

Who Are You Making To The Prom This Year?

Twenty years ago, Aaron Fricke decided he wanted to go to his senior prom with Paul Guilbert. His principal wouldn't let him. The principal was afraid the other students might be offended, or that it could even get violent.

Aaron thought that was wrong.

"The simple, obvious thing would have been to go to the senior prom with a girl. But that would have been a lie -- a lie to myself, to the girl, and to all the other students."
-- Aaron Fricke

To Aaron, it was a question of free expression. Why shouldn't he be able to be who he was at the prom, like everyone else could?

"He feels his attendance would have a certain political element and would be a statement for equal rights and human rights."
-- United States District Judge Raymond J. Pettine

Before he could go to the prom, Aaron had to go to court. And he won.

The federal court in Rhode Island told Aaron's school that it had to let him attend the prom with Paul. In fact, the court even told the school that it had to provide enough security that Aaron and his date would be safe.

After Aaron went with Paul to the prom, Aaron remembered what he was thinking as he stared at all the reporters who were there.

"I thought of all the people who would have enjoyed going to their proms with the date of their choice, but were denied that right; of all the people in the past who wanted to live respectably with the person they loved but could not; of all the men and women who had been hurt or killed because they were gay; and of the rich history of lesbians and homosexual men that had so long been ignored. Gradually we were triumphing over ignorance. One day we would be free."
-- Aaron Fricke

That was twenty years ago. Today, the law is still the same. Don't let your school tell you that you can't go to the prom with your sweetheart -- or even your best friend -- just because the two of you are the same sex. Tell them about [Aaron Fricke v. Cumberland High School Principal Richard B. Lynch](#) in U.S. District Court in Rhode Island. And call your local ACLU if they still refuse.

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