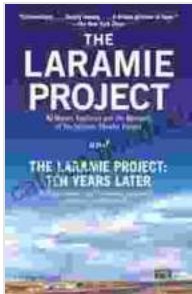


# The Laramie Project: A Harrowing Examination of Hate Crime and Community



## The Laramie Project and The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later by Andy Paris

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1470 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 226 pages



The Laramie Project is a powerful and moving play that tells the true story of the murder of Matthew Shepard, a gay college student in Laramie, Wyoming. Shepard was brutally beaten and left to die on a fence post in October 1998. His murder sent shockwaves through the nation and sparked a national dialogue about hate crime and homophobia.

The play was written by Moisés Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theater Project. It is based on interviews with the people of Laramie who were affected by Shepard's murder, including his friends, family, and members of the community. The play premiered in 2000 and has been performed around the world.

The Laramie Project is a powerful indictment of hate crime and homophobia. It also explores the power of community to heal and the

importance of compassion and understanding.

## **Themes**

The Laramie Project explores a number of important themes, including:

- Hate crime
- Homophobia
- Community
- Healing

### **Hate crime**

The Laramie Project is a searing indictment of hate crime. The play shows how hate crime can destroy lives and tear communities apart. Shepard's murder was a horrific example of hate crime, but it is far from an isolated incident. Hate crimes are committed against people of all races, religions, and sexual orientations.

### **Homophobia**

Homophobia is a major theme in The Laramie Project. The play shows how homophobia can lead to violence and hatred. Shepard was murdered because he was gay. His killers were motivated by homophobia, and they believed that they were justified in killing him because of his sexual orientation.

### **Community**

The Laramie Project also explores the power of community. In the wake of Shepard's murder, the people of Laramie came together to support each

other and to heal. The play shows how community can help people to overcome tragedy and to find hope.

## **Healing**

The Laramie Project is a story about healing. The play shows how the people of Laramie were able to heal from the trauma of Shepard's murder. The play also shows how healing can be a long and difficult process, but it is possible to find healing and hope even in the darkest of times.

## **Characters**

The Laramie Project features a large cast of characters, including:

- Matthew Shepard
- Aaron McKinney
- Russell Henderson
- Dennis Shepard
- Judy Shepard
- Romaine Patterson
- Father Roger Schmit
- Reverend Fred Phelps

## **Matthew Shepard**

Matthew Shepard was a gay college student who was brutally murdered in Laramie, Wyoming in 1998. Shepard's murder was a horrific hate crime, and it sent shockwaves through the nation. Shepard was a kind and loving

person, and he did not deserve to be killed. His death is a reminder of the dangers of hate crime and homophobia.

## **Aaron McKinney**

Aaron McKinney was one of the two men who murdered Matthew Shepard. McKinney was a high school dropout and a methamphetamine addict. He was motivated by homophobia to kill Shepard. McKinney is currently serving a life sentence in prison.

## **Russell Henderson**

Russell Henderson was the other man who murdered Matthew Shepard. Henderson was a friend of McKinney's, and he helped McKinney to plan and carry out the murder. Henderson is also serving a life sentence in prison.

## **Dennis Shepard**

Dennis Shepard is Matthew Shepard's father. He is a rancher and a former rodeo cowboy. Dennis is a strong advocate for gay rights. He has spoken out against hate crime and homophobia, and he has worked to raise awareness of the dangers of hate speech.

## **Judy Shepard**

Judy Shepard is Matthew Shepard's mother. She

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