

Laramie Project Roles & Descriptions

Sherry Aanenson

Sherry is Russell Henderson's (one of the men convicted of Matt Shepard's death) landlord. She found Russell to be "so sweet."

Baptist Minister

The Baptist Minister (who does not want his name used) believes that it is stated in the Bible that homosexuality is wrong.

Stephen Belber

Stephen is one of the members of Tectonic Theater Project who traveled to Laramie, conducted interviews, helped to write the play, and played himself, as well as several other characters in the play.

Dr. Cantway

Dr. Cantway is an emergency room doctor at Iverson Memorial Hospital in Laramie. He helps try to save Matt Shepard's life. He describes Matt's injuries as looking as if he had been in an accident in a car going "eighty miles an hour."

Catherine Connolly

Catherine is a professor at the University of Wyoming in Laramie and she considers herself to be the "first 'out' lesbian or gay faculty member on campus." She feels fear grip her after the death of Matt Shepard and is afraid to walk down the street.

Rob DeBree

Rob is a detective sergeant for the Albany County Sheriff's Department in Laramie. He is the chief investigator of Matt Shepard's murder.

Philip Dubois

Philip is the president of the University of Wyoming. He is a relative newcomer to Wyoming but prefers it to big-city life. He used to feel that Laramie was a safe place to raise children.

Tiffany Edwards

Tiffany is a local Laramie reporter. She describes the outside media that descend on Laramie after the news of Matt Shepard's death is broadcast as "predators."

Reggie Fluty

Reggie is the policewoman who responds to the 911 call and has to be tested for HIV after attempting to save Matt Shepard's life. She is the first police official on the scene.

Leigh Fondakowski

Leigh is a member of Tectonic Theater Project who traveled to Laramie to conduct interviews. She is a character in the play but does not play herself or any other characters.

Matt Galloway

Matt was the bartender at the Fireside bar. He was also a student at the University of Wyoming. He witnessed Matt Shepard leaving with Russell Henderson and Aaron McKinney on the night of the murder. He later regretted not having done something to prevent the events that happened later that night. He disbelieves that Shepard would have approached these two men as some other people believed.

Jim Geringer

Jim is the governor of Wyoming. He makes a statement against the "heinous crime," but falls short of calling it a hate crime. He is challenged by a reporter who asks him why he has not pushed for hate crime legislation.

Amanda Gronich

Amanda is a member of Tectonic Theater Project who went to Laramie and conducted interviews. She plays herself and several other characters in the play.

Russell Henderson

Russell is twenty-one years old when he offers Matt Shepard a ride home, then beats and robs him and leaves him to die. He later changes his plea from not guilty to guilty of the crime and is sentenced to life in prison.

Rebecca Hilliker

Rebecca is the head of the theater department at the University of Wyoming. She has recently moved to Wyoming and found the people there to be generally nice to one another. She states that she likes the fact that her students are such "free thinkers," unlike other students she has had. "You may not like their opinions," she says, "but they are honest."

Sergeant Hing

Hing is a detective at the Laramie Police Department and third generation resident. He offers a history of Laramie in the beginning of the play.

Sherry Johnson

Sherry was an administrative assistant at the University of Wyoming. She is a bit disheartened by the news coverage that the death of Matt Shepard has received, while the death of a Laramie policeman receives no attention at all.

Aaron Kreifels

Aaron is a student at the University of Wyoming. He was riding his bike the night Matt Shepard was murdered. He found Matt tied to the fence and called an ambulance. He felt that God had wanted him to find Matt and that is why he took a different route on his bike.

Doug Laws

Doug is the leader of the Mormon Church in Laramie. He believes that the word of God proclaims that "a family is defined as one woman and one man and children."

Aaron McKinney

Aaron is one of the young men who offered to drive Matt Shepard home on the night he was murdered. He is put on trial and found guilty.

Bill McKinney

Bill is the father of Aaron McKinney. He makes the statement that if this had been a murder of a heterosexual man, "this never would have made the national news." He is concerned that his son will be proven guilty before he even gets a trial.

Matt Mickelson

Matt is the owner of the Fireside Bar, the place where Matt Shepard was last seen. He offers some history of the place.

Marge Murray

Marge is mother to Reggie Fluty. She was very worried about the possibility of Reggie contracting AIDS from Matt Shepard after Reggie administered medical services to him. Marge has lived in Laramie all her life and knows just about everyone. She offers a cultural history of the place, but when she finds out that all this information might be used in a play, she decides not to tell her interviewers all that she knows.

Doc O'Connor

Doc was a limousine driver and had driven Matt Shepard to Colorado on occasion. He is from the East Coast, originally, but has lived in Wyoming for quite some time. He offers his reflections on the type of people who live in Laramie. He says that he liked Matt Shepard "cause he was straightforward."

Andy Paris

Andy was a member of Tectonic Theater Project who went to Laramie to conduct interviews and to help write the play. Andy plays himself as well as several other characters in the play.

Romaine Patterson

Romaine is a close friend of Matt Shepard's. She says she used to call him "Choo-choo." What she remembers most of him is his "beaming smile." He was friendly with everyone, she says. At his funeral, she and a group of her friends dress up in angel costumes in order to block the Fred Phelps' group of protestors.

Jon Peacock

Jon, a professor of political science, was Matt Shepard's academic advisor at the University of Wyoming. He helped Matt open up when he first came to Laramie. Matt wanted to work on issues of human rights, Jon states. And when Matt figured this out, he was excited by it.

Reverend Fred Phelps

Fred is a minister in Laramie. He is extremely anti-gay and comes to the funeral with a group of people to protest. He is concerned that everyone is making "Matthew Shepard into a poster boy for the gay lifestyle."

Greg Pierotti

Greg is a member of Tectonic Theater Project who went to Laramie to collect interviews and help with the writing of the play. Greg plays himself as well as several other characters in the play.

Barbara Pitts

Barbara is a member of Tectonic Theater Project who went to Laramie to collect interviews and help with the writing of the play. She played herself as well as several other characters in the play. She records the words of a sign she sees upon entering Laramie. It reads: "Hate is not a Laramie value."

Father Roger Schmit

Roger is a very outspoken Catholic priest in Laramie. He sets up a vigil as Matt lies dying in the hospital. He is disappointed when other ministers in the town will not become involved.

Jedediah Schultz

Jedediah is a student at the University of Wyoming. He used to love Laramie, but after Matt Shepard's death, he's afraid that everyone in the world will look at Laramie as another Waco—a place of a violent crime. Jedediah won a scholarship to the University based on a performance he did, a scene from the play *Angels in America*, which deals with homosexuality. His parents refused to come to see the play. Later, despite his minister's statements that homosexuality is wrong, Jedediah comes to his own conclusions.

Dennis Shepard

Dennis is the father of Matt Shepard. He makes a very emotional statement at the trial of Henderson, stating that he would not seek the death penalty.

Lucy Thompson

Lucy was Russell Henderson's grandmother. She makes a plea for his life at his trial.

Harry Woods

Harry is an older man who lives in the heart of Laramie. He offers the information that he is a homosexual and he secretly celebrates the addition of hundreds of people who join the homecoming parade in honor of Matt Shepard.