



Author James Weems Newsletter

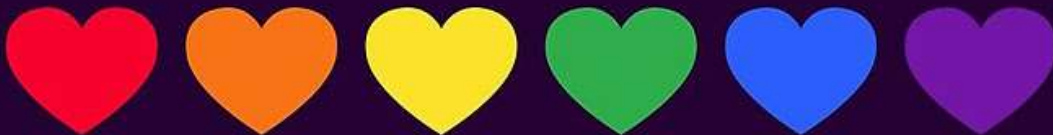
romantic comedies that will make you laugh, cry, and fall in love.

JAMES WEEMS AUTHOR

June 18, 2024

Happy Pride, y'all! For those of you just joining this journey, let me pause to explain that “y'all” is an official Southern United States pronoun, referencing any number of people from one to several hundred thousand. So you're all included! If this is your first “regular” newsletter, hooray! That means you've finished my three-in-a-row chatter, so things won't be quite as cluttered. Welcome to the group! Make yourself at home.... Feel free to contact me – reply to this email, visit the website (<https://jamesweems.com>) and leave a message there, or email me at author@jamesweems.com. I promise I'll answer you as swiftly as I can. (And it will be really from me, I'm a one-man-shop here, at least for now). Now, if you at any time feel like you just don't want to be here any longer, slide to the bottom of this, or any of my emails to you, and click the “Unsubscribe” button, okay? I don't want to keep you here against your will!

HAPPY PRIDE MONTH



===== LOVE IS LOVE =====

With all that said... I'm going to jump right into things, because THIS is Pride Month, and there's a lot to be said about that. No matter where you fit in the crazy quilt that is humanity, whether you are straight as an arrow, slightly curved, bent into a pretzel, or are a lump of dough trying to figure out your place, the most important thing to remember is this: YOU BELONG HERE. You're valid. And, in this forum (this newsletter), and countless others, you're seen, and you are loved – not just this month, but EVERY day, week, and month of the year, and every year. If you are a straight ally, feel free to reach out, through me or others if you wish, to offer your support. If you're anywhere along the rainbow spectrum, or suspect you might be, there are organizations that can help. I encourage you to reach out to any or all of these.

The Trevor Project Help Hotline – open around the clock, 24/7/365

The Trevor Project (website)

GLAAD – The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (website)

PFLAG – Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (website)

In addition, there are local LGBTQIA2S+ centers in many communities, as well as bars, nightclubs, and other “gathering places.” Seek out safe havens, but beware of those who would prey upon you. (Sorry if I get a little heavy here. Know that I care about all of you!)

Pride Safety!

Travel in groups—there is power (and safety) in numbers.

Have an exit strategy or plan in case things go sideways.

Determine an emergency meet-up spot in case you get separated from your group.

Follow instructions from event organizers and law enforcement.

Stay hydrated and pack essentials like sunscreen.

Look out for each other—enable Find My or another location app for the day so everyone in your

group can keep track of one another.

Set regular times to check in with your group. If you spread out, plan to text or check-in every hour or so.

Trust your instincts. If something or someone seems off, get out of the situation as quickly as you can.

Practice inclusivity and respect—for Pride participants and even detractors.

Resist the urge to engage in aggressive language, shouting, or other interactions.

If you're drinking alcohol, don't overindulge, don't accept an open drink, and don't leave your drink unattended.

Enjoy celebrating!

A fellow author, Vee Debras, wrote a piece that I asked to quote, and she graciously permitted:

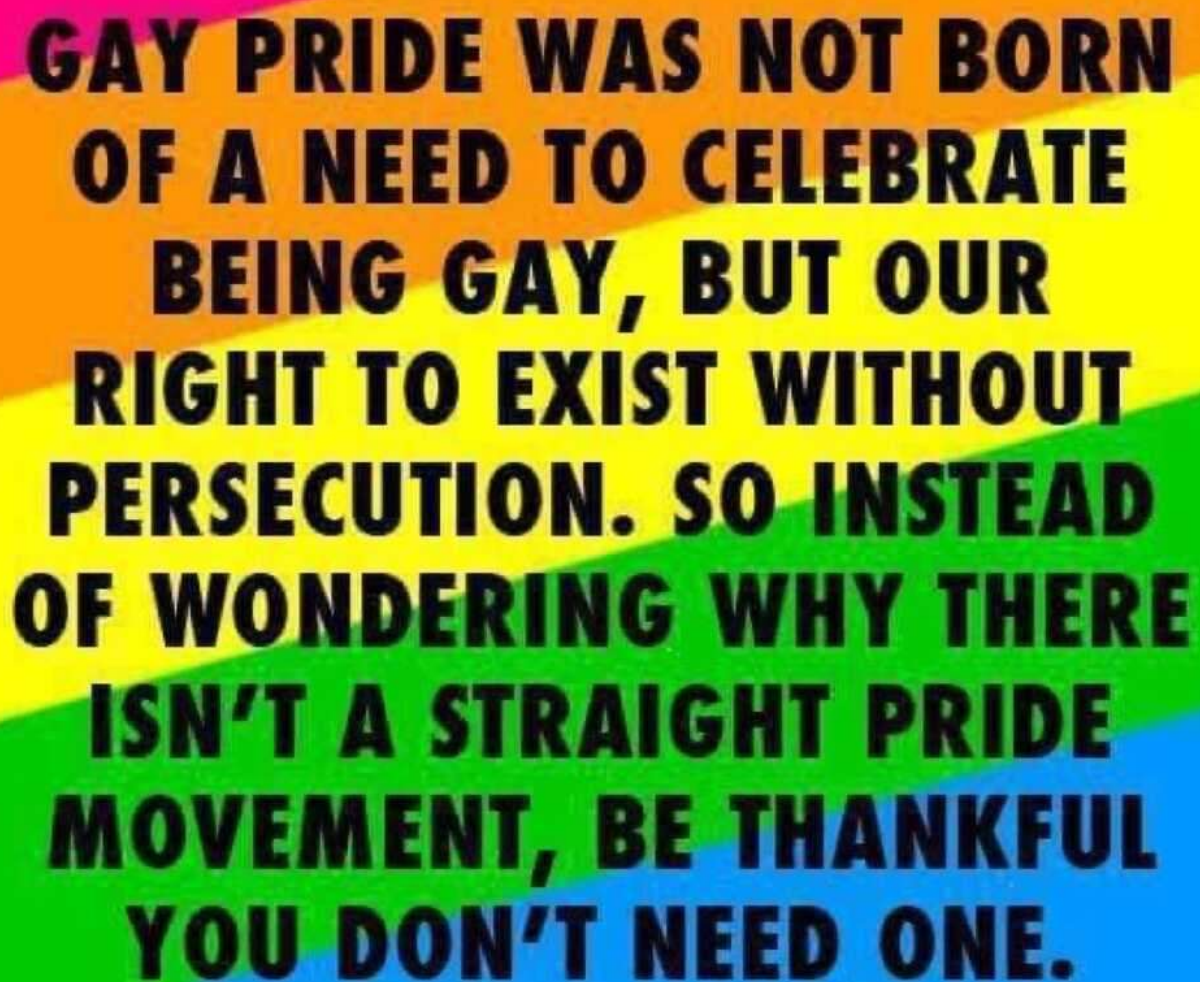
“So hey, whoever you are right now reading this, I see you. I remember you. I believe in you all year round. I hope you can do the same for me.

What I intended to give you in this email before my demons showed up was these six loving reminders for this Pride Month. I hope you can get something out of them.

- It's okay if you haven't figured yourself out yet, no matter your age, no matter if you thought you already had.
- You are exactly who you know you are, even if people doubt you, and even if you doubt yourself sometimes.
- The only way you “should look like” is the way you look.
- You're not invisible, they've closed their eyes (but they aren't blind).
- You deserve to be celebrated, so celebrate yourself.
- I don't need to know you to love you. Thank you for existing for another day.”



For those of you born since 2000, you may not even know WHY we “celebrate” Pride in June (and, in fact, many locations have changed the dates due to weather and other concerns). So, a quick history lesson. Pride was born from the Stonewall Uprising, which occurred after New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn on June 28, 1969, due to accusations of illegal liquor licenses. Employees and customers were arrested or detained for incidental charges, as had happened on previous occasions. This time, however, the gay community – for it was mostly gays who patronized the bar – retaliated. What began as a violent show of flying bottles, insults, and trash resulted in the bar catching fire. The uprising lasted five days. The Gay Rights Movement was born. In 2016, the Stonewall Inn and the surrounding areas were officially registered as a national monument, and on the occasion of the 50th anniversary in 2019, the New York Police Department Commissioner issued a public apology. When you hear that Pride was a protest, now you know why.



**GAY PRIDE WAS NOT BORN
OF A NEED TO CELEBRATE
BEING GAY, BUT OUR
RIGHT TO EXIST WITHOUT
PERSECUTION. SO INSTEAD
OF WONDERING WHY THERE
ISN'T A STRAIGHT PRIDE
MOVEMENT, BE THANKFUL
YOU DON'T NEED ONE.**

Dan Levy, an incredible audiobook narrator for a lot of my fellow authors, has started a website with his child in support of Trans Kids. They've got some great designs for Pride (or anytime). It supports trans rights, too. Please visit <https://609design.com> and check it out! I'm on my way there now.



Wishing all the
homophobes a super
uncomfortable
month.

”
Love yourselves, y’all – regardless of what anyone else tells you, you’re a valued person here! I’m glad you’re part of my little family group. Some quick business here: the NEXT newsletter will arrive Tuesday, July 9, so this is my only “Pride Month” official newsletter – though you got a special one to start the month with the freebies (still available), and there **might** be a special news item around the corner – before the end of the month, but maybe not. Anyway, you’ll get another message from me for sure on July 9....

The manuscript for the novel is getting very close to being ready for beta readers, then Advanced Review Copies will be prepared. If you’re interested, watch for that news, *coming soon!*

Happy Birthday today to Sir James Paul McCartney, 82 years old, and STILL rocking. June 25 is the fifty-seventh anniversary of the first worldwide live broadcast of *All You Need Is Love*, with the Beatles joined by Mick Jagger and hosts of other top recording stars as the now-legendary anthem to world peace was performed and recorded.

IN MEMORIAM

PULSE NIGHTCLUB | JUNE 12, 2016 | ORLANDO

Stanley Almodovar III, 23 years old	Christopher Andrew Leinonen, 32 years old
Amanda L. Alvear, 25 years old	Alejandro Barrios Martinez, 21 years old
Oscar A. Aracena Montero, 26 years old	Brenda Marquez McCool, 49 years old
Rodolfo Ayala Ayala, 33 years old	Gilberto R. Silva Menendez, 25 years old
Antonio Davon Brown, 29 years old	Kimberly Jean Morris, 37 years old
Darryl Roman Burt II, 29 years old	Akyra Monet Murray, 18 years old
Angel Candelario-Padro, 28 years old	Luis Omar Ocasio Capo, 20 years old
Juan Chavez Martinez, 25 years old	Geraldo A. Ortiz Jimenez, 25 years old
Luis Daniel Conde, 39 years old	Eric Ivan Ortiz-Rivera, 36 years old
Cory James Connell, 21 years old	Joel Rayon Paniagua, 32 years old
Tevin Eugene Crosby, 25 years old	Jean Carlos Mendez Perez, 35 years old
Deonka Deidra Drayton, 32 years old	Enrique L. Rios, Jr., 25 years old
Simón Adrian Carrillo Fernández, 31 years old	Jean Carlos Nieves Rodríguez, 27 years old
Leroy Valentin Fernandez, 25 years old	Xavier Emmanuel Serrano-Rosado, 35 years old
Mercedez Marisol Flores, 26 years old	Christopher Joseph Sanfeliz, 24 years old
Peter Ommy Gonzalez Cruz, 22 years old	Yilmery Rodríguez Solivan, 24 years old
Juan Ramon Guerrero, 22 years old	Edward Sotomayor Jr., 34 years old
Paul Terrell Henry, 41 years old	Shane Evan Tomlinson, 33 years old
Frank Hernandez, 27 years old	Martin Benitez Torres, 33 years old
Miguel Angel Honorato, 30 years old	Jonathan A. Camuy Vega, 24 years old
Javier Jorge Reyes, 40 years old	Juan Pablo Rivera Velázquez, 37 years old
Jason Benjamin Josaphat, 19 years old	Luis Sergio Vielma, 22 years old
Eddie Jamoldroy Justice, 30 years old	Franky Jimmy Dejesus Velázquez, 50 years old
Anthony Luis Laureano Disla, 25 years old	Luis Daniel Wilson-Leon, 37 years old
	Jerald Arthur Wright, 31 years old

On a somber note, this month was the eighth anniversary of the PULSE nightclub murders. May the forty-nine gentle spirits Rest In Pride, and remain in our hearts, forever.



Remember to stuff your Kindles with FREE books through June 30! Benji's Bayou Birthday Bash is one of many free books – if you haven't checked them out yet, don't miss! (Click the banner above, or this sentence, to open in a new window.)

Well, that wraps this edition up. As always, if you decide you're not happy here, just hit the Unsubscribe link below, and no hard feelings... but there's a lot of fun yet to come, so I hope you'll stick around! Remember to check my website, <https://jamesweems.com>, for all the Pride celebrations around the world—let me know if I'm missing any. The next regular newsletter will pop into your inbox on July 9, 2024. See you then, and Happy Pride!



*GAMBIT'S ANGEL
PUBLICATIONS*

