



Texas's Fight for Independence

By E.D. Gray

“Attorney general Paxton’s opinion and Governor Abbott’s letter have no legal effect, can’t change Texas law, and can’t override the constitutional rights of Texas families... No court anywhere in the country has ever found that gender-affirming care can be considered child abuse.” - ACLU

In October of 2021, the very first anti-trans legislation to become law in recent years made its debut thanks to Texas Republican Governor Greg Abbott, making

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The Owl House & Representation in Animation

By Lauren Post



This Article contains some spoilers for plot of the show.

Disney’s The Owl House is the story of a young Dominican-American girl, Luz Noceda, who doesn’t want to go to summer school.

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Leaving Toxic Relationships

By L. Leavitt

For many couples, personal relationships have their share of ups and downs, but those who find themselves in a toxic relationship find that they are constantly exhausted and stressed out.

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Education and Independence

By Claudia Carranza, PhD

My Dearest Reader,

You don’t know me yet. This one fact could make it hard to trust my words, their motives, why I work with The Prism, and why I am writing this article. You are not wrong to be wary, but it is important to understand that simply not knowing about a person, place, thing, or topic is not justification for dismissing it. Sadly, this dismissal is all too often the case.

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Stand In Families Help LGBTQ+ and Allies Build Community

By Deborah Bostock-Kelley

While others watch from the sidelines as intolerance and inequity toward the LGBTQ+ community continue to grow, a gay man on Tiktok succeeded in building a safe space for the community and allies to connect.

On January 27, 2021, a Tiktok video under the *_zombie_dan* stated, “If you are a same-sex couple getting married that does not have a biological family there to support you, let me know. If I’m not able to attend your wedding, I have friends that will. We have a big network, and it continues to grow of moms and dads that want to be part of your day.... We’ll be your biggest fans.”

Soon over one hundred and forty-five thousand followers joined. Daniel Blevins, the content creator, never realized that the video would set into motion a chain of events that would have a global impact. He could not have imagined that one video’s call to action would be why a support system connecting members of the LGBTQ+ community and a network of allies would be built.

“When I started making content on Tiktok as an older gay man, I started getting contacted by young people looking for validation or affirmation,” he said.

TikTok members responded instantly to his sincerity. Blevins didn’t know what to think about his video going viral.

“It happened really fast. When I started reading comments, people were offering to help as well.” Stand-In Pride (Formerly Tiktok Stand-In Families) was born from the comments to his viral video. Inspired by Sara Cunningham, founder of Free Mom Hugs, Blevins knew he had but one positive voice in a sea of naysayers, but if his voice could connect with an LGBTQ+ youth or adult and help them see their value, he knew he had to try to help. “I didn’t know how to organize this because comments are just not a viable way for people to connect. I started looking around at social media, and Facebook had the only platform where you can do a private

group, and that’s how it came to be,” Blevins explained. “This is a connection point. It’s a place for people to post their needs, whether they need a person physically to stand in for someone at a wedding or graduation or simply they need someone to talk to. They can take that conversation to messenger, FaceTime, or however they choose. Basically, it’s a platform for people to connect. Though some members have met in person, most of our members are through a virtual connection.” Fast forward a little over a year and add nearly 37,000 other strangers’ voices affirming that they are worthy and loved. In the private Facebook group, the rainbow banner reads, “Together we make a family.” Representing over 70 countries worldwide, thousands of allies and the LGBTQ+ community comment on posts. They are eager to surround the writer in a virtual hug, tell them ‘good job’ or say, ‘I’m proud of you,’ ‘you are enough,’ ‘you aren’t alone,’ kind words spoken without judgment, only love.

These supporters will stand in as a new makeshift family because one man decided he wanted to make a small difference. Blevins saw a need; people in the LGBTQ+ community were losing their way and, in the worst situations, turning to suicide to escape the pain of not being accepted. Blevins is proud that the platform gives those in the LGBTQ+ community a safe space to be their authentic selves, virtually surrounded by people who accept them unconditionally.

Blevins relayed a favorite story from the first months of founding the Facebook group. A woman posted for advice for her twin trans brother. She was looking for a place to purchase chest binders for him. Immediately, her post was filled with helpful comments, and one commenter went as far as buying the binders for her brother.

“It just happened naturally. She didn’t come on asking anyone to buy anything. She was just looking for advice.”



Another trans member was dealing with domestic violence and needed someone to talk to. “Three members actually connected and helped this person get out of that domestic violence situation. I didn’t find out about this until after the fact. All three members were from different places, and they came together to help this person. It still gives me chills to just think about people going above and beyond to help someone.”

Blevins said that many Stand-In Moms and Dads had adopted their kids, if only figuratively. “We have a lot of Mom figures who check in on the kids they have adopted through the group every day. We have Dads who are there if someone needs advice on fixing things, though some Moms are good at fixing things too,” he said.

During Thanksgiving and Christmas, Blevins said that, without a second thought, many Stand-In Families opened their homes and set a place at their table for a total stranger they met through the Facebook group. Blevins has been written about in newspapers and magazines across the globe, featured on national morning shows, and spoken on podcasts, but he doesn’t consider himself any type of celebrity. He is launching a website and an app for allies and those that need support who are excluded because they don’t use Facebook. He is also transforming Stand-In Pride into a nonprofit organization that will focus on providing resources for the growing number of homeless LGBTQ+ individuals and outreach and education programs.

“My goal is to quickly reach young people who are tossed out before they are living on the streets and become hardened or are exposed to trafficking, drugs, and alcohol (abuse). I think that’s where the biggest difference can be made. If we can catch them as soon as

Mansion (6/13/2022)

By Alex Carr

My whole life felt like stumbling through darkness
An old mansion with the lights all off
Once I’d found my way through one room
The next was just as dark
Disembodied voices shouting at me
Telling me of what I should do
What I should be
Who I should be
I spent so much time chasing them
Only to trip over myself
Unknowingly letting self-fulfillment slip into corners I
never checked
The voices were only distractions
Keeping me from listening to myself
Drowning out the truth of who I really am
Through gaining independent thought
I found pieces of myself I was never allowed to realize
The lights started turning on by themselves
Slowly driving away the voices
Dissolving the shadows
There are no more intruders in my mansion
And I’m finally free to discover myself

they fall or are pushed out of the door, my biggest goal is to try to solve that problem. The app will be an extension of the Facebook group being more accessible to more people.”

Blevins said he never expected to start a kindness movement with a Tiktok post where hundreds of thousands pledged to walk in his footsteps. “I get a little bit overwhelmed when I think about it too much, but the goodness of so many people has just come out of every corner of the earth. It’s just amazing. It’s humbling to be recognized for something like this, but I don’t take a lot of credit for it. I just pushed a couple of buttons on Facebook. If the people who came there to offer their love and support didn’t show up, nobody would be noticing this group. I’d be just in there by myself. Without the members who joined, believed in the idea, and wanted to participate, it wouldn’t be what it is today.”

To become a part of Stand In Pride, sign up at facebook.com/groups/105879514461410.

A sister group in Stand-In Pride, Canada, is also available. To follow Daniel on Tiktok, follow the [_zombie_dan](#).