

History Happens

News from the



GLBT
Historical
Society
archives & museum

SPECIAL BACK-TO-SCHOOL ISSUE



September 2018

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Alex Granlund, Sophia Valdez and Allison Brustman with the California History Day mascot

Eighth-Graders Win Award for Best LGBTQ Project in California History Day Competition

The GLBT Historical Society grants an annual Young Scholar Award to the best LGBTQ project in the California competition for [National History Day](#). This year's winners are Allison Brustman, Alex Granlund and Sophia Valdez, who were eighth-grade students at Spring View Middle School in

Rocklin, Calif., when they participated at the state level in May. They also received an honorable mention from California History Day. This month, all three start as freshmen at Whitney High School in Rocklin. Here's their report on their winning project:

by Allison Brustman, Alex Granlund & Sophia Valdez

National History Day is a nationwide competition where kids in grades six through 12 pick a topic and a style to display information on a history topic of their choosing. There are regional and state competitions, and winners go to the national event. Each year there is a new theme. This year it was "Conflict and Compromise."

We entered the competition as a group, choosing California's Proposition Six from 1978 because we wanted to study a topic that related not only to a civil rights movement, but also to LGBTQ history. Proposition Six was a ballot initiative that would have banned gay and lesbian people from teaching in the state's public schools. We titled our project "[Hope Is Never Silent: The Conflicts and Compromise of Proposition Six.](#)"

We were able to discover how LGBTQ people now have opportunities to become more open with the world; however, this openness is relatively recent, and it is still not found throughout our country. With our History Day project, we wanted to make more people aware that even today, there are LGBTQ people struggling to be okay with themselves because of what society has shaped itself to be.

Harvey Milk vs. John Briggs

Our project was laid out as a website with several components to show and analyze the history. You can visit the website [here](#). For context, we noted that not many people were openly gay in 1978. Following this, we presented the two sides of the conflict, with State Senator John Briggs promoting the initiative and the No on Six campaign, including Harvey Milk, opposing it. Then we looked at compromise. This was hard to find because both sides were so influential and determined.

One last important part was the short-term and long-term impact of Proposition Six. In the end, voters rejected the initiative, and lesbian and gay people were allowed to continue working in California public schools. As a result, more people realized being lesbian or gay was fine, and more people came out. It looked like gay and lesbian rights were heading in the right direction -- although even today, 40 years later, we still have many more things to achieve to reach full equality for LGBTQ people.

As a team, we were incredibly honored to win the GLBT Historical Society's Young Scholar Award for California History Day. We had used

the society's website and museum plus advice from its staff members to help put together our project. We had an incredible amount of support for taking on such a controversial yet intriguing topic. Winning the award was a huge pat on the back for our group because we realized that we were helping promote change, even if only a little.

From the Staff

Back to School: Learning About Queer History



by Nalini Elias

We're constantly working to develop educational activities inspired by the GLBT Historical Society's archives and museum exhibitions. The process includes collaborating with community organizations, scholars and advocates to promote the inclusion of LGBTQ history in the wide array of settings devoted to public education.

Following are just two of our current initiatives:

Museum Tours. At the GLBT History Museum, we invite students from elementary school through university to learn about the LGBTQ past via guided tours of our exhibitions. Trained docents lead the tours, which are targeted to meet the grade level and subject focus of the given group. We welcome teacher-organized class visits, school field trips, student organizations and alternative spring-break groups. As program manager for the GLBT Historical Society, I'm responsible for booking guided tours; contact me at least three weeks in advance for information on fees and to arrange a date: nalini@glbthistory.org.

Queer History Conference. An important learning initiative we're honored to cosponsor is the first annual [Queer History Conference](#) of the Committee on LGBT History, set for June 16-18, 2019, in San Francisco. Academics, independent scholars and community organizers will come together to advance our understanding of the histories of same-sex sexuality, trans identities and gender nonconformity. The committee has just released the call for papers: "We encourage interdisciplinary scholarship but we also stress that this conference is meant to interrogate the queer past. There is no specific theme; rather, we hope that this gathering will simply showcase the best of current work and new directions in the field of queer history." The deadline for proposals is November 1; for full details, visit the [CLGBTH website](#).

Nalini Elias is the program manager at the GLBT Historical Society.

LGBTQ Activism on Campus: Read All About It



by Mark Sawchuk

As young people around the United States begin arriving on campuses with U-Haul trucks and extra-long twin sheet sets, student organizations are firing up their publications for the academic year. Here at the GLBT Historical Society, we're taking a look at the earlier generations of queer campus publications that form part of our Periodicals

Collection. Surprisingly, the earliest gay student newsletters go back almost 50 years to roughly the same time commercial LGBTQ periodicals began to appear.

We have copies of a number of such early efforts. In 1970, the Gay Students Union at the University of California at Berkeley was already publishing a newsletter, as were the Student Homophile Leagues of Cornell University and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (whose members slyly titled theirs *The Closet Door*). Our collection is especially rich in California publications, including those put out by gay student organizations at institutions ranging from community colleges to San Francisco State to Stanford University.

Organizing in Higher Education

As the number of such publications expanded, they also became increasingly diversified. Newsletters specifically for lesbian students started to appear in the mid-1970s. The illustration shows the logo from one example: *Lesbian Visions*, launched at Stanford in 1975. By the 1990s, publications aimed at LGBTQ alumni, faculty and administrators were common. Collectively they provide a fascinating look into the activism of LGBTQ people in higher education. For example, our collections include two issues of a rare title distributed at the height of the AIDS crisis: *The Condom Courier* (1989-1990), published by the Student AIDS Mobilization Condom Co-Op at U.C. Santa Cruz.

What's largely missing from our holdings? Newsletters and other publications from groups created by LGBTQ students of color and groups organized specifically around the concerns of transgender, genderqueer and asexual students. Those titles emerged in the later 1990s and 2000s, once email and other online forms of communication had substantially replaced print. If you can donate electronic or hard copies of such materials, our archivist is eager to hear from you.

To learn more our holdings of LGBTQ campus publications, use keywords such as "college," "school," "student" and "university," as well as the names of individual institutions of higher learning to search our [online](#)

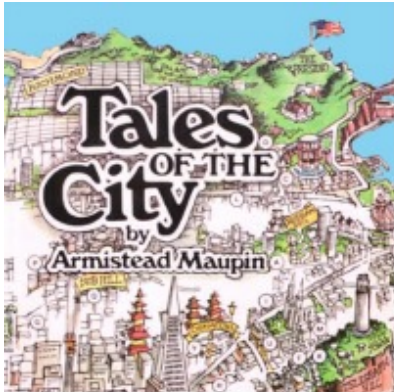
archives catalog. The publications themselves are available for consultation in our [archives reading room](#).

Mark Sawchuk is a volunteer with the Communications Working Group at the GLBT Historical Society.

Upcoming Events

Illustrated Talk

Queer Love on Barbary Lane: *Tales of the City*



Thursday, September 13
7:00-9:00 PM
The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco
\$5.00 | [Free for members](#)

Ramzi Fawaz will present his ongoing research about the experiences of Bay Area residents who read Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City* when it first appeared as a serial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* starting in 1976. Drawing on oral history interviews, Fawaz will discuss readers' emotional responses to Maupin's events, characters and storylines. In particular, he'll track the ways *Tales of the City* made the gay liberation injunction to come out of the closet available to a wide range of readers. Fawaz is associate professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and is author of *The New Mutants: Superheroes and the Radical Imagination of American Comics* (2016). Purchase advance tickets [here](#).

Exhibition Opening

The Briggs Initiative: A Scary Proposition



Friday, September 14
7:00-9:00 PM
The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco
\$5.00 | [Free for members](#)

On November 7, 1978, Californians decisively voted down Proposition Six, a statewide initiative that would have banned lesbian and gay people and supporters of lesbian and gay rights from teaching in public schools. Sponsored by State Senator John Briggs, the initiative was part of a wave of homophobic ballot measures around the United

States. The No on Six campaign was the first to succeed in defeating anti-gay forces in the voting booth. Among the best remembered leaders of the effort was Harvey Milk, but many other groups and individuals also made vital contributions.

A new exhibition at the GLBT History Museum, "The Briggs Initiative: A Scary Proposition," marks the 40th anniversary of the campaign. Drawing on posters, buttons, flyers, photographs and other scarce materials from the archives of the GLBT Historical Society and the San Francisco Public Library, the show recounts the story of the fight to defeat Briggs and advance equality for LGBTQ people and their allies in California. The opening reception will feature brief remarks by community curators Sue Englander, Paula Lichtenberg and Glenne McElhinney, all of them veterans of the No on Six campaign. Light refreshments will be served. Purchase advance tickets [here](#).

[Community Forum](#)

Fighting Back: Bringing LGBTQ History to Classrooms



Wednesday, September 26

7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

[Free Tickets](#) | \$5.00 Donation Welcome

The latest in our monthly "Fighting Back" series exploring contemporary queer issues in a historical context, this community forum will

offer a multigenerational conversation about about efforts to bring LGBTQ history into classrooms for students from kindergarten through 12th grade in California public schools. A panel of educators, historians, community organizers and school advocates will highlight resources and the latest educational initiatives, including implementation of the [FAIR Education Act](#). The panel also will look at how these efforts can help inform today's resistance movements. Reserve your free tickets [here](#).

[Living History Panel](#)

San Francisco Bay Times: Four Decades of LGBTQ News

Friday, September 28

Reception: 6:00-7:00 PM

Panel: 7:00-9:00 PM

The GLBT History Museum

4127 18th St., San Francisco

[\\$5.00](#) | [Free for members](#)



The *San Francisco Bay Times*, the first newspaper for the Bay Area LGBTQ community jointly produced by women and men, is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. This living-history panel will review San Francisco history since 1978 as covered in the pages of the paper. Among those who will recount their memories and discuss the significance of the publication are founding news editor Randy Alfred, founding

production manager Susan Calico, founding contributor Cleve Jones, founding arts and entertainment editor M. J. Lallo, historian and current columnist Bill Lipsky, and former columnist and current San Francisco Supervisor Rafael Mandelman. Purchase advance tickets [here](#).

Fundraiser

The Roast of Donna Sachet Hosted by Bruce Vilanch



Saturday, September 29
7:00-9:00 PM

The Castro Theatre
429 Castro St., San Francisco
Tickets: \$30 - \$150

Few people do more for San Francisco than [Donna Sachet](#), an entertainer, fundraiser, organizer and drag personality extraordinaire

who has long been at the forefront of LGBTQ rights and visibility in the city. Now Donna is in for a well-deserved roast at the [Castro Theatre](#), with host Bruce Vilanch and special guests Heklina, Sister Roma, Cleve Jones and Lenny Broberg taking charge of the festivities. A portion of the proceeds will benefit our work at the GLBT Historical Society. Purchase advance tickets [here](#).

Fundraiser

Make History! The 2018 GLBT Historical Society Gala



Friday, October 5
VIP Reception: 5:30-6:30 PM
Gala: 6:30-9:30 PM
The Green Room
War Memorial & Performing Arts Center
401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco
Individual Tickets: \$150 - \$250

Join us for a spectacular evening featuring

Tony-nominated and Obie-winning trans-genre cabaret star [Mx. Justin Vivian Bond](#)! Emceed by Michelle Meow, with a hosted bar, resplendent hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction featuring art, photography, vintage LGBTQ memorabilia, travel, fine dining and other lots. At this year's gala, we'll highlight the vibrant history of our community as we honor archivist, collector and curator Lisbet Tellefsen; the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus on the occasion of their 40 year anniversary; and Thomas E. Horn, president and trustee of the Bob Ross Foundation. We'll also celebrate the memory of pioneering LGBTQ studies and human sexuality scholar and educator Dr. John P. De Cecco with a very special recognition. Purchase advance tickets [here](#).

MAKE HISTORY!

GLBT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
GALA 2018

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2018
VIP 5:30-6:30 GALA 6:30-9:30

THE GREEN ROOM
SF WAR MEMORIAL &
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
[CLICK HERE TO BUY TICKETS](#)

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MUSEUM

Exhibitions & Programs

4127 18th St.

San Francisco, CA 94114

(415) 621-1107

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

Sunday: Noon - 5:00 PM

NOTE: Closed Labor Day (Monday, September 3)

ARCHIVES

Collections & Research Center

989 Market St., Lower Level

San Francisco, CA 94103-1708

(415) 777-5455

www.glbthistory.org/archives

Call to schedule a research appointment.

CREDITS. Feature: Courtesy Allison Brustman. From the Staff: Courtesy Nalini Elias. In the Archives: Logo from *Lesbian Visions*, the newsletter of the Women's Collective of the Gay People's Union at Stanford (February 1975); archives of the GLBT Historical Society. Upcoming Events: Queer Love: Cover of the first edition of Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City* (1978). Briggs Initiative: "Never Again! Fight Back!" (San Francisco: Too Much Graphics, 1978); detail of a poster sold to raise funds for the No on Six campaign; collection of the GLBT Historical Society. Fighting Back: Members of the FAIR Education Act Coalition (August 2017); photo courtesy **Our Family Coalition**. *San Francisco Bay Times*: Courtesy *San Francisco Bay Times*.

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