

History Happens

News from the



GLBT
Historical
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archives & museum



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June 2017

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San Francisco Supervisor Jeff Sheehy
at his swearing-in (January 2017)

For San Francisco Supervisor Jeff Sheehy, History Matters in Struggle for Social Justice

San Francisco Board of Supervisors member Jeff Sheehy holds the seat once held by Harvey Milk in a district that includes the Castro neighborhood and is home to the GLBT History Museum. Sheehy studied history as an undergraduate at the University of Texas. He went on to a

long career of public service as an HIV/AIDS activist and an advocate for LGBTQ equality, most recently as head of communications at the AIDS Research Institute of the University of California, San Francisco.

Shortly after being named to the Board of Supervisors in January 2017, Sheehy introduced and led the passage of a [groundbreaking resolution](#) calling on municipal authorities, philanthropists and business leaders to support the GLBT Historical Society's efforts to develop a [New Museum of LGBTQ History and Culture](#). In this exclusive interview with *History Happens*, the supervisor discusses why our history matters and why he supports the campaign to create a full-scale queer public-history center in San Francisco.

Why is learning about LGBTQ history important?

LGBTQ folk have always existed, but our history has either not been recorded or has actively been erased. Berlin in the 1920s and early 1930s was the queerest city on the planet, easily the San Francisco of its day. Yet the Nazis erased everything, putting LGBTQ folk in concentration camps. Anthropologists are revealing the existence of LGBTQ folks in cultures across the globe.

Queer history is important not only for our community, but for everyone. Part of the richness of LGBTQ culture and history is that it poses alternative social structures to the patriarchal and hierarchical model that saturates modern society. Because of the ubiquity of LGBTQ folk, our continuing liberation movement is part of and a collaborator with other liberation struggles. The recent presidential election in the U.S. heightens the importance of all of us resisting together.

Does San Francisco have a special role to play in linking queer public history and social justice?

Our queer history has been and is intertwined with the continuing struggle for social justice for all. The modern LGBTQ movement that arose in San Francisco fought in tandem with the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the antiwar movement, the environmental movement and other liberation struggles. Our history is one of a movement for social justice, and we always need to remember that our liberation relies on collaboration with other struggles for freedom.

Why is it crucial for San Francisco to build the New Museum of LGBTQ History and Culture?

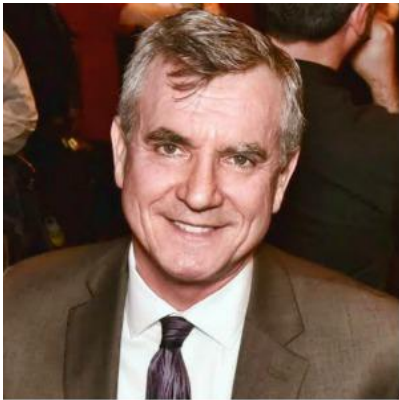
[Magnus Hirschfeld](#), the "Einstein of Sex," established an Institute for Sexual Science that included a Museum of Sex in 1919 in Berlin. This institution helped people from across the globe discover their sexuality. School classes visited it. Yet it was destroyed in 1933 by the Nazis. San Francisco is the perfect place to rebuild what was lost and do it with all of San

Francisco's fabulousness.

We also owe it to the coming generations of queer youth to document and provide access to our past and culture. Young people are moving to San Francisco seeking sanctuary now more than ever and being able to not only learn from the past, but get inspired by exhibitions of the voices of our community is one of the best ways to instill a sense of belonging. A trans youth having moved to the city, never having had another trans person in their family, can go to the museum and see that someone has come before them in this city and that they are connected to a vast collective history that embraces and welcomes them.

From the Executive Director

How Our Volunteers Put Pride Into Action



by Terry Beswick

This Pride season, I am deeply grateful to have the opportunity to work with so many committed and brilliant people who are passionate about the GLBT Historical Society. Since you're reading this newsletter, I'm guessing you share our vision for preserving and disseminating the stories of our diverse LGBTQ community's past.

Every day in our museum and our archives, I encounter LGBTQ young people who have gained a new sense of pride in their queer heritage. I meet elders deeply touched by the recognition we give to their long lives of love and struggle. And I see non-LGBTQ people who come away with greater respect for their queer neighbors. The stories that we share in our museum and that researchers uncover in our archives have a wonderful potential to educate, inspire and transform lives.

Since its founding in 1985, the GLBT Historical Society has been an independent, community-based organization that has grown and thrived in large part due to the volunteers and supporters who make all of our initiatives possible. If you're in the Bay Area, please check out the many ongoing opportunities for getting involved with our work:

- We're always looking for volunteers to help at the GLBT History Museum in the Castro and our archives in the mid-Market neighborhood.
- We're recruiting for a variety of tasks for our Oral History Project.
- We welcome new members for our working groups that focus on

exhibitions, archives, historic places, communications and educational events.

- We're always looking for candidates for our board of directors.

What's more, we're a major beneficiary of Folsom Street Events this year. To qualify for the funds, we're asked to recruit about 100 people to fill various volunteer positions at the Up Your Alley Street Fair on July 30 and the Folsom Street Fair on September 24. To sign up, [click here](#).

From the very beginning when our archives were housed in cofounder Willie Walker's living room on 17th Street in the Castro, volunteers have been the lifeblood of the GLBT Historical Society. If you have even a few hours to spare to support LGBTQ history, you can find all the details about getting involved on our [volunteer opportunities page](#).

Of course, if you prefer to support the GLBT Historical Society financially with an annual membership or a donation, we appreciate you, too! To give online, [click here](#).

Terry Beswick is executive director of the GLBT Historical Society.

In the Archives

The Joys and Challenges of LGBTQ Aging



by Mark Sawchuk

In a culture that remains obsessed with youth, it's important to cherish the experiences and wisdom of older members of the LGBTQ community. While aging may be an uncomfortable topic for many people, queer and straight alike, the subject is a central one in the archives. Our holdings reflect the joys and challenges of LGBTQ aging, as well as the dauntless activism of elders in our community.

Our largest collection on the concerns of older adults documents the work of the Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network between 1975 and 2009. LGAIN was the LGBTQ interest group of the American Society on Aging, a San Francisco-based national membership association for professionals in aging. In addition, we hold the organizational records of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of Old Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC), which mobilizes lesbians ages 60-plus to support one

another and oppose ageism, sexism and homophobia.

Our holdings of personal papers also shed light on growing older and on elder activism. For example, the papers of pioneering lesbian organizers [Del Martin \(1921-2008\)](#) and [Phyllis Lyon](#) -- shown in the photo -- include records of their efforts to create LGBTQ visibility at the 1995 White House Conference on Aging. The papers of Jordan Lee (1926-2004) document two social groups for older gay and bi men: the G40-Plus Club and Prime Timers. And cabaret performer Janet "Janny" MacHarg (1923-2003), an OLOC member, entrusted the archives with her original compositions, many of which deal with aging, including her song "Aging is Not for Sissies."

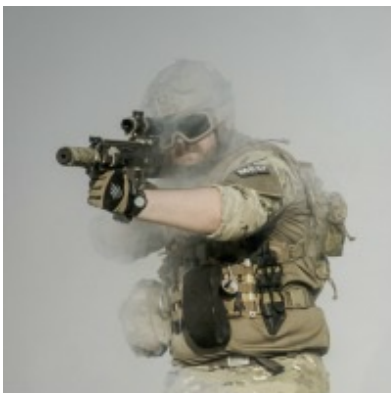
Researchers also will find extensive resources in our periodicals collections, which preserve numerous newsletters of LGBTQ elder organizations, among them LGAIN, G40-Plus, OLOC and nearly 50 chapters of Prime Timers. For details on all of our aging-related holdings and on how to use the collections, visit our [archives information page](#).

Mark Sawchuk is a member and volunteer at the GLBT Historical Society.

Upcoming Events

Staged Reading

Rhino in the Castro: In the Heart of America



Monday, June 5

7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

Free | \$5.00 donation welcome

[Theatre Rhinoceros](#), San Francisco's groundbreaking queer stage company, has teamed up with the GLBT History Museum to

present "Rhino in the Castro," a series of readings of plays reflecting the LGBTQ community and our allies. This month's offering is "In the Heart of America" by Naomi Wallace. During the First Gulf War, Craver, "white trash" from Tennessee, and Remiz, a Palestinian American, served together and fell in love. Later, Remzi's sister wants to know what happened to her brother.

Exhibition Opening

Picturing Kinship: Portraits of Our Community

Friday, June 9



7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

\$5.00 | Free for members

A new exhibition providing a 35-year overview of portraits in painting and photography by San Francisco artist [Lenore Chinn](#). Her work depicts a wide spectrum of women and men, people of color and the LGBTQ community.

The subjects are largely individuals who have contributed to San Francisco's cultural landscape in such fields as poetry, visual and performing arts, film, rock music, academia and the LGBTQ movement. The opening will feature comments from curator [Tirza True Latimer](#) and from the artist. Light refreshments will be offered. "Picturing Kinship" runs through September 18 at the GLBT History Museum. Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).

[Media Arts](#)

13th Annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival



June 9-11

Brava Theater Center

2789 24th St., San Francisco

Tickets available from the festival

The GLBT Historical Society is proud to cosponsor the 13th annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival presented by the [Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project](#). The three-day event will premiere 30 films across four

screenings at the [Brava Theater Center](#) in the Mission District in San Francisco. As the organizers note, "The 'Beloved Community' festival focus will include an 'Unleash The Power' conversation on collective self-care for challenging political times. From the resilient wisdom of LGBTQ people of color to the power of prayer for a young Muslim woman and a young Black Christian woman, these films encourage communities to find their squad and unleash their super powers to create change." For the full schedule and to purchase tickets, visit the [festival website](#).

[Author Talk](#)

Eccentric Modernisms: Creating Queer Culture

Monday, June 12

7:00 - 9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum



4127 18th St., San Francisco
\$5.00 | Free for members

Art historian Tirza True Latimer presents her new book, *Eccentric Modernisms: Making Differences in the History of American Art* (University of California Press), which traces the networks of cosmopolitan eccentrics who made space in America in the 1930s and 1940s for what we would today call queer culture. The book focuses on painter Pavel Tchelitchew, composer Virgil Thompson and writer Charles Henri Ford and others from the circle of Gertrude Stein. Latimer is an associate professor and chair of the Graduate Program in Visual and Critical Studies at California College of the Arts, San Francisco. She will be interviewed by James Voorhies, dean of fine arts at California College of the Arts. Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).

[Frameline Festival](#) Historical Society Copresents Queer Film Programs



June 17, 18, 22, 24
Castro Theatre & Victoria Theatre
Landmark Theatres (Piedmont)
Tickets available from Frameline

The GLBT Historical Society is copresenting four programs focused on queer history at Frameline, marking its 41st anniversary this year as the world's oldest and largest LGBTQ film festival. The festival runs from June 15 to

June 25. For more information and to buy tickets, click on the film titles below or visit the [Frameline Festival home page](#).

[Against the Law](#) (United Kingdom): Saturday, June 24, at 6:30 p.m. at the Castro Theatre.

[Bones of Contention](#) (Spain): Saturday, June 17, at 4:00 p.m. at the Victoria Theatre.

[The Death and Life of Martha P. Johnson](#) (United States): Thursday, June 22, at 9:30 p.m. at the Landmark Theatres, Piedmont, and Saturday, June 24, at 3:45 p.m. at the Castro Theatre.

[The Lavender Scare](#)

(United States): Sunday, June 18, at 11 a.m. at the Castro Theatre, and Saturday, June 24, at 2:15 p.m. at the Landmark Theatres, Piedmont.

Free Museum Admission. With support from Wells Fargo, the GLBT Historical Society will be offering students with valid school ID free admission to the GLBT History Museum throughout the Frameline Festival.

Picnic & Dance

Queer Summer of Love in Golden Gate Park



Sunday, June 18

Noon-5:00 PM

National AIDS Memorial Grove

Golden Gate Park

Free | Donations welcome

In conjunction with the "[Lavender-Tinted Glasses](#)" exhibition currently on display at the GLBT History Museum, the [Calamus Fellowship](#)

invites you to join in an afternoon tribute to the queer movers and shakers who helped create the Summer of Love in 1967. The potluck picnic and dance for all ages will take place at the [National AIDS Memorial Grove](#) in Golden Gate Park. DJs Brontez Purnell, Malik Mays and others will provide the sounds. Fabulous tie-dye and other LGBTQ hippie looks encouraged. Free admission. Calamus will be collecting donations for the AIDS Memorial Grove and the GLBT Historical Society. Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).

Fighting Back

Lesbian Activism: When the Dykes Went Marching In



Tuesday, June 20

7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

Free | \$5.00 donation welcome

The latest in our monthly "Fighting Back" series exploring contemporary queer-community issues in a historical context, "When The Dykes

Went Marching In: A Celebration of 1990s Lesbian Activism" will offer a multigenerational conversation about the legacy and lessons of that decade for political resistance today. Local veterans of lesbian activism will join moderator Anne-Christine d'Adesky, journalist, activist and author of the new book [The Pox Lover: An Activist's Decade in New York and Paris](#) (University of Wisconsin Press). Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).

Queer Memory

Dyke Codes: Growing Up Outside the Bubble



Wednesday, June 21

7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

\$5.00 | Free for members

StormMiguel Florez and RaMona Webb will spearhead a group of artists from various parts of the United States -- Albuquerque, Baton

Rouge and more -- to discuss and perform work remembering how they found community growing up "outside the bubble" of such LGBTQ metropolises as New York and San Francisco. Florez will introduce his newest project, a film about just such a method for recognizing other queers in settings where visibility wasn't the norm -- and Webb will talk about the first integrated poetry slam in Baton Rouge. Presented by the [Queer Cultural Center](#) as part of its [National Queer Arts Festival 2017](#); cosponsored by the GLBT Historical Society. Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).

Visit Us

EXHIBITIONS & PROGRAMS

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St.

San Francisco, CA 94114

(415) 621-1107

www.glbthistory.org/museum

Monday - Saturday: 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Sunday: Noon - 5:00 PM

NOTE: Closed for construction June 5 through June 7

ARCHIVES & RESEARCH CENTER

The GLBT Historical Society

989 Market St., Lower Level

San Francisco, CA 94103-1708

(415) 777-5455

www.glbthistory.org/archives

Call to schedule a research appointment.

Archives: Photo by Sarah Fawcett from the Del Martin & Phyllis Lyon Papers. Theatre Rhino photo: Prexels.com. "Picturing Kinship": Detail of *Veuxdo in the Fillmore* (2012); acrylic on canvas by Lenore Chinn. QWOC Film Festival: Screen capture from "The Revival: Woman and the Word." Tirza Latimer: Photo by Wanda Corn. Frameline Festival: Still from "The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson." Grove picnic graphic: *San Francisco Oracle* (April 1967); courtesy Regent Press. Fighting Back photo: Lesbian Avengers Records, archives of the GLBT Historical Society. Dyke Codes photo: Annalise Ophelian.

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