



Why SF's iconic dyke bar, the Lexington Club, is closing



Regulars at The Lex: The iconic club is closing, another sign of the times

By Marke B.

OCTOBER 23, 2014 — “I’m selling the Lex,” Lila Thirkield told me, her no-nonsense voice tinged with a little disbelief at what she herself was saying. Lila had pulled her car over to call me — and I hope my sudden wail of bereavement didn’t blow out her speakerphone.

Alas, it’s true: SF dyke institution the Lexington Club (www.lexingtonclub.com) is being sold, and will probably close after New Year’s. But the Lexington Club brand will live on in one-off events. And of course there’ll be a huge closing party.

Eighteen years ago, a 25-year-old Lila opened the homey, punkish Lexington Club as a Mission neighborhood space for “the dykes, queers, artists, musicians and neighborhood folks who made up the community that surrounded it,” as she put it Thursday [in a Facebook post announcing her decision](#). The queer revolution of the 1990s was still in full effect, but bars geared especially toward queer women were rare as two-headed unicorns.

But the Lex was more than just a place for dykes to get wild in the Mission — although, yes, its parties have always been rowdy blasts. It was situated as a queer outpost in the Mission, then the city's lesbian neighborhood, that acted as a hub for sex-positive and women's rights activists, longtime cruisers and fresh-faced newbies, butches and femmes, the emerging transman community, and all manner of beautiful freaks who stretched the city's queer boundaries beyond the Castro and SoMa. Lila went into it with this vision, and it paid off in nurturing the city's ever-evolving queer movement and style.

So, yeah, Lila selling the Lex is a big deal — an emotional decision for her, and an enormous loss to the community the Lex has fostered. Once I took a few deep breaths after realizing we're waving "so long" to yet another SF institution, I asked Lila for more details over email.

So, why are you selling the Lexington Club?

This was a very tough decision for me, and one that involves factors that I have been watching unfold for a long time now. A few years back my rent was raised to market rate, which was really challenging for us to adjust to. Then, the demographics and economics of the neighborhood around us continued to change faster and faster. As the neighborhood continued to change, we began to see sales decline, and they continued to do so until it became clear that The Lex model was not going to be viable much longer. I made this decision now basically because of the financial viability of the bar. I want to start the process before things get dire to make sure we can have a positive end to the journey.

Do you already have a buyer? Who is it, and will the Lex be changing? Is it closing?

We are currently in contract with an undisclosed buyer. And while I don't know what the new business will look like, I know it will not be the Lex. If I thought the Lex could survive, I would not be selling it to begin with. When I first made this decision I reached out to a few qualified people in my community to see if they had any interest in buying the Lexington Club. They too didn't see it as a possible lasting business model in the Mission and weren't interested in the purchase.

This is a huge deal for the queer community — especially dykes of course — and especially at this time when we're losing queer space in the gentrifying onslaught. What do you think the community's reaction will be? Is this part of the larger changes that are happening in SF, and to queer culture?

It is really difficult for me to anticipate what people's reactions will be. So far, the folks I've told have been shocked and sad. But even when I told my staff, it was not a complete surprise — they have seen the reality of the changing neighborhood and they have felt it financially on their shifts.

What's happening to the Lex is absolutely a part of the larger changes that are happening in SF. We are closing because we can't run a sustainable business in the Mission anymore because of the economics of the neighborhood and the diminished presence of queer women living in it.

Another real issue is economic gender inequality. Why is there only one lesbian bar when there are so many gay male bars? Even if you take queerness out of it, women make less money than men and a two male household is going to have more capital potential to start a business than a two female household. How many bars or

restaurants do you see being run by women? So few. And that's just the supply side. Because women have less disposable income and consume less than men, the spending power isn't the same when you are talking about having a bar for mostly women. But I'm proud that we were able to employ and train so many women and to keep a space open for nearly 20 years that goes against the economics of that gender inequality. It ain't easy, but it's a hell of a lot of fun.

If I could keep the Lex forever, I would. And while I think this loss is sad, I also think that The Lex is something to be celebrated. There had been no dyke bar in SF for about 7 years before we opened. And we were there for nearly 20 years. SF has always been a queer Mecca and it still is.

Is there any plan to help the staff find other positions? And what about a closing party?

So yes, the Lex is closing. But it will take some time and we are still here and having a blast and looking forward to seeing lots of familiar faces. Come by for a visit! And YES, there will definitely be a huge closing party but first there will be Halloween and even New Year's Eve. We are in the very early stages and this won't happen until into the New Year.

As well, I will be keeping The Lexington Club name and website, etc. My plan is to keep the community alive by utilizing the name we've built and continue to do one-off events and fundraisers at outside venues and will hopefully be able to include The Lextenders in those events. And of course, I will be helping my staff in whatever way I can towards their next steps. We're a family and we have always and will always do that for each other.

So much recent San Francisco queer history is tied up in the 18 years of the Lex. What have been some of your fondest memories?

Owning The Lex for my entire adult life, since I was 25, has been an amazing honor. Really the best thing for me has been the feeling of helping to create community. Giving folks a safe space to be themselves and being willing to change with the times. I'm incredibly proud of all the folks that have worked here and it has often taken a village to make things happen. Meaning tons of artists, DJs and community lovers that have contributed their time to help create great parties and happenings. Everything from friends building a larger-than-life ass out of chicken wire and fabric with a giant hand slapping it all suspended from the ceiling for a one night Folsom Party to Michelle Tea, nine months pregnant and about to give birth on the pool table, hosting a reading for Lit Crawl (last weekend!).

The things I'm most proud of are always having no cover EVER and throwing great parties, having cheap drinks and always staying open on the holidays. Really I think the Lex is special because of our openness to the community too. When we first started, there was a climate of heavy competition among the parties and lesbian happenings. We took a different road and let everyone put up posters for all their events, even if we were having one on the same night. A lot of people were shocked. But our thinking was the more there is to do for queer women in San Francisco the more of a scene there is and the more reason there is for more women to go out.

I saw this sentiment change over time and really facilitate a different feeling that I see among many of the people throwing events and contributing to the community today. It turned us into a sort of community center for what was going on in the city and we were happy to let someone know where they could go dancing with a bunch of hot

girls that night. It really helped create a sense that there was a vibrant and cohesive queer community here in SF and I think there still is.

What will you be doing after you sell the Lex?

Well, I opened Virgil's Sea Room (www.virgilssf.com) a little over a year ago, right next to El Rio. And it's been an amazing experience. It is different in that it is an "everybody bar" but it has a huge queer sense about it, many queer staff members, and some great crossover already. Like I said earlier, I hope to throw events under the Lexington Club name. As I let go of the the Lex, I am already imaging new ways for us to come together and new places for us to share. I still love the Mission and will still work and live here. I plan to continue community building and to continue to help keep the queer Mecca that is SF alive.

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90 Responses to *Why SF's iconic dyke bar, the Lexington Club, is closing*



Krushch. says:

October 23, 2014 at 7:49 pm

God Bless Kay Scott, Mona's / Black Magic

[Reply](#)



Lifelong SF Resident says:

October 23, 2014 at 7:53 pm

Though the writing has been on the walls, what heartbreaking sadness for those of us who were 25 when she opened The Lex and have grown it – thanks for great DJs, cute queer folks, and your efforts to keep this haven – even as it has gotten more and more invaded itself – against the increasing sausage onslaught in the neighborhood. Is there any stop to the impact of the bros? They are a virus if I ever met one.

[Reply](#)**Greg says:**

October 23, 2014 at 9:24 pm

“increasing sausage onslaught in the neighborhood. Is there any stop to the impact of the bros? They are a virus if I ever met one.”

Why is this acceptable? If this kind of sexism was directed at women, the poster would be banned. Why do we tolerate this kind of language when it's directed at men?

[Reply](#)**Barnaby says:**

October 23, 2014 at 11:30 pm

U mad bru? Yeah, u mad. I guess you'll have to go talk about it at your myn's group and tell them how marginalized you feel as a white educated male in SF.

LSR isn't being sexist, and isn't even of determinable gender by the statement. LSR is bringing attention to a well documented and factual change in the demographics of the neighborhood, and their feeling about the entitled, privileged, and painfully square newcomers. [citation:

<http://www.sfbg.com/politics/2014/07/23/twitter-releases-diversity-figures-mostly-white-mostly-male>]

New York had 200 years to acclimate to the douchebaggery of Wall Street Bro's. SF was thrust upon a 12 year venture capital fueled frat party they had no interest in attending.

[Reply](#)**Greg says:**

October 24, 2014 at 7:02 am

Your response makes no sense, Barnaby. “Sausage” and “bros” is “not of determinable gender?” [sic] Who are you kidding? I agree that there's a lack of diversity in tech, but throwing that in there is a total non-sequitur. We're talking about the viciously sexist language in the statement I quoted. Try substituting slang for women and female genitalia and see how that feels. Hell, it probably wouldn't even stay up here for more than 5 minutes. You're defending the indefensible.

[Reply](#)**sonyama says:**

October 24, 2014 at 7:15 am

Greg, you're an idiot...ssshhhhhhhh

**MissionBernal says:**

October 24, 2014 at 10:09 am

Think of this as a learning experience. Now you know how women feel every day walking down the street minding their own business. Those gentlemen have no problem politely asking if they can “f**k my p**sy” and you're complaining that she called some guys bros? Wake up

**Vinita says:**

October 24, 2014 at 1:54 pm

Greg, I am sorry for the response you are getting from the lesbian community, or should I say have gotten, I just started reading this link and find the attack indefensible. Before you seemingly young bitch's start calling me out as stupid male identified, blah blah blah. let me assure you that none of those things are true. The mission district, has never been short of male of residents or patrons, It's largest demographic for the last several decades has been Latinos and dare I say Catholics; yet it has always been open to diversity. The GLBT community are not the only ones suffering from the squeeze the dot. comers come bearing down upon the whole city. Calling everyone that is not exactly like you a sausage and an idiot is divisive and of no use. It certainly not the celebration of diversity that SF is so loved for.

**Sam says:**

October 24, 2014 at 3:32 pm

Vinita, if you truly worshipped at the alter of diversity then you would be more accommodating towards those who disagree with you.

Prove your diversity credentials by hugging a white male tech worker and condo buyer.

**urban gal says:**

October 24, 2014 at 5:07 pm

Greg..stop whining like a frickin sissy boy and go beat yer tiny sausage meat..

**Reading Comprehension says:**

October 26, 2014 at 1:23 pm

The author, Greg. "LSR" is the abbreviation of the author's screen name ("Lifelong SF Resident). Barnaby wrote that the author of the OP (original post) is not of a determinable gender.

**Greg says:**

October 26, 2014 at 10:30 pm

"Reading Comprehension," by focusing on minor side issues, you miss the forest for the trees. Actually, I think LSR makes it pretty clear she's female, but that's beside the point. The point was that the statement was sexist and misandrist, as are many of the attitudes expressed in her defense.

**FSFduh says:**

October 24, 2014 at 10:17 am

Thanks for sharing this article Barnaby.

[Reply](#)

**Sam says:**

October 24, 2014 at 6:09 am

For once, I agree with Greg. Attacking a class of people only because they are tech workers or white males is as unacceptable as attacking a class of people for being black or queer.

We can advocate for more justice without overly-broad and invalid stereotypes.

[Reply](#)



Kate Holum says:

October 24, 2014 at 7:01 am

“Sausage onslaught” may not be the most tactful way to put it, but to paraphrase Richard Pryor, “I got a right to be hostile. My people been persecuted.” I see fewer visible dykes and more young white guys in this city, and I don’t think it’s due to queer assimilation into the overall culture, and therefore less need for queer spaces. I agree with Lila in the article that the underlying problem is gender and economic inequality.

[Reply](#)



Greg says:

October 24, 2014 at 7:11 am

“Sausage onslaught” isn’t even the most objectionable thing in there. Equating men to a virus is just plain vile. No, we men don’t deserve to be equated with a virus. I’m going to stand up and say this because this is hate speech. If the shoe were on the other foot, it would have been deleted. It’s wrong, it’s hurtful, it’s offensive. No, you don’t have a right to equate me with a virus.



urban gal says:

October 24, 2014 at 5:04 pm

it’s true, bro, so suck it up....that should be easy fer ya...

[Reply](#)



Alison says:

October 24, 2014 at 6:00 pm

Suck it up, Greg. And grow a vagina. Balls are too fragile to sustain the continual onslaught of male superiority the lesbian community faces everyday.

[Reply](#)



Greg says:

October 24, 2014 at 7:20 pm

This is great. All of you who are responding (all except one -thanks Vinita) probably think you’re so cool/ cutting edge/ progressive/ enlightened/ whatever. But you fail to see your utter conservatism and conventionality, perfectly mirroring society’s conventional thinking and rigid gender roles... and all the associated harm they cause.

The boxes that society puts men and women in, based on pure prejudice, hurt us all. We’ve all heard about how it hurts women, but it also hurts men. In a multitude of ways -it’s a long conversation to list them all. But at the heart of the matter is this: it’s socially acceptable to treat men like dirt -to ridicule men, to berate them, to insult them, to commit violence against them (physical and psychological), in a way that is simply not acceptable to do to women.

When women are victimized, society teaches us that they are supposed to be cared for, protected, nurtured. When men are victimized, they are taught to “suck it up.”

You're all so in tune with your own victimhood that you're oblivious to the oppression on the other side. Men spend a lifetime learning that their lives and safety are less valuable than women's... from infancy with studies showing that parents show more nurturing behavior toward infant girls than boys, to school administrations that turn a blind eye to bullying, to higher rates of incarceration (yes, for the same crime and same criminal record), to near universal rules of rescue operations that prioritize the lives of WOMEN and children first before men, to forcing our sons (but never our daughters) to fight and kill and die violently. And if they complain we tell them "suck it up."

...and then we wonder why men are so violent. No, actually we don't wonder. If we wondered, we might do something to change it. Truth is, we don't give a damn. We just call for locking men up more.

I want gender equality more than anyone. But you're never going to achieve equality by being the mirror image of that which you so despise. And if you don't see yourselves as conservative and conventional, well that's exactly the problem. These responses reveal how deeply rooted you are in those prejudices that you rail against.

[Reply](#)



Sam says:

October 25, 2014 at 9:43 am

Yes, many so-called minority groups over-play their hands because they feel they are entitled to act out.

You see this with race all the time. Folks can be as abusive as they like about whites, but say one even slightly critical thing about blacks and you get accused of being a racist.

Sadly gays and women also fall into the trap of egregious card-playing. And it is particularly ironic when white women do it as they have been the biggest beneficiary of the growth of civil rights, affirmative action and political correctness.

The sense of entitlement is stunning.



Alison says:

October 25, 2014 at 2:46 pm

Like I sad Greg bro, grow a vagina. Then you would understand what it's like to be a gender of people that has been victimize by religion, media, politics and basically CENTURIES of society. Yeah, we are pissed off. And yes, we are cutting edge. We have to be even if it hurts. Because we move society forward. Sorry, but you cant really say that about privileged white males. You've run society up to this point. Perhaps thats why the world is so fucked up.



marcos says:

October 25, 2014 at 5:07 pm

Alison, the women's, queer and people of color movements have not cut anything resembling a radical edge for the past 30 years. Everything you wrote had been said by the 1970s. Contemporary identitarianism is the past warmed over and less resilient. It is not like nobody had ever thought about any of this before. The only question is what are we going to do to change it? Raging might make for effective individual therapy, might not. But it is no substitute for critical and strategic organizing to move an agenda forward. Even the seminal

works of second wave feminism acknowledged that misogyny puts yokes around the necks of men.



Sam says:

October 26, 2014 at 10:56 am

Alison's mistake is more fundamental. Blacks did not seize civil rights through force. The antics of Malcolm X, the Black Panthers, the Watts riots and so on actually set back the black cause. It was white liberals who gave blacks those rights because they were persuaded far more by the gentle civil obedience of MLK than by threats and intimidation.

By positioning this as a war rather than a debate, Alison is setting herself up for failure. You do not hate on the very people who have the power to give you what you want. And as MLK famously said, "We must disagree without being disagreeable".

As long as Alison is playing her "angry lesbian" role, the problems she claims to see will continue. She needs to understand that pitching lazy categories of people against each other never achieves progress.

Moreover it is perhaps futile to seek to uplift an entire class of people based on arbitrary stereotypes. There are, as you note, many different types of people under her umbrella. Most Americans progress through their own individual efforts, and not through handouts to an entire self-selected class.

So yes, Alison isn't moving anything forward. She is just ranting and coming off all "cutting edge" to make herself feel better. And in doing that, she perpetuates her victim status. Good luck with that as a strategy.



Alison says:

October 26, 2014 at 5:11 pm

That whole white male superiority role I was referring to, Sam and Marco just nailed perfectly. Well done boys. Now go high five yourselves.



marcos says:

October 26, 2014 at 7:56 pm

Alison, I think that you are exemplifying superiority in that you posit yourselves as the force that moves society forward when society is moving backwards increasingly rapidly.



Greg says:

October 26, 2014 at 11:04 pm

Sam, I think that even MLK would not have described his tactics as "gentle civil obedience." Let's remember that Rosa Parks was not just a random black woman who happened to feel tired one day, as mainstream media have portrayed her. She was a radical activist, and her act of civil DISobedience was pre-planned. The subsequent Montgomery bus boycott, which brought MLK to prominence, and which he went to jail for, was designed to bring the city to its knees economically.

The truth is that a variety of situations call for a variety of tactics, and none shouldn't be

taken off the table. Sometimes non-violent tactics are enough to achieve justice. Gandhi's struggle to liberate India, for example. Other times, like with the struggle to liberate South Africa from apartheid, or Nicaragua from the brutal grip of the Somoza dictatorship, it's simply not enough.

In the struggle for justice there are a variety of tools in the activist's toolbox, from education campaigns to win hearts and minds, to electoral and judicial campaigns, to economic boycotts, civil disobedience, protests, and yes sometimes even armed struggle. It's vital to choose the right tactics at the right moment, but none should be taken off the table arbitrarily. It was MLK, who you profess to admire so much, who said "I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed, without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today – my own government."

The question I'm asking here is whether this is justice? If the goal here is gender equality, that's a goal I'm on board with. I just think that goal is set back, not forward, by demonizing people based on how they were born. That's basically the issue I have with these folks -they're not attacking patriarchy, or inequality, or men who support these things. They're attacking men -all men -just because they happened to be born men.

Obviously these self-styled feminists don't see it, but they are the mirror image of what they rail against, and with every post they put their foot in their mouth more and more.



marcos says:

October 27, 2014 at 5:48 am

The key is that as the militancy of tactics increases, popular support must likewise increase. Without popular support, none of this works, vanguardism is a dead end. Either you manufacture support like the libertarians are doing by spending to buy it or you do what folks with infinitely fewer resources than we have at our disposal did, in Central America, in South Africa, and organize people in support of their own emancipation. That will be difficult until conditions in the US outside of prisons approach those inside. Until then, we'll see radical vanguardists working through their issues pretending to lead people who are simply not following. As we anarchists like to say, if the people lead, then the leaders will shoot them.



Sam says:

October 27, 2014 at 5:56 am

Greg, your examples of where violence is the effective strategy were limited to Africa and Central America – places where democratic change is often not a real option in any sense that we know of here.

I would support the use of violence to overthrow a fascist or communist dictatorship, or to throw a foreign or colonial power out of the US, as we did. I am less sure about the civil war being necessary as slavery would have gone away anyway, just as it did everywhere else. And we paid a terrible price for that in terms of lives lost, mutual distrust that lingers to this day, and a massive erosion of states' rights.

Where we have a democratic system, I maintain that violence and aggression sets back whatever cause you have, whether that be left or right.

Neither Rosa Parks nor MLK were violent. Civil disobedience is a fair strategy, whether it be

refusing to work (as in a strike) or refusing to pay taxes as the Tea Party have advocated..

Notwithstanding Alison's intransigent posturing, white females in the US have a lot of power and wealth, and have benefited hugely from affirmative action and the growth of civil rights. While Hilary Clinton may well be our next President. The most powerful man and the richest woman in the nation are both black. People like Alison neglect how far we have come and instead focus on the last few percentage points of equity, without seemingly acknowledging that that is impossible under any system where we choose to reward out-performance.

If she wants a pony too, she should study harder, work harder, take a few personal risks and stop expecting others to buy her one just for being a princess.



Greg says:

October 27, 2014 at 8:41 am

Is democratic change through the electoral process a real option here, Sam? If so, then what is your definition of democracy?

To me, democracy isn't just going through the motions of having an election. In order to call it democracy, I think there needs to be a real possibility that voting changes the fundamental economic and foreign policy of a country. And it's not a sharp dividing line between democracy/non-democracy. But some countries are more democratic than others. Brazil... I'd say the people had a real choice there. Bolivia... it definitely mattered who you voted for in this last election.

The US... not so much. And it's not because the people are so happy with the system as it currently is, that they don't want to entertain alternatives. It's that we have a system where alternatives are systematically marginalized by design. Let's not forget that not too long ago, countries like Brazil, Bolivia, Venezuela, etc. were in the grip of neoliberal parties that controlled everything no matter who among the "major" parties people chose. Ostensibly they were "democracies" even then, and yet people never had a real choice until a different alternative managed to break through. I would argue that these countries were not fully democracies then. They had electoral politics that presented the trappings of democracy without giving people a real choice. But they are democracies now. And when presented with a free choice of going back to the old system, people there seem very reluctant to turn back the clock.

Ironically, the ostensibly "democratic" US, and many acolytes of US "democracy," support violent overthrow of democratically elected governments when it suits them. As we saw in Ukraine earlier this year, where they succeeded, and in Venezuela, where they failed. As poorly as Yanukovich managed the country, he was, you know, democratically elected. In no way shape or form could you make the case that he rigged those elections. How could he? He wasn't in power when he was elected. But with new elections but a year away, the west decided to foment a violent overthrow of the government by force instead of first trying to vote him out democratically. With disastrous consequences, as we can see. But I'm guessing you supported that, along with all the other so-called "democrats" in the west. As I'm sure you supported the violent overthrow of the government in Venezuela, a government that has now won something like 16 out of 17 elections. So forgive me if I don't buy the hypocritical moralizing about "democracy" from the empire's acolytes.



Sam says:

October 27, 2014 at 9:52 am

But to my mind, Greg, you crossed a line there. You drew a distinction there between democracies according to your own biases about what the result of elections should be.

So when you get an election result that you do not like, which I expect happens a lot in the US, then you say "ah but that wasn't really democratic" and so justifies extra-democratic action anyway.

When Reagan won 49 out of 50 states in 1984, was that not democratic just because you didn't like Reagan? (Maybe you were too young to vote then. I was, but you know what I mean).

As for the US meddling overseas, that sometimes works and sometimes not. But I wasn't trying to jump start a debate on foreign policy. My concern with violence and, to a lesser extent, any form of direct action is that it is often just an attempt by your minority group to hijack the democratic process and attempt to achieve a different goal for no reason other than that you happen to prefer it.



Greg says:

October 27, 2014 at 11:00 am

And yet, Sam, you do support violence and/or direct action to change a democratic result that doesn't suit you, don't you?

Can you honestly say that you opposed the effort to bring down the just-elected Maduro government by street mobs earlier this year? Can you honestly say that you oppose the coup regime currently supported by the west in Ukraine? Or the coup regime supported by the west in Honduras? If you do, well that's something we agree on after all. Something tells me that you don't support democracy in those contexts.

I, however, do believe in democracy, even if it doesn't come out the way I want. Take the US election in 2000. I think we can all agree that Gore won that election. Whether or not you agree that Florida was stolen, it is a fact that Gore got 500,000 more votes. Now I didn't vote for Gore. However, if Americans had done so, I would have taken to the streets with them to defend democracy -defend a result I did not agree with or vote for. Would you do the same?



Sam says:

October 27, 2014 at 11:07 am

Greg, I don't have a view on these foreign policy excursions, and my point was limited to respecting US elections and US domestic policy regardless of whether my side wins or loses.

People will debate Gore/Bush 2000 to the end of time. Given that we have an electoral college system and not a popular vote system, then Bush won fairly. If the system were different, they would have campaigned differently, and then Bush might still have won. Speculation.

But in fact the Gore supporters did not take to the streets. And had they done, it would have done them no good, and that I believe is fine.

We have a process. Work within it. And if you don't like US foreign policy, then persuade me

Why SF's iconic dyke bar, the Lexington Club, is closing - 48 hills48 hills
and million of others to vote for Nader or Kulinich or Dean or whomever you think would change that



marcos says:

October 27, 2014 at 5:59 pm

A case could be made for a RICO prosecution against the Democrats and Republicans for illegal restraint of democracy through collusion.



Sam says:

October 28, 2014 at 5:56 am

marcos, nothing is stopping you from starting your own political party to challenge the alleged duopoly.

Look how quickly the Tea Party went from nothing to being a force.



marcos says:

October 28, 2014 at 5:57 am

You must be snorting Koch.



Sam says:

October 28, 2014 at 9:15 am

No, I am merely pointing out that the failure that you are whining about is a failure of the very people who you claim are under-represented.



marcos says:

October 28, 2014 at 10:20 am

“Look how quickly the Tea Party went from nothing to being a force.”

Are you suggesting that we all become Koch heads?



Sam says:

October 28, 2014 at 10:33 am

No, marcos, I am suggesting that if you do not feel part of the moderate majority and wish for a political party that more reflects your values, then it is possible to create one. That is what the Tea Party success should have taught you.

If you're not happy you could create a left-wing equivalent of the Tea Party.

Or you could just whine on blogs that nobody else is doing that, of course.



marcos says:

October 28, 2014 at 11:08 am

New political parties cannot form in the US until the current political parties are extinguished and their death grip on the political system ends. Just as the Democrats crushed OWS, the

Republicans are now engaged in crushing the Tea Party. The political parties are in collusion to illegally restrain trade in politics. That is why popular opinion common across the political spectrum and public policy are so divergent.



Sam says:

October 28, 2014 at 11:16 am

“Popular opinion” is limited to reality TV, junk food, Bud and gossip. We have the political system that we have because the vast majority of voters want the professional politicians to make the decisions for them so they can spend all their free time eating, drinking and watching TV.

We have exactly the politics that we deserve. And if you don't do something about it then you are part of the problem. Americans are center-right ideologically and I can understand why you feel like a fish out of water.

But hey, you still have your tech job and your condo so you can afford to whine while enjoying the good life. It's all just a pastime for you anyway, with nothing really at stake.

Might as well make bank, huh?



marcos says:

October 28, 2014 at 11:45 am

Americans across the political spectrum support a wide range of policies in economics and foreign policy according to polling, policies that are simply off the table with the duopoly. Government under the Democrats and Republicans is an organized crime spree.



Sam says:

October 28, 2014 at 12:10 pm

Assuming for a moment that you are correct (And I do not believe that you are) then the real failure is with people like you who claim to see under-representation but do nothing about it.

You'd rather enjoy your high-paying tech job, your appreciating condo value, and limit your political activities to whining on a blog.



marcos says:

October 28, 2014 at 12:39 pm

This is not about me, it is about structural impediments to representative democracy put into place by racketeers in collusion.



Sam says:

October 28, 2014 at 1:56 pm

And I am saying that you whining about it is a part of the problem, when that is a substitute for actually trying to do something about it.



marcos says:

October 29, 2014 at 7:15 am

Right, only the pro-corporate get to comment, everything else is whining. How uncivil can you get?



Sam says:

October 29, 2014 at 7:35 am

We have democracy because everyone gets to vote.

If elections turn out different to the way you would like, you cannot blame the election or the process. You can only blame the fact that not many people agree with your viewpoints.



TruthIsBeauty says:

October 26, 2014 at 7:38 pm

Greg, don't bother with logic and reason, as the women hoodwinked into this kind of irrational belief, are likely to be impervious. The idea that it's at all accurate to judge the individuals of an entire group on the basis of a common feature or two, is as old as the hills, and as we've historically seen, quite popular with people lacking in either intellectual honesty, self-confidence, or intellect, itself (see the Nazis, the Klan, male chauvinists, racists, in general, et. al.). For these people, there will always be an offense or slight – real or perceived – that justifies cruel behavior, yet they will bay like a wolf when the roles are reversed.

For an alternate perspective on the current, irrational, wave of feminism, I think this post is quite fair.

<http://check-your-privilege-feminists.tumblr.com/post/95979451581/i-dont-understand-how-are-you-not-a-feminist>

[Reply](#)



Alison says:

October 26, 2014 at 8:46 pm

Anybody else want to bully up?

[Reply](#)



Greg says:

October 26, 2014 at 10:17 pm

I'm guessing you didn't click on the link.

Too, bad. There's a lot of powerful stuff in there. Some of the examples of misandry are pretty painful to read. But being a fact-based kind of person, I was most impressed by the article by Katie Bardaro, a data analyst and economist at Payscale.com.

But hey, your mind's made up about all this stuff, so what's the point of looking at information which challenges your worldview, right?



Sam says:

October 27, 2014 at 7:21 am

Alison, you are locked into a downward spiral here. the more you rant against classes of people based on shallow stereotypes, the more others ignore you, the worse you then feel, and that in turn reinforces your self-imposed feeling of being ostracised.

Until you open up to the fact that people are individuals and not just members of classes that largely exist only in your head, you are doomed to be rattling cages in an empty room.

If three people as ideologically different as marcos, Greg and I all agree that you're wrong, then you have achieved a unique status right there, and that should tell you something.

Lighten up, and open up.



David says:

October 27, 2014 at 1:23 pm

Because men are part of and benefit the dominant power structure in our society (I'm a man, btw). Context matters, Greg.

[Reply](#)



Dan says:

October 23, 2014 at 10:44 pm

Agreed. Mostly young, straight and white with a requirement to hold hands whenever in public. Are they THAT insecure? (Because it doesn't look like affection).

The article says:

"SF has always been a queer Mecca and it still is."

Well, the reality is that the Queer Mecca is fading, rapidly. It disgusts me that this is happening. I didn't move 3,000 miles away to have this happen to SF. Ugh. Sometimes Castro and Market looks more straight than it does gay, with str8s making out under the rainbow flag...WTF? I've heard that str8s come to the Castro to cheat on their partners because it's the last place they would be expected to be (cheating).

[Reply](#)



Sam says:

October 24, 2014 at 6:13 am

Dan, you could look at the fact that the Castro is now less gay than it used to be as a sign of progress. There are now gays living all over the city, and gays no longer have to live in a limited gay ghetto to feel safe and accepted.

The Castro is actually becoming more diverse now. Historically it was the most white neighborhood in the city. It's ironic that the Mission is being criticized for all the white males moving there when in fact the Castro now has less white males than it did in its heyday.

And perhaps that explains why this bar had failed. Because gay women now feel comfortable in a much wider selection of bars, and no longer need to cross town to find a bar they feel comfortable in.

[Reply](#)



Mike says:

October 24, 2014 at 7:09 am

That's the same bull shit you dumped on the BG site (nearly word for word) when this topic came up on there several times. It's also part of your right-wing/wealthy agenda. It's nearly a copy and paste

job.

Most intelligent and informed people already know that the gay community is being gentrified out of this city, except for the very wealthy and that's why you see nothing at all wrong with it as you go on about how wonderful it is with your phony "diversity" nonsense, which you couldn't care less about. There's no need for me to refute your other drivel and nonsense.

[Reply](#)



Greg says:

October 24, 2014 at 7:21 am

Except that the gay community is doing a lot of that gentrifying now. Do you have any evidence that gays are less wealthy than straights? Because I've seen some evidence that on average they are more wealthy:

<http://money.cnn.com/2012/12/06/pf/gay-money/>

It's a sad fact that a lot of gays who moved here in their 20s are now in their 60s, they own rental property, they care more about property values than struggling gay youth, they vote for the likes of Scott Weiner and Sit-Lie, and they evict people with a vengeance. I think we need to be honest with ourselves and face facts.



Sam says:

October 24, 2014 at 7:33 am

Greg is correct here. Zephyr is the most aggressive residential RE firm in the city and it is gay owned and run. There is street after street of gay-owned two million dollar homes in and around the Castro.

In fact a good way to know that a neighborhood is gentrifying is that gays start buying up the old homes and remodeling them.

There may be less young gays in SF now, not least because it is now easy to be gay in any major US city and so there is less reason to move to SF. But I'd be willing to claim that the median income for gay males in SF matches or exceeds the overall median.

But perhaps it is hard to shake off a history of being a disadvantaged minority with all the perks that come with being a card-holding and card-playing member. But it's time – the privilege is now evident.



Mike says:

October 24, 2014 at 8:25 am

It's already happened in Chelsea:

Chelsea: The Death of a Gay Neighborhood, Murdered by Neo-Hetero-Homophobes

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-carosone/chelsea-new-york_b_1009598.html



Mike says:

October 24, 2014 at 8:35 am

@Greg: Dan has already written about all of that on his blog precisely in that exact context.

That's why he described some of the wealthy gay community as really anti-gay, particularly when it comes to Prop G ("Yes" on G)..



Mike says:

October 24, 2014 at 8:39 am

@Greg: To clarify: The wealthy gay homeowners urge a "No" vote on G. Dan's blog encourages voters to vote "Yes" on G.



marcos says:

October 25, 2014 at 9:40 pm

I knew there was a reason why we didn't remodel!



marcos says:

October 25, 2014 at 9:59 pm

What do you mean "the gay community?" Is there just one? Gay communities and cultures have changed over time. People denied access to the upper tier of the economy are being forced out of San Francisco including many queers. The tech workplace is hardly bereft of queers.

It is not like the gay communities and cultures of our youths are somehow normative across time, if not in the past, then probably not in the future.

Gay culture is going to evolve over time and things are going to change on one hand, and the rampant onslaught of real estate capital has to stop on the other.

San Francisco progressives like to make assertions about groups of people based on an aspect of identity and then get worked up when people don't comply and see themselves as progressives say they should. Few queers of any income see themselves as progressives say we should. I learned in ACTUP/SF 25 years ago that there is no gay community, just a collection of often intersecting fragments.



Barbara says:

October 24, 2014 at 9:36 am

The Castro was "Little Scandanavia," then Irish, and then gay. It has not "always been a gay Mecca." I was a newcomer to SF 25 years ago. I am amused at how often I see people lamenting "San Francisco institutions" that replaced San Francisco businesses that were standing when I arrived. Either these recently fallen businesses are also evil gentrifiers or the analysis is severely lacking in historical context or both.

[Reply](#)



[Kate Holum](#) says:

October 24, 2014 at 9:37 am

For me, a woman, saying "I hate men" may be evil, misguided, or many other things, but it is in no way the same as a man saying "I hate women." Likewise for me, a dyke, complaining "Too many men in the dyke bar." The patriarchy does exist. Women earn less for the same work, get less representation in government, do the shit jobs.

[Reply](#)

**Vinita says:**

October 24, 2014 at 2:14 pm

This is true Barbara and Kate the “new wealth ” of gay males is not be true for women, there are more of us than there are of them in college now but fewer property owners. We have yet to achieve economical equality. We also tend to be more monogamous; for these reasons we tend to be less supportive of bars and restaurants. This is a long conversation. Presenting only your right to be insulting and hateful, at this level probably isn't helpful.

[Reply](#)**Greg says:**

October 24, 2014 at 7:46 pm

One thing to consider -college is an entry level marker of wealth. Property ownership happens much later. Why does this matter?

Well, let's stipulate that discrimination still exists. And now, let's say that you could wave a magic wand, and end all further discrimination right now, today. How much time would it then take for men and women to achieve parity in terms of pay? Answer: 35-40 years. Because that's how long it takes to rise to the top of your career. Even if discrimination ended today, you'd still see more male CEOs for the rest of your working life, because it would take that long for previous generations of leadership -bound individuals to filter out simply by attrition.

That's why, when you have income studies, those studies need to be sorted by job type *and* level of experience in order to be meaningful. Thus far, I have yet to see one.

Just food for thought.

And incidentally... here's a question for the thoughtful: *why* is it that women now outnumber men in college admissions?

Is it because women are somehow innately smarter, more able? And if you don't adhere to a theory of innate gender superiority, then might we entertain the idea that perhaps society is doing something in its socialization our boys in such a way that makes the next generation less likely to succeed? And if you entertain that notion, then might you also entertain the notion that maybe we should look into correcting that?

[Reply](#)**Greg says:**

October 26, 2014 at 9:48 pm

For what it's worth... this link is superb. It came from within a link that TruthIsBeauty provided above, and it's the closest thing I've seen to the kind of study I was referring to, which accounts for a variety of factors.

<http://www.payscale.com/career-news/2009/12/do-men-or-women-choose-majors-to-maximize-income>

Very different result than the oft-repeated mantra of 77 cents on the dollar, huh? Are we courageous enough to look at the issue with this kind of intellectual honesty?

[Reply](#)

**Steph says:**

October 29, 2014 at 2:30 pm

The next question when you look at numbers like that is “Why are the male dominated majors for financially valued?” You can just stop there.

**Sam says:**

October 29, 2014 at 4:00 pm

Steph, there are as many female voters as male. If men are being elected more it is because female women prefer them

**[saminsf](#) says:**

October 23, 2014 at 8:32 pm

While I am sad about the Lex, I am happy to see Marke B's name on this byline

[Reply](#)**[48hills](#) says:**

October 24, 2014 at 5:40 am

Thank you, Sam.

[Reply](#)**Sam says:**

October 24, 2014 at 6:30 am

Ah, but did he get paid for the piece or was this a labor of love?

[Reply](#)**mssndlrrs says:**

October 24, 2014 at 10:34 am

I felt the same @Saminsf

[Reply](#)**N.M.SARTAIN says:**

October 23, 2014 at 8:49 pm

We're going there tomorrow for a drink in the city. Very sad news. I'm not stunned by it but reading about the bars History is pretty eye opening. The times are a changing! It's sad but true.

[Reply](#)**[Marga Gomez](#) says:**

October 23, 2014 at 10:33 pm

I have been posting my LEX LOVE all day but also want to thank Lila extra for this “We took a different road and let everyone put up posters for all their events, even if we were having one on the same night our thinking was the more there is to do

for queer women in San Francisco the more of a scene there is and the more reason there is for more women to go out.” As a self promoter I greatly appreciated businesses with community spirit. It was always fun to put my poster in the window and then get a beer from the Lextender.

[Reply](#)



maria says:

October 24, 2014 at 10:25 am

Agreed Marga and if I'm not mistaken Amelia's let ppl post posters or flyers do their eventsalso...to this day I miss that place n Maud's..

[Reply](#)



MPetrelis says:

October 23, 2014 at 11:07 pm

Hey District 8 voters! Send a protest message when you cast a ballot. If you're pissed off, vote Petrelis!

[Reply](#)



Dan says:

October 23, 2014 at 11:11 pm

I used to go to a gay bar in Pacific Heights on Divisadero, I believe. It was a pleasant, laid-back, sort of quiet bar. Never loud or obnoxious. I thought about that bar the other day and thought it had probably closed. Nope. Today it's a str8 bar and the reviews of the place lament the death of another gay bar in the city.

From the reviews, the clientele today is mostly young and white, and obnoxious. The word “doughy” is a common theme throughout many of the reviews particularly describing the young white, frat/jock boys that go there.

It sounds nothing like the gay bar it was. Sad.

[Reply](#)



Dan says:

October 23, 2014 at 11:16 pm

Correction due to typo: It should be douchy not doughy.

The word “DOUCHY” is a common theme throughout many of the reviews particularly describing the young white, frat/jock boys that go there.

[Reply](#)



marcos says:

October 24, 2014 at 5:09 am

#notallsausage

[Reply](#)



LisaLouis says:

 October 24, 2014 at 6:07 am

The Mission was the city's dyke neighborhood back then? Really? That should come as quite a surprise to the Latino community. Not to mention Bernal Heights.

The loss of The Lex is sad. But, truth be told, this city has always struggled to support lesbian-centric businesses. The list is long of dyke bars that have started and failed, long before the latest onslaught of newcomers arrived in the city.

I know it's the editorial position of 48 Hills to blame young people and tech for all of the city's woes, but this is just bad, misleading journalism.

[Reply](#)**SammyBurns** says:

October 24, 2014 at 6:18 am

I agree. It's rare for a bar to stay under the same brand for 18 years, let alone a lesbian bar. Even the writer admits they are "as rare as two-headed unicorns."

So I say congrats to the Lex for lasting so many years. It's a huge accomplishment we should celebrate. Too bad 48 Hills wants to turn this into an ugly bashing of people who are different from us. The existence of tech dudes does not threaten dykes. How pathetic would we be as a community if that were really true?

[Reply](#)**DavidA** says:

October 28, 2014 at 11:28 am

Pithy reply. Thank you.

To add to your point, I don't recall any mudslinging when Maud's, Peg's Place, and Amelia's closed... just mostly introspection by the dyke community. And, trust me, there was plenty of gentrification to point a finger at back then.

But in fairness to 48 Hills, I don't detect any editorializing by writer, Marke B. He's just reporting the facts here and/or letting his interview speak her mind.

[Reply](#)**Sam** says:

October 28, 2014 at 12:14 pm

Describing a bar closing as an "enormous loss" IS editorializing.

In fact, writing a long feature article on a bar closing, and instilling it with masses of significance is also editorializing.

I'm not arguing that any of this is not the case, but only that it is a political piece.

[Reply](#)**janettlbo** says:

October 24, 2014 at 6:32 am

Never been to SF and I'm not queer, but what a beautiful story of love and community. Thanks to you all for the Lexington and the home it has been and will continue in ways to be seen. Bless you.

[Reply](#)**SFrentier** says:

October 24, 2014 at 9:06 pm

Yeah, you can really sense all the community and love (lost) by reading the varying comments here!

[Reply](#)**SFLezzard** says:

October 24, 2014 at 8:21 am

In no way do I intend to offend anyone (which means I'm basically going to offend people, right?) but I would like to offer a different narrative than the ones I've been seeing online since the announcement of the Lex closing. Hopefully the tone of this is read positively and that the message isn't about the Lex but more about the community.

Back when the Lex opened, San Francisco was a different city almost entirely. It was a place for the outcasts, queer, gay, whatever you want to label them and it was a safe place. It became a local haunt, got divey-er (is that a word?) as the years went on and more recently it's become a place that has been failing for a few reasons.

Gentrification. If I hear this word one more time, I'm going to scream. Understandably, the neighborhood has changed. The city has changed. Times have changed and if businesses don't evolve, they are doomed.

Yes, a lot of lesbians moved to Oakland. As a uhauling bunch, we have issue with staying put, not nesting, breaking up, trying to find roommates, and thus Oakland became a cheaper and more feasible option. However, just because seemingly 'all' the lesbians moved to Oakland, that doesn't mean that 'newer' lesbians, perhaps slightly less 'alternative' but lesbian nonetheless have moved to the city – seeking out that same sense of safe place, community and acceptance as happened previously when the Lex first opened.

However, that newer group of lesbians finds the Lex completely unwelcoming. Based on my own personal experiences, trying no less than about 10x going there, trying to make it work, trying to like the place that seemed so 'cool' – but it was the same horrible experience every time.

What the Lex became is so far from the original purpose which is why I feel (not know) it's now failing. The people who have been going there for years, working there, hanging out there made the place so uninhabitable for 'new' people or even non-locals visiting. All sitting around the bar, casing every person that walks in, chatting up their bartender friends who then didn't serve anyone else. It seems liked you were walking into someone's living room or a house party that you weren't invited to. How could a business survive when it turns away the only people (besides the regular crew) that ever wanted to go and spend money there?

They needed to reinvent. Not with fancy drinks or using mason jars and endless succulent displays, but they needed to whip their staff into shape. Welcome the lesbians that haven't found their way in the city. If they keep talking about the shrinking lesbian population, they must simply be talking about their own little clique of girls who have moved to Oakland because I still see plenty of lesbians aimlessly walking around the Castro in search of a hangout because they feel uncomfortable in the Lex.

People talk about the Lex now like you'd talk about an alcoholic who finally died. You don't talk about the final years, you look at the Glory years. And yes, in its glory years it was vital to have a meeting place like this, where women/queers/trans all felt comfortable, but that comfort soon turned to clique and exes and everyone's already slept with each other and it became a cesspool. Let's also be frank, it's dirty. It smells in there, it's not accommodating for women to even use the disgusting restroom. Is that how you think you attract business and maintain customers?

I think it's a good thing (hear me out) that the Lex is closing because it not only shows a sign of the times changing (NOT in a gentrification way) and now hopefully lesbians can come out of their dark hole, cliquey bullshit and actually socialize with one another in other bars/clubs, etc. There are so many lesbians in this city, not JUST the ones that all congregate around the pool table at the Lexington. We don't all look alike. Some girls are femme, butch, etc etc etc, the labels go on for days – and now that the alcoholic has died, it's time for this community to find new life in a new era. I have to also think that while rent was raised for this establishment, it could have easily 'tried' to do something a bit different to show the community it was versatile and not just stuck in its glory days, but I fear it won't.

We deserve better than the Lex of current days. We deserve to treat each other with courtesy, respect and know that we're all in this together. We're all facing adversity, we're all a minority and instead of creating tensions and clubhouses, we should be saying hi to each other and being nice or at least acknowledging each other with this gigantic chip on our shoulders.

I for one am happy to see what comes after the Lex closes and I hope that everyone can band together to support each other – even the clique crew that never welcomed us into that bar ☐

[Reply](#)



It's Me says:

October 24, 2014 at 1:05 pm

I find this opinion very interesting. My girlfriend and I have lived in The Lex's neighborhood for some time now. We have enjoyed popping into the Lex every now and then to have a few beers, show out-of-town guests a quintessential neighborhood bar and/or to have a general good time. And while I see the "changing neighborhood"-i.e., becoming increasingly more white, straight, affluent-contributing, I also see what SFLezzard refers to above.

First, let me say, I am of the opinion that it's really sad that a queer girl-specific joint in my hood is closing. However, in maybe the last year or so, I have on multiple occasions walked into the Lex for a drink, only to have the same cliquey staff leer at me as if to say, "what are you doing here?" Or, better yet, they basically flat out ignore you till you insert yourself in their face and order a drink. Here we are, queer girls, ready to spend money in your establishment. I know I'm not in a ripped up tank with tats blazing, so I look a little different and don't resemble your version of "cool". But we are queer, so please act like you care, and as if the "community" you worked so hard to build is a real thing and not just some gimmick used to draw in your desired clientele.

Also, I second the disgusting bathroom sentiment. It is possible to maintain your dive bar atmosphere without patrons feeling as though they are risking tetanus every time they use the facilities.

Again, I am sad that the queer girl community is losing this institution, but maybe a little effort to keep the concept fresh and welcoming over the last few years would've gone a long way to maintain a viable business.

[Reply](#)



E.A. says:

October 24, 2014 at 1:55 pm

The Lex has been my all time favorite bar in SF. I personally never felt unwelcome or threatened by any of the staff or clientele at the Lex, and I certainly didn't "fit in" over there either. (Then again, I didn't feel the need to.) However, SFLezzard is spot on about the cliquey vibe that a lot of people experienced. I would always get overly enthusiastic about meeting up with my mostly lesbian crew of friends for dinner anywhere near 19th and Valencia because I knew I'd manage to talk one or two of them into hitting up the Lex afterward. But planning a night out at the Lex? Forget about it. Most of my friends just felt too uncomfortable there to have any desire to go, no matter how hard I lobbied and it had nothing to do with the drink menu or cleanliness of the bathrooms, but the overall vibe. Anyway, I'm sad to see this place go. It's the one place I've always felt I can go to escape the predatory male gaze and enjoy a night without dealing with complete douchyness. For whatever it's worth, I am a white girl that works in tech—say what

you will, but the douchyness I'm referring to is not limited to just tech workers.

[Reply](#)



SFrentier says:

October 24, 2014 at 9:23 pm

See? This thread is "the real" San Francisco! The lament of a 2 decade old dyke bar. The complaints about tech brah's. Rich established gays vs. newcomers inability to come. Irish cultural establishment vs. Latino cultural establishment. Guilty liberals vs. moderate democrats. Gentrification vs. more homeless shelters.

Everybody is so scarred-obsessed with San francisco changing, but I have news for you. The more things change, the more they stay the same. I liked the city when I moved here in 1994, and I like it now in 2014. Rock on SF.

[Reply](#)



Bean says:

October 25, 2014 at 11:05 am

It would not be a huge surprise to me to see revealed later that Lila accepted a fat check for the Lex that she could not refuse. A friend lives on the same block as the bar and says that it is packed to overflowing almost every night.

[Reply](#)
