

Speak Out

In this study based on national survey data, white adults with a body mass index of 23 to 25 and African American adults with a BMI of 23 to 30 lived the longest. The findings quantify the health risks associated with obesity, especially for young and middle-aged adults. Because about two-thirds of the U.S. adult population is overweight or obese, the findings "confirm that obesity is a major public health problem that appears to lessen life expectancy markedly, especially among individuals in younger age groups."

Those who are curious about their BMI can find more information at nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm. Obesity is a serious health

problem and should not be discarded as a mere prejudice of esthetics.

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Lou Harrison, 1917-2003

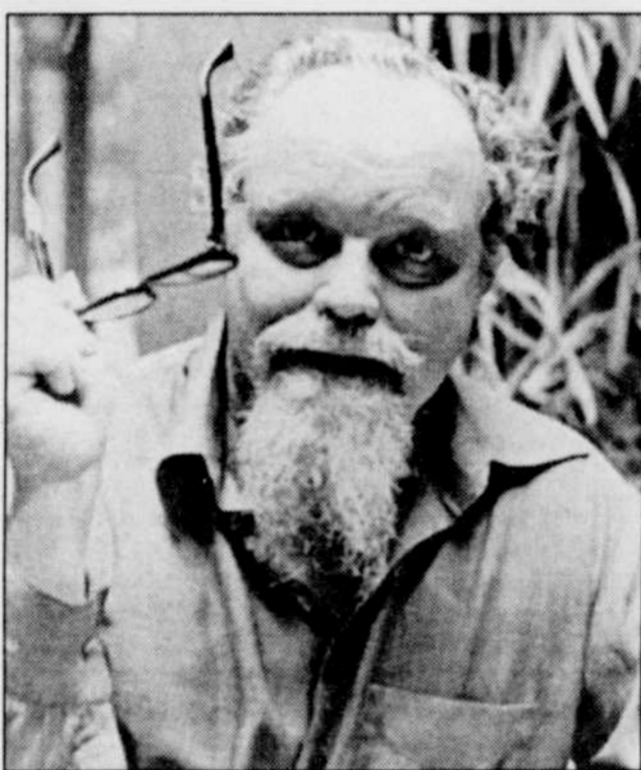
Lou Harrison, often cited as one of the most original and influential composers in the United States, died Feb. 2 in Indianapolis on his way to Ohio for a festival of his music. He was 85.

Born May 14, 1917, in Portland, he grew up in the Bay Area. He moved to Aptos, Calif., in 1967.

Harrison's avant-garde 1940s music brought him success and a seat in the American Academy of Arts and Letters. His music, while thoroughly American and personal, drew on Eastern sounds including alternative tunings and innovative and extensive uses of percussion.

During his long and varied career, he explored dance, Asian music, tuning systems and universal languages and actively championed political causes ranging from pacifism to gay rights. In addition to his prolific musical output, he was also a skilled painter, calligrapher, essayist, critic, poet and instrument builder.

His partner of 33 years, William Colvig, died in 2000.



Morris Kight, 1919-2003

Gay civil rights leader Morris Kight, a founding father of the modern gay rights movement who helped organize and form the West Coast's first Gay Pride parade in 1970, died Jan. 19. He was 83.

"Morris was a visionary leader and pioneer in gay civil rights," said Elizabeth Birch, Human Rights Campaign executive director. "He started a paradigm shift in this country's understanding of the gay community, moving from a place of deep-seated fear and intolerance toward a culture based

in pride, mutual understanding and tolerance."

Kight helped found the Gay and Lesbian Community Service Center of Los Angeles, now known as the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center, which helped galvanize California's sexual minorities community. His work through the years also included protesting a variety of social issues affecting the queer community and crusading in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

He is survived by his partner, Roy, and their two daughters.

Sarah Pettit, 1966-2003

Sarah Pettit died from complications related to lymphoma Jan. 22. She was 36.

Pettit had a brief but distinguished career in publishing, helping found *Out* magazine in 1992, only four years after graduating from Yale, and joining *Newsweek* in 1999 as senior editor of the Arts and Entertainment section. She was also instrumental in helping create the style and concept for *HRC Quarterly*.

"Sarah was a tremendous example of what the very best and brightest in our community have to offer," said Elizabeth Birch, Human Rights Campaign executive director. "As a lesbian in the publishing industry, she helped to break down walls and build understanding. She made great strides forward in bridging the chasm between the gay community and the mainstream press."

Monique Wittig, 1935-2003

French lesbian feminist Monique Wittig died of a heart attack Jan. 3 in Tucson, where she taught at University of Arizona. She was 67.

As a founding leader in the French feminist movement, her literary and theoretical works were recognized as essential contributions to feminist thought in Europe and the United States and to the emerging movement for lesbian and gay rights. Her novels—including 1969's *Les Guérillères*, 1973's *The Lesbian Body*

and 1975's *Lesbian Peoples: Materials for a Dictionary*—combine a sensitivity to the nuances of language and style with a powerful illustration of her philosophy of lesbian materialism, a theoretical position she set forth in a series of essays collected in 1992's *The Straight Mind*, a term she coined.

Wittig is survived by her partner, Sande Zeig; mother, Maria Wittig; sister, Gilberte Wittig; and niece, Dominique Samson.

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