

World: Americas and UK – hate Crimes

Americans mourn gay hate-crime victim Put together by Jay



Anti-gay protesters picketed the funeral

“In light of the recent bombings in London I wanted to remind people of other bombings and killings of innocent people. The bombs killed innocent people and it seems like it was again religious motivated. This is where religion can lead and that is why I think it should be personal and not forced down people’s throat in law or preached in a way that spreads hatred and harm to minority sections of society. It all starts with words and religions should not use them as they do to kill and harm people.”

“It is this kind of religious hatred, judgement, discrimination and unloving, ungodly, cruel, vicious words and spreading of them that leads to many people being killed over the world due to their sexuality. They should not play God and unless they have not sinned. They should not be throwing Stones as murder is the biggest commandment and it is not a sentence that should carried out by these kinds of people. They have blood on their hands and this kind of hatred leads to bombings and killing of people.” Jay 2005. Bombings in Soho.

The Trial Of David James Copeland – Soho Bomber

Racist homophobe David Copeland received six life sentences on 30th June at the Old Bailey after being convicted of carrying out last April's three horrific nail-bombings and the murder of three of his victims. Michael Murphy followed the trial at the UK's principal criminal court.

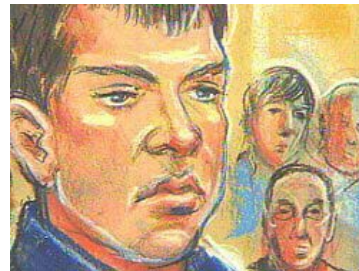


This is the twisted youth whose bigoted evil ultimately led to the senseless murders of Nicholas Moore, Andrea Dykes and John Light at last April's third and final nail-bombing at the Admiral Duncan pub in Soho.

As we sat huddled in the crowded well within the hallowed portals of The Old Bailey's imposing, dark, wood-panelled Court Number One on June 5th we finally got our first glimpse of the monster who had succeeded, with such ease, to

Old Bailey

violently shatter so many innocent lives.

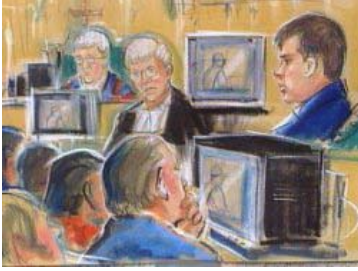


As the charges were read to him, Copeland cut a pathetic figure in the dock

Copeland

His expression was sullen, almost challenging, as he gruffly entered guilty pleas to the charges of causing those three fateful explosions in Brixton, Brick Lane and Soho. He denied the three charges of murder, instead offering pleas to the lesser charges of manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility.

The Crown had earlier refused to accept these pleas, and thus the die had been cast. The burden of proof had moved from the prosecution to the defence. Copeland, as expected, played the 'nutty' card. His defence would contend that he suffered from mental abnormalities that rendered him incapable of rational reason.



No 1 Court

Opening for the Crown, Mr Nigel Sweeney QC, outlined the events leading to last year's three tragic nail bombings. The court learned that Copeland had formerly been a member of the far-right British National Party, and had been impressed by the carnage caused by the Atlanta bombing during the 1996 Olympics. At the time he was just 19 years-old.

He had admitted to detectives that he "fervently" believed in the white-supremacist doctrine of the German Nazi Party, telling them that he read Hitler's 'Mien Kampffe' avidly. During one police interview, Copeland said: "I am a Nazi, whatever you want to call me. I believe in a ruling master race. Racial dominance should belong to us."

Armed with his recipe for terror, the court was told how self-confessed racist homophobe Copeland used a local minicab firm to ferry him around on shopping trips from his home to his local branch of B&Q. It was here that he purchased metres of plastic piping and thousands of six-inch nails, in addition to the other materials he would later use to ignite his dangerous cocktail of ammonium and mercury fulminate.

Seemingly with even greater ease, we then heard how, on a separate expedition, he bought over £1,500 worth of fireworks from a Farnborough joke shop without arousing the slightest suspicion from sales staff.

After the first bombing in Brixton, when CCTV Pictures
CCTV tapes were analysed, Copeland was clearly seen wearing a white baseball cap loitering outside the local Iceland store. Stills from this tape were published in The London Evening Standard two days before the Soho bombing. It led to LT engineer Paul Mifsud recognising the bomber as David Copeland, a work colleague on the Jubilee Line extension. He called the police with his suspicions, but tragically, his call was received only a matter of an hour before Old Compton Street experienced Copeland's third and final outrage.

It was described in court how Copeland had taken this third device to the Vegas Hotel in Victoria, and then to the Admiral Duncan. "I put it down at about 10 to six, sort of in the middle of the pub. I

had a drink and I was in the pub for about 25 minutes," Copeland told detectives.

He calmly walked back to Victoria and watched reports of his handiwork on Channel 4 News. He then checked out of his hotel, took a taxi to Waterloo station then a train to Farnborough, before cycling to his home in Cove.

On the third day of the trial, some of those who were terribly injured in the Admiral Duncan blast gave evidence to a silent courtroom. Jurors craned their necks to catch every word from those for whom the horror of that fateful day will be forever etched on their memories. By sheer coincidence, Copeland had a sudden bout of illness that Wednesday morning and his counsel requested that he be excused from attending that day's hearing. Thus Copeland avoided coming face to face with the survivors of his handiwork.

Victims of the Admiral Duncan bombing at the start of last Easter's bank holiday weekend described the scene of devastation created when the explosion ripped through the low ceiling and narrow beams of the Soho pub, spraying nails across the crowded bar.

Blast victim Julian Dykes told the court how the tragedy robbed him of his pregnant wife Andrea and their unborn child. Others attended court to tell of the moment when razor-sharp nails ripped into their arms and legs as the jukebox played Robbie Williams' song 'Millennium'.



Andrea & Julian Dykes

David Williams, a drinker in the pub, told how he had chatted to Copeland at the bar moments before the explosion. He described Copeland as "fidgeting, twitching, and looking around before leaving the pub to get some money".

Describing the moment when the device went off, Williams said: **"It was like being dropped in a swimming pool. I wasn't blown off my feet, I was still standing. I went into auto pilot."**

John Light's partner, Gary Partridge, said the atmosphere in the pub was happy. In a voice heavy with emotion, he said: **"All of a**

sudden I saw a flashing light... I heard a popping sound, like a champagne cork. I felt my head and covered my face - I didn't really feel any pain."

Partridge told the court how an unnatural calm settled over the debris for a few seconds, before people began to shout and scream: **"It was very dark and full of smoke and I was aware of things falling on my head. I could smell burning or singed hair,"** he told the jury.

Continuing his evidence, he remembered how he saw his lover John being dragged out of the smoking ruins by two men: **"At first I thought he had lost a leg, but when I looked again I realised that was because it was so soaked in blood."**

In the hushed courtroom, tapes of Copeland's interviews with police were played to the jury. The court heard Copeland try to explain away his actions when he claimed, in a calm, matter-of-fact way: "I'm totally shot away - I'm just weird!"

When pressed by police to explain his hatred of gays, he said: **"One, they are a minority. Two, your open groups don't like them anyway. Three, I knew it would piss everybody off, especially Blair and Mandelson and all them lot."**

Forensic evidence was then presented which linked fragments found from the three London blasts to materials found by police when they had raided his Hampshire bedsit. They included items and chemicals listed in 'The Terrorists Handbook' that Copeland had downloaded from the net, a copy of which



Admiral Duncan

had also been found during the raid. The police had also found press cuttings of his victims pasted to the walls of the bedsit. A full-sized mock-up model of one of Copeland's devastating devices was then shown to the jury.

Defence psychiatrist, Dr Ian Cummings, said that when Copeland carried out his bombing campaign, he falsely believed he would create a race war and would be rewarded.

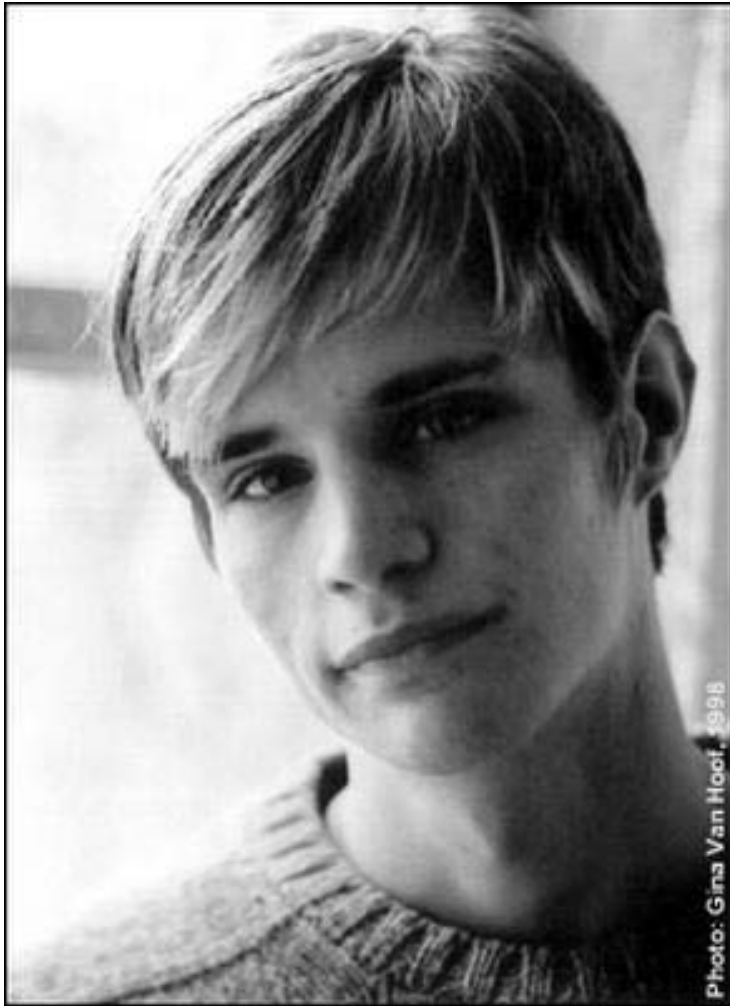
"He believed God had chosen him and an Armageddon might result," stated Dr Cummings. He informed the court that Copeland had started taking medication early this year **"and there had been a small improvement."**

On the morning of Wednesday, June 25th, Nigel Sweeney began summing up for the prosecution. He told the jury that the Crown had proved that Copeland had intended to kill people during his bombing campaign: **"It is a clear case of murder,"** said Mr Sweeney. **"He was not suffering from mental illness during the bombings. He made a choice, took that choice, and he should now pay for his choice."**

Dismissing the defence's claim of diminished responsibility, Mr Sweeney said that Copeland had changed his story several times, with "no references to delusions or hearing voices until much later."

FROM OUT IN THE UK

Americans mourn gay hate-crime victim



The funeral has taken place in the United States of Matthew Shepard, a 21 year-old student who was apparently beaten to death because he was gay.

Friends and family gathered in pouring rain at the church in the town of Casper, Wyoming, where he was baptised.

The brutal way in which he died has shocked the country. President Clinton, who said he was "deeply grieved" and "horrified" by the killing, sent two representatives to the funeral.



The Shepard family joined the pleas for tolerance

surgery was not an option.

Tied to a fence, Matthew Shepard was repeatedly beaten by his attackers and then left for dead in near freezing temperatures.

The bicyclist who found him on Wednesday, some 18 hours after the attack, first mistook him for a scarecrow.

Authorities said he had been pistol-whipped after being lured from a campus bar by two men who told him they were gay.

He died in hospital on Monday - his skull was so badly fractured by the beating that doctors said

Two charged

Two 21-year-old men have been charged with first degree murder.



University of Wyoming students protest at the killing

Police say although the main motive may have been robbery, the attackers also singled out their victim simply because he was gay.

The charge carries a possible death sentence, but prosecutors have not said whether they will seek the death penalty.

The savage attack has prompted numerous candle-lit vigils across America calling for tougher laws to combat hate crimes, which monitoring groups say are on the increase.

Members of Congress have joined prominent gay activists in expressing outrage and pleading for tolerance.

President Clinton has urged members of Congress to pass legislation making it easier for federal prosecution of hate crimes.

'Wake-up call'

At a rally in Washington DC, TV star Ellen Degeneres said heterosexuals should see the savage killing as "a wake-up call to help us end the hate."



"Right now, homosexuals are the target of, at the very least, discrimination; at the very worst, hate and violence," she said.

At the funeral Matthew Shepard's father, Dennis, described him as a caring, loving person who would have been overwhelmed by what his death has done to the hearts of people around the world.

The brutal killing has caused shock across America

Reverend Royce Brown of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, where the funeral took place knew Matthew Shepard and his family well.

"He was a really nice kid. He was always willing to help,"
Reverend Boyce said. **"You never needed to tell Matt what to do."**



Anti-hate law

In response to the killing, Wyoming state legislators have called for the state to pass an anti-hate crime law.



But homosexuality is an issue that deeply divides America and anti-gay demonstrators held a rally at the funeral.

Members of the Westboro Baptist Church from Topeka, Kansas, a group that regularly holds anti-gay pickets, said they would protest at the funeral, ignoring pleas for privacy from the Shepard family.

Matthew

Shepard: "A really nice kid"

"We should try to remember that because Matt's last few minutes of consciousness on earth may have been hell, his family and friends want more than ever to say their farewells to him in a peaceful, dignified and loving manner," Matthew Shepard's father said.

Wyoming State Governor Jim Geringer said officials could not stop the group from coming to Casper, but said their presence was not wanted.

"The people of Wyoming do not tolerate their hatred," said spokesman Jim Orr.

Saturday, October 17, 1998 Published at 00:10 GMT 01:10 UK



BBC news

Matthew Shepard Memorial Quilt

July 29, 2000, the Matthew Shepard Memorial quilt was presented to Mrs. Judy Shepard by Monie Gebhart and David Lehning. Mrs. Shepard was very pleased with the quilt and it is hoped that the Matthew Shepard Foundation can continue this project in some fashion similar to the AIDS Quilt.

The Matthew Shepard Memorial quilt is an artistic labor of love. The quilt stands as a testimony that there are many people in the world who care, who love and who remember those who were the victims of hate crimes. We encourage concerned quilters to create quilts that can be used to reduce hatred and violence.

The Matthew Shepard Memorial Quilt contains quilt blocks in memory of victims of crime. Some of the quilt blocks and some close-up photographs of the quilt appear below. The first two photos are of Judy Shepard and David with the quilt.



Matthew's parents

Matthew's Story

Through Matthews Mum Judy's eyes

“Matthew had an interest in politics and current news events. He was quite adept at understanding complex issues and was equally adept at expressing his opinions on these issues. He had such hopes for the future, his future. He was always anxious for the next step - the next stage of his life to begin. Every new step meant new challenges, new

friends and new experiences. He knew that judging people before knowing them was the loss of an opportunity. He never understood why everyone didn't think that way. Matthew felt there could be nothing better on this earth than another friend."

Through Matthews Father Dennis' eyes

"Matt's gift was people. He loved being with people, helping people, and making others feel good. The hope of a better world, free of harassment and discrimination because a person was different, kept him motivated. All his life, he felt the stabs of discrimination. Because of that, he was sensitive to other people's feelings. He was naive to the extent that, regardless of the wrongs people did to him, he still had faith that they would change and become "nice". Matt trusted people, perhaps too much. Violence was not a part of his life until his senior year in high school. He would walk into a fight and try to break it up. He was the perfect negotiator. He could get two people talking to each other again as no one else could."

"Matt loved people and he trusted them. He could never understand how one person could hurt another, physically or verbally. They would hurt him, and he would give them another chance. This quality of seeing only good gave him friends around the world. He didn't see size, race, intelligence, sex, religion, or the hundred other things that people use to make choices about people. All he saw was the person. All he wanted was to make another person his friend. All he wanted was to make another person feel good. All he wanted was to be accepted as an equal."

What did Matt's friends think of him?

Fifteen of his friends from high school in Switzerland, as well as his high school adviser, joined hundreds of others at his memorial services. They left college, fought a blizzard, and came together one more time to say good-bye to Matt. Men and women coming from different countries, cultures, and religions thought enough of my son to drop everything and come to Wyoming - most of them for the first time. That's why this Wyoming country boy wanted to major in foreign relations and languages. He wanted to continue making friends and, at the same time, help others. He wanted to make a difference. Did he? You tell us.

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THANK YOU

Robertson, and James Dobson even produce 'special' shows on homosexuality that lead indirectly to violence and to depression, self hatred, and suicide for sensitive young gay and lesbian human beings. They are the victims of this avalanche of hatred from 'Christian' pulpits and 'Christian' television.

They use the bible like it has been used in the past to support slavery from the pulpits and to discriminate against women. They aim isolated passages now at gays, even as Martin Luther and Hitler used the bible against Jews. To be an 'accomplice' or 'accessories after the fact' in a murder is a crime as I understand it.

The Secretary of Health under President Bush did a national study on 'Gay and Lesbian Youth Suicide' and they said this:

"Gay youth are three times more likely to attempt suicide than other young people. Suicide is the leading cause of death among gay and lesbian youth. Gay and Lesbian youth are strongly affected by the hostile elements of society against them. Tens of thousands of others fail at suicide attempts and will go on living lives of quiet, lonely, closeted desperation."

This is not just a Wyoming problem. It is a cancer growing all through the bible belt, the political and religious right wing, as well as fundamentalists everywhere in America.

What heinous support are our national Republican leaders contributing to this insanity?

Matthew Shepard died last Monday. It is a truth, do with it what you will, that those who must assume some responsibility for this murder extend far, far beyond the two thugs who pounded his head into mush and left him in the freezing night tied to a fence like a scarecrow.... to die

And Judy – Matthews Mum spoke My Time in the Presence of Judy

Editor's note: Judy Shepard appeared at Mercyhurst's Mary D'angelo Performing Arts Center April 3rd, 2001 with singer-songwriter Randy Driscoll and filmmaker (and Mercyhurst Alumnus) Brent Scarpo for a screening of his documentary Journey to a Hate Free Millennium: Stories of Compassion and Hope.

by Gary N. Snyder, PRIDE News May 2001

After the documentary, Brent touchingly introduced Mrs. Shepard. I think, Judy Shepard is not a woman you would describe as a star or even what one would think of when you meet someone of 'public' celebrity status. Honestly, Judy is simple, quiet, and polite to everyone around her. She's your next-door neighbor you can borrow sugar from if you want. She's an educated mother whose life has taken her on an amazing journey. She is not someone that you would pick out of a crowd to be a person who now tours colleges and cities speaking on hate and its effect on the world we live in. She is just like us. She is a beautiful and humble human being.

She started her segment of the presentation by explaining that she never really is sure what to say. She had not watched the documentary in its entirety for some time. Yet every time she does, it brings forth emotions and feelings that matter to the heart. Judy said that she feels Brent helps answer our questions on 'What is hate? Where does it come from? How does it affect us? and most importantly, What can we do?'

She chooses to travel and speak. Judy brings forth a message. Her message is that now is the 'time to make a change.' There is already too much hate in the world. 'When we let hate go unchecked. . . . we let them all down, perpetrator and victim. It is our responsibility to try and make a difference.'

How can we make a difference? Start with Brent's last quote in the documentary, "The change begins with me." Judy feels that the 'glory is within all of us [sic]. Once you let it out, you have to put it to good use.' She illustrated through examples that as one person you can change the world. Mahatma Gandhi was one man. Mother Theresa was one woman. Martin Luther King was one man. Nelson Mandela is just one man. One the subject of politics, Judy said she prefers to not get involved. But she recognizes that legislation is needed. Considering the ordinance issue our community is facing, she feels that 'It is shameful that we have to have legislation to say that it is wrong to hate and discriminate.' Her plea is that everyone 'please take a stand. Let the people around you know that it isn't acceptable. This is your responsibility to make the world a safer place.' Matthew came out to her at the age of 18, three years before he died. He decided in his own time and space when to tell his parents about his feelings on his sexuality and how that was important to him. After explaining how she and her husband dealt with Matthew's coming out, Judy believes that 'Your goal in life is to be the best and happiest you can be. Be who you are. Share who you are with the rest of the world.' Come out. Come out to yourself. Come out to your family. Come out to your

friends. Be who you are and don't hide in the closet of fear. Take pride in who you are through and through.

In closing, Judy illustrated her thoughts that if the corporate world of gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals would come out and be true to themselves, their lives, and the world we live in would be a better place. Maybe Matthew would still be here today. 'It's fear and ignorance that killed Matthew. If fear is shed, the violence will go with it.' Acceptance of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals would not allow fear and ignorance to exist as hate.

By being who we are and not hiding that from others, we treat ourselves with dignity and respect. When we treat ourselves with dignity and respect, so will the world we live in. It takes one person to change the world. The journey begins with me. The journey begins with you.

Note:

***The following internet sites can help you be active in
stopping hate and the crimes committed:***

www.newlightmedia.org

www.matthewshepard.org

www.matthewsplace.com

www.hrc.org

www.planetout.com

www.advocate.com

www.glaad.org

www.pflag.org

www.stophate2000.org

www.glsen.org

www.youthresource.com

www.nglhf.org

www.unitedagainsthate.org

www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/save.html

On May 4th, 2001 - NBC is to begin shooting The Official True Story of Matthew Shepard, produced by Goldie Hawn. This movie is endorsed and supported by the Shepards. Together they have approved the script personally and will be involved with the project for its entirety. Stockard Channing will be portraying the role of Judy Shepard with Sam Waterston portraying the role of Dennis Shepard. Currently they are still casting for the part of Matthew. The movie is expected to air this coming fall so check your local listings for announcements.

Shane Meier, who plays **Matthew** Shepard in the upcoming NBC TV movie "The **Matthew** Shepard Story" (airing on Saturday, March 16 from 9 to 11 pm ET), ... www.planetout.com/entertainment/news/?sernum