

***Email from David Pengelley to Douglas Lind, May 18, 2016 [some irrelevant personal comments have been removed]***

Dear Doug,

It's amazing to me that you write to ask me about something from 24 years ago, especially given how much has changed in this country in that time on the GLBT front, but also, what still hasn't. I guess you're right, current events make this relevant. And I think it would be great for you to write a Notices piece!

In any case, the simple story from my end is simply that I wrote a letter! And yes, I think my letter was quite timely and had quite an effect; not often that that happens from a single letter. Perhaps an interesting thing to explore might be more "why" I, of all people, wrote this letter. This I don't really know for sure, but it might be interesting to explore this by Skype with you; I'd be happy to, and I have some ideas, which are interesting sociologically.

In any case, here's what I can say for sure. In November, 1992, Colorado voters passed an initiative constitutional amendment that removed discrimination protections in place in Denver, ... I see there's a Wikipedia article about this:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romer\\_v.\\_Evans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romer_v._Evans).

When I saw this, I immediately reacted to the fact that JMM 1995 was scheduled for Denver (JMM is planned years in advance, of course). I wrote a letter and sent it to every member of the AMS Council and the MAA Board of Governors (a lot of people; this was all by paper; email was still pretty primitive). I basically asked them to pull out of their Denver JMM commitment, as part of a boycott. I knew it was late to try to change this, and I did it quickly, I think, because I knew the two boards would each meet in January, 1993 at JMM, and I hoped they would confront it then. I imagine there may have been other people who sprung into action, but I was always given the impression that my letter was the initial impetus for what happened subsequently.

I probably have a copy of the actual paper letter, but many of my files are still in numerous boxes in the garage of our rented house. I could try looking it out when we get back in a week, and would be happy to if you wish. I think I have a file folder on this very issue.

However, the good news is that I'm very good at keeping not only paper, but also computer files. I have located my tex file for the letter, and had to reformat it a little to get it to process 24 years later, but the only difference is that it has no date, and doesn't have my signature. I attach the letter as a pdf file; happy reading! As far as the date, I suspect it was November or December of 1992, since I wanted the boards to confront this at JMM 1993. I could probably confirm this next week from a box in our garage.

Well, the AMS Council and MAA Board of Governors met in a special joint session together at JMM 1993 to discuss this, and in the end they decided to pull out of Denver. The meeting was then rescheduled for San Francisco. I think I may also have been told that this was the first time the AMS Council and MAA Board of Governors had ever met together in joint session, but this would need independent verification.

Doug, I think it's great you are pursuing this, and may write about it. Let me know of any way I can help, and if you want a Skype.

Very best wishes  
David