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Meet Wyn Arentth.



'We haven't done anything wrong to anybody'

Anti-trans legislation

Kids like Wyn are the targets of legislation that seeks to prevent them from accessing gender-affirming healthcare, "Don't Say Gay" bills, which prevent discussions about gender or sexual orientation in schools.

Book bans

St. Tammany Parish has been one of the most active places re: book bans in Louisiana. The library system has faced hundreds of challenges and the majority of the books involve LGBTQ-affirming themes and/or characters. Louisiana's newly elected governor is involved as well.

Dismantling of support systems

Some legislation and local school policies are forcing clubs and associations at schools, like "Gay Straight Alliance" (GSA) to disband. These groups are often vital support systems for kids who may otherwise have none.

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“I put up some fliers for a rally and it got put on Facebook, and people in the comments wasted no time directly talking about me and calling me slurs — people’s parents. Why is this something that I have to put up with? No 15-year-old child should have to deal with being bullied and harassed almost every day.”

— Wyn Arentz

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“It is not an exaggeration to say taking away someone's support system, especially a person with a marginalized identity, puts someone at risk. At risk of harm by themselves, but also at risk of harm from others.”

— Dr. Thema Bryant, president of the American Psychological Association



Some data:

41%

of LGBTQ young people seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year

56%

of LGBTQ young people who wanted mental health care in the past year were not able to get it.

Nearly 2 in 3

LGBTQ young people said that hearing about potential state or local laws banning people from discussing LGBTQ people at school made their mental health a lot worse.

The Role of the Media

Questions of accuracy

NYT has faced criticism for ‘inaccurate, biased coverage of transgender people.’ Examples include reporting gender affirming care as a “side” to be debated rather than widely held consensus in medical community.

Empowers the powerful

NYT and others cited by legislators to justify legislation targeting transgender people. This contributes to an ongoing climate of discrimination and violence.

Failure to report information re: sources

Mainstream outlets like NYT may omit important information about sources, such as a source’s connection to anti-trans groups.

Framing Language

Youth held at Angola



State vs. Media Framing

Youth with “high risk of violence”

Attorneys for the state referred to them numerous in hearings times as quote violent and aggressive

Juvenile offenders

Youth who have engaged in violent behavior

These kids were held in solitary confinement for extended periods of time, that they're exposed to extreme heat and that they're not getting the educational and mental health services that the state is required to provide them.

Words matter: A judge ruled they had to be moved immediately. She reviewed evidence showing the state disciplined children by withholding contact from their families, citing a mother unable to communicate with her son for three consecutive weeks.

Mass shootings



The media dilemmas

Naming the shooter

The #NoNotoriety movement may be the new norm as more newsrooms adopt the practice—or a version of it, such as the practice of naming the shooter once and never in a headline.

Reporting the manifesto

Should the media amplify the hateful ideas and motivations behind a mass shooting event? It's still unclear at this time if there will be consensus.

Race portrayals

White shooters framed as mentally ill and suffering from extreme life circumstances—19 times more likely to receive mental illness frame than Black shooters.

_____(Vincent)_____



Media Changes

**Mass shooting
coverage actively
changing.**

More than 1,000 NYT contributors signed an open letter citing “serious concerns about editorial bias in the newspaper’s reporting on transgender, non-binary, and gender nonconforming people.”

Individual newsrooms and journalists

More responsible coverage

For mental health and suicide, there's a trend toward increasing hopeful and recovery-oriented coverage, in relation to mental illness and suicide and away from inaccurate and stigmatizing coverage. (Whitley 2023)

Movement journalism

Consumers seek outlets that center underrepresented and/or marginalized voices. Examples: Scalawag Magazine, The 19th, PressOn, and others.

Asset Framing

A narrative model that defines people by their assets and aspirations before noting challenges and deficits they face/are facing.

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