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Laramie Project

The weird thing is that this is not a first time thing that has happened. Hate crimes vs. Homosexuals are and have been around for a long time. We have seen in both the film and articles we were given to read that people don't want to be criticized when it comes to human rights. When it boils down to it though they only say that when they are in the lime light. Live and let live as long as I am not offended by what you do in front of me.

You first have exhibit (A) which is a boy in Laramie, WY called Matthew Shepherd. In the film The Laramie Project, we see some of the towns people talking about what type of town Laramie really is. You hear the phrase "live and let live, that is how we are here in Laramie". Other naive citizens are convincing themselves that "we don't grow boys like that here". This crime must have been from someone far away that gives us distance from what really happened. These statements of remorse for actually having to see the consequences for asinine decision making are a poor attempt to true conviction and would not even be worth thinking about if this hate crime was not a touchy subject. The towns people in this film just try to blame something else or are simply in denial of the reality of problems that our society faces. The truth is that Laramie and all its citizens are just as guilty for what happened to Matthew Shepherd as Henderson & Mc Kinney are. By the end of the movie after all is said and done, the truth about gays getting treated negatively can bring people to feel bad but not to the point that they change a thing. They talk about how bad this crime was but there was only one girl though out the entire movie that was honest and said "we need to own this crime, we are like this... we are like this." You see if they are really not the town that kills gay kids they would stop and think how can we prevent this in the future. Nobody seems to want this to change bad enough to do anything about it.

Karen Franklin hits the nail on the head in her interview What makes a person become a gay-basher. She has gone around to various places seeing the victims of this specific type of hate crime. Though it can boil down to name calling and other subtleties; it is just as important as the case of Matthew Shepherd. Franklin states...

The main mistake is just focusing on these extreme, very heinous cases, and ignoring the everyday harassment that goes on nonstop all day long, every day, such as in the schools.

This is their mindset, that they (heterosexual males that lash out at gays) are being victimized. Because of mandatory norms about masculinity in our culture, and about heterosexuality, there's not any room for these young men to express anything other than very rigid gender norms, or to allow anybody else to do anything else in their presence.

These norms that Franklin discusses are acceptable by society and that is where society goes wrong. No one should have to feel fear because of their choices. They need to have their own consequences for things. Not have people that don't believe in gay rights to badger them into a dark corner.

This article as I said before hits the nail on the head stating that we need to focus on the wrongful treatment of our citizens and this can stop hate crimes that are horrendous from happening. Laramie if you really are not the town you say you aren't then get up and show us that. Do something.