

## Talking about a queer Quaker response to climate change

BY JOSH BARKER  
STAFF WRITER

"What if we do nothing?" asked Peterson Toscano during his Guilford presentation on a queer Quaker response to climate change on Feb. 25.

Peterson Toscano visited campus for three events as a part of Religious Emphasis Week: a Tea and Talk in The Hut, a dinner conversation in the Atrium and his presentation on climate change in the west wing of Founders Hall.

Toscano previously visited Guilford in February 2010. On his website, Toscano is described as "a theatrical performance activist using comedy and storytelling to address social justice concerns."

**Q: What brought you to Guilford College?**

**A:** I was brought down to present at Greensboro College, and since I've had a relationship with Guilford, I made sure they knew that I was coming.

We decided that the best thing for me to do was to talk about this current stuff that I'm doing around climate, and what would be a potential queer Quaker response to it.

**Q: Can you briefly summarize the queer Quaker response to climate change?**

**A:** You know it may not seem intuitive

to think of a queer response to climate, particularly because one of the number-one arguments people have for climate change is that we need to do this for the children.

As a gay guy, it's not very easy for me to produce a child. Lord knows, my husband and I keep trying, but the Lord has not given us a child yet.

Though there are gay, lesbian and transgender people with children and who will have children, most of us never will. But the studies show that gay and lesbian people are much more interested in climate issues than straight people, to the point of 55 percent compared to 30 percent of straight people.

We see the world in very different ways, often because of our experiences. We know what it's like when people tell lies about us, and there are a lot of lies being told about climate and there's a coordinated effort to misinform people. That sounds familiar to me as a gay man.

To address the climate also means really thinking outside of the box. Thinking about future living, what will that look like. It may mean alternative families where lots of people live together with a lower carbon footprint. The gay community has been doing that for a long time where many of us create our own families and pairings of units of families.

So I don't know if there is a particular

queer Quaker response to this, but I think of my great, great, great grandfather Walt Whitman who had Quaker grandparents, who had an epiphany at one point in

his life. And I think, "What would Walt Whitman do today?"

That gives me a little bit of guidance as I try to navigate what I'm going to do.



Peterson Toscano responds to tough issues such as climate change and religion. At his presentation in The Hut, he offered an explanation for a queer interpretation of the Bible.

### EMAIL

## How email may affect student stress and focus

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The Guilford College Student Handbook says, "Students, faculty and staff are expected to check their official email address on a frequent and consistent basis in order to stay current with college communications" and suggests checking once a day. In reality, most students must check their email multiple times a day in order to keep up with emails from teachers, administrators, Moodle, class project group members and everyone else.

Yet recent studies indicate that email use and excessive computer/smartphone use may be linked to high stress.

A study done in collaboration between the University of California, Irvine and U.S. Army researchers observed a group of computer-dependent, Army-employed civilians. The experimental group used no email for a five-day period, and the control group used email as usual.

"We found that when you remove email from workers' lives, they multitask less and experience less stress," said UCI Informatics Professor and Study Co-author Gloria Mark to UC Irvine Today.

Stress was gauged in part by monitoring subjects' heart rates. Those without email had significantly more natural, variable heart rates than those with email.

In another study, University of Gothenburg researchers found a link between computer/mobile phone use and stress.

"High quantitative use was a central link between computer use and stress, sleep disturbances and depression," Sara Thomee, lead author of the study, to the Daily Mail.

There are, of course, benefits to using email

in an educational institution. According to the Student Handbook, Guilford's email use is "motivated by the convenience, speed, cost effectiveness and environmental advantages of using email rather than printed communication."

"In high school, I took a chance by trying to contact a teacher through email," said first-year Chris Luder. "Here, I can rely on getting in touch with my professors through email."

Some Guilford faculty try to find ways of getting around the negative aspects of electronic communication.

"I thought I would try recording my voice to an MP3 file and emailing my audio comments to the students," said Visiting Instructor of Theatre Studies Marc Williams. "I wasn't sure what the students would think, but they loved getting feedback this way."

Guilford students receive the Buzz daily and the Beacon weekly in addition to emails from administrators announcing events, emails from Moodle and emails with announcements from resident and faculty advisors. The list goes on. The quantity of mass emails sent to students can actually prevent them from noticing the important ones.

"I receive a lot of emails from Moodle and whatnot, so sometimes I just ignore emails," said first-year Rachel Featherstone.

Stress and focus are significant issues for today's college student.

If email and computer use are causing stress and loss of focus for students, it will be a difficult issue to solve. At Guilford, we rely on these potential stressors everyday. However, the studies being done could lead to solutions in the future.

Understanding the problem is the first step toward fixing it.

## Who is the Bryan family?

BY JAMIE LUCKHAUS  
STAFF WRITER

Bryan Hall, Bryan Jr. Auditorium, Bryan Boulevard, Bryan Park — the name is everywhere, but who exactly is Bryan?

Joseph M. Bryan Jr. of the well-known Bryan family is a Guilford College alumnus '61 who has stuck with the school ever since. He is chair of the board of trustees and has served on the board since 1973.

"Joseph M. Bryan Jr.'s dedication to Guilford College is immeasurable," said Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow. "He serves as an advocate, major donor, board chair and proud alum. It really is difficult to articulate Joe's impact on the college."

Bryan Jr. and the Bryan family have a long history with Guilford and are recognized for their philanthropy and continuous devotion.

As chair of Guilford's Advancing Excellence campaign, Bryan Jr. has given over \$3.5 million to the campaign in support of the popular lecture series the Bryan Series, which he established in 1994.

The college has received over \$9 million in donations from Bryan Jr. in total.

Although Bryan Jr. is strongly connected to Guilford, he is not limited to helping Guilford College. For years, Bryan Jr. has been giving to institutions all over Greensboro and beyond.

"Joseph M. Bryan Jr.'s generosity has enabled Guilford to present for its students, as well as the greater community, a marvelous opportunity to engage with people who have changed the world," said

President and Professor of Political Science Kent Chabotar.

Joseph M. Bryan Jr.'s generosity runs in the family, as his father, Joseph M. Bryan Sr., received national recognition for his philanthropy. The Bryan Family Foundation was established in 1955 in his honor.

Bryan Sr. valued education and helped numerous schools across North Carolina including Duke University, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro College, Guilford College and many more.

The charitable organization The Joseph M. Bryan Foundation was created in 1984 by Bryan Sr. in order to invest money into the community. After his death in 1995, the board Bryan Sr. hand-selected, with the addition of a sixth member, now continues Bryan Sr.'s work, spending \$5 million or more annually.

According to The Business Journal, one of the five board members, former Greensboro Mayor Jim Melvin, said that the priorities Bryan Sr. gave the board were to invest the money back into the Greensboro, in order to promote economic, cultural and recreational enrichment, with a special interest in Bryan Park.

So, the next time you are in Bryan Park to play some golf or soccer or to simply enjoy the scenery, remember the industrious effort Bryan Sr. and his wife Kathleen put into developing this recreation center. It was Bryan Sr.'s favorite spot.

Bryan Sr. once said, "When it comes to giving, man must tip his hat to nature. She gives joy, beauty and hope — and excludes no one."