

The Intersectionality of Flags, Religion, and the Gay Pride Movement

By Amy Langston

Pride Flags: Origins and Evolution

Pride flags, symbolizing groups of people united by sexual orientation or gender expression, are ubiquitous. Most Americans today can make an intuitive connection between rainbow colors and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights (LGBT) movement. Pride flags, like all flags, have been a source of contention and inspiration in politics and society. The response of religious groups to the display of the pride flags has been a notable arena for observing the dichotomy of opinion not only about pride flags, but also about alternative sexualities in general. Americans' love for flags as representations of their identities—whether national, subcultural, religious, or sexual—offers opportunities for the testing of social boundaries when tempers flare and opposites collide.

The city of San Francisco, California, is home to one of the largest concentrations of gays in the world.¹ Gay activism based in San Francisco has been pivotal to the advancement of the wider gay movement. It is no surprise then, that the San Francisco gay scene is also the origin of the rainbow flag. The idea of a gay pride flag originated in connection with the 1978 Gay Freedom Day Parade. Gilbert Baker designed the rainbow flag, the most commonly used flag to symbolize gay pride and solidarity (figure 1).²

The rainbow flag as we know it today is a six-striped flag of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, from top to bottom. However, the flag went through multiple stages of design before this final version. The original

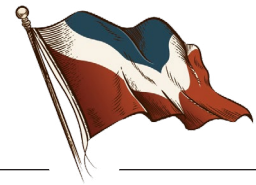


Figure 1. The “gay pride” flag. Source: Quinn Dombrowski, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/quinnanya>

INSIDE / SOMMAIRE	Page
Editor's Note / Note de la rédaction	2
What Was He Thinking?	12
Captain William Driver Award Guidelines	15
NAVA 51 Annual Meeting Boston	16

continued on page 3





Editor's Note / Note de la rédaction

Vexillology encompasses many interests and explores the role of flags throughout the vast expanse of history. One of the distinct pleasures of belonging to NAVA is the opportunity to encounter ideas from all branches of knowledge—the pages of this publication have addressed flags through the lenses of political science, history, heraldry, psychology, law, physics, and even mathematics. If you have the opportunity to attend our next annual meeting in Boston, I assure you that you will be impressed by the breadth of learning on display (and by the verve with which your fellow members share it), and fascinated by the many ways that flags reflect the human condition.

This issue in some ways exemplifies the gamut of vexillological concerns, from a historical view of the earliest flags of the United States, to a sociological examination of the perception of flags used in very current debates about sexual and gender identity. David Martucci offers a thoroughly researched piece on the astronomical bodies that may have influenced the “new Constellation” in the flag adopted by the Continental Congress in 1777. Amy Langston offers an expansion of her talk from the NAVA Annual Meeting held in San José last October, which earned an Honorary Mention for the William Driver Award for Best Paper. Langston’s talk covers the existing flags in use by groups advocating for the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, but also incorporates a research technique which is rare in vexillology: an opinion survey. There are many flags and examples of flag use that this article brings to a NAVA publication for the first time.

It is my honor to have been recently appointed co-editor of *Flag Research Quarterly*, and I would like to encourage our readers to be in touch. We want to know what you like and don’t like in the publication, and what you’d like to see more or less of.

In addition, please consider contributing to *Flag Research Quarterly*. Amy Langston’s paper originated as a talk at the annual meeting—but David Martucci wrote his directly for publication. You don’t have to present your research at an annual meeting to be a part of the conversation in NAVA! All proposals are welcome. In fact, if you have an idea but are not sure how to begin research, the editors are available to help you get started. Please contact us at frq@nava.org.

Steven A. Knowlton
Co-editor, *FRQ*

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Langston: The Intersectionality of Flags, Religion, and the Gay Pride Movement *continued from page 1*

design was an eight-striped flag with pink and turquoise as additional colors. Also, the blue stripe was of a darker shade than it appears on the current flag. A seven-striped flag, with pink removed, was the penultimate version before the six-striped flag. In both cases, the stripes were removed for practical reasons, as flag fabric in pink and turquoise was expensive and difficult to procure.

The rainbow flag was not the only gay pride symbol that emerged during this stage of the gay pride movement. Pink and black triangles, and lambda symbols, were created as alternatives to the rainbow flag by groups such as the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP), and while they have not replaced the flag, they have managed to gain a degree of notoriety as gay pride symbols (figure 2). Nonetheless, the rainbow flag was and continues to be the most popular symbol of gay pride.³

The rainbow flag was the first flag—that is, the first flag popular enough to become an accepted symbol—of an alternative sexuality, and it continues to be a symbol for the wider LGBT movement. After the rainbow flag was introduced, the subsequent



Figure 2. Early gay rights button, featuring the triangle symbol. Source: James, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sfphotocraft>

decades saw the emergence of flags for other alternative expressions of sexuality. The rainbow flag notably served as an inspiration for design patterns of related flags that followed it.

The first such flag that followed the rainbow flag was that of the Leather subculture in 1989 (figure 3).⁴ This was shortly followed by the flag of the Bear subculture in 1995 (figure 4).⁵ It was not until 1998 that the flag for bisexuality was created, increasing the visibility of bisexual people through their own flag (figure 5). The flag of bisexuality was the first in a series of new flags for alternative sexualities, created in rapid succession. Before the bisexuality flag, the creation of flags for alternative sexualities had progressed slowly.



Figure 3. The Leather pride flag. Source: Steven Damron, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/sadsnapst>

Many of the flags created since 1998 were for newly understood and defined identities. Moving into the twenty-first century, general societal attitudes toward sexual orientation began to change to ones of greater acceptance and inclusion of LGBT people. In the 2010s, the changes extended to attitudes about gender orientation. As a result of growing social and political acceptance of alternative expressions of sexuality, communities composed of people with varied expressions of gender and sexuality became established and grew. Flags provided these communities with public visibility symbols (figures 6 & 7).

The role of the internet in the growth of these communities and the adoption of flags cannot be underestimated. Many of the communities for alternative sexualities were created and continue to exist primarily online. Online communication and discourse is an accessible forum for community organizers to run flag design campaigns and for designers to share their work. The internet changed from a tool for technically-oriented users to a common utility and became the way for alternative sexuality communities to gain numbers and strength, and to disseminate the flags that symbolize them.

While few of the flags discussed in this article have been transferred from a digital medium to the



Figure 4. The Bear pride flag. Source: Guillaume Paumier, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gpaumier>



Figure 5. The bisexual flag. Source: Staff Bi News+Views, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bimagazine>



Figure 6. The transgender flag. Source: torbakhopper, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gazeronly>



Figure 7. The asexual flag. Source: Immanuel Brändemo, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/trollhare>

LGBT Community Terminology and Flags

Sexual, romantic, and gender identities are very personal and often change from person to person. The information below is simply a general guide to some popular LGBT community terms. When dealing with these terms it is important to remember that gender identity, romantic attraction, and sexuality are independent of each other. Some of these terms can be used in a derogatory way and care should be used when speaking with someone about their gender identity, sexuality, or romantic attraction. It is always best practice to ask the person which terms they prefer.

Sexual Orientation	Gender Identity	Romantic Attraction
<p>The way a person defines their sexual preferences</p>  <p>Gay: Males who are sexually, romantically, or emotionally attracted to other males. Also used as an umbrella term to describe any male or female who feels attraction to the same gender.</p>	<p>The way a person expresses their personal feelings about where they fall on the spectrum of genders between male and female.</p>  <p>Gender Fluid: A person whose gender identity may change from day to day and who is not constrained by stereotypical expectations of male or female behavior.</p>	<p>The feeling that causes people to desire intimacy, monogamy, and/or sexual activities with another person.</p>  <p>Aromantic: A person who does not experience romantic attraction. This has nothing to do with sexuality. Community members can fit anywhere on the sexuality spectrum.</p>
 <p>Gay Bear: Gay male subculture. Generally focus heavily on masculinity. Some bears are described as bulky, hairy, and cuddly.</p>	 <p>Androgynous: An umbrella term for a person who exhibits both male and female characteristics and gender identities.</p>	 <p>Greyromantic: Umbrella term for Lithromantics and Demiromantics.</p>
 <p>Androphilia: A person who is sexually attracted to men or masculinity, regardless of their gender identity.</p>	 <p>Drag/Feather: A person who dresses in clothing opposite their gender. This is usually done for personal expression and/or entertainment.</p>	 <p>Lithromantic: A person who feels attraction but does not want their feeling to be returned in any way.</p>
 <p>Lesbian: Females who are sexually, romantically, or emotionally attracted to other females.</p>	 <p>Genderqueer: An umbrella term for a person whose gender identity is different from that assigned at birth.</p>	 <p>Demiromantic: A person who only feels romantic attraction after a strong emotional bond has been formed. Generally described as only feeling romantic attraction a few times in their life, if ever.</p>
 <p>Lipstick Lesbian: Lesbians that tend to fall heavily in the feminine gender spectrum.</p>	 <p>Gender Binary: A gender identity structure that allows for only male and female gender identities. This flag is sometimes used to express cisgender pride, as well.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Relationship</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">An emotional or other connection between people</p>
 <p>Gynephilia: A person who is sexually attracted to women or femininity, regardless of their gender identity.</p>	 <p>Gender Non-Binary: A gender identity structure that embraces a rainbow of genders instead of strictly male and female.</p>	 <p>Polyamorous: A person who accepts, desires, or practices the acceptance of having more than one intimate and/or sexual partner at a time, with the consent of all individuals involved.</p>
 <p>Asexual: A person who feels little or no sexual attraction to anyone or any gender identity.</p>	 <p>Hermaphrodite: A person with both male and female genitalia.</p>	
 <p>Demisexual: A person who does not feel sexual attraction until a strong emotional bond has been formed.</p>	 <p>Intersexual: A person who is born with characteristics or genitalia that are neither male nor female.</p>	
 <p>Autosexual: A person who prefers self-gratification over other types of sexual activities.</p>	 <p>Neutrois: A person who does not identify with gender and often feels that they fall neutrally between male and female.</p>	
 <p>Bisexual: A person who is attracted to both males and females.</p>	 <p>Transexual: A person who emotionally and psychologically feels that they belong to the gender opposite of their birth assignment.</p>	
 <p>Pansexual: A person who is sexually, romantically, or emotionally attracted to people of all genders.</p>	 <p>Transgender: A person whose gender identity is different from that assigned at birth.</p>	
 <p>Polysexual: A person whose gender identity is non-binary and who is sexually, romantically, or emotionally attracted to others regardless of their gender identity.</p>	 <p>Two-Spirit: A Native American term for gender-queer individuals within their communities.</p>	
 <p>Skoliosexual: A person who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to non-binary identified individuals.</p>	 <p>Trigender: A person whose gender identity may alternate between male, female, and neutral.</p>	
 <p>Straight Ally: A person who identifies as heterosexual and supports the LGBT community and their activities.</p>		

Figure 8. Guide to online flag icons representing alternative sexualities. Source: Tavla Walker, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/liveloudgraphic>

cloth that defines a flag in the classic sense, the design nonetheless serve most of the purposes of a physical flag. They help define and give visual identity to a group with a shared identity. As Tony Burton has written, the digital age has brought about a “return of the vexilloids”: that is, flag-like symbols, including digital icons, are taking their place alongside cloth flags in the lexicon of imagery used to establish group identity (figure 8).⁶

Design Motifs of Pride Flags

It is often the case that in groups that share aspects of their identities there will be vexillographic similarities among the flags representing them. The pride flags are no exception. There are a number of design motifs that are present in most pride flags. First, the majority of pride flags feature bands or stripes as the basis for the design. The number of bands or stripes varies, but typically it ranges between 3 and 5. A few flags, such as the Bear pride, Leather pride, and Polyamorous pride flags feature a pictographic symbol, but most leave the symbolism to the colors. Also notable is that virtually always, the bands or stripes are horizontal, not vertical.

The primary symbolic convergence of the pride flags is in the colors. The meaning behind the colors is varied. In the rainbow flag itself, the stripes are intended to symbolize abstract ideas and not ones directly associated with homosexuality.⁷ But usually the colors represent aspects of gender, including the colors that represent all the ways people could identify with the particular orientation. The colors used in the pride flags are often colors traditionally associated with the concept symbolized, or the colors the community has adopted.

There are no official governing bodies for these communities. So, the flag of a community is usually the one that is the most popular and widespread among its members. A flag may be selected or popularized from a number of designs made available to the community. For most well-known orientations, there is only one flag typically used for the movement. For more obscure identities, especially gender identities, while there may be multiple flag designs proposed and used, there is no one generally recognized flag for the group.

The purpose of pride flags is not merely to symbolize the groups they represent. They are, perhaps more importantly, a source of visibility to the outside world, used to spread awareness about the group. Seeing pride flags makes people outside these communities more aware of groups previously unknown to them. As well, the pride flag is an easily recognizable tool for association with an identity. The flags become about pride in the group and in oneself as a member of the group, and solidarity with both the people within the community and support from those outside it.

LGBT Pride and Religious Organizations

The pride flags have been a medium in relations between the LGBT community and religious communities. In the United States, religion and the gay rights movement are tied politically. Several major religions present a universal condemnation of non-heterosexual sexual behavior. This has caused the perception along some that gay rights and expression are inherently at odds with organized religion and the progression of civil liberties.

The groups in the United States most inclined to activism against the gay rights movement are certain denominations of Christianity. Evangelical Christian denominations (such as the Southern Baptist Convention and the Assemblies of God), the Roman Catholic Church, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) have been outspoken and political about their unwavering stances on the issue. However, it is important to note that while their official stances are promoted by conservative members and leaders, not all members of these churches are anti-LGBT in their personal views. In addition, several religious groups are explicitly LGBT-affirming, namely liberal Christian denominations (such as the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the United Church of Christ) and Unitarian Universalism.

Religious groups use flags, but only a few have adopted an official and widely-used flag. The most common religious flag is probably the “Christian flag”, which is particularly popular among evangelical Christians. Because there is no official governing body for all of Christianity, the Christian flag was popularized in much the same way that pride flags are. The Christian flag is commonly displayed inside churches or outside Christian schools.⁸ Interesting to note that the Christian flag’s vexillographic design is similar to the layout of the U.S. flag, and the Christian flag is often displayed alongside the U.S. flag. Perhaps this is a perception that religious identity is tied to a sense of being a patriotic American.

The Catholic Church in the United States has most often used the Vatican City flag as a general flag for Catholicism. While its usage is not quite as ubiquitous as the Christian flag, it is not unusual to see it displayed outside Catholic churches or schools. Similarly, the flag of Israel is commonly displayed as a flag for Judaism, inside Jewish institutions and synagogues. The Episcopal Church in the United States has a banner of its arms. The Episcopal Church flag can often be seen in Episcopal churches. In a few other denominations, the denomination’s logo will be rendered on a white field.

Flags are key symbols in American culture, where a flag can become tied to the group it represents. Flags serve as nonverbal communication in a multitude of ways. This, of course, includes the symbolism in the flag itself, but the details

of how it is displayed and used also send messages. Americans harbor strong feelings about the proper usage of flags, and this is reflected most visibly in attitudes towards and perceptions about the national flag, but applies to many other flags as well.

Pride Flags and Politics

The issues surrounding the display of pride flags have both political and social elements. Controversy has more often been related to the display of pride flags on government-owned property such as office buildings and schools. It is generally agreed that private citizens have the legal right to display pride flags based on freedom of speech; the question of whether pride flags should be allowed on government property is contentious.⁹

The flag associated politically with LGBT pride is nearly always the rainbow flag. The rainbow flag is the most widely-used of the pride flags, and it is commonly used to represent the whole umbrella of alternative sexualities. It is used not merely to evoke a group identity, but also to demonstrate one's stance in political debates about LGBT rights. People hold strong feelings about the pride flag, and these feelings can be polarizing. While members of the LGBT community may view the flag as a source of pride, the rainbow flag has been described by conservatives as a "symbol of hate" and "offensive." A poll of mostly conservative American voters conducted in 2013 found that respondents believed the rainbow flag to be more offensive than the Confederate flag.¹⁰

Following a racially-motivated mass shooting of African American parishioners at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina in June 2015, after which the accused murderer was shown to have displayed Confederate flags, backlash against the Confederate flag grew. In light of this controversy related to flags, conservative groups expressed their condemnation of the display of the rainbow flag. Opponents stated that this flag serves as a symbol of hatred against Christians and anyone who disapproves of gay rights. Some suggested that the flag itself breeds conflict among those who oppose the movement behind it.¹¹

Relatedly, June 2016 saw one of the deadliest mass shootings in United States history. The shooting occurred at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. Because Pulse was a gay nightclub, the majority of the victims were LGBT; the massacre unleashed an outpouring of LGBT solidarity throughout the country. The rainbow flag was displayed outside the Hillsborough County, Florida civic center as one expression of this solidarity. An employee complained the flag is "divisive" and "uncomfortable" for a Christian to come into contact with at work. The objection was primarily related to display of the rainbow flag on government property, and not use by private citizens.¹²

Pride Flags and Religious Symbolism

Liberal religious groups sometimes display the rainbow flag, or other pride flags, as a demonstration of their solidarity with the movement. Displaying the flag also serves as a message to the gay community that they will be accepted by members of the particular congregation if they choose to worship there (figure 9). These denominations may also use the rainbow colors as a motif in designs for non-flag graphic arts. However, it is also not unusual for the rainbow flags displayed at these houses of worship to be stolen or damaged.¹³

Flags have been created to represent gays within a religion as a minority group. These flags incorporate the rainbow symbolism into a flag containing a common symbol of their religion. The most well-known of these is likely the gay Christian flag, based on the all-purpose Christian flag with rainbow stripes replacing the white field. Designs also exist for gay Muslims, gay Jews, gay Wiccans, gay Buddhists, and gay Episcopalians. In most of these cases, there are multiple designs in existence (figures 10, 11, and 12).¹⁴

In addition to defacing or stealing pride flags, some opponents of LGBT activism have created flags for the majority groups, such as flags for heterosexuality and cisgender. It is believed that these flags primarily exist not as a symbol of



Figure 9. The Episcopal Church flag and the gay pride flag flown together. Source: Maia C., <https://www.flickr.com/photos/maiac>



Figure 10. Gay Christian flag patch. Source: AliExpress, <https://www.aliexpress.com/cheap/cheap-christian-patches.html>



Figure 11. Gay Jewish flag. Source: ulu2007, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/22269692@N07>



Figure 12. Gay Muslim flag. Source: Fahrenheit211, <http://www.fahrenheit211.net/2014/03/14/if-my-family-find-out-im-gay-they-will-kill-me-such-is-the-life-of-the-ex-muslim-lesbian>

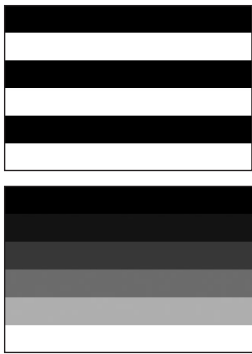


Figure 13. Two variations on “straight pride” flags for heterosexuals. Source: <http://www.crwiflags.com/fofw/flags/qq-het.html>

“pride” for these identities but are intended as a symbol of anti-gay sentiment. But as will be illustrated, these flags are not widely known or accepted among people who identify with the majority (figure 13).

Survey Regarding Pride Flags and Religion

In order to gauge varying opinions about pride flags, a survey was conducted as a part of this research. There were ninety-two responses provided by anonymous respondents through an online template. The respondents were recruited primarily

by publicizing the survey through social media. The methods by which the survey was conducted and executed have very notable limitations: the responses came primarily from those associated with the publicists, which can limit the spectrum of opinions presented, and the unpredictability of an internet-based survey potentially gives skewed results.

The ages of the respondents were distributed relatively evenly across the age categories provided. The largest single group was ages 45-59, comprising 28.6% of the respondents. The vast majority (90%) of respondents were raised in North America and 87% of those who stated their nationality were United States citizens. The respondents were also overwhelmingly white (90.1%). (See tables 1, 2 and 3).

TABLE 1: Age of Survey Respondents

18-25	19.8%
26-35	8.8%
36-45	24.2%
45-59	28.6%
60 and over	17.6%
Other	1.0%

TABLE 2: Geographic Origin of Survey Respondents

Africa	0%
Asia	4.3%
Europe	8.7%
North America	90.2%
Oceania	1.1%
South American	0%
Other	1.1%

TABLE 3: Race of Survey Respondents

American Indian	0%
Asian American	4.4%
Black or African American	3.3%
Hispanic or Latinx	3.3%
Native Hawaiian	1.1%
White	90.1%
Other	3.3%

Most of the respondents were of the “majority” orientations in society: 55% were heterosexual and 82% were cisgender. Of those of non-heterosexual orientation, 16 respondents identified as homosexual (18%), 13 as bisexual (14%), eight as asexual (9%), two as pansexual, and two “others”, who both described themselves as queer. In terms of gender, five identified as agender (6%), five as genderqueer (6%), and two as transgender. One of the transgender respondents marked themselves as transgender, genderqueer, and genderfluid. (See tables 4 and 5).

TABLE 4: Sexual Orientations of Respondents

Asexual	8.8%
Bisexual	14.3%
Heterosexual	54.9%
Homosexual	17.6%
Pansexual	2.2%
Other	3.3%

TABLE 5: Gender Identifications of Respondents

Agender/none	5.6%
Cisgender female	47.2%
Cisgender male	34.8%
Genderfluid	1.1%
Genderqueer	5.6%
Transgender female	1.1%
Transgender male	1.1%
Other	7.9%

Respondents were also asked to mark their romantic orientation. In the asexual community, romantic orientation reflects a person’s interest for romantic relationships if they do not experience sexual attraction. The asexual respondents clearly knew what the term “romantic orientation” indicated, but many other respondents did not. Interestingly, seven bisexual respondents (54%) did not mark themselves as biromantic. (See table 6).

TABLE 6: Romantic Orientations of Respondents

Same as sexual orientation	58.6%
Aromantic	5.7%
Bioromantic	3.4%
Heteroromantic	29.9%
Homoromantic	4.6%
Panromantic	3.4%
Other	2.3%

Respondents were asked about their religious identifications. The two largest were No Religion (41%) and Christian (37%). The respondents also included five Jews, four Unitarian Universalists, three pagans, two Buddhists, four who preferred not to answer, and several “others”. The distribution of religious identification for homosexuals was different. Nine of the respondents were religious (63%) and the other five were not. (See table 7).

TABLE 7: Religious Identifications of Respondents

OVERALL	
Buddhist	2.4%
Christian – Roman Catholic	10.8%
Christian – Protestant	20.5%
Christian – Other	6.0%
Jewish – Reform	4.8%
Jewish – Other	1.2%
Pagan	3.6%
Not religious / None	41.0%
Unitarian Universalist	4.8%
Prefer not to answer	4.8%
AMONG HOMOSEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=14)	
Christian – Protestant	29%
Christian – Roman Catholic	14%
Christian – Other	7%
Jewish – Reform	7%
Pagan	7%
Not religious / None	36%

Of all respondents, 56% specified that their current religion was not the same as that of their upbringing. However, it was found that sexual orientation had “no [effect] at all” on choice of religion, both overall (66%) and for sexual minority groups. Only 6% of all respondents marked that it most “definitely” was a factor. (See table 8).

TABLE 8: Effect of Sexual Orientation on Current Religious Practice

Question: Are your religious beliefs the same as your upbringing?

Yes	37.8%
No	55.6%
Prefer not to answer / Other	6.6%

Question: How much has your sexual orientation influenced remaining in or leaving the religion of your upbringing? (On a scale of 0 to 5)

1 (very little influence)	65.9%
2	6.6%
3	13.2%
4	8.8%
5 (definitely influenced)	5.5%

Question: Did your sexual orientation influence your choice of religion? (On a scale of 0 to 5)

AMONG HOMOSEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=15)	
1 (very little influence)	40.0%
2	6.7%
3	26.7%
4	13.3%
5 (definitely influenced)	13.3%

AMONG BISEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=13)	
1 (very little influence)	38.5%
2	15.4%
3	15.4%
4	30.8%
5 (definitely influenced)	0%

Respondents were asked if they knew their sexual, gender, or romantic orientations had flags. However, because the majority of respondents were heterosexual and unsurprisingly did not know there was a heterosexual flag, these statistics were somewhat skewed. All of the homosexual respondents knew that there was a gay pride flag. In contrast, 36% of bisexual respondents did not know there was a bisexual pride flag. Also, while the flags of sexual orientation were relatively well-known, fewer knew about flags for romantic and gender orientations. (See table 9).

TABLE 9: Percentage of Respondents Who Know There is a Flag for Their Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual	0%
Homosexual	100%
Bisexual	64%

Respondents were asked if their sexual orientation needs a flag. Again, statistics were skewed here. Of the homosexuals, 47% marked 5 for “definitely”, 20% marked 4, and 20% marked 1 for “not at all.” Overall, the homosexual respondents thought it was a good thing for a gay pride flag to exist. In contrast, bisexual respondents were less enthusiastically inclined about a bisexual pride flag. 46% marked 1 (“not at all”) or 2 on the scale, and only 15% marked 5 for “definitely.” The few asexual respondents were also mostly leaned toward needing a flag, with 75% marking 3, 4, or 5. (See table 10).

TABLE 10: Respondents’ Attitudes About the Need for a Pride Flag

Question: Does your sexual orientation need a flag?
 (On a scale of 0 to 5)

AMONG HOMOSEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=15)

1 (not at all)	20.0%
2	6.7%
3	6.7%
4	20.0%
5 (definitely)	46.7%

AMONG BISEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=13)

1 (not at all)	30.8%
2	15.4%
3	15.4%
4	23.1%
5 (definitely)	15.4%

Respondents were asked if they like the flag of their sexual orientation. Here, the results matched fairly closely with the perceived need for a flag, but with even more results leaning positive. For the homosexual responses, more respondents marked high on liking the flag than marked high on needing a flag. The statistics were also very different for the bisexual respondents on the need for a flag, with less evenly distributed feelings about needing a flag, and a minority (27%) marking a 4 or 5, on opinion of the flag, with the most at “3” (46%). Respondents were also asked if they would want to be associated with the flag of their sexual orientation. Here, the

responses shifted noticeably. For homosexuals, 54% marked “3” on associating with the flag. The majority of bisexuals were ambivalent about association with the bisexual flag: only 1 out of the 13 marked “5”—definitely, and 6 marked “3” (46%), 3 marked “2” (23%) and 3 marked “1”—not at all (23%). (See table 11).

TABLE 11: Respondents’ Attitudes Toward the Pride Flag

Question: Do you like the flag of your sexual orientation?
 (On a scale of 0 to 5)

AMONG HOMOSEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=15)

1 (not at all)	13.3%
2	0%
3	6.7%
4	26.7%
5 (definitely)	53.3%

AMONG BISEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=11)

1 (not at all)	9.1%
2	18.2%
3	45.5%
4	0%
5 (definitely)	27.3%

Question: Do you want to be associated with the flag of your sexual orientation? (On a scale of 0 to 5)

AMONG HOMOSEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=15)

1 (not at all)	6.7%
2	0%
3	53.3%
4	6.7%
5 (definitely)	33.3%

AMONG BISEXUAL RESPONDENTS (n=13)

1 (not at all)	23.1%
2	23.1%
3	46.2%
4	0%
5 (definitely)	7.7%

Respondents were asked what the flag of their sexual orientation means to them. For those with opinions on their flags, it tended to be positive. Common responses included “unity”, “identity”, “pride”, “visibility”, “struggle”, and “community.” One respondent stated, “It’s the concept really. It’s a silent

message that can help show there are others like you. I'm bi and if I see someone with a bi flag somewhere I feel validated that I'm not going through this alone and there are people who feel this way too. It's the community the flag represents."

Another stated, "I don't know how to explain, but it's like a light, and it makes me feel safe in the sense that other people identify with this flag along with me, so if I see someone with it I know we're fighting a similar battle and we're not alone."

Some respondents, however, possessed negative opinions, which included opinions about flags in general. One respondent stated, "yuck," and another called the LGBT pride flag a "made-up symbol that could be confused with peace flags." Others said, "I do not believe in needing a symbol," called the pride flag "a useless piece of cloth," and merely "fabric." Most heterosexual respondents had nothing to say about the straight flag, but a few did, and they were pointedly negative. Responses included, "The black and white 'straight pride' flag is offensive to me due to its insistence on black/white, same/other. I do love the straight ally flag, though", "Nothing, I don't see a point in a flag for being heterosexual", and "Potentially anti-LGBTQ symbol."

And one man stated, "Some people spend too much time dividing up the world and formalizing those divisions."

Finally, survey respondents were asked what the response from religious communities to flags should be. This question required a write-in response. Several said there should be no response, and other common responses included "support," "minding their own business," "respectful," "neutral," "tolerance," "positive," and "shouldn't care." Two respondents noted the constitutional right of religious groups to freedom of speech. For example, "Religious groups have a constitutional right to whatever response they believe in," and, "They can SAY what they want. It's a fundamental principle of free speech, which I believe in. I myself do not have to agree or disagree with their response. I am opposed to violence however, and would condemn any religious group who uses or encourages violence against ANY other group."

Others stated that this matter does not concern religion. For example, "None. It has nothing to do with religion." "Don't think it needs a response necessarily. The two things are separate," and "Religious groups should not 'hate on' flags like those, whether they think it's a sin or not."

Only one respondent in the entire survey was openly negative about alternative sexuality. In this section, he stated, "Tolerance and respect for what people are. They can't help that. However religious groups should not be forced into accepting aberrant and/or illicit behavior. There have always been absolutes about what is right and wrong behavior and a person's sexual orientation does not give them license to violate those standards."

Noteworthy closing comments included, "I'm from the USA, but have family globally, especially in Canada. 'Flags' in general don't really mean anything at all to me. I'm not patriotic, and I've been queer and out since before the rainbow flag existed, so it's not really a big thing either. My identity isn't tied to any particular piece of waving cloth, I guess," and "the rainbow flag is a wonderful, all-inclusive flag. I question the value of the more specific orientation flags—seems to buy into a very cis-ish insistence of division and demarcation—the opposite of the queer ideal."

A crucial takeaway from this research is the importance of flags in American culture. Many Americans are attached to the national flag, religious groups can be attached to their flags, and the LGBT community is very proud of the flags that they use to represent themselves to the wider world. As a result of this love of flags, it is no surprise that flags come at the intersection of the perceptions of subcultures and gaining social acceptance.

Pride flags have become an unmistakable symbol in American culture and politics. While opinions are wide-ranging, they have left an indelible mark on the socio-cultural landscape and have been an integral component of the increasing normalization of alternative sexualities into our society. Only time will tell what will become of these flags when the push for acceptance is no longer needed.

This topic could be explored further in a number of media. As religion continues to be a contentious issue in the cultural landscape, and attitudes towards sexuality and gender are changing, the areas where they intersect is all the more important. Discerning public opinion through surveys is valuable, and can potentially produce stronger results in a different form than the one used in this research. Academics should also stay abreast of the latest developments and changes surrounding the topic.

Editor's note: This paper was presented at the 50th Annual Meeting of the North American Vexillological Association in San José, California, where it was commended with an Honorable Mention for the Captain William Driver Award for Best Paper.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A: Survey Questions

What is your age?

Where were you raised?

What is your nationality?

What is your ethnicity?

What is your sexual orientation?

What is your gender orientation?

What is your romantic orientation?

What best describes your religious beliefs?

Are your religious beliefs the same as your upbringing?

How much has your sexual orientation influenced remaining in or leaving the religion of your upbringing? (On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very little influence and 5 being a great deal of influence)

All sexual, gender, and romantic orientations have flags. Did you know there were flags for your orientations prior to this survey?

Do you think your sexual orientation needs a flag? (On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all and 5 being definitely)

Do you like the flag of your sexual orientation? (On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all and 5 being definitely)

Would you want this flag displayed and/or associated with yourself? (On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all and 5 being definitely)

What does the flag of your sexual orientation mean to you?

Is there a flag for your religious beliefs?

Do you think your religious belief system needs a flag?

What do you think of the flag of your religious belief system?

Would you want this flag displayed and/or associated with yourself?

What does the flag of your religious belief system mean to you?

What should be the response of a religious group to displays of LGBT or other identity flags?

Anything else you wish to add?

¹ Frank Newport and Gary J. Gates, "San Francisco Metro Area Ranks Highest in LGBT Percentage," *Gallup Reports*, March 20, 2015, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/182051/san-francisco-metro-area-ranks-highest-lgbt-percentage.aspx>

² James J. Ferrigan, "The Evolution and Adoption of the Rainbow Flag in San Francisco," *Flag Bulletin* 28, no. 1-4 (1989): 116-122

³ Clare Bayley, "A Field Guide to Pride Flags," *ClareBayley.com*, last modified June 27, 2013, accessed August 30, 2016, <http://clarebayley.com/2013/06/a-field-guide-to-pride-flags>

⁴ "The Leather Pride Flag," *Leather Archives & Museum*, accessed August 30, 2016, <http://www.leatherarchives.org/pride.html>

⁵ The Bear Society, "History of the Bear Flag," accessed November 23, 2016, <http://thebearsociety.weebly.com/history.html>

⁶ Anthony (Tony) Burton, "Flagging Enthusiasm," *Flag Research Quarterly* No. 1 (2013): 4

⁷ In Baker's original design the colors were said to correspond to the following list. Pink – sex; Red – life; Orange – healing; Yellow – sun; Green – serenity; Turquoise – art; Blue – harmony; Purple – spirit.

⁸ Robert Raeside, "Christian Flag," *Flags of the World*, last modified, November 12, 2013, accessed August 30, 2016, <http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/rel-chr.html>

⁹ For example, see Mike Adams, "Time to Take Down the Rainbow Flag," *Townhall*, July 17, 2015, accessed August 30, 2016, <http://townhall.com/columnists/mikeadams/2015/07/17/time-to-take-down-the-rainbow-flag-n2026369>

¹⁰ James Nichols, "Poll Finds Conservative Americans More Offended By Rainbow Flags Than Confederate Flags," *Huffington Post*, November 14, 2013, accessed August 30, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/14/rainbow-flag-offensive-confederate_n_4273886.html

¹¹ Trudy Ring, "Far-Right Pundits Call for Taking Down LGBT Pride Flag," *The Advocate*, June 23, 2015, accessed August 30, 2016, <http://www.advocate.com/politics/2015/06/23/watch-far-right-pundits-call-taking-down-lgbt-pride-flag>

¹² Steve Contorno, "LGBT Pride Flag Raised after Orlando Shooting 'Unbearable' for Christian Employee, Hillsborough Commissioner Says," *Tampa Bay Times* June 17, 2016, accessed August 30, 2016, <http://www.tampabay.com/blogs/baybuzzlgbt-pride-flag-raised-after-orlando-shooting-unbearable-for-christian/2282099>

¹³ For recent examples, see Jamie Edmonds, "New Hudson Church's Rainbow Flag Stolen—Again," *Click On Detroit*, August 22, 2016, accessed August 30, 2016, <http://www.clickondetroit.com/news/new-hudson-churchs-rainbow-flag-repeatedly-stolen>; Matt DeRienzo, "Danbury Church's Rainbow Flag Stolen Again," *Danbury News Times*, May 31, 2016, accessed November 18, 2016, <http://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Danbury-church-s-rainbow-flag-stolen-again-7953975.php>; "LGBT Rainbow Banner Stolen From Church In Menifee For Second Time," *CBS Los Angeles*, March 6, 2016, accessed November 18, 2016, <http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2016/03/06/church-in-menifee-says-its-lgbt-flag-was-stolen-for-second-time/>; "Thief Absconds with More Rainbow Flags from Hillsborough Church," *Durham News & Observer*, April 14, 2016, accessed November 18, 2016, <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/chapel-hill-news/article71810837.html>

¹⁴ Randy Young, "Gay Pride/Rainbow Flags—Religious Variants," *Flags of the World*, last modified January 16, 2016, accessed August 30, 2016, https://flagspot.net/flags/qq-rb_r.html

What Was He Thinking?

by David B. Martucci

For well over a century, Americans have speculated about the only symbolic reference in the Flag Resolution of June 14, 1777. In particular, they have wondered what real constellation may have been referred to by the phrase stating that “the Union be 13 stars white in a blue field representing a new constellation.”¹ The most famous people to cover this material are Schuyler Hamilton in the nineteenth century and Whitney Smith, Jr. in the twentieth century.

Smith speculated some years ago that Francis Hopkinson, who is believed to have designed the Stars and Stripes, may have had access to an old book of heraldry, *The Sphere of Gentry*, which describes an obscure charge thusly: “Corona Austrina consisted of 13 stars, and was accounted but a trifling Garland, which Sagittarius was wont to wear, who cast it away in jest or scorn; and therefore it is placed between his legs.”² Based on this reasoning (and the existence of six-pointed stars in Hopkinson’s own coat-of-arms), Smith published a booklet in which he attributed a flag design of thirteen six-pointed stars in a circle to Hopkinson.³

The constellation Corona Austrina, which is better known today as Corona Australis, in fact consists of 13 stars, according to some sources (figure 1). Smith’s interpretation of the term “garland” as a circle may not be correct, however. Few depictions of the constellation show it as a circle; usually it is shown as a “U” shape. In fact, in ancient Roman times a garland consisted of

two boughs or branches of some kind of plant material tied at one end and placed on one head of a person as an honor (figure 2). Today such garlands

are made as wreaths, but that was not the case in earlier times. In addition, a garland in heraldry is the same as the Roman usage. Although occasionally the tops cross each other, they do not attach (figure 3).

The unanswered question is, of course, why would Hopkinson use an heraldic emblem from the Southern



Figure 1. Modern day plot of the constellation Corona Australis depicting 13 stars. Source: <http://www.squidoo.com/corona-australis>



Figure 2. Left: Modern reconstruction of Roman vexillum showing a garland. Source: http://img.readtiger.com/wkp/en/Vexilloid_of_the_Roman_Empire.svg



Figure 3. Right: The present day coat-of-arms of the city of Paris encircled with a garland of oak and olive branches. Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/0d/Grandes_Armes_de_Paris.svg/2000px-Grandes_Armes_de_Paris.svg.png

Hemisphere, one invisible to Americans and nearly unknown in the Northern Hemisphere at the time? No one has offered a satisfactory answer to this question that I am aware of.

Schuyler Hamilton, on the other hand, was certain the constellation in question was Lyra. In his landmark book he described his logic, starting with the “obvious”: that “the constellation Lyra was a time-honored emblem of union,” and that “the language of the resolution of June 14, 1777, evidently has reference to such an emblem, representing a new constellation.”⁴

Hamilton’s “proof” is that John Quincy Adams, when he was Secretary of State in the 1820s, used a seal different than the Great Seal of the United States (figures 4 and 5). Namely, it included an eagle bearing a lyre on its breast along with stars of varying points representing the constellation Lyra, the entire emblem surrounded with a ring of thirteen six-pointed stars. This, he reasons, must be because of the following facts:

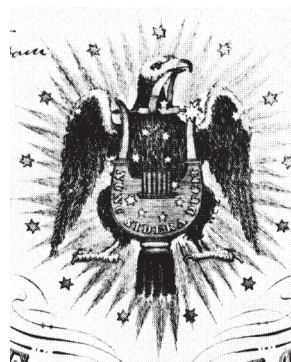


Figure 4. Left: Seal design from U.S. passports used under Secretary of State John Quincy Adams. Source: Richard S. Patterson and Richardson Dougall, *The Eagle and the Shield* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 1978), 349.



Figure 5. Right: The star pattern from the Adams seal.

1. That his father, John Adams, was in charge of the Board of War in 1777; and
2. That the first flag had a circle of 13 stars on it.

He believed the flag would not have been proposed through any other channel than the Board of War and that the first flag had 13 stars in a circle was apparently self-evident. J. Q. Adams's seal "proves" this by having a constellation on the eagle's breast and the ring of thirteen stars around it.

Hamilton illustrates a flag with the stars and the lyre on it (eliminating the eagle which he correctly said was not adopted until later) in addition to the flag that shows the thirteen stars in a circle (figure 6).⁵ He concludes "The Lyra was not adopted. A circle of thirteen stars was."⁶

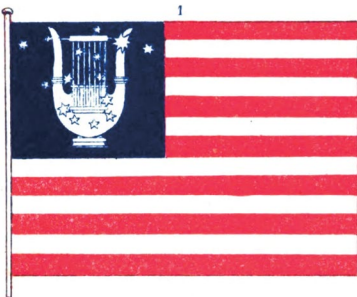


Figure 6. Lyra flag from plate III of Hamilton's book, between pp. 96 & 97.

I am, of course, severely condensing this theory into a very small space while Hamilton used several pages to make his case, but I do not find his logic very compelling. George Henry Preble, who stated the Lyra theory was propounded by one Alfred B. Street with no further reference, concluded about Hamilton's theory, "I cannot deem the evidence conclusive."⁷

However, I do not rule anything out. We do have, for example, William Barton's first design (1782) for the Arms of the United States that included "on a canton azure, [thirteen] stars disposed in a circle of the first [argent]" which he stated signified:

"... the same Number of Stars [thirteen] upon a blue Canton, disposed in a Circle, represent a new Constellation, which alludes to the new Empire, formed in the World by the Confœderation of those States—Their Disposition, in the form of a Circle, denotes the Perpetuity of its Continuance, the Ring being the Symbol of Eternity."⁸

No drawing of this design is known to exist.

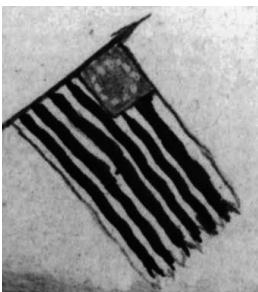


Figure 7. Flag (detail) from Barton's second seal design, 1782. Source: William Furlong, Byron McCandless, and Harold Langley, eds., *So Proudly We Hail: The History of the United States Flag* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 139.

A second proposal by Barton, also in 1782, shows an eagle as a part of the crest holding in its right talon a small flag of thirteen alternate white and red stripes with a blue canton bearing thirteen stars in a circle. The stars are too small to determine the number of points but the border of

the shield on the seal contains thirteen eight-pointed stars.⁹

Reviewing this material caused me to think, "Could there be other clues about the first flag we may have missed? Could the Lyra or other constellation have been in the mind of the designer?"

Hamilton was pretty adamant about Lyra being the constellation in mind. After re-reading his material several times, I came away with the feeling that the Lyra theory was already in hand and all he was trying to do was find proof of it.

Of course, the only person to have claimed to have designed the flag was Francis Hopkinson.¹⁰ He did at least three other designs with star patterns that still exist, plus one additional design attributed to him. Could any of these be based on an actual constellation?

One design, that used on the Continental \$40 bill in 1778, shows thirteen eight-pointed stars in a circle (figure 8). The design attributed to him, that of a Seal for the Board of War and Ordnance, shows an actual flag whose solid field displays thirteen six-pointed stars in a somewhat random pattern (figure 9). Neither of these resembles any existing constellation as far as I can tell.



Figure 8. 1778 Continental \$40 bill designed by Francis Hopkinson.

The other two designs, those of his two proposals in 1780 for a Great Seal of the United States, do have the stars in the crests arranged in an unusual but deliberate pattern (figures 10 and 11). How do these designs compare with the constellation Lyra?



Figure 9. 1778 design for a Seal for the Board of War and Ordnance attributed to Francis Hopkinson. Source: Edward W. Richardson, *Standards and Colors of the American Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 58.

The constellation Lyra, like any other, is drawn in many different ways by different viewers. In ancient times it was imagined as an eagle with a lyre on its chest, very similar to the seal J. Q. Adams used.

The constellation as seen in the night sky differs somewhat from that depicted in J. Q. Adams's seal (figures 12, 13, 14, and 15). And neither the constellation nor the star pattern in the Adams seal exactly mirrors the designs



Figure 10. Hopkinson's first proposal for a US Seal 1780, obverse. Source: National Archives.

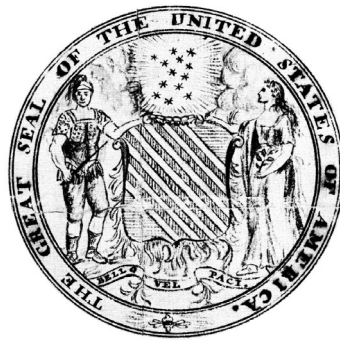


Figure 11. Hopkinson's second proposal for a US Seal 1780, obverse. Source: National Archives.



Figure 14. Left: Simplified schematic of the constellation Lyra.

Figure 15. Right: Star pattern of Lyra in the night sky.



Figure 12. Traditional design for the constellation Lyra. Source: "Origins of Lyra Nara," accessed March 7, 2013. <http://www.lyranara.com/origins-of-lyra-nara>

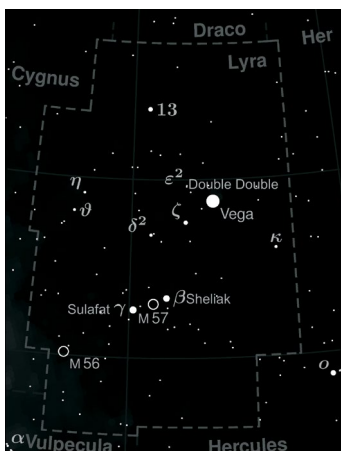


Figure 13. Schematic view of the constellation Lyra with star and galaxy designations; astronomical names added. Source: *Astroclub Meridian*, accessed November 26, 2016, http://meridianzero.astroclubul.org/images/Lyra_constellation_map.png.

of the crests in Hopkinson's two seal designs. Indeed, his first proposal shows only twelve stars. And yet, there is a certain something that may be similar. I am not saying for sure these two drawings done by Hopkinson in 1780 are supposed to be the constellation Lyra but it could be the case.

The final design to consider is that proposed by the Secretary of Congress, Charles Thompson, in 1782 (figure 16). His design was executed and submitted as an "almost" final concept which was then redone by William Barton into the design we now have as our National Coat of Arms and Seal.

Working with, and apparently inspired by, the materials prepared by Francis Hopkinson, Thompson's illustration also shows a strange pattern of stars in the crest similar to Hopkinson's designs. His design in fact most closely resembles the actual pattern of stars seen in the constellation Lyra of any of the designs reviewed.

He describes it as, "Over the head of the Eagle a

Constellation of Stars surrounded with bright rays and at a little distance clouds."¹¹

Barton, as the herald he was, of course, outwitted them all by arranging the stars in the Arms and Seal of the United States in rows of 1-4-3-4-3-1, which resembles a six-pointed "great" star. It is still called a "constellation" in the documents adopting the present arms and seal by Congress on June 20, 1782.

So what exact pattern did the designer have in mind for the "new Constellation" depicted on the Stars and Stripes adopted on June 14, 1777? Your guess is still as good as mine!¹²

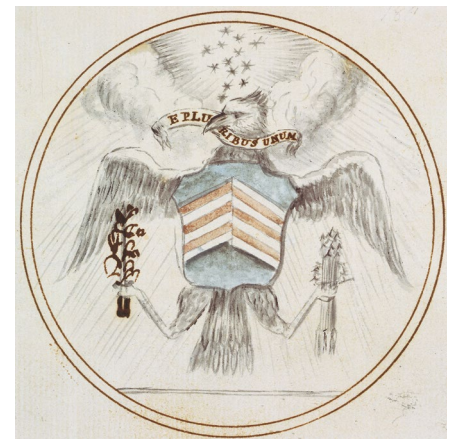


Figure 16. Charles Thompson's 1782 proposal for a Seal of the United States. Source: National Archives

¹ *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, ed. Worthington C. Ford et al. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), 8:464.

² Sylvanus Morgan, *The Sphere of Gentry...* (London: Leyhourn, 1661), 3:41.

³ Whitney Smith, Jr., *Long May It Wave! The National Flag of the United States Past, Present and Future* (Winchester, Mass.: The Flag Research Center, 1998).

⁴ Schuyler Hamilton, *The History of the National Flag of the United States of America* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1853), 92-94

⁵ *Ibid.*, Plate III, between 96 & 97.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁷ Alfred Billings Street (December 18, 1811—June 2, 1881) was an American author and poet who was well-known in his day, about whom Preble felt needed no additional explanatory information; George Henry Preble, *History of the Flag of the United States of America...* (Boston: Osgood & Co., 1882), 263.

⁸ Richard S. Patterson and Richardson Dougall, *The Eagle and the Shield* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 1978), 61.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁰ David B. Martucci, "The Fancy Work of Francis Hopkinson," *NAVA News* 34, no. 3 (July-Sept. 2001): 4-11.

¹¹ Patterson & Dougall, *The Eagle and the Shield*, 75.

¹² Of course we easily may have gotten the cart before the horse in this investigation. It is equally possible the designer suggested an abstract "new Constellation" in 1777 and was then besieged with questions regarding which one so that he tried to amend that thought in 1780 for the U.S. Seal and Arms. More to investigate!

Captain William Driver Award Guidelines

Captain William Driver Award

Bylaws § 2.05

- (a) At each annual meeting, the executive board shall confer the Captain William Driver Award on the individual who presents the best paper as part of the scientific program upon the recommendation of the award judges.
- (b) An individual may not receive the award more frequently than once every three years.
- (c) A member of the executive board is not eligible to receive the award during the member's term of office.
- (d) The executive board shall adopt guidelines for the judging of papers by the award judges. The guidelines must be published before each annual meeting in Flag Research Quarterly.
- (e) For each annual meeting, the award judges are the executive board and the three recipients who are disqualified under Subsection (b) from receiving the award at that meeting who are present at that meeting.

Executive Board Award Guidelines

1. The Captain William Driver Award was established in 1979 for the best paper presented at the Association's annual meeting. It is named in honor of Captain William Driver, who christened the United States flag "Old Glory." The award consists of a certificate and an honorarium of US\$250; the honorarium is usually underwritten by the Association's organizational members.
2. The executive board determines the recipient of the award based on the criteria given below. At its discretion, the executive board may determine that no presentation delivered at the annual meeting has met the criteria for the award and decline to give an award that year.
3. The criteria for the award follow, in descending order of relative importance:
 - a. The presentation should be an original contribution of research or theoretical analysis on a flag or flags resulting in an advancement of knowledge in the field of vexillology.
 - b. It should be characterized by thoroughness and accuracy.
 - c. It should be well organized and, as appropriate, illustrated.
 - d. It should be delivered well, i.e., interesting for the audience as well as informative, such that it is easily comprehensible.
4. No presentation may be considered for the award unless a completed written text is submitted in advance of its delivery.
5. No single individual may be given the award more frequently than once every three years.
6. Because of the conflict of interest, current members of the executive board are ineligible for the award.
7. If at all possible, the executive board shall not give the award jointly to co-recipients. In extraordinary circumstances, the executive board may recognize another presentation with the designation "Honorable Mention."
8. As a condition of being considered for the award, presenters agree that NAVA has the right of first refusal to publish their presentation in either *Flag Research Quarterly* or *Raven: A Journal of Vexillology* within two years of the presentation date. This right of first refusal extends to both the actual recipient of the award and the remaining non-recipients. A presenter who desires to have his or her presentation published elsewhere may decline to have the presentation considered for the award, provided that the presenter makes this fact known before the presentation is delivered.
9. These guidelines should be distributed to presenters in advance of the annual meeting.

Award guidelines can also be found at: <http://nava.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Driver-Award-Guidelines.pdf>

NAVA 51 Annual Meeting Boston October 13–15, 2017

NAVA's board and the Organizing Committee

are proud to invite you to celebrate our 50th anniversary in Boston on October 13–15, 2017. While “The Hub” is historic for many reasons, it is also the city where NAVA was organized in 1967. It is our hope that this “going back to where it all started” will inspire us to come together and renew the camaraderie that should be at the center of our scientific yet joyful occupation, at the same time as it helps us come to terms with the recent passing of our irreplaceable founder, Dr. Whitney Smith.

HOST HOTEL—BEST RATES RESERVED THROUGH SEPTEMBER 11

NAVA 51 will be held at the Omni Parker Hotel, located in the center of historic Boston. While Boston is an expensive destination, accommodations have been arranged at the low rate of \$275 per night for deluxe rooms with a king-

size bed, a queen-size bed or two full-size beds. Members sharing a room with two full-size beds can each stay at this historic and luxurious hotel for \$137.50 per night. Anyone looking to share a hotel room should contact the Program Committee at nava.meetings@nava.org, which will maintain a list of those looking to share a room. These rates are good for reservations made through Monday, September 11, 2017; however, the number of rooms available is limited, and reservations should be made as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. You may make your reservation online at the Omni Parker House link below. Those wishing to make reservations by phone may call 1-800-THE-OMNI and reference “NAVA Golden Anniversary Conference” to book rooms at the group rate.

Omni Parker House link

<https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/boston-parker-house/meetings/nava-golden-anniversary>



NAVA 51 flag



Old State House, Boston. Source: Lance Griffin/Flickr

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Go to: <http://www.nava.org/nava51registration>

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Individual: \$285 (early) – \$335 (regular)

Student or First Time Attendee: \$165

Companion: \$150

Whitney Smith Dinner only: \$85

PROGRAM & SCHEDULE

Our complete program and schedule will be available this summer on nava.org once the submitted papers are reviewed and confirmed. In the meantime, please note that, as we enter the second half of our first century of existence, we are planning to hold a discussion session on the future of NAVA before the traditional Saturday night banquet. This session will be distinct from the annual NAVA Business Meeting, which will be held Sunday morning as usual.

CALL FOR PAPERS—DEADLINE JUNE 13

NAVA invites all its members to submit a paper by June 13, 2017 for its 51st annual meeting to be held in Boston MA, October 13–15, 2017. Submissions must be composed of a 3000–4000 character abstract, inclusive of spaces, but exclusive of the title, figures and references.

A selection committee shall be formed by NAVA's First Vice-President consisting of himself and two other NAVA members in good standing who are not submitting a paper, in order to judge the abstracts and select those to be presented at NAVA 51. Papers will be judged equally for their scholarly content, their clarity, and their contribution to the advancement of vexillology. By July 13, the selected candidates will also be asked to produce a fully written version of their paper by September 13, 2017.

Any author who, according to NAVA's bylaws and according to the Award Guidelines, is eligible to receive the award will be considered for NAVA's Captain William Driver Award. Please see Captain William Driver Award guidelines on page 15.

Please submit your abstract to 1stvp@nava.org by June 13.