just, like, soup and bread. We come up with pork chops, hamburgers. You name it, we try to come up with it here.” According to Nathan, cooking at the Hangout was most often a collaborative effort. “If we need something, somebody’s got it. All you gotta do is holler outside that you’re cooking dinner, what you need and somebody will normally find it.”

Along with the use of the kitchen space, the Hangout enabled visitors to wash their clothes, store their belongings, use the bathroom, shower, shelter from the elements and stay in place without getting ticketed or

arrested. These services required coverage through Medicaid and compliance with the list of rules posted on the walls, but were otherwise complementary. As covered in *The Daily Sentinel* article, “Amos Hangout house provides space for homeless to rest, eat and bathe”, the Hangout opened on October 1, 2023, funded by Medicaid and community donations rather than backed by city funds.



The building formerly known as the Hangout. 1111 Ute Ave. Photo Courtesy Honest Lens Photography.

What I gathered from a phone conversation I shared with city council member Scott Beilfuss is that Amos has been fighting an uphill battle to keep the Hangout in operation ever since. In his words: “As far as I knew, they still were operating legally, but they had been harassed so

much. For example, I’m sure you heard the story, but they got ticketed because their weeds were one inch too long from the legal length of weeds. It’s like, talk about harassment.”

“You know, [Councilmember] Cody [Kennedy] is coming from a law enforcement background, and that’s kind of the lane he’s in right now. He’s not thinking ‘solutions.’ He’s just thinking ‘shut-down.’ And, you know, I mean, that’s Cody, that’s his prerogative.”

Beilfuss declined from stating definitively whether or not this pattern of harassment from local government was the ultimate cause of the Hangout’s closure, stating, “You can’t just sit there and point

of the total of America's 84 anti-LGBTQ+ laws in place.

But where did anti-LGBTQ laws come from? Homophobia? Religion? Unfortunately, no one knows for sure, but looking at some of the earliest anti-LGBT legislation, it seems it originates from religion. According to Stonewall, British colonialism imported homophobia to the African countries under the commonwealth. Countries formerly ruled by Britain have the most severe anti-LGBTQ+ laws. This appears to stem from Christian rule dating all the way back to Henry VIII and continued with Christian missionaries.

Closer to home, anti-sodomy laws existed at the state level since the 17th century. Even Colorado adopted British common law when it entered the union, which allowed for the death penalty for acts of homosexuality.

The history of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation at the federal level in the United States is less clear, but many point to the Immigration Act of 1917, which restricted immigration to people with "constitutional psychopathic inferiority," a classification used to discriminate against people because of their sexual orientation.

Considering modern legislation's blatant disregard for separation of church and state, one might assume that text from the Bible is influencing our Congress and state representatives. Although the people spewing hateful rhetoric cite biblical passages for their "moral reasoning," their evidence is severely lacking, as the word "homosexual" wasn't translated that way until 1946.

The biblical passage claiming homosexuality is morally wrong in Leviticus contains only two Greek words, malakoi and arsenokoitai, for which the original translation was "boy molesters" rather than homosexuals, and was most likely referring to Levitical priests and laws.

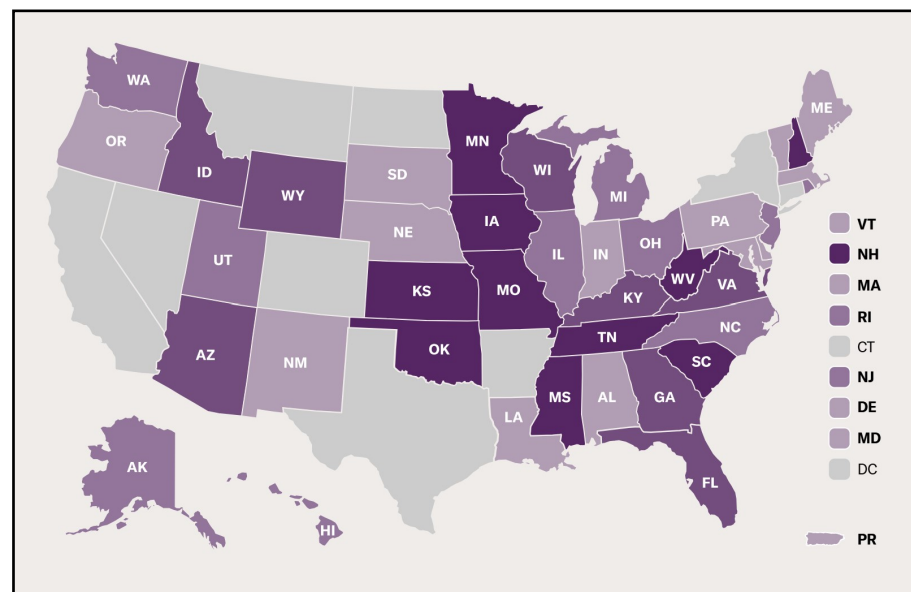
Regardless of one's religious faith or the books they follow, it has no place in our legislation. We have a duty to make sure that everyone regardless of race, religion, disability or sexual orientation be treated with equality. And right now, our nation, along with many other countries, is denying our human right to exist. We all must protect each other, and if any of us are not free, then none of us are free. So I encourage you to stand up, vote, protest and live as who you truly are.

Free Gaza Rally! GJ!



Humanity and Justice Advocates of Grand Junction holds regular rallies at 12th and North Avenue, calling for peace in Gaza and Lebanon. Over a dozen people rallied on October 26. Folks from the Ceasefire Now! Roaring Fork Valley attended. Photo by Firefox.

It's Crime to be Gay!?



ACLU's map of anti-trans legislation. Courtesy ACLU. Darker state have more anti-trans legislation. <https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights-2024>

By Aiden McVay

Worldwide, 63 jurisdictions have LGBTQ+ bans; of those, 12 countries have the death penalty as a potential sentence for LGBTQ+ people.

The Human Dignity Trust website offers a map and list of countries that criminalize LGBTQ+ people, as well as those countries that enforce the death penalty for the LGBTQ+ community.

Of the countries that enforce a death penalty for LGBTQ+ people, eight are in Asia: Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Pakistan, Brunei and Qatar, and four are in Africa: Somalia, Nigeria, Mauritania and Uganda. All of those countries, except Uganda, have death by stoning as the punishment. Under Ugandan law, life in prison is the punishment, but the government also states that it imposes the death penalty.

It's not just foreign countries that have LGBTQ+ bans. According to the Human Rights Campaign, in 2023, over 520

anti-LGBTQ+ bills were introduced in state legislatures. Over 220 bills specifically targeted transgender and non-binary people, and over 70 anti-LGBTQ+ laws were enacted in 2023. The HRC breaks it down—Laws banning gender affirming care for transgender youth, 15: Laws requiring or allowing misgendering of transgender students, 7: Laws targeting drag performances, 2: Laws creating a license to discriminate, 3: Laws censoring school curriculum, including books, 4.

The American Civil Liberties Union also tracks anti-LGBTQ+ legislation. Of the 530 bills, they are currently tracking 31 introduced bills, 104 advancing and 44 already passed into laws across state legislatures. This year, Tennessee tops the list with 13 of 44 active laws in the United States. Utah comes in at 6, Idaho at 5 and Iowa at 4. In 2023, Texas had 6 active anti-LGBTQ+ bills, Colorado had zero and North Dakota rounded out the top of the list with 10 laws

Finding Beauty Everywhere: The Photography of Aiden McVay



Old Colorado City, Colorado Springs. 2021.



Stella Rae Van Dyke. GJ's Ceasar Chavez Celebration, 2024



Unhoused man, Grand Junction. Aiden's first portrait. 2021.



Self-Portrait mid-seizure. "My body is tighter than a yo-yo. The pain is so intense it feels as if I'm on fire. The rumbling in my stomach is like a volcano waiting to explode. The spasms are crumpling up my muscles and ripping them apart. But this is the price I pay for not seizing 24 hours a day. Keto may save me from seizing all the time, but it requires my body just as the devil requires a soul."



Xavi Van Dyke at Delta Pride 2023.



Kandrii Zavalla, Dia De Los Muertos, Delta 2023.



Self-Portrait.



Daizy McCarty, We Choose the Bear photo shoot, 2024



Zackarina Jenny-Hoe, Mt. Pride. Avon, Colorado.



Angelique Fantastique, Ouray Pride 2024.