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Author: Time is ripe for change

Progressive strategist Mike Lux visits Triangle

by Matt Comer . Q-Notes staff

Mike Lux says he's been a progressive since childhood.

"What shaped me the most was that my parents taught me that, taking care of folks who didn't have all the advantages in the word was the right thing to do, for moral reasons, for religious reasons," he told *Q-Notes* in an interview via phone from Washington, D.C.



"Equality has always been at the heart of American debate," says "Progressive" author Mike Lux.

Lux, co-founder and president of the D.C. firm Progressive Strategies, is the author of "The Progressive Revolution: How the best in America came to be." He's been working full-time in progressive political circles for nearly 30 years, working for Bill Clinton, AFL-CIO, People for the American Way and Barack Obama.

He visited Raleigh and Durham on May 13 and 14, speaking at a N.C. Policy Watch luncheon, signing books at Durham's Regulator Bookshop and attending Durham's popular Drinking Liberally social and political group.

"The Progressive Revolution" corrects conservative myths about American progress and history. Lux outlines arguments for progressivism and makes the case that the time is ripe for "another Big Change Movement."

"Conservatives love to wrap themselves in the flag and in tradition," Lux told *Q-Notes*. "They like to argue that they seek the same thing as the Founding Fathers. You hear a lot of talk about having Jeffersonian ideals or that Lincoln was a conservative. The fact is, when you really look at the arguments and you go back and study the flow of debate back and forth you realize that conservatives have

always made certain arguments and progressives have always made certain arguments."

Lux says conservatives believe in authority, tradition and states' rights. Those arguments have been used to defend slavery and other social ills. Arguments against the minimum wage and Social Security during the New Deal are some of the same arguments heard in today's dismal economic climate.

"When you look at the arguments through history, it is really clear which side progressives have always been on and what side conservatives have always been on," Lux said.

While most Americans only saw the effects of a movement for "big change" in the November election of Barack Obama, Lux says it has been building for a while. Friends have chided Lux, calling his "big change" argument the "Draino Theory of American Politics."

"Change sometimes gets put on hold for quite a while, because conservative politicians come to dominate the scene for a while," he said. "Change comes in big rushes. The most important changes in American history happen in a very few, short periods of time. When someone finally comes in ready to do some-

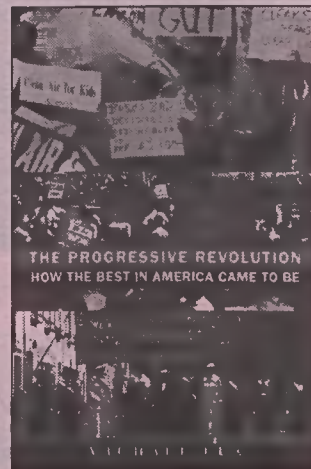
thing about it, movements are strong enough to make things happen."

Lux says LGBT people have a definitive place in American society. History, he says, proves we'll eventually move in the right direction.

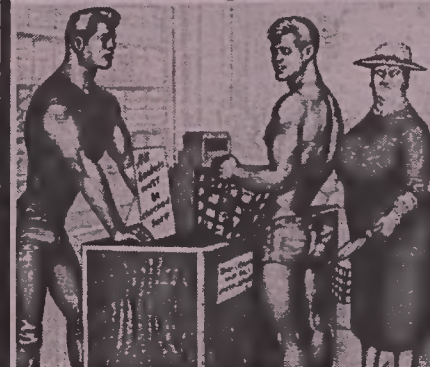
"Equality has always been at the heart of the American political debate. Look at the other big periods of change in American history, from the 1860s to the early 1900s, 1950s and 1960s."

Lux is convinced that the fight for LGBT equality is going to be one of the "leading edge indicators" of political change. "It will drive a

see Lux on 7



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