

# SurveyLA

## LGBT Historic Context Statement

City of Los Angeles  
Department of City Planning  
Office of Historic Resources

September 2014

Prepared by:



With contributions from:

Carson Anderson, Senior Architectural Historian, ICF/Jones & Stokes  
Wes Joe, Community Activist

**Certified Local Government Grant Disclaimers**

The activity which is the subject of this historic context statement has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of Interior, through the California Office of Historic Preservation. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior or the California Office of Historic Preservation, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or the California Office of Historic Preservation.

This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age of Discrimination Act of 1975 as amended, the Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to:

Office of Equal Opportunity  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20240

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose and Scope.....	1
Terms and Definitions .....	2
Existing Scholarship, Archives, and Outreach .....	3
<b>Historical Overview.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Chronology of Events in Los Angeles LGBT History .....	15
<b>Themes Related to LGBT History in Los Angeles.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Theme 1 – The Gay Liberation Movement (1948-1980) .....	22
Theme 2 – LGBT Persons and Their Impact on the Entertainment Industry (1917-1980) .....	34
Theme 3 – The Reconciliation of Homosexuality and Religion (1950-1980) .....	48
Theme 4 – Gay Bars as Social Institutions (1920-1980) .....	56
Theme 5 – Homosexuality: The Mental Illness That Never Was (1948-1980).....	67
Theme 6 – The LGBT Community and the Media (1945-1980) .....	74
Theme 7 – Gays and Lesbians in the Los Angeles Literary Scene (1912-1980) .....	82
Theme 8 – Queer Art (1945-1980) .....	87
<b>Selected Bibliography .....</b>	<b>97</b>

## Introduction

### Purpose and Scope

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) historic context is a component of SurveyLA's citywide historic context statement and was partially funded with a grant from the California Office of Historic Preservation. This context provides guidance to SurveyLA field surveyors in identifying and evaluating potential historic resources relating to Los Angeles' rich LGBT history. The context provides a broad historical overview on the growth of gay and lesbian identities, communities, and politics in Los Angeles and then focuses on themes and geographic areas associated with extant resources. As the narrative reveals, these resources date primarily from the 1930s to the 1970s and are largely concentrated in neighborhoods between Downtown and Hollywood such as Westlake, Angelino Heights, Echo Park, and Silver Lake. Resources located in adjacent cities, such as West Hollywood and Beverly Hills are not included in the scope of this context because they are separate jurisdictions. While focusing on historical themes associated with political, social, and cultural institutions, the context also identifies individuals and organizations that played significant roles in LGBT history throughout Los Angeles.

Los Angeles has led the nation in cultivating a politicized gay consciousness and building gay institutions. The city's prominent role in creating the modern gay political movement, however, has been overshadowed by the symbolic power of New York's Stonewall riots in 1969 as well as San Francisco's reputation as the country's preeminent gay city.

Historic resources associated with the LGBT community are the product, at their core, of the dynamic, conflicting, and intersecting perspectives of personal identity, public attitudes about human sexuality, behavioral science theories concerning sex and gender, and the resulting distillation of that discourse as public policy acted upon by agents of local and state government, such as the police. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Los Angeles, along with San Francisco and New York City, were the key locations where sexual identity became the basis for efforts within the political and cultural spheres to gain recognition and acceptance of sexual and gender minorities as full members of American society. LGBT historic resources in Los Angeles include sites, buildings, structures, and districts in diverse locations throughout the city that:

- are significant places of social interaction (e.g., city parks, bars, and nightclubs);
- are significant sites of political action and reaction (e.g., bars, cafes, and parade routes);
- are associated with LGBT persons or key LGBT supportive persons who were significant in the political, cultural, and social history of Los Angeles (e.g., residences, offices, and studios);

- are associated with significant LGBT businesses (e.g., such as magazine publishers, bookstores, and retail shops);
- are associated with pioneering institutions and organizations developed as direct products of the early gay liberation movement to address the particular educational, cultural, health, or spiritual needs of LGBT persons (e.g., offices, churches, synagogues, and health facilities).

SurveyLA's citywide historic context statement covers the period from about 1850 to 1980. Each theme therein may cover a shorter period of time depending on the topic and associated resources. The 1980s were, of course, a transformational period in LGBT history because of the AIDS pandemic. The era of sexual freedom came to an end and a generation of gay and bisexual men in the prime of their lives was wiped out. The response to this crisis in Los Angeles was, however, an outpouring of generosity and activism from both inside and outside the LGBT community. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the agenda of the gay liberation movement had changed from seeking tolerance to demanding acceptance, and issues changed from equality in the workplace to equality in more personal matters such as marriage. While this important period in LGBT history in Los Angeles will not be covered at this time, it is recommended that future updates of the citywide context statement include LGBT themes relating to the more recent past.

## **Terms and Definitions**

It should be noted here that the LGBT community is diverse, and segments within the community have been known by a variety of names. What does it mean to call oneself homosexual? gay? lesbian? queer? Where did these and other words come from and how have they changed over time?

The term "homosexuality" is derived from the Greek and Latin words for "same" and "sex." Thus, it was used historically (particularly in religious, medical, and legal texts) to describe romantic attraction, sexual attraction, or sexual behavior between members of the same sex. Thus, the word homosexual was applied to both men and women. We have avoided using the word homosexual as a noun in this context, because it sounds very clinical and is frequently used to denigrate LGBT persons, couples, and relationships.

During the 1930s, men who were attracted to men or in same-sex relationships began calling each other "gay," although the term did not really catch on until the 1950s. Although homosexual women were referred to as lesbians by this time, gay was also used as an umbrella term that included homosexual men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders. Thus, we have taken the liberty to sometimes use the word "gay" as an umbrella term for men and women.

The term "homophile" is an alternative word for homosexual or gay that was used briefly in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was preferred by early LGBT organizations and individuals because it is derived from the Greek word for "love" rather than "sex." In

recent years it has been adopted by anti-gay groups, so we have only used the word when it is included in titles and direct quotes.

"Transgender" is also an umbrella term used to describe a broad range of people who express and/or experience gender differently from societal norms. It includes people who are transsexual, cross-dressers or otherwise gender nonconforming. We recognize that not all transgender people will or have undergone gender transition. We use both the chosen and given names of transgender persons in this context.

"Queer" is a term with multiple meanings. It is sometimes used as a sexual orientation label instead of bisexual and sometimes used to describe sexually transgressive explorers. For decades queer was used as a derogatory adjective for gays and lesbians, but in the 1980s gay and lesbian activists began to use it to self-identify. Like many reclaimed words, they are considered acceptable when used by a member of the group, but not by outsiders. Therefore, the term "queer" is not used here except in the discussion of the visual arts, because "queer art" is a term that has been adopted by artists who challenge sexual and gender norms in their work.

Throughout this historic context statement the term "LGBT" is used to broadly describe the entire community of "un-straight" people.

### **Existing Scholarship, Archives, and Outreach**

Research on the history of the LGBT community was largely restrained by fear and intolerance within academia until the 1970s. The publication of several seminal works on gay history signaled a new era of critical thinking about sexual and gender identity. Many of the early histories focused on establishing the sexual orientation of historical figures such Alexander the Great, Walt Whitman, and Frieda Kahlo, to name a few. In a society that offered only negative images of LGBT persons, these biographies of respected historical figures provided the community with much needed heroes. Subsequent histories focused on homosexual repression and resistance, and documented early gay civil rights organizations. The histories of gay men have generally placed emphasis on sexuality, while the histories of lesbians have stressed the importance of romantic friendship.

Several books on LGBT history in the United States were used as background information for this context to provide a frame of reference for the events and trends that took place in Los Angeles. These included *Gay American History* (1976) by Jonathan Katz, *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present* (1995) by Neil Miller, *The Gay Metropolis* (1997) by Charles Kaiser, and *A Queer History of the United States* (2011) by Michael Bronski. Other books that were helpful focused on particular periods of history, they included *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (1991) by Allan Bérubé and *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America* (2012) by Craig M. Loffin.

The history of LGBT persons in the entertainment industry is especially relevant to Los Angeles, and there are a number of books on the topic. However, we found many to

be sensationalistic and anecdotal. We found *Behind the Screen: How Gays and Lesbians Shaped Hollywood, 1910-1969* (2002) by William Mann to be well researched and refreshing in that it includes individuals behind as well as those in front of the camera.

Recent scholarship specifically on the LGBT history of Los Angeles that was critical to this context included *Mapping Gay L.A.* (2001) by Moira Kenney, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (2006) by Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, and *Bohemian Los Angeles and the Making of Modern Politics* (2007) by Daniel Hurewitz.

The three archives below have collections focused on LGBT history. These archives were used to fill information gaps in the secondary source material mentioned above and included in the bibliography.

- June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives in West Hollywood
- Vern and Bonnie Bullough Collection of Sex and Gender at the Oviatt Library
- ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives in Los Angeles

The community was invited to participate in the project through MyHistoricLA.com, an online forum. MyHistoricLA.com was designed to engage the public in SurveyLA by providing a framework for community members and groups to share information with survey professionals. Information submitted about properties associated with LGBT history was incorporated into the lists of known resources at the end of each theme in the context.

Finally, numerous individuals attended a community meeting held in March 2014 and provided useful information in the development of this context as well as the identification of associated resources. Other individuals, such as the community activist Wes Joe, exchanged information with the research team on a regular basis and steered the direction of the project. Their participation was very much appreciated and enriched the context with details about the community that could not be gathered from books or archival materials.

## Historical Overview

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century California was a place at the edge of the world - a place where nonconformists could find greater freedom to act upon their core values, and where the anonymity afforded by a place with large numbers of transplanted people provided the chance to reinvent oneself. While Los Angeles was not yet a major American city, between 1890 and 1900 the population exploded from 50,395 to 102,479. By comparison, San Francisco was the ninth largest city in America, with a population of 342,782. However, in 1920 Los Angeles had grown to the tenth largest city in the U.S. with a population of 576,775, and San Francisco had fallen to twelfth place with a population of 506,676.

The rapid increase in the population during the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be attributed to transportation improvements such as the completion of the transcontinental railroad and the development of the Los Angeles Harbor, the opening of the Los Angeles Aqueduct which secured a reliable source of water, the discovery of oil, and the blossoming of the motion picture industry. Los Angeles attracted thousands of single men and women with new employment opportunities in these and other industries who lived in apartment hotels and boarding houses in Downtown and nearby neighborhoods. The transient nature of these neighborhoods permitted the development of L.A.'s gay and lesbian subculture.

A LGBT community clearly existed in Los Angeles prior to 1900. Although little is known about this period, historical accounts during the frontier days of Los Angeles reported unconventional sexual and gender behavior and used euphemisms such as "peacock" and "strong-minded" to describe men and women who were likely gays, lesbians, and transgenders.<sup>1</sup> The Merced Theater in present-day El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historical Park played host to masked balls for male and female prostitutes and became a covert gay lodging house.<sup>2</sup> The relative tolerance for such behavior ended in 1898 when the City of Los Angeles enacted an anti-masquerading ordinance in response to La Fiesta celebrations. La Fiesta was a weeklong celebration, along the same lines as Mardi Gras, which culminated in All Fool's Night. Although the celebration was organized by the Los Angeles Merchants Association, it drew the wrath of conservative Protestant groups who were trying to change the lawless image of the city. Amidst the rowdiness, the behavior Protestants found most disturbing was cross-dressing.<sup>3</sup> Thus began a period in which the LGBT community was isolated by low levels of public acceptance and sustained efforts by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to discourage nearly all public expressions of nonconforming sexual and gender behavior.

---

<sup>1</sup> Of course, derogatory words such as "sissies" and "fairies" were also used, and expressed a special disdain that heterosexual men had for homosexual behavior.

<sup>2</sup> Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A. A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 28; No Author, "Precautions to Prevent Rowdiness on All Fool's Night," *Los Angeles Times*, April 10, 1897, 14; No Author, "Earned Their Pay: Busiest Session of the City Council For Months," *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 1898, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 14-17.



During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, much of the LGBT subculture was centered around Main Street, a working class entertainment and vice district. Here, several bars, dance halls, and theaters catered to gays and lesbians and featured male and female impersonation acts. As the connection between theatrical impersonation and sexual behavior had not yet been made by American audiences, the anti-masquerading ordinance was not enforced against entertainers. Indeed, male and female impersonators were popular throughout the country during the period and were described in the mainstream press as wholesome family entertainment.



**Figure 1:** Julian Eltinge was the nation's most popular female impersonator at the beginning of the 20th century. *The Fascinating Widow* was a musical that was written for him. Source: <http://www.thejulianeltingeproject.com/bio.html>

The amazing and mysterious life of Julian Eltinge, the renowned female impersonator of his day, is told in *Bohemian Los Angeles* by Daniel Hurewitz. Eltinge began performing in female attire as a child and first appeared on Broadway in 1904. Hurewitz explains that the seriousness of his act differentiated it from his contemporaries as well as the post-World War II “drag queens” that were mocking the ideals of womanhood.<sup>4</sup> Eltinge performed throughout Europe and the U.S. on vaudeville circuits. In 1917, he moved to Los Angeles to act in motion pictures and built a house for himself in Silver Lake.<sup>5</sup> Off stage, Eltinge maintained an exceptionally masculine profile to combat rumors about his sexual orientation.

The City's anti-masquerading ordinance was fortified by state laws that further criminalized facets of homosexual conduct. Enacted in 1915, California State Penal Code 288a made oral sex a felony.<sup>6</sup> Sodomy had been a felony in California since 1850. It was difficult to capture individuals in the act; however, as it was typically performed in private between consenting adults. Improvements in personal hygiene and the invention of the

---

<sup>4</sup> Daniel Hurewitz, *Bohemian Los Angeles and the Making of Modern Politics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 27.

<sup>5</sup> The anti-masquerading law was eventually applied to entertainers such as Eltinge. His obituary stated that eight months before he died “the Police Commission ruled that his act at a film city nightclub was controversial to one of its rules prohibiting female impersonators.” No Author, “Eltinge, Famed Female Impersonator, Passes,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 1941, 1A.

<sup>6</sup> The law was enacted as a direct result of the arrest of 31 men in Long Beach in 1914.

zipper helped to popularize oral sex at the beginning of the century. Pershing Square and Westlake Park became sites where working class gay/bisexual men could go to at certain times of the day or night to find one another and engage in quickie sex.<sup>7</sup>

Turkish baths were another venue used by gay/bisexual men to identify and find one another. One of the earliest bathhouses was the Palace Turkish Baths, which opened in 1906. It originally operated as a straight venue, offering massages and Turkish bath facilities, but gradually evolved into a clandestine gay bathhouse.<sup>8</sup> This risky behavior challenged traditional ideas about privacy that made moral crusaders very uncomfortable. While the laws against sodomy and oral sex did not address the sexual orientation of the participants, they were used to entrap, arrest, and prosecute gay/bisexual men. As a consequence, bars, nightclubs, parks, and bathhouses were under constant surveillance by the LAPD Vice Squad.



**Figure 2:** A mix of heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual men mingling in the relatively tolerant social space in Pershing Square. Source: Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection.

The lesbian presence in the city was less visible during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in part because many working class lesbians “passed” as men in order to gain access to better paying jobs.<sup>9</sup> Lesbians were also not prone to being entrapped by the police in places like Pershing Square or Westlake Park because female-female sex acts were rarely carried out in public places that were under surveillance. Cohabiting women were also not viewed with the same suspicion as their male counterparts. Thus, they had more opportunities to have sex and to develop relationships in private. Indeed, one

of the main reasons men resorted to having sex in public and semi-public places was out of fear that their landlords or neighbors would learn their true identities. Such exposure could ruin careers and lives.

The independent spirit that drew people to Los Angeles at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was also a factor in why the city became the center of the American entertainment industry during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals played a central role in shaping the motion picture industry in front of and behind the camera. Filmmakers found the Southern California climate attractive because it allowed them to film outside in a wide variety of locations and settings. Initiated in cramped facilities in

---

<sup>7</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 30.

<sup>8</sup> Constructed in 1906, the building still stands at 128-32 E. Fourth Street and operates as the KLYT Baths.

<sup>9</sup> The book *Lavender Los Angeles* (22-23) mentions women who dressed in male attire among their friends, as well as examples of transgender men, women who lived their lives as men.

Edendale (on the border of present-day Echo Park and Silver Lake) and Hollywood, filmmaking quickly spread to the west where land was still undeveloped and plentiful. By 1911, Edendale was the center of the motion picture industry on the West Coast. While Edendale and Hollywood functioned as the major production centers for the industry, several studios were located in West Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.<sup>10</sup>

Actors, writers, and designers began moving to Los Angeles during the 1920s to practice their crafts in this new medium. Many of these creative types came from vaudeville circuits and legitimate theaters in New York and Europe with looser sexual strictures than Los Angeles, which still had small town values.<sup>11</sup> They brought with them a bohemian lifestyle that instead valued nonconformity and adventure in all aspects of life including sex.<sup>12</sup> Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals enjoyed tremendous freedom and influence in the entertainment industry - with certain obvious limitations. For example, Dorothy Arzner, Alla Nazimova, George Cukor, and James Whale led relatively open lives in Hollywood among their peers, but their sexual orientation remained hidden from the American public. In the case of actresses such as Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, and Katherine Hepburn, their gender ambiguity added to their appeal. But male film stars had to be much more guarded with their sexual identities and relationships. Nevertheless, the LGBT community blossomed in late 1920s and early 1930s Los Angeles, and Hollywood in particular, as the population of the region soared.

While private parties and personal networks were the foundation of the LGBT subculture, bars and nightclubs functioned as important places for social interaction. Despite the fact Prohibition was enacted in 1919, making the sale of alcohol illegal, the nightlife in Los Angeles was very active and an underground speakeasy culture emerged where people with different sexual orientations mixed. Places like B.B.B.'s Cellar and Jimmy's Backyard featured female impersonators. Indeed the drag scene was so successful that many New York performers came to Los Angeles after that city cracked down on drag shows.<sup>13</sup> Gender bending performances were also popular in vaudeville theaters and jazz clubs beyond Hollywood. Club Alabam on Central Avenue, which was a venue for jazz music, hosted an annual drag ball that attracted a multiracial crowd.

The more public homosexuals became, however, the more they were believed to threaten the American way of life. Homosexuality became associated with the hedonism of the Roaring Twenties that many believed had plunged the country into the Depression. The repeal of Prohibition in 1933 legalized the sale of alcohol, but was ironically accompanied by a decline in the city's nightlife. By this time, government officials began to view the popularity of impersonator revues in speakeasies as an

---

<sup>10</sup> "Historic Context Statement: The Southeast San Fernando Valley Sub-regional Planning Area of the City of Los Angeles." Prepared by Historic Resources Group for the Los Angeles Conservancy. Revised September 14, 1990.

<sup>11</sup> Hurewitz, 118-121.

<sup>12</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 39-40.

<sup>13</sup> *Roots of Equality, Lavender Los Angeles* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 35.

indication of the growing immorality of the city, which was being brought about by the increased visibility of LGBT persons. At the beginning of the decade, raids on bars and nightclubs typically involved liquor law violations. By the middle of the decade, these arrests gave way to charges of masquerading and indecency. In addition to the increase in the number of arrests, there was an increase in the severity of penalties. In 1930, someone convicted of masquerading might be charged a fine or sentenced to ten days in jail; in 1933, they would be sentenced to six months in jail, the maximum penalty under the law. Despite the fact that bars and nightclubs were raided frequently, most continued to operate.<sup>14</sup> Others moved to West Hollywood, which was an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County at the time. Business owners found that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department was less vigilant in the enforcement of anti-gay laws.

The backlash against homosexuality reached new heights in 1937. Sensational reports about sex crimes in newspapers such as the *Los Angeles Examiner* created a public panic. The owner of Clifton's Cafeteria, Clifford Clinton led the campaign to rid the city of vice and corruption. His campaign included recalling Mayor Frank Shaw for alleged misconduct. Shaw attempted to deflect the unwanted attention on his administration by forming the Sex Bureau to control sexual degenerates. The crime statistics were, of course, inflated by the intensified policing of the LGBT community earlier in the decade. Since all homosexual acts were against the law and most were classified as sex crimes, homosexuals were lumped together with rapists and child molesters. Much of the reporting about sex crimes reinforced the false notion that homosexuals were child molesters. Men with the economic means to hire an attorney were able to plea bargain for a lesser charge in hopes of paying a fine. However, those who lacked educational or financial resources could be convicted of felonies and sentenced to lengthy terms in jail. These disparities created class tensions within the gay subculture of Los Angeles.<sup>15</sup>

World War II facilitated the abandonment of traditional gender and sex roles and inadvertently brought gay and lesbian people together. The war created unprecedented economic opportunities for women on the home front and, to some extent, service in the military. While women were not able to enlist, they were able to volunteer in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) or Navy Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services (WAVES). Men as well as women were thrown into same-sex settings for extended periods of time. With the absence of male companions on the home front, women formed close, and sometimes sexual, relationships with one another. Servicemen likewise had new opportunities for gay experiences away from their families.

The various branches of the U.S. Armed Forces consistently held that LGBT persons were unfit for military service. Historically, personnel caught engaging in homosexual activity were court martialed and dishonorably discharged. The mass mobilization for World War II and the unprecedented sexual activity among servicemen made it impractical to convene military courts. Besides, the Armed Forces needed able-bodied men and

---

<sup>14</sup> Hurewitz, 121-122.

<sup>15</sup> Hurewitz, 122-135.

women to win the war. Thus, gays and lesbians were generally tolerated. However, when they were caught having sex they were hospitalized and discharged under Regulation 615-360, Section 8, which applied to the mentally ill. Discharges for homosexuality were often printed on blue paper and were sometimes called "blue discharges." Blue discharges were disqualified from the benefits of the G.I. Bill and could be prevented from civilian employment. Many of those who were discharged could not return home because they would be rejected by their families, so they settled in port cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York. Thus World War II fostered the development of permanent LGBT communities in urban areas such as Los Angeles.<sup>16</sup>

The lesbian community that formed in North Hollywood during this period illustrates the importance of World War II to the LGBT community. The airports in Van Nuys, Glendale, and Burbank made the San Fernando Valley the logical location for wartime industries. Lockheed and Vega Aircraft constructed facilities in Burbank, a neighboring city, which required thousands of employees. Women filled the vacancies in this workforce that were left by men joining the Armed Forces. The relatively high wages of defense industries jobs meant that single women could afford to rent their own apartments for the first time. As more women were drawn to the East San Fernando Valley during the 1950s and early 1960s, the social life of these residents came to be reflected in the area's built environment in the form of restaurants, nightclubs, and bars catering to lesbians, as well as through more ephemeral associations with area parks due to a preponderance of women's softball teams.

After the war, however, the country reaffirmed and protected traditional gender roles and severely stigmatized deviance from heterosexuality. Women who filled labor shortages in defense industries during the war were told to return to household work because the jobs they had been performing belonged to returning veterans. Many attracted to the same sex retreated to what soon came to be known as the closet. With World War II over, the Cold War began almost immediately as the Soviet Union gained power in Central and Eastern Europe. Conservative politicians like Senator Joseph McCarthy fueled American's anxieties about communism. The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) was the most prominent and active government committee involved in anti-communist investigations. HUAC was notorious for its investigation of the motion picture industry in 1947. HUAC also targeted gays and lesbians because they were believed to be susceptible to blackmail by Soviet agents because they were mentally unstable. Rooting out communism became comingled with forcing homosexuals out of the closet and into the open where they were treated like sexual perverts and criminals. In 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10450, banning homosexuals from working for the federal government or any of its private contractors. The order listed homosexuals as security risks, along with alcoholics and neurotics.

---

<sup>16</sup> For more information on this subject see *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II* by Allan Bérubé.

In Los Angeles this effort to ferret out homosexuals was led by the Chief of Police, William Parker. Appointed in 1950, Parker did not invent police tactics to entrap gay and bisexual men, but he did much to regularize and institutionalize them. The Vice Squad, which had been dismantled in 1939, was reinstituted and renamed "Administrative Vice."<sup>17</sup> The unit reported directly to Parker and productivity was measured by the number of prostitutes and homosexuals arrested. Historians Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons documented a dramatic increase in arrests for so-called sex crimes between 1947 and 1950. In 1947 there were 1,656 arrests for "sexual perversion" or "lewd and lascivious conduct." Three years later arrests increased by 86.5%.<sup>18</sup>

Ironically the police crackdown on gay and lesbian bars laid the foundation for the nation's gay liberation movement. While the anti-gay hysteria forced many men and women deeper into the closet, a few began to fight back. As historian Allan Bérubé put it:

The taste of freedom during the war, the magnitude of the postwar crackdown, and the example of the growing black civil rights movement caused more and more lesbians and gay men to think of themselves as an unjustly persecuted minority. They increasingly realized that when they defended their new bars from attacks by queer bashers, when lesbians and gay defendants began to plead 'not guilty' in court, and when bar owners challenged the cops and liquor control boards, they were actually fighting to establish a public turf of their own, defending their right to gather in public places.<sup>19</sup>

Los Angeles played a critical role in the gay liberation movement with the work of Harry Hay, Edith Eyde, W. Dorr Legg, and others. Harry Hay was an actor and political activist who used his charm and organizing skills to help found the Mattachine Society. The society sought to gain acceptance through greater communication between homosexuals and heterosexuals. The name was based on Medieval French secret societies of masked men who, through their anonymity, were empowered to criticize ruling monarchs with impunity. The Mattachine Society was originally organized like the Communist Party, of which Hay was a member, with cells and oaths of secrecy.

The organization received an unexpected boost in membership with the arrest of one of the co-founders Dale Jennings. In February 1952, Jennings was arrested in MacArthur Park<sup>20</sup> and charged with lewd behavior. Up until this point, men defended themselves by denying that they were homosexuals. Jennings admitted to being a homosexual, but defended himself by claiming that the police had entrapped him. Jennings

---

<sup>17</sup> "History of the Vice Division," *Los Angeles Police Department*, accessed March 18, 2014, [http://www.lapdonline.org/detective\\_bureau/content\\_basic\\_view/1987](http://www.lapdonline.org/detective_bureau/content_basic_view/1987).

<sup>18</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 376.

<sup>19</sup> Alan Bérubé, "Marching to a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II," in *Hidden History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, edited by Martin B. Duberman, Martha Vicinius, and George Chauncy Jr. (New York, NY: New American Library, 1989), 393.

<sup>20</sup> By this time the name of Westlake Park had been changed to MacArthur Park in honor of General Douglas MacArthur. However, the neighborhood is still referred to as Westlake.

surprising acquittal was heralded as a major victory for gay rights. A dozen Mattachine chapters immediately formed, however, the frenetic growth of the organization resulted in a change in the leadership.

While the Los Angeles chapter of the Mattachine Society fizzled out after the departure of the original founders, it survived elsewhere. In October 1952, a Mattachine chapter in West Hollywood formed ONE Incorporated, an educational and advocacy organization for gay rights. ONE Incorporated's publication *ONE*, a magazine that discussed topics in LGBT history, behavioral science, cultural arts, and civil liberties, was unprecedented in the breadth of its national readership. ONE Incorporated readily admitted women, and Joan Corbin, Irma Wolf, Stella Rush, Helen Sandoz, and Betty Perdue were vital to its early success. ONE and Mattachine in turn provided vital help to the Daughters of Bilitis in the launching of their newsletter *The Ladder* in 1956. The Daughters of Bilitis was the counterpart lesbian organization to the Mattachine Society, and the organizations worked together on some campaigns and ran lecture-series. Bilitis came under attack in the early 1970s for 'siding' with Mattachine and ONE, rather than with the new separatist feminists.

Despite the fact that many of the early leaders of the gay liberation movement were political radicals, intolerance for transgender people was an underlying theme. Early gay and lesbian leaders tended to be white, well educated, and middle class; and believed that the path to acceptance was assimilation. Thus, those who were too flamboyant in their voice or dress were shunned. It was not until the 1960s that leaders embraced the idea of uniting lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgenders into a community.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the movement shifted its focus from educating mainstream society about sexual and gender identity to cultivating a politicized gay consciousness and building gay institutions. A few of the old guard, such as Jim Kepner and Don Slater, joined the younger, more militant activists. During this period the level of group resistance to police harassment and other forceful displays of homophobia began to rise. In 1967, a police raid at the Black Cat, a gay bar in Silver Lake, touched off protests that predated by two years the Stonewall riots in New York City. The 1969 Stonewall riots, in which gays and lesbians fought back against the police for several nights, became a symbol for the struggle for gay rights.<sup>21</sup>

On New Years Eve, the LAPD swarmed the Black Cat, beating and arresting sixteen patrons and bartenders for exchanging same-sex kisses. Six of the men arrested that night were convicted of lewd conduct for kissing another man, which meant that they were registered as sex offenders. A new LGBT organization, PRIDE (Personal Rights in Defense and Education) organized protests in front of the Black Cat that lasted for several days. Established in 1966, PRIDE set a new tone for gay political groups like the Gay Liberation Front and the Radical Fairies. PRIDE led aggressive, in your face,

---

<sup>21</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 155-57.



demonstrations against the suppression by the LAPD of gay gatherings or same-sex meetings in Los Angeles.



**Figure 3:** Flower Power police harassment protest, LAPD Harbor Division. Source: Gay L.A. Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons. New York: Basic Books, 2006.

The next year, the arrest of two patrons at The Patch in Wilmington prompted a massive show of resistance. This time instead of arresting the men for same-sex kissing, they were arrested for same-sex dancing. The owner Lee Glaze offered to pay bail for those arrested and urged the patrons to fight for their rights as citizens. A spontaneous civil disobedience action began in which patrons that were not arrested marched to the LAPD's Harbor Division station to demand the release of those arrested. Along the way Glaze stopped at a florist and bought bouquets of flowers, with the notable exception of

pansies, and presented them to the officers. This single event morphed over the next several months into a series of LGBT community Flower Power marches to the police station.<sup>22</sup>

The growing resistance to police harassment corresponded with the emerging LGBT newspaper media, such as *The Advocate* and *The Lesbian Tide*. These widely circulated LGBT newspapers provided an unprecedented level of information about what was happening locally, as well as across the country, that was of interest to LGBT persons. The development of LGBT media also greatly expanded social networking opportunities beyond what had been possible during preceding decades. In turn, the emergence of LGBT media and opportunities to market directly to a more open community provided the basis for an explosion of LGBT-owned businesses during the period (including real estate firms, accountants, doctors, bookstores, retail shops, discotheques, bathhouses, and nightclubs).

In 1969, two important LGBT organizations were founded, the Gay Community Services Center (GCSC) and the Los Angeles Chapter of the Gay Liberation Front. The GCSC would eventually change its name to the Gay and Lesbian Center. At their core were two gay men, Don Kilhefner and Morris Kight. Although the GCSC had a political component, its primary mission was providing social services to the LGBT community. Incorporated in 1971, the GCSC would become one of the largest LGBT organizations in the country. The Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was founded in New York City in direct response to the Stonewall riots. The GLF had a broad political platform demanding the end to the persecution of LGBT persons, denouncing racism, and attacking traditional gender roles. By the end of 1969, chapters were quickly formed in other cities in the U.S., such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as London. Although the GLF folded by

---

<sup>22</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 158.



the middle of the decade, they demonstrated against negative images of LGBT persons in print media and on television and organized the first gay pride parade down Hollywood Boulevard.

One of the primary goals of LGBT organizations was the repeal of California laws that criminalized homosexuality. Many states in the U.S. repealed their sodomy laws in the early 1970s when they modernized their penal codes; however, California was an exception to the rule. California's sodomy repeal effort began in 1969 with urging from Morris Kight, Reverend Troy Perry, and others. The repeal bill was introduced to the California legislature starting in 1969 by Assemblyman Willie Brown, and every year afterwards until its passage in 1975. In 1975, the liberal Democratic Senate Majority Leader, George Moscone — running for Mayor of San Francisco — twisted many arms for its passage. When the Senate deadlocked on a 20-20 vote, Moscone locked the chamber doors, until Lieutenant Governor Mervyn Dymally could fly back from Denver and cast the tie-breaking vote. Then Governor Jerry Brown signed it into law.<sup>23</sup>

The gains made by the LGBT community during the 1970s were being made by women as well. Lesbians played an important role in the women's movement, which sought to eliminate sexism from the workplace, among other goals. Lesbians involved in the GCSC, GLF, and other organizations began to form their own separate organizations and revitalize old ones. For example, lesbian feminists including Delia Villarreal and Jeanne Córdova reformed the Daughters of Bilitis in 1971. As historians Faderman and Timmons explain, "many lesbians were now deciding that they had less in common with gay men than with straight women."<sup>24</sup> The Supreme Court decision in *Roe vs. Wade* legalizing abortion strengthened the women's movement. Feminist and lesbians across the country, including Los Angeles, began forming women's health clinics and claiming greater control over their own bodies. The first Feminist Women's Health Center was founded in Los Angeles by a group of women who had been running an abortion referral service. This evolved into a clinic and the other clinics throughout the state.

Finally, by the late 1970s, the new visibility of the LGBT community prompted significant homophobic backlash in the political arena – a defining example being Proposition 6 – the so-called Briggs Initiative of 1978, which sought to purge LGBT persons from teaching in the public schools. Ironically, as the LGBT community organized itself in a massive way and in coalition with non-gay allies to defeat this legislation, it demonstrated a new level of political astuteness and power, both in Los Angeles and statewide. The mobilization to successfully defeat Proposition 6 served as a capstone to decades of political organizing and public educational efforts on the part of Los Angeles' LGBT community and was a defining event in affirming LGBT identity and in demonstrating the power the LGBT community had in shaping its own destiny.

---

<sup>23</sup> "History of Sodomy Laws," *Sodomy Laws*, accessed March 1, 2014, <http://www.glapn.org/sodomylaws/history/history.htm>.

<sup>24</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 182.



**Figure 4:** No on Proposition 6 demonstration on Hollywood Boulevard, 1978. Beginning in 1966, many LGBT protests took place on Hollywood Boulevard—often beginning at the corner of Las Palmas Avenue and McCadden Place—an important LGBT social gathering locus beginning in the 1950s. Source: Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection.

## Chronology of Events in Los Angeles LGBT History

The type, location, and period of significance of LGBT historic resources have been shaped by trends in local and national history that are unrelated to sexual identity, as well as historical events that are particular to Los Angeles and California in geographical terms and that are directly related to sexual identity. The major events in Los Angeles LGBT history are summarized below:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>1898</b> | The City of Los Angeles enacts an anti-masquerading ordinance to discourage public displays of cross-dressing.   |
| <b>1915</b> | California State Penal Code 288a is enacted, making oral sex a felony rather than a simple misdemeanor. During this period, the LAPD begins a campaign of harassment that lasts for decades.   |
| <b>1919</b> | Prohibition is enacted and in effect during a period in which the city's population grew substantially, including its LGBT population.   |
| <b>1922</b> | The anti-masquerading ordinance is amended to expressly prohibit women from "masquerading" as persons of the opposite sex. Heightened police harassment and arbitrary arrests of women result. |

- 1933** The repeal of Prohibition brings the underground speakeasy culture to an end.
- 1937** Before Mayor Frank Shaw is recalled, he forms the Sex Bureau to control sexual degenerates.
- 1942-1945** World War II and the accompanying mobilization brings thousands of formerly isolated LGBT persons together in the military and wartime industrial production activities in Los Angeles.
- 1947** *Vice Versa*, the first lesbian publication in the U.S., is written and self-published by Edythe Eyde (aka Lisa Ben) at RKO Studios in Hollywood.
- 1948** *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, which disseminated the research of Dr. Alfred Kinsey's Institute for Sex Research, is published in January. The widely discussed best seller demonstrates for the first time that homosexuality is more prevalent than had been believed previously and describes it as being on a continuum of sexual behaviors.
- 1950** The Mattachine Society, the first sustained American gay rights group, is formed in the home of Harry and Anita Hay.
- 1952** ONE Incorporated is established as the public advocacy and education arm of the Mattachine Society.
- Dale Jennings is arrested for allegedly soliciting a police officer in a bathroom in Westlake Park. His trial draws national attention to the Mattachine Society, and membership increases dramatically after Jennings contests the charges, resulting in a hung jury.
- 1953** ONE Incorporated begins the publication of *ONE Magazine*, the first pro-gay publication in the U.S.
- Between 1950 and April 1953, several chapters of the Mattachine Society were established across California. Representatives from these chapters met together for the first time in April 1953 at First Universalist Church to create the charter for the organization.
- Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, the companion to the earlier book on male sexuality, is published in September. The widely read book, which challenged widely held presuppositions about female libido, prompts even greater controversy than its predecessor.
- President Dwight Eisenhower signs Executive Order 10450, banning homosexuals from working for the federal government or any of its private

contractors. The order lists homosexuals as security risks, along with alcoholics and neurotics.

- 1954** In October, the U.S. Post Office declares *ONE Magazine* obscene.
- Dr. Elmer Belt becomes one of the first surgeons in the country to perform sex-reassignment operations. He ceased operations at the end of 1954 when a committee of doctors at UCLA decided against the practice; however, he restarted quietly a few years later.
- 1955** The Daughters of Bilitis is founded in San Francisco by four lesbian couples. It is the first national lesbian political and social organization in the U.S.
- The redevelopment of Bunker Hill results in the wholesale demolition of the neighborhood for modern high-rise office buildings and prompts a demographic shift of gay men from Downtown to the Westlake, Echo Park, and Silver Lake neighborhoods at a time when numerous heterosexual households in those neighborhoods were relocating to the suburbs.
- 1956** The ONE Institute of Homophile Studies is founded. In addition to organizing classes and annual conferences, it also published the *ONE Institute Quarterly*, a journal dedicated to the academic exploration of homosexuality
- 1957** Dr. Evelyn Hooker's publication of her groundbreaking research in the *Journal of Projective Techniques* is possibly the earliest published empirical study disputing the widespread psychiatric assumption that homosexuality is a mental illness. The research for the article was conducted in Los Angeles.
- 1958** In a landmark freedom of the press case, the U.S. Supreme Court reverses the lower court rulings against the ONE Incorporated, enabling it to continue mailing its magazine through the U.S. postal service. This is the first time the U.S. Supreme Court rules on a case involving homosexuality.
- The Los Angeles chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis is organized by Stella Rush (nee Stan Russell) of ONE Incorporated and Helen Sanders (nee Helen Sandoz).
- 1959** The first known instance in the LGBT community of gender-transgressive persons resisting arbitrary police arrest occurs at Cooper's Donuts in Downtown. The customers throw their coffee and food at the arresting officers driving them from the shop. This minor but significant rebellion transpired ten years prior to the better-known rebellion at the Stonewall

Inn in New York City and seven years prior to a similar occurrence at Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco.

**1961** Illinois becomes the first U.S. state to remove sodomy from its criminal code through the passage of the American Law Institute's Model Penal Code.

Virginia Prince creates the Hose and Heels Club, the nation's first peer support group for male transvestites. Within a year, it had chapters across the country.

**1966** On May 12, the first gay (car) parade of record occurs on Hollywood Boulevard to protest the ban on homosexuals serving in the military. This was the first of five LGBT demonstrations (1966-1967) across the nation protesting the military ban.

Activist Steve Ginsberg forms the radical LGBT rights group Personal Rights in Defense and Education (PRIDE). The organization's name is believed to be the origin of the phrase "gay pride."

**1967** LAPD officers disrupt a New Year's celebration at the Black Cat Bar in Silver Lake and arrest its patrons for exchanging same sex New Year's Eve kisses. The incident sparks what may have been the largest public gay rights demonstration to date.

The raid and protests have also been credited with inspiring Richard Mitch to publish *The Advocate*, initially as the newsletter of PRIDE, one of the organizations, which sponsored the demonstration at the Black Cat.

**1968** First known "gay-in" takes place at Griffith Park. Gay-ins were inspired by the sit-ins and teach-ins that occurred during the 1960s, which were organized to raise public awareness of a particular issue.

The arrest of two patrons at The Patch in Wilmington prompts a massive show of resistance. The single event morphs over the next several months into a series of LGBT community Flower Power marches to the police station.

The Metropolitan Community Church is formally organized by Rev. Troy Perry. It is the earliest continuous religious congregation organized by LGBT persons to meet the spiritual needs of the LGBT community, and the world's largest LGBT religious denomination.

**1969** In July, the Stonewall Rebellion in New York City marks an internationally significant turning point in LGBT consciousness, when gender-transgressive patrons at the Stonewall Inn, a LGBT bar in Greenwich Village fight the police and resist arrest following a routine bar raid.

Inspired by the Stonewall Rebellion, Morris Kight and others organize the Gay Liberation Front in Los Angeles, a radical advocacy organization arguing for the immediate and full acceptance of LGBT persons.

The LGBT community plays a key role in the election of Peggy Stevenson to the City Council from the 13<sup>th</sup> District.

**1970** The Gay Community Services Center, the first known free “drop-in” health clinic/counseling/educational organization in the U.S. opens its doors on Wilshire Boulevard.

The first Christopher Street West gay pride parade is held honoring the rebellion at the Stonewall Inn in New York the preceding year. Rev. Troy Perry, Bob Humphries, and a lesbian on horseback led the parade from its starting point at McCadden Place and Hollywood Boulevard.

Unitarian Universalist Association becomes the first mainstream religious organization in the U.S. to recognize LGB clergy and laity within its ranks and demands an end to discrimination.

**1971** The International Psychologists and Psychiatrists conference convenes at the Biltmore Hotel with a plan to declare electric shock therapy as the official “cure” for homosexuality. The conference was disrupted by throngs of activists who begin a dialog with the American Psychiatric Association.

*The Lesbian Tide*, published by the Los Angeles chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, becomes the first magazine to use “lesbian” in its title.

**1972** Simone Wallace, Gahan Kelley, and Adele Wallace open the Sisterhood Bookstore, a pioneering woman/lesbian business enterprise devoted to selling books and periodicals focused upon women/lesbian-related subject matter.

**1973** Paul Laporte, in a bid to regain his council seat (13<sup>th</sup> District), and Burt Pines, a candidate for City Attorney, visit a series of bars and nightclubs in Silver Lake to publicly campaign for LGBT votes.

The American Psychiatric Association declassifies homosexuality as a mental disorder.

**1974** Ed Edelman publically seeks LGBT support in his campaign for a seat on the County Board of Supervisors. Per his campaign promises he hires David Glascock as his deputy, the first known openly gay political appointment in the nation.

- 1975** Homosexuality is legalized in California due to the Consenting Adult Sex Bill.
- A benefit for the Gay Community Services Center at the Mark IV Bathhouse is raided. As a result, there are major changes in LAPD policy regarding policing the gay community.
- 1976** The formation of the Municipal Elections Committee Los Angeles (MECLA) to promote LGBT supportive candidates for public office marks a milestone in shaping electoral politics in Los Angeles. David Mixner, attorneys Roberta Bennett and Diane Abbit, and Steve Lachs were key organizing members.
- Mayor Tom Bradley issues a proclamation officially establishing Gay Pride Week in Los Angeles, a dramatic milestone marking an end to the discriminatory policies of the City of Los Angeles towards the LGBT community.
- 1978** Greater and greater LGBT visibility during the 1970s prompts a backlash by conservatives, including the qualification of Proposition 6 for a statewide referendum. Proposition 6, also known as the Briggs Initiative, would have required the firing and prohibited the hiring of LGBT public school teachers. An unprecedented coalition of LGBT and non-gay organizations worked together to defeat the initiative.

## **Themes Related to LGBT History in Los Angeles**

The following themes relate to extant resources that have important associations with LGBT history in Los Angeles. These themes are consistent with the overall content and format developed for SurveyLA's Citywide Historic Context Statement (HCS). The narratives here are intended to supplement and complement existing narratives for each theme.

Theme 1 – The Gay Liberation Movement (1948-1980)

Theme 2 – LGBT Persons and Their Impact on the Entertainment Industry (1917-1980)

Theme 3 – The Reconciliation of Homosexuality and Religion (1950-1980)

Theme 4 – Gay Bars as Social Institutions (1920-1980)

Theme 5 – Homosexuality: the Mental Illness That Never Was (1948-1980)

Theme 6 – The LGBT Community and the Media (1945-1980)

Theme 7 – Gays and Lesbians in the Los Angeles Literary Scene (1912-1980)

Theme 8 – Queer Art (1945-1980)



## **Theme 1 – The Gay Liberation Movement (1948-1980)**

Los Angeles played a critical role in the gay liberation movement in the United States, which can be divided into two distinct phases. The first phase of the movement involved consciousness raising, while the second phase involved political organizing. Prior to World War II, most LGBT persons were isolated from one another and they did not view themselves as BEING gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. This began to change after the war when LGBT persons from all over the country met each other through their service in the Armed Forces or their employment in wartime industries. Many choose to stay in Los Angeles after the war. Although homophobia was present, it was easier to be "different" in Los Angeles, than most towns and cities in the U.S. The groups that formed during the first phase of the movement were largely comprised of middle class gay men who were focused on making same sex love acceptable to mainstream society. The movement gained steam and changed direction during the mid-1960s. During this period of political and social unrest, the gay liberation movement was swept into the larger youth movement, feminist movement, and sexual revolution that objected to the Vietnam War, challenged the prevailing sexual and gender norms, and confronted the policies that discriminated against women and minority groups. By this time, LGBT persons became more visible, defined themselves as a minority group, and resisted police harassment. By the late 1970s, the movement became more institutionalized and used the legal system and electoral process to expand the civil rights of LGBT persons.

By the 1940s, the population of Los Angeles had reached a large enough number that LGBT communities began to form. However, these communities were relatively small and isolated from one another, and their aim was more social than political. The isolation was still mostly by choice, as living openly as a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender person was still a dangerous proposition. And the notion of a united LGBT community with a political agenda was still almost unimaginable. World War II would prove to be a transformative event in LGBT history. During the war years, Los Angeles was a major hub for the Armed Forces on the West Coast. LGBT individuals came into contact with people just like themselves from all over the county. Increasingly, they realized that they were not alone. Through letters, discussions, and meetings a small network of gay men in Los Angeles began to develop the idea of forming an organization to fight for equal rights.

Early attempts to organize gay men occurred in Europe and elsewhere in the United States, but collapsed under the weight of homophobia. Magnus Hirschfield founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee in 1897 in Berlin.<sup>25</sup> Hirschfield was a physician who lived openly as a gay man and lobbied for the decriminalization of homosexual acts. Inspired by Hirschfield, Henry Gerber founded the Society for Human Rights in Chicago in 1924. It is considered to be the first recognized gay rights organization in the United States, because it was chartered by the State of Illinois. After a few months, however, several members were arrested and the organization dissolved. The aim of both of these organizations was to educate medical professionals, law enforcement

---

<sup>25</sup> For more information on Hirschfield, please see Theme 5.

officials, politicians, and society at large about homosexuality.<sup>26</sup> Although short-lived, these organizations are considered to be the precursors to the gay liberation movement that took form in Los Angeles during the early 1950s.



**Figure 5:** Founding members of the Mattachine Society. Source: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives.

Arguably, the preeminent event in the gay liberation movement was the founding of the Mattachine Society in 1950. At the center of the group was Harry Hay, an actor and political activist. In 1948, Hay wrote a manifesto in which he conceived of an organization that would advocate for improving the social status of gay men. It would take two years for the group to crystalize. Hay modeled the Mattachine Society on the 19<sup>th</sup> century fraternal orders, such as the Freemasons and Odd Fellows, because the structure of such organizations was based on the notion of secrecy, which was crucial at the time when homosexuals

had much to fear.<sup>27</sup> Besides Hay, the founding members include Rudi Gernreich, Dale Jennings, Stan Witt, Bob Hull, Chuck Rowland, and Paul Bernard.

In April 1951, the Mattachine Society adopted a Statement of Missions and Purposes, which stands out in the history of the gay liberation movement because it incorporated two important themes. First, the group argued that homosexuality was not merely a sexual orientation. Rather, collectively homosexuals were a minority group with a unique culture (like Blacks, Latinos, and Jews). Second, the group called for a grassroots movement of gay people to challenge anti-gay discrimination.

The arrest and acquittal of Dale Jennings on charges of lewd behavior in 1952 provided the group with a concrete victory for gay rights, but also negative attention from the media. Paul Coates, a conservative columnist for the *Los Angeles Daily Mirror*, described the group as having ties to the Communist Party.<sup>28</sup> His article set off a panic among Mattachine members, who were horrified at the thought of their activities being linked to communism. In the controversy that followed, two conventions were held and opposing sides took shape. Conservative members questioned the organization's stated goals, challenging the idea that homosexuals were a minority. They claimed such an approach would only encourage hostility. The founding members did not agree, but feared that a government investigation into the organization would expose the identity of its members and destroy the movement. So, in May 1953, the founders resigned, turning the group over to the conservatives. Unfortunately, the new leadership shared

---

<sup>26</sup> "Lesbian & Gay History," *Chicago Metro History Education Center*, accessed August 25, 2014. <http://www.chicagohistoryfair.org/history-fair/history-fair-a-nhd-theme/subject-essays/chicago-lesbian-a-gay-history.html>

<sup>27</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 110-112.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Choates, "Well, Medium, and Rare," *Los Angeles Daily Mirror*, March 12, 1953.

none of the vision or experience of the original founders. While chapters of the Mattachine Society remained in other cities, the chapter in Los Angeles folded.

In October 1952, a Mattachine chapter in West Hollywood formed ONE Incorporated, a pioneering organization in LGBT culture and education. The name was derived from a line by the Victorian writer Thomas Carlyle, "A mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one." Although two of the founders, Dale Jennings and Chuck Rowland, were also founders of the Mattachine Society, the group often referred to themselves as "the Corporation" to distance themselves from any links to communism. The other founding members included Antonio Reyes, Martin Block, Merton Bird, and W. Dorr Legg. Several of these men had been members of Knights of the Clock, a group that supported interracial gay couples.<sup>29</sup> ONE also readily admitted women, and Joan Corbin, Irma Wolf, Stella Rush, Helen Sandoz, and Betty Perdue were vital to its success.

ONE Incorporated's publication *ONE Magazine*, a journal that discussed topics in LGBT history, behavioral science, cultural arts, and civil liberties, was unprecedented in the breadth of its national readership. In a battle taken all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, ONE demonstrated a new level of LGBT political and social power, winning an important legal case for the freedom of the press.<sup>30</sup>

In 1956 ONE Incorporated established the ONE Institute of Homophile Studies. The ONE Institute amassed a noteworthy library on the topic homosexuality and offered what were likely the first classes in homophile studies in the United States. The ONE Institute received a large donation from Reed Erickson in 1965, which allowed the group to fulfill its mission. Erickson was a female-to-male transsexual who had inherited his family's fortune. He founded the Erickson Educational Foundation in 1964 and poured millions of dollars into LGBT causes.<sup>31</sup>

The modern period of the gay liberation movement unfolded during the mid- to late 1960s and reflected the consolidation of a LGBT group consciousness. The key manifestations of this new group awareness were an increasing level of group resistance to homophobia, a major expansion in the number and variety of permissive social spaces, and a substantial increase in the number of sexual identity based political and social organizations. The movement during this period was facilitated by the emergence of a vibrant local LGBT newspaper media including *The Advocate* and *The Lesbian Tide*.

The political and social upheaval during the mid-1960s attracted even more non-conformist and radicals to Los Angeles. The more liberal attitudes and androgynous fashion during this period, allowed LGBT persons to be more visible and less different. While the society at large was beginning to change its view of homosexuality, the police had not. The LAPD continued to raid gay and lesbian bars throughout the

---

<sup>29</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 116.

<sup>30</sup> For more information on *ONE Magazine*, please see Theme 7.

<sup>31</sup> A.H. Devor, "Reed Erickson and the Erickson Educational Foundation," *University of Victoria, Canada*, accessed August 29, 2014, <http://web.uvic.ca/~erick123/>

1960s.<sup>32</sup> Raids at the Black Cat in Silver Lake in 1967 and The Patch in Wilmington in 1968 are the most often mentioned because of the demonstrations and marches they provoked. Such group resistance strengthened the movement by raising group awareness and organizing the LGBT community around broader issues related to homophobia.

The new generation of gay political activists was more likely to have been affiliated with one of the left-wing or counter-culture groups active during the period than one of the existing homophile organizations. Morris Kight, for example, was an anti-war activist who was one of the co-founders of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) in Los Angeles. While the GLF in Los Angeles was short-lived, its contributions to the movement were significant. Although the GLF represents a radical departure from the homophile organizations, the first meeting was hosted by Don Slater, the former board member of ONE Incorporated and editor of *Tangents* at the time.<sup>33</sup>

In June 1970, Kight helped organize a march down Hollywood Boulevard to commemorate the first anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York. In addition to Kight, parade organizers included Reverend Bob Humphries with the United States Mission and Reverend Troy Perry with the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC).<sup>34</sup> The parade, which was officially co-sponsored by the GLF and MCC could not be held without a permit from the City of Los Angeles. Reverend Perry attended the hearing



**Figure 6:** Members of GLF protest the Police Commission's conditions for holding the first gay pride parade. Source: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives.

and described part of his exchange with Ed Davis, the chief of police:

Chief Davis: "Did you know that homosexuality is illegal in the State of California?"

Reverend Perry: "No sir, it is not."

Chief Davis: "Well, I want to tell you something. As far as I'm concerned, granting a parade permit to a group of homosexuals to parade down Hollywood Boulevard would be the same as giving a permit to a group of thieves and robbers."<sup>35</sup>

The Police Commissioners debated amongst themselves and finally voted in favor of the permit on the condition that the organizers post bonds and pay fees for police

<sup>32</sup> The same could be said of police departments in other cities with large LGBT populations such as New York and San Francisco.

<sup>33</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 154.

<sup>34</sup> It should be noted that Perry was also a member of the GLF.

<sup>35</sup> "History of Christopher Street West/LA Pride," *Christopher Street West Presents LA Pride*, accessed August 29, 2014, <http://lapride.org/history.php>

protection. Without hesitation, the organizers met with attorneys for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). With the assistance of the ACLU, the conditions were dropped and the parade was held without incident. The parade was originally called Gay Freedom Day. Eventually, "freedom" was replaced with "pride" and the event was orchestrated annually by a new organization called Christopher Street West. In 1979, the parade was moved to Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood.<sup>36</sup>



**Figure 7:** Crowds gather at a Gay-In in Griffith Park in 1970. Source: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive.

In 1970 and 1971, the GLF organized a series of gay-ins, three of which took place at the merry-go-round in Griffith Park. Like the parade, the purpose of these gay-ins was to encourage LGBT persons to come out of the closet and to encourage the public to accept alternative expressions of sexuality and gender. The events, which attracted thousands of people, took place during the day and included speeches, music, and dancing as well as booths that offered free legal and social services. Challenging the LAPD policy that effectively banned gays and lesbians from congregating in public

was also one of the goals of the GLF, which was largely achieved by these events. The LAPD officers that policed the events only agitated the crowds. So the GLF obtained a restraining order on the basis that it was a violation of their civil rights.<sup>37</sup>

Another component of the gay liberation movement was gaining equal access to social services. Existing social service agencies were often hostile to the needs of the community. In the early 1970s, for example, mental health clinics still treated homosexuality as a disease.<sup>38</sup> Instead of convincing existing agencies to treat LGBT persons with respect, three members of the GLF, John Platania, Don Kilhefner and Morris Kight, organized the Gay Survival Committee. The committee envisioned a network of services run for and by gays and lesbians. The committee had an office on Vermont Avenue and began to provide information referrals and mental health support. Then a coffee shop was opened on Melrose Avenue, and homeless teenagers and adults were allowed to sleep there at night.

The group quickly realized that more structure was needed, as opposed to the loosely organized network of services that was beginning to form. Thus, the Gay Community Services Center (GCSC) was organized in April of 1971.<sup>39</sup> Recognizing the growing

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 176 and Moira Rachel Kenney, *Mapping Gay L.A.* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001), 170-171

<sup>38</sup> For more information on the treatment of LGBT persons by mental health professionals, please see Theme 5.

<sup>39</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 192-195; Kenney, 82-84; Lorrie L. Jean, "40+ years of L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center History," *L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center*, accessed August 29, 2014,

number of homeless gays and lesbians, especially teenagers, the GCSC leased a house for them on Edgemont Street in April of 1971. Called the Liberation House, residents were asked to pay \$1.50 a day for room and board. Four additional houses were added to meet the demand.<sup>40</sup> The GCSC also opened the Funky Gaywill Shoppe and Recycling Center on Griffith Park Boulevard to provide employment for the residents living in the Liberation Houses.



**Figure 8:** The founders of GCSC on the front steps of the building on Wilshire Boulevard, circa 1974. Source: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive.

During the 1970s, the GCSC grew to become one of the largest LGBT organizations in the country. In October of 1971, the GCSC was incorporated and opened its first headquarters in a house on Wilshire Boulevard. In addition to the Liberation Houses and Gaywill Shoppe, the GCSC operated a gay men's venereal disease clinic and a self-development clinic with individual counseling, group therapy, and family services. In 1974, the GCSC became the first gay entity granted nonprofit status by the Internal Revenue Service, although the application was initially rejected because it served homosexuals. By the end of the decade, the GCSC had moved into a larger building on Highland Avenue, transitioned from a volunteer to a paid staff, and received grants from public agencies for the services it provided.

In 1980, the GCSC changed its name to the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center, an explicit acknowledgement and invitation to lesbians. Throughout the 1970s, however, lesbians had already begun to create separate organizations with a feminist political agenda. Central among these was the Gay Women's Services Center, which was founded by Del Whan in 1971. Sharon Raphael and Mina Meyer expanded the services of the center to include bailing gay women out of jail, rescuing them from mental hospitals, and sheltering them until they were re-established.<sup>41</sup> The center, along with other groups, also sought to provide women with healthier and safer alternatives to bars in terms of meeting places.

As the gay liberation movement matured during the late 1970s, new groups were formed that were less ideological and more traditional in their approach to political change. In 1976, a group of upper-middle-class gay men founded the Municipal Elections Campaign Los Angeles (MECLA) to provide financial support to gay-friendly

---

<http://laglc.convio.net/site/News2?page=NewsArticle&id=14427>. The latter article provides an excellent chronology of the history of the center.

<sup>40</sup> These were located on Van Ness, Oxford, Central, and Las Palmas.

<sup>41</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 170.

political candidates. Concerned that candidates would not accept donations from openly gay organization, the word gay was left out of the name with little regret. The group, largely led by Rob Eichberg and Steve Lachs, organized a successful series of elegant dinners and banquets that for the first time tapped into the wealth of the affluent gay community. The following year, the board of MECLA expanded from nine men to five women and ten men.<sup>42</sup> David Mixner, a still closeted gay political consultant, was the chief strategist for the group.

MECLA played an important role in the campaign to defeat Proposition 6, also known as the Briggs Initiative, in 1978. Proposition 6 was placed on the ballot by Orange County State Senator, John Briggs. It would have effectively banned gays and lesbians from working in public schools in California and represented the conservative backlash against the gay liberation movement. During the late 1970s, ordinances protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination were being repealed across the country. Mixner created the "NO on 6" organization and MECLA was a major financial donor. A key feature of the campaign was for gays and lesbians to come out to their families, neighbors, and co-workers to shift public opinion away from the homophobic initiative. The defeat of Proposition 6 represented the culmination of the growing political power of the LGBT community, although the struggle for LGBT rights was far from over.

The following tables describe designated and known resources associated with the gay liberation movement. Eligibility Standards address residential, commercial, institutional, site and other property types.

#### Designated Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
The Black Cat	3909 Sunset Boulevard	A gay bar in Silver Lake during the 1960s and 1970s. The site of the first large protest against police harassment in 1967. This property is designated LAHCM #939.
Griffith Park Merry-Go-Round	Griffith Park	The merry-go-round in Griffith Park was the location of a series of gay-ins between 1970 and 1971. This property is located in Griffith Park, which is designated LAHCM #942.

#### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Christopher Street West/Gay Pride Parade	Hollywood Boulevard between Highland and Vine	The first gay pride parade occurred in 1970. It was one of several actions taken to increase the visibility of the LGBT community. The parade moved to West Hollywood

---

<sup>42</sup> Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagorney, *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 350-358.

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

		in 1979 and has been held there ever since.
Cooper's Donuts	316 East 5 <sup>th</sup> Street (Demolished)	The site of the first known instance of transgender persons resisting arbitrary police arrest in 1959.
Daughters of Bilitis (DOB)	852 Cherokee Avenue	The DOB formed in San Francisco in 1955. It was conceived as a social alternative to lesbian bars, which were subject to raids and police harassment. As the DOB gained members, their focus shifted to providing support to women who were afraid to come out. The Los Angeles chapter was founded by Stella Rush and Helen Sanders in 1958.
Funky Gaywill Shoppe and Recycling Center	1519-21 Griffith Park Boulevard	The Shoppe was operated by the GCSC and provided employment for residents living in the Liberation Houses.
Gay Community Services Center	1612-14 Wilshire Boulevard (Demolished)  Their first headquarters were in two rented houses at 1612-14 Wilshire Boulevard. They moved to a former motel at 1213 N. Highland Avenue in 1974. Now at 1625 N. Schrader Boulevard.	The GCSC, incorporated in 1971. It provided a variety of services to gays and lesbians who were neglected or mistreated by existing agencies.
Gay Liberation Front (GLF) Los Angeles/Morris Kight Residence	1822 West 4th Street	The GLF was founded in New York City in 1969 after the Stonewall riots. The Los Angeles chapter was established that same year by Morris Kight, Don Kilhefner, John Platania, Brenda Weathers, and Del Whan among others. The GLF operated out of Kight's home. He was also one of the founders of the GCSC.
Gay Women's Services Center (GWSC)	1542 Glendale Boulevard (Demolished)	Founded in 1971, the GWSC was the first organization in the U.S. incorporated as a social service agency exclusively for lesbians.
Harry Hay Residence	2328 Cove Avenue	Hay (1912-2002) was an actor, political activist and early leader in the gay liberation movement. He played a key role in the formation of the Mattachine Society, although he resigned from the leadership in 1953.
Dale Jennings Residence	1933 North Lemoyne Street	Jennings (1917-2000) was one of



SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

		the founding members of the Mattachine Society and ONE Incorporated.
Knights of the Clock	Need Address	The Cloistered Order of Conclaved Knights of Sophisticracy, more commonly known as the Knights of the Clock, was an interracial homophile social club based in Los Angeles. Sources differ as to the founding date of the organization, variously citing it as 1949, 1950, and 1951. Regardless of the exact date, the group was one of the earliest gay organizations in the U.S.
Mark IV Baths	4400-4424 Melrose Avenue	The site of a notorious 1975 LAPD raid, which resulted in a major change in the policing of the gay community.
Mattachine Society	232 S. Hill Street (Demolished)	The Mattachine Society, founded in 1950, was one of the earliest homophile organizations in the U.S. probably second only to Chicago's Society for Human Rights (1924). Harry Hay and a group of Los Angeles male friends formed the group to protect and improve the rights of homosexuals.
ONE Incorporated	2256 Venice Boulevard ONE Incorporated shared offices with the Mattachine Society when they were founded in 1953. However, that building has been demolished.	ONE, Incorporated, which grew out of the Mattachine Society, was founded in 1952 as an educational and advocacy organization for gay rights.
Personal Rights in Defense and Education (PRIDE)	Need Address	Established in 1966, PRIDE set a new tone for gay political groups. Like the Gay Liberation Front, PRIDE led aggressive demonstrations against the oppression of gay gatherings or same-sex meetings by the LAPD.
The Patch Bar	610 West Pacific Coast Highway	The site of civil resistance to police harassment, which launched the Flower Power Protest in 1968.
Don Slater Residence	1354 W. Calumet Avenue Research indicates that Slater lived with his partner, Tony Reyes. Reyes is listed at 1354 W. Calumet Avenue from 1961 and 1987.	Slater (1923-1997) was the founding editor of <i>ONE Magazine</i> and later <i>Tangents</i> . In addition, he was the first vice president of the ONE Institute.
Southern California Women for Understanding (SCWU)	Need Address	SCWU was an educational non-profit organization, formed in 1976 and dedicated to enhancing the

		quality of life for lesbians and changing stereotypical images of lesbians.
Westside Women's Center	Need Address	Founded in 1970, the Westside Women's Center published a feminist newspaper, provided therapy, and trained women in the building trades.

## Eligibility Standards

### Theme: The Gay Liberation Movement

*Property Type:* Residential, Commercial, and Institutional

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types include residential, commercial, and institutional buildings used by groups that played an important role in the gay liberation movement. The earliest groups were often founded in and operated out of the homes of one or more of the members. As groups matured, they may have purchased or rented space in commercial or institutional buildings. Only in a few cases, were groups so successful that they could raise funds for purpose built facilities.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with influential organizations in the gay liberation movement.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Social History

*Criteria:* A/1/1

*Period of Significance:* 1948-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Is directly associated with an event, organization, or institution that played an important role in the development of LGBT consciousness, community, or culture during the period of significance

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with events that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Interior spaces that functioned as important gathering/meeting places must remain readable from the period of significance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the institution occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

*Property Type:* Residential

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include single-family and multi-family residential buildings that were the homes of prominent leaders in the gay liberation movement.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with persons who played an important role in the gay liberation movement. In many cases, significant individuals were involved with numerous groups, some of which only functioned briefly. Thus, the residence of an individual is often the property that best represents their productive life.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Social History

*Criteria:* B/2/2

*Period of Significance:* 1948-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Individual must be proven to have played a significant and influential role in the gay liberation movement
- Is associated with a person who made important individual contributions to the gay liberation movement
- Is directly associated with the productive life of the person

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- For multi-family properties, the apartment or room occupied by the person must be readable from the period of significance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the institution occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant individual occupied the property

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

## **Theme 2 – LGBT Persons and Their Impact on the Entertainment Industry (1917-1980)**

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons have been a constant and critical force in Los Angeles' entertainment industry since its beginnings. As actors, directors, producers, art directors, set designers, makeup artists, and costumers, LGBT people shaped and defined Hollywood's glamorous image – an image which was quite different from the rough, industrial reality of early filmmaking. While the degree to which the industry accepted people with unconventional sexual and gender behavior fluctuated over time, the significant influence of the LGBT community, both in front of and behind the camera, remained unwavering and undeniable.

Many of Hollywood's early film stars and crewmembers began their careers in theater and vaudeville. The theater world afforded greater acceptance of people who were considered different from mainstream America in a variety of ways, including sexual orientation. LGBT persons were drawn to the theater for the freedom and community it fostered. Another significant source for early movie industry employees was Europe, which had both a thriving theater scene and a generally more sophisticated understanding of human sexuality.

As opposed to theater, which thrived in enclosed, indoor spaces, early motion pictures required space, natural light, and reliable weather, all key elements which New York City, the center of the American theater, could not offer. In addition, many early independent filmmakers were on the run from the Motion Pictures Patents Company (MPPC, also known as the Edison Trust), which was vigilant in tracking down patent violators. Not only did Southern California offer space, light, and good weather, it also had a looser system of law and order than the MPPC's home state of New Jersey. As a result, nascent movie companies headed west. Looking to transfer their honed theatrical skills into motion picture careers, many LGBT people moved west, as well, and helped transform Hollywood from a sleepy suburban community into a booming industry town.

In the early days of the silent era, which stretched from approximately 1910 to 1927, LGBT people working in Los Angeles were relatively free to be themselves in private, as long as their sexual orientation did not interfere with their work or on-screen personas – in other words, their image. People working within the industry knew who was gay, who was straight, and who was “unstraight;” they just did not speak of it. LGBT people working behind the scenes were able to live more openly as gay or bisexual than actors and actresses, but all had more freedom than they would have had in most other American communities at the time, a circumstance, which undoubtedly encouraged LGBT people to settle in Los Angeles in significant numbers.<sup>43</sup>

The silent era produced the entertainment industry's first major movie stars, many of whom were gay or bisexual. Examples include J. Warren Kerrigan, Ramon Novarro, and

---

<sup>43</sup> William J. Mann, *Behind the Screen: How Gays and Lesbians Shaped Hollywood 1910-1969* (New York, NY: Viking, 2001), xiv.

Lilyan Tashman. The silent era also launched the careers of many gays and lesbians who would become significant for their work behind the camera, such as director Dorothy Arzner, set designer George James Hopkins, and costumer Adrian. The work of LGBT persons like these defined the early image of Hollywood, an image which would trickle into mainstream, middle-class America and greatly influence the popular domestic and personal styles of the day.



**Figure 9:** Dorothy Arzner was the first female member of the Directors Guild of America. Source:[https://wfpp.cdrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/Arzner\\_CCP\\_FIG106\\_WFP-ARZ141.jpg](https://wfpp.cdrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/Arzner_CCP_FIG106_WFP-ARZ141.jpg).

As social and political attitudes changed during and after World War I, the pressure for performers to have undeniably straight public images increased. The studios continued to care little about the private lives of stars, but they expected more of an effort to keep up appearances. In addition, there was a new expectation that stars would marry and create the impression of settling down. The studios and fan magazines alike wanted their stars to epitomize the American dream. To satisfy these demands, actors, actresses, musicians, and dancers entered into “lavender marriages,” in which at least one partner was gay or bisexual. While some lavender marriages proved happy and productive partnerships, others were tumultuous and ended in divorce. An example of a reportedly happy lavender marriage was the union between Tashman and Edmund Lowe, which began in 1925.<sup>44</sup> LGBT people working behind the scenes were not under the same pressure to play it straight to protect their careers, but many engaged in lavender marriages anyway due to societal pressures and family expectations.<sup>45</sup>

Despite the increased pressure to appear straight in the media after World War I, the decadent atmosphere of Los Angeles in the 1920s continued to offer members of the LGBT community a significant degree of freedom in their personal lives. Private parties at the residences of people like Alla Nazimova provided opportunities for LGBT people to socialize freely with each other.<sup>46</sup> They also provided important networking opportunities for newcomers anxious to break into the entertainment business. The speakeasy scene, which developed as a result of Prohibition, provided another place

---

<sup>44</sup> Mann, 114.

<sup>45</sup> Mann, 21-26.

<sup>46</sup> Mann, 59-62.

for LGBT people to meet one another, and it created a space where both gay and straight people intermixed. Drag performers were a common fixture of speakeasies and exposed both straight and gay people to the transgender culture.<sup>47</sup>

In 1927, Warner Brothers released *The Jazz Singer*, the first film with sound.<sup>48</sup> It marked the beginning of the end of not just the silent era, but also of the freedom and rebellion of 1920s Hollywood. The rise of talkies and the dawn of the 1930s would be accompanied by new social and political pressures, as well significant changes to how films were made. These changes affected performers and crewmembers alike. For performers the effect of sound was obvious: the tone and nature of their voices became an issue for the first time. LGBT performers not only had to look straight, they also had to sound straight. For those working behind the scenes, changes in the late 1920s and early 1930s were caused less by the introduction of sound in general and more by the change in style which accompanied it.

Sound allowed for more realistic dialogue, which led studios and directors to make more realistic films. Sets, for example, were no longer flat, painted pieces of artwork; rather, they became architectural. This had a major effect on art directors and set designers. For the first time a background in architecture became a prerequisite for such jobs.<sup>49</sup> Architecture was not a common career for gays at the time, at least not for those who were open about it.<sup>50</sup> As a result, in the 1930s the majority of art directors were heterosexual male architects.<sup>51</sup>

Technological advances were not the only changes to impact Hollywood's LGBT community in the 1930s; at the same time the nation at large was in the midst of the Great Depression, and many Americans blamed their hard times on the excesses of the 1920s, particularly the hedonistic culture they associated with being gay or bisexual.<sup>52</sup> Additionally, with many men unable to support their families, traditional gender roles and ideals of masculinity were threatened. The reactionary response to the fear and tension of the period was the return of a staunch belief that men should be men, and women should be women.<sup>53</sup> Demands for greater censorship in film ignited justified fear of government intervention among studios and producers. To quell the reformist protests, William Hays, President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) organization, joined forces with studio executives in 1930 to create the Production Code.<sup>54</sup>

The Production Code, often called the Hays Code, was a doctrine of self-censorship designed to preempt government interference, promote conservative politics, and

---

<sup>47</sup> Mann, 85-87 and 93-96.

<sup>48</sup> Technically, this was the first film with synchronized dialogue sequences; however, it is commonly known as the first film with sound.

<sup>49</sup> Mann, 53-57.

<sup>50</sup> Mann, 54.

<sup>51</sup> Mann, 55.

<sup>52</sup> Mann, 122.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Mann, 122-123.

keep Christian critics at bay. Traditional Catholic values were at its core, so depictions of nontraditional sexual relationships ranging from unmarried straight lovers to gay affairs were supposed to be forbidden; however, there were no means in place to enforce the code, so producers and executives knowingly and willingly violated it on a regular basis in its early years.<sup>55</sup>

Regardless of the lax enforcement of the Production Code, its basic presence was a telling sign of the preferences of the time. Gay was out and straight was in, but this did not prevent incredibly talented gays and lesbians from making their mark. George Cukor, for example, one of the most revered directors in film history, made several important films in the 1930s and utilized gay actors to do so. Reformists admonished the studios and Hays for continuing to allow the release of such films, and eventually, executives began to show their personal bigotries and to worry about their bottom lines.<sup>56</sup>

In 1934, after heightened threats of government interference and boycotts, all of the major studios agreed to enforcement of the Production Code under the direction of the new Production Code Administration (PCA). The PCA had the final say on all scripts before they went into production and all finished films before they could be released. Conservative Christian values and morals were strictly enforced in all new films as censorship prevailed over self-expression. By the mid-1930s, Hollywood had transitioned from a place of relative freedom for the gay community to a place of certain fear and prejudice.<sup>57</sup>

The PCA era deeply impacted the personal lives of LGBT movie stars, more so than character actors, producers, directors, and crewmembers. Afraid for their jobs, many stars who had been living openly with their same-sex lovers off screen began to dramatically change their personal lives. They arranged public outings with members of the opposite sex to generate press, got married, and some had children. LGBT character actors, on the other hand, while not immune to societal pressures, became desirable commodities for their ability to play certain parts – “sissies,” “old maids,” and the like. Unfortunately, while their careers weren’t necessarily jeopardized by their orientation, the parts they were offered were usually overt stereotypes.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the censorship of the PCA era, a few very significant gay directors and producers rose to prominence in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s while living relatively open personal lives. George Cukor is perhaps the most famous example of a successful gay director from the period. Others included Edmund Goulding, Irving Rapper, Mitchell Leisen, and Charles Walters. Notable gay producers include David Lewis and Harriet Parsons, rare as both a female producer and a lesbian in the studio system.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Mann, 123-128 and 140-143.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Mann, 160.

<sup>59</sup> Mann, 161-163 and 188-196.





**Figure 10:** George Cukor was famously fired as the director of *Gone with the Wind*, supposedly because Gable refused to work with him.

Source: <http://m5.paperblog.com/i/71/710537/george-cukor-a-double-life-L-14XndM.jpeg>.

The LGBT presence in other behind-the-scenes professions varied greatly by department. The prop and costume departments were known for higher concentrations of gay men, while the technical departments and writers' rooms were known as mostly straight. The LGBT distribution in the labor force was divided by rank, as well as by department. Evidence suggests that there were more secretly gay employees in professional and managerial roles than there were open gays and vice versa. In other words, there was a particular notion of what should be considered "queer" work in the studio system of the PCA era, and it influenced both its structure and its hierarchy. There were, of course, people who transcended the prescribed roles. Examples included screenwriters like John Patrick, who worked with Cukor, and DeWitt Bodeen, who collaborated with Harriet Parsons, and Leonard Spigelgas, a dedicated "studio man."<sup>60</sup>

There were also those who rose to prominence within the world of "queer work." Set decorators and costume designers, in particular, achieved great success in the 1930s and 1940s, significantly influencing popular trends in interior design and fashion. Notable set decorators included George James Hopkins, Henry Grace, and Jack Moore. Hopkins worked for Warner Brothers, while Grace and Moore worked for MGM under the direction of Edwin Willis. Of the costume designers from the period, Walter Plunkett and Orry-Kelly were two of the most successful.<sup>61</sup>

During World War II scrutiny of the LGBT community waned in Los Angeles. Law enforcement eased its grip due to its depleted stock of officers. In addition, military service and home front employment had the unintended effect of connecting gays and lesbians from different geographic locations. Young gays moved into major cities, like Los Angeles, which was booming with wartime industry, and formed new communities. This combination of factors transformed Hollywood once again into "a wonderful place to be gay in."<sup>62</sup> Many LGBT people in Hollywood resumed their open or at least ambiguous lifestyles. Several new gay stars, for example, never married.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> Mann, 197-199 and 202-215.

<sup>61</sup> Mann, 215-227.

<sup>62</sup> Mann, 243.

<sup>63</sup> Mann, 239-243.



**Figure 11:** Set decorators picketing Paramount Pictures in 1945. Source: [mgc.artprintimages.com/images/art-print/martha-holmes-view-of-picket-lines-in-front-of-paramount-studios-during-a-set-directors-strike\\_j-G-27-2701-WXBND00Z.jpg](http://mgc.artprintimages.com/images/art-print/martha-holmes-view-of-picket-lines-in-front-of-paramount-studios-during-a-set-directors-strike_j-G-27-2701-WXBND00Z.jpg)

Two film genres were increasingly popular in the years immediately following World War II: noir and musicals. While in general the LGBT community was not heavily involved with producing or starring in noir films, they were the recognized authority behind musicals. The hub of gay creative activity at this time was the Arthur Freed production unit at MGM. Known within the industry as "Freed's Fairies," the unit included producers, directors, composers, arrangers, choreographers, and dancers, many of whom were gay. Freed himself was not gay, but the arranger, songwriter, and creative force within his team, Roger Edens was. Freed and Edens collaborated on some of the most memorable musicals of all time, including *The Wizard of Oz*, *Show Boat*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *An American in Paris*, and *Singin' in the Rain*.<sup>64</sup>

In 1945, a strike initiated by a group of set decorators, many of whom were gay, marked the beginning of a turning point in attitudes toward the LGBT community and "fundamentally changed the industry."<sup>65</sup> The strike began out of a dispute between the set decorators, under the leadership of Henry

Grace, and the studios over the right of employees to belong to unions of their choice. The set decorators were joined by their assistants, as well as painters, film technicians, machinists, carpenters, and the local IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers). The strike had a serious impact on the studios; production slowed and operations were limited.<sup>66</sup> Eventually, however, the strike received a communist reputation, union groups walked away from the picket lines, and a split arose among the set decorators. In the end, the set decorators achieved little advancement out of the strike, and the gay community received a new, unfavorable and undeserved label that would last into the 1950s: communist.<sup>67</sup>

Another negative consequence of the strike, it caught the attention of the House Un-American Activities Committee. (HUAC, technically the House Committee on Un-American Activities). In 1947, HUAC subpoenaed witnesses from the entertainment industry to testify about subversive elements in their ranks. Many were willing to name

<sup>64</sup> Mann, 270-282.

<sup>65</sup> Mann, 287.

<sup>66</sup> Mann, 288-290.

<sup>67</sup> Mann, 290-292.

names, a reflection of the nationwide ideological swing from the left to the far right and to the conservative, traditional values it implied.<sup>68</sup> Although the blacklisting of suspected communist sympathizers in the 1950s put Hollywood's LGBT community on guard, few were actually blacklisted or called to testify in front of the HUAC. Some, like Cukor and Edens, were even able to thrive during the early Cold War years; however, others became noticeably less active, and few new gay filmmakers emerged.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to ideological fanaticism, Hollywood's LGBT community had to deal with another new threat in the 1950s: the tabloid press. In the early years of the entertainment industry, fan magazines generally treated stars with a certain degree of respect for their private lives, but in the 1950s, they began exposing gays and lesbians like never before. Some of the most notorious tabloids included *Hollywood Life*



**Figure 12:** Lizabeth Scott's film career came to an end when she sued *Confidential* for exposing her sexual orientation. Source: <http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-hao3PTqICfg/T9zT17epLhI/AAAAAAAM8U/OUXs7vZFmhl/s1600/Lizabeth8.jpg>

*Newsweek of the West*, *Top Secret*, and *Confidential*.<sup>70</sup> While they usually would not comment directly on tabloid exposés, the studios would go to great lengths to protect the images of bankable stars from scandal. Tab Hunter, for example, was exposed in the tabloids as gay, but thanks to the studio's aggressive media strategy to protect his image, he remained a popular actor and sex symbol.

Lizabeth Scott, a prominent actress in the early 1950s, decided to take on the sensationalist press in 1955. She sued *Confidential* over a story claiming that her name was listed on the roster of a house of prostitution and insinuating that she was a lesbian. Interestingly, it was in the same issue that the tabloid exposed Tab Hunter's sexuality. Scott lost the court case on a legal technicality, and her career never recovered. Subsequently, she only made two films. Because Scott sued, the story became a much larger news item and was picked up the mainstream press. The downturn in her

career has been attributed to the larger media scrutiny that accompanied her case, as well as her unwillingness to play the studio publicity game. Hunter, on the other hand, was eager to play it straight at public outings and publicity events. The different

<sup>68</sup> Mann, 292-296.

<sup>69</sup> Mann, 304-308.

<sup>70</sup> Mann, 309-312.

experiences of the two stars sheds some light on why stars and studios were so protective of their public images in the 1950s. Careers were clearly at stake.<sup>71</sup>

As a result of the increasing demand for image savvy representation, a new corps of publicists, journalists, and agents developed, many of whom were gay. A prime example was Rupert Allen. Allen was a very powerful publicist who has been credited with saving the careers of many Hollywood celebrities, both straight and gay. Gays, and to a lesser but still noteworthy degree lesbians, achieved significant influence in the entertainment industry in the new publicity-oriented roles of the time.<sup>72</sup>

A third factor significant factor in the entertainment industry in the 1950s was the rise of television. It was during this decade that television transitioned from live shows to recorded programming and increasing numbers of Americans began to rely on the medium for information and entertainment. Live shows were produced in New York, but Los Angeles, due to its film industry, had the infrastructure to support recorded television. Thus, production moved to Hollywood. Like in the early days of film, when Broadway actors and crewmembers migrated west to make movies, New York-based live television employees relocated to make recorded shows. New talent, which included numerous LGBT individuals, flooded into Los Angeles.<sup>73</sup>

Television in the 1950s and 1960s offered increased possibilities to the LGBT community. For example, television employed a substantial number of gay writers, especially when compared with film. Examples included Robert Shaw, Jack Lloyd, and Bernard Drew. It also re-opened the door to gay production designers, like Paul Barnes and John Pickette. Gay actors have noted that the television world at the time cared far less about an actor's sexual orientation than the film industry. As in film, gays found success in the wardrobe departments, but as opposed to film, television allowed gays the opportunity to work in technical roles for the first time. Gay cameramen and broadcasting technicians achieved their first successes in 1960s television.<sup>74</sup>

The relative tolerance and equal employment policies of TV would not go unnoticed. By the early 1960s, the tabloid press published explicit tales and accusations of television casts and crews with increasingly homophobic tones. As a result, many stars, like Dick Sargent of *Bewitched* fame, hid their true sexual identities from the public, just as the movie stars did.<sup>75</sup>

As the 1960s progressed, the political environment of the U.S. changed dramatically. The civil rights movements of women and minorities were in full swing, and the sexual revolution was about to begin. The changes in American society emboldened many LGBT people to live completely openly, including many in Hollywood, though there was a definite divide between young and old. While the older members of the entertainment industry who had worked through the PCA era and blacklist days

---

<sup>71</sup> Mann, 309-312.

<sup>72</sup> Mann, 322-330.

<sup>73</sup> Mann, 331-335.

<sup>74</sup> Mann, 335-336.

<sup>75</sup> Mann, 336-338.

remained discreet, the newer, younger members stepped out in public with their partners.<sup>76</sup>

By the end of the 1960s and early 1970s, the demise of Hollywood's studio system was inevitable. The original executives and moguls were gone, the studios were in financial turmoil, and independent producers and companies were gaining power. This was not a positive development for Hollywood's LGBT community. After all, despite their many flaws, the studios provided a place of relative safety and freedom, a degree of which would be lost in the post-studio era. For instance, while gays and lesbians were more readily portrayed on screen, the depictions were often stereotypical or unfavorable. In addition, without the studios the old employment model of large wardrobe, prop, and set departments disappeared. At the same time, more and more women were entering the workforce, taking the place of gay men in many cases. As a result, despite the advances that gays were able to make in the technical fields in the 1960s and later, they experienced significant setbacks in traditionally gay fields, and the gay presence on many film sets was lost. Gay entertainment industry veterans, like producer David Lewis, retired. Others returned to Broadway. On the bright side, in place of the older generation, newcomers with incredible talent and unique styles emerged, like cinematographer James Crabe and director John Waters. Coinciding with the Stonewall Riots in New York and the rise of the gay liberation movement, these newcomers led open public and private lives and created films and television shows catering to increasingly open LGBT audiences.<sup>77</sup>

The following tables describe designated and known resources associated with the LGBT persons in the entertainment industry. The table is not intended to be an exhaustive list. (Note that many persons working in the entertainment industry, including LGBT persons, lived in neighboring cities such as Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, and Santa Monica. Some are listed in the table for information only and will not be surveyed as part of SurveyLA). Eligibility Standards address residential property types.

### Designated Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Dorothy Arzner/Marion Morgan Residence	2249 Mountain Oak Drive	Arzner (1897-1979) was one of the very few female motion picture directors during the Golden Age of Hollywood. In 1936, Arzner became the first woman to join the newly formed Directors Guild of America. Her residence is designated LAHCM #301.
Ramon Novarro Residence	5609 Valley Oak Drive	This property is known as the Samuel Novarro Residence and is designated LAHCM

---

<sup>76</sup> Mann, 338-342.

<sup>77</sup> Mann, 359-366.

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

		#130 for its architecture. It also appears to be significant in this context for its association with Ramon Novarro (1899-1968), a silent film star. In 1925, he achieved his greatest success in <i>Ben Hur</i> . With the death of Valentino in 1926, Novarro became the leading Latino actor.
--	--	--

### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location(s)	Comments
DeWitt Bodeen Residence	23450 Calabasas Road (U.S. Public Records Index) 903 Heliotrope Drive (1932 Voter Registration) 1701 Nichols Canyon Road (1948 and 1952 Voter Registration)	Bodeen (1908-1988) was a motion picture screenwriter best known for writing <i>Cat People</i> and <i>Billy Budd</i> . Later he found success as a television writer.
George Cukor Residence	9166 Cordell Drive	Cukor (1899-1983) was a motion picture director who mainly concentrated on comedies and literary adaptations.
Roger Edens Residence	7670 Hollywood Boulevard (residence in 1936 Voter Registration) 1655 Gilcrest Drive (residence in 1944 Voter Registration)	Edens (1905-1970) was a composer, arranger, and associate producer, and is considered one of the major creative figures in Arthur Freed's musical unit at MGM.
Julian Eltinge Residence (Villa Capistrano)	2327 Fargo Street	Eltinge (1881-1941) was the preeminent female impersonator of his era. He moved to Hollywood in 1917 to act in motion pictures.
Henry W. Grace Residence	1028 Hi Point (residence in U.S. Census 1940)	Grace (1907-1983) was a distinguished set decorator. He won an Academy Award for <i>Gigi</i> in 1958 and was nominated for 12 more for Best Art Direction.
Cary Grant/Randolph Scott Residence	2177 W. Live Oak Drive Grant and Scott shared this residence during the mid-1930s. In the late 1930s they occupied a house at 1039 Ocean Front in Santa Monica.	Grant (1904-1986) was one of the most popular leading men during the Golden Age of Hollywood. Although he was married five times, he enjoyed several homosexual relationships, the most famous being with fellow actor Randolph Scott (1898-1987).

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

Howard Greer Residence	10064 Toluca Lake Avenue (residence in U.S. Census 1940)	Greer (1896-1974) was the costume designer for Famous Players-Lasky Studios, which was later to emerge as Paramount Pictures. He left Paramount in 1927 and started his own couture house, designing for films and actresses until his retirement in 1962.
William Haines/Jimmy Shields Residence	1712 Stanley Street (residence in U.S. Census 1940)  His office and showroom was in Sunset Plaza in West Hollywood. In 1949, he moved to 446 Canon Drive in Beverly Hills.	Haines (1900-1973) was a motion picture actor whose career was cut short because of his refusal to deny his homosexuality. He quit acting in 1935 and started a successful interior design business with his partner Jimmie Shields.
Orry George Kelly Residence	2173 Cedarhurst Drive	Kelly (1897-1960) was the chief costume designer at Warner Brothers between 1932 and 1944 working on hundreds of films. He was close friends with George Cukor and Cary Grant.
David Lewis Residence	288 Amalfi Drive (residence in U.S. Census 1940)  David Lewis and James Whale lived together between 1930 and 1952. Lewis is listed as a "lodger" in U.S. Census 1940.	Lewis (1903-1987) was born David Levy. He was a motion picture producer who was the longtime companion of James Whale, the director. Lewis film credits included <i>Dark Victory</i> , <i>Arch of Triumph</i> , and <i>Raintree County</i> .
James Mitchell Leisen Residence	1803 N. Highland Avenue Unit B (residence in Motion Picture Studio Directory 1921)	Leisen (1898-1972) was a motion picture director, art director, and costume designer. He entered the film industry in the 1920s, beginning in the art and costume departments. He directed his first film in 1933 with <i>Cradle Song</i> and became known for his keen sense of aesthetics.
Jack D. Moore Residence	Maple Drive, Beverly Hills (residence in U.S. Census 1940)  Died in Santa Monica.	More (1906-1998) was a motion picture set decorator. He won the Academy Award (1949) and was nominated six times in the category Best Art Direction.
Harriet O. Parsons Residence	815 Malcolm Avenue (residence in U.S. Census 1940)  Lynn Bowers, her partner, is listed as a "secretary."	Parsons (1906-1983) was one of the first women motion picture producers and the daughter of the Hollywood columnist

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

	Died in Beverly Hills.	Louella Parsons. Before producing, she was a screen and magazine writer and had her own radio program.
Walter Plunkett Residence	537 Huntley Drive, Beverly Hills (residence in U.S. Census 1940) His partner, Hal Richardson, was actually listed as a "partner." Died in Santa Monica.	Plunkett (1902-1982) was a prolific costume designer who worked on more than 150 projects throughout his career. He formally adopted his partner Lee so he could inherit his estate.
Irving Rapper Residence	19014 Pacific Coast Highway (residence in 1954 Voter Registration) Died at Motion Picture and Television fund home in Woodland Hills.	Rapper (1898-1999) was an English born American film director. His most successful body of work is the ten films he made for Warner Brothers.
William Reynolds Residence	314 S. Spaulding (residence in 1974, City Directory)	Reynolds (1910-1997) was a film editor whose career spanned six decades. His credits include such notable films as <i>The Sound of Music</i> , <i>The Godfather</i> , <i>The Sting</i> , and <i>The Turning Point</i> . He also was associated with two of the most infamous projects in film history, <i>Ishtar</i> and <i>Heaven's Gate</i> , which he executive produced.
Lizbeth Scott Residence	No Address Found	Scott (1922-0000) was a successful film actress known for her deep voice and sensual beauty. An article about her sexual orientation in Confidential derailed her career.
Robert J. Shaw Residence	9255 Doheny Road, Apt. 1605 72763 Beavertail Street, Palm Desert (1982)	Shaw (1917-1996) was a prodigious writer of radio serials, soap operas, and television dramas. He was the head writer for <i>Dallas</i> and the mastermind behind "Who Shot J.R.?"
Leonard Spigelgass Residence	9405 Brighton Way, Beverly Hills (1982)	Spigelgass (1908-1985) was a motion picture producer and screenwriter. He got his start collaborating with Eric Von Stroheim.
Charles Walters Residence	1433 Lake Shore Avenue (residence in U.S. Census 1940)	Walters (1911-1982) was a motion picture director and choreographer most noted for his work in MGM musicals and



		comedies from the 1940s to the 1960s.
James Whale Residence	288 Amalfi Drive (residence in U.S. Census 1940)	Whale (1889-1957) was a motion picture director best known for his classic horror films. He was openly gay throughout his career.

### Eligibility Standards

*Theme:* LGBT Persons and Their Impact on the Entertainment Industry

*Property Type:* Residential

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include single-family and multi-family residential buildings.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with LGBT persons who made significant contributions to the entertainment industry.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Entertainment, Social History

*Criteria:* B/2/2

*Period of Significance:* 1917-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- A residence designed specifically for a significant LGBT person in the entertainment industry, or the long-term residence of a significant LGBT person in the entertainment industry
- Individual must be proven to have made an important contribution to the entertainment industry
- Is directly associated with the productive life of the person within the entertainment industry

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance
- The individual must have resided in the property during the period in which he or

she achieved significance

- May also have served as a gathering place for LGBT people in the entertainment industry

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant person occupied the residence
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

### **Theme 3 – The Reconciliation of Homosexuality and Religion (1950-1980)**

Religious objections to same-sex attraction between men have existed since at least the Middle Ages, but were first enforced by English law in the Buggery Act of 1533. The law classified sodomy as an illegal act between man and woman, man and man, or man and beast. This law, which was re-enacted in 1563, was the basis for all male homosexual convictions in England until 1885, when the Criminal Assessment Act extended the legal sanction to any sexual contact between males. These laws were rooted in passages from the Old Testament that were interpreted as a prohibition on homosexual acts. Leviticus 20:13 is the passage most often referenced, "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them." Some religious scholars, both gay and straight, have maintained that historical context must be considered when interpreting the Bible. In *The Good Book*, Reverend Peter J. Gomes wrote the authors of the Bible "never contemplated a form of homosexuality in which loving, monogamous, and faithful persons sought to live out implications of the gospel with as much fidelity to it as any heterosexual believer."<sup>78</sup>

Within the state of California, sodomy was included in the State Penal Code beginning in 1872, and was punishable by a prison sentence. Oral sex was added to the Code as a criminal offense in 1915.<sup>79</sup> These laws controlling sexual activity were similar to those in other states and were based upon the English legal code as well as the Puritan doctrine that procreation was the only moral justification for sexual activity. The dichotomy in Puritan culture between "purity" and "danger" conflated homosexuality as a danger to society throughout much of American history.

Until fairly recently, organized religious groups typically condemned LGBT persons on the basis of their sexuality and identity, at times excommunicating them and barring them from worship. Through the efforts of many this has slowly changed over time and churches are beginning to be more inclusive of congregants regardless of their orientation. Los Angeles has been at the forefront of this trend and is home to some of the earliest LGBT-friendly religious groups in the country.

During the early 1950s, gays and lesbians began to find spiritual refuge and social support in a few churches in Los Angeles. For example, the First Universalist Church supported the formation of the Mattachine Society.<sup>80</sup> A closeted gay man named Wallace de Ortega Maxey was minister of the church at the time. Maxey hosted the society's 1953 conventions in April and May, during which different chapters met to create an official charter for the organization. Maxey also founded a LGBT-friendly singles group with Mattachine Society co-founder Chuck Rowland called the Crusaders. The Crusaders held a fashion show at the church, which, on top of the convention, ruffled the feathers of other congregants who complained to church

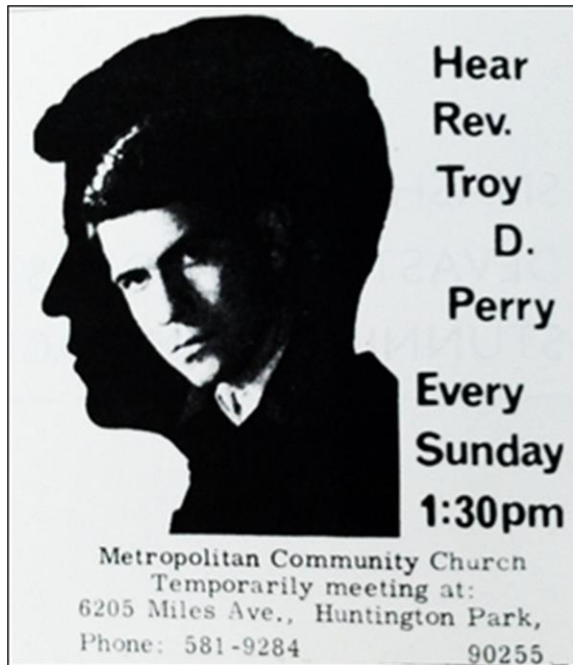
---

<sup>78</sup> Quoted in *The Gay Metropolis*, (New York: Grove Press, 1997), xi.

<sup>79</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 28-30.

<sup>80</sup> For more information on the Mattachine Society, please see Theme 1.

officials and even the FBI. Maxey resigned in March of 1954 to avoid further scandal.<sup>81</sup> Rowland later attempted to form a church called the Church of One Brotherhood in 1956, but the congregation did not find its footing. The timing was wrong in such a conservative era, and his attempts were short-lived.<sup>82</sup>



**Figure 13:** An advertisement for one of Perry's early sermons. Source: *Gay L.A.* Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons. New York: Basic Books, 2006.

By the 1960s, there was a major nationwide decline in religious faith. As the majority of prejudices against LGBT persons were based upon interpretations of the Bible, the social climate of the 1960s and onward was ripe for the reconsideration of the long-held conservative and orthodox beliefs behind these prejudices.<sup>83</sup>

Following the 1968 LAPD raid on The Patch, a popular gay bar in Wilmington, Reverend Troy Perry was inspired to form a church for the LGBT community. Perry, a Pentecostal minister, relocated to Southern California after being defrocked in Tennessee for being gay. Perry was at The Patch the night of the police raid with a date who was arrested. Upon being released, his date Tony Valdez expressed to Perry that "We're just a bunch of dirty queers. God doesn't care [about us.]" It was at this point that Perry realized he should create a congregation open to all.

Perry placed an advertisement in *The Los Angeles Advocate* announcing the formation of a gay and lesbian congregation, and twelve people responded.<sup>84</sup> At his Huntington Park home, Perry gave his first sermon as the founder of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC).<sup>85</sup> Officially established in 1969, the MCC was the first openly gay congregation in the country.<sup>86</sup> Attendance grew so quickly and steadily that Perry had to scramble each week for large enough venues to accommodate everyone; the MCC would have several meeting places over the course of its history. In the early days, their temporary meeting place was the former Encore Theater at 5308 Melrose Avenue.

<sup>81</sup> "Wallace de Ortega Maxey," *Tangent Group Homosexual Information Center*, accessed May 9, 2014, [http://tangentgroup.org/mediawiki/index.php/Wallace\\_de\\_Ortega\\_Maxey#Conviction.2C\\_and\\_Christmas\\_in\\_the\\_Clink](http://tangentgroup.org/mediawiki/index.php/Wallace_de_Ortega_Maxey#Conviction.2C_and_Christmas_in_the_Clink).

<sup>82</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 163.

<sup>83</sup> Charles Kaiser, *The Gay Metropolis* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1997), 142.

<sup>84</sup> For more information on *The Los Angeles Advocate*, please see Theme 7.

<sup>85</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 164.

<sup>86</sup> Kaiser, 143.

Their first permanent home was an old church in West Adams.<sup>87</sup> The property was purchased in 1972 and the congregation worked to make it a “real church,” with new carpets and decorative silk wallpapers. Like other minority groups, the MCC struggled for acceptance within the larger religious community. They regularly received vicious hate mail, and in January of 1973 their church caught fire and was damaged beyond repair. It was believed by many to be the work of *arsonists*, though this was never proven.<sup>88</sup> The church later moved to Hollywood.<sup>89</sup>



**Figure 14:** Beth Chayim Chadashim in the Los Angeles Christopher Street West pride parade, 1979. Source: USC Digital Collections, <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu>.

While he welcomed them with open arms into the MCC congregation, Perry suggested to his Jewish attendees in 1972 that perhaps they should form their own congregation. Encouraged by Perry's suggestion, the Jewish congregants approached two rabbis in Los Angeles, Norman Eichberg and Erwin Herman, to assist in the formation of the Metropolitan Community Temple. By January of 1973, the group was official, having adopted a Hebrew name, Beth Chayim Chadashim (“House of New Life”) and acquired a Torah. The very same day they adopted their

Hebrew name, the church that housed both the Metropolitan Community Church and Temple burned down—fortunately sparing their Torah.

Until the MCC could rebuild or relocate, Beth Chayim Chadashim (BCC) was offered temporary space for worship in the Leo Baeck Temple. During the next year, BCC experienced growing pains as the congregation debated the acceptance of heterosexuals (typically the relatives of gay members) as members and as lesbian feminists questioned the male-centric services. This same year, BCC applied for membership in the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (later the Union for Reform Judaism). After a heated debate among the rabbis, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations agreed to include the BCC in their group of congregations, making it the first gay congregation of any denomination to be recognized by its governing body.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> The church is indicated on a 1955 Sanborn of the area on the southwest corner of Union Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.

<sup>88</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 261.

<sup>89</sup> “Our History,” *Founders Metropolitan Community Church*, accessed May 9, 2014, <http://www.mccla.org/about-us/our-history/>

<sup>90</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 263.

Perry and the MCC also provided a place for the non-Christian members of the LGBT community to worship, including a coven of lesbian witches—the Susan B. Anthony Coven #1—led by Priestess “Z” Budapest.<sup>91</sup> Other social services within the MCC included Crisis Intervention Counseling, an alcoholics support group and De-Colores, an all-lesbian group. Today, the MCC is the “largest gay institution in the world,” with a total of 275 congregations across the United States and 23 countries.<sup>92</sup>

While independent Protestant ministers like Perry were able to form new LGBT-friendly churches, the more rigid and hierarchical Catholic Church, condemning homosexual acts as a sin, typically prevented priests from ministering to this community. A rare exception to this rule was a Catholic priest named Father Patrick X. Nidorf. In 1969, Nidorf started the first ministry for gay and lesbian Catholics that would come to be called Dignity. Nidorf felt he needed to start the ministry in response to a crisis of guilt and identity felt by the LGBT Catholic community that was “reinforced in the confessional, rather than being resolved.”<sup>93</sup> Father “Pat” put advertisements in the *Los Angeles Free Press* about the new ministry, which instructed interested parties to contact him. As a precautionary measure against radicals and homophobics, Nidorf required all new members to complete an application form, and in some cases submit to a personal interview, before paying their annual dues and being admitted with a membership card. Originally based in San Diego, the meetings eventually moved to private homes in Los Angeles, where most of the members were based. As the group grew, Nidorf, like Perry, ran ads in *The Advocate*.

The first official branch of Dignity was formed in 1970 in Los Angeles with a draft constitution and chairman, Bob Fourier. Dignity’s first meeting on church property was in the basement of St. Brendan’s Church on Van Ness Avenue.<sup>94</sup> The next year, at the request of members, Nidorf sent a letter to the Archdiocese asking for Dignity to be officially recognized. Predictably, and as Nidorf feared, the letter was not well received and the Archbishop asked Father Pat to cut off ties with the group. He resigned February 20, 1971. However, the departure of their founder was not a deterrent, and by 1973 Dignity was a nationwide organization with multiple chapters across the United States. Today, Dignity is still a national presence that continues to promote LGBT-rights within the Catholic community.<sup>95</sup>

On a national level, churches everywhere began to publicly address the issues of homosexuality and religion during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1969, the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ (UCC) adopted the “Resolution on Homosexuals and the Law,” a resolution denouncing laws against homosexuality on a

---

<sup>91</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 262.

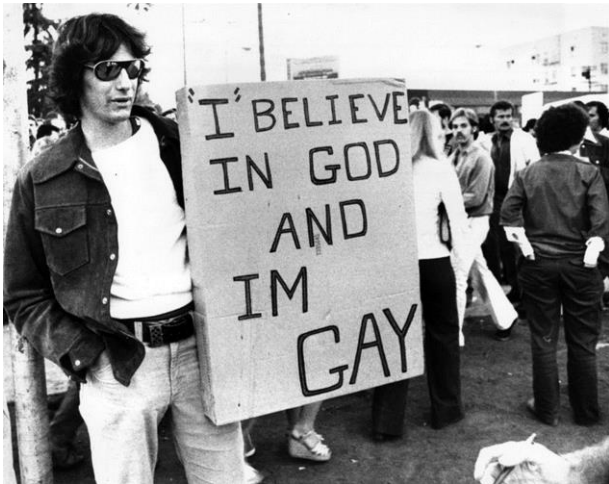
<sup>92</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 260.

<sup>93</sup> “Highlights of DignityUSA’s History: 1969,” *DignityUSA: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Catholics*, accessed May 9, 2014, <https://www.dignityusa.org/history/1969>.

<sup>94</sup> “Highlights of DignityUSA’s History: 1970,” *DignityUSA: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Catholics*, accessed May 9, 2014, <https://www.dignityusa.org/history/1970>.

<sup>95</sup> “What is Dignity?” *DignityUSA: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Catholics*, accessed May 9, 2014, <https://www.dignityusa.org/content/what-dignity>.

religious basis and encouraging compassion for “homosexual persons as well as for other socially-rejected minorities.”<sup>96</sup> In the next year, the Unitarian Universalist Association was the first mainline religion to accept and recognize LGBT clergy members and worshippers.<sup>97</sup> In 1972, the Quaker Committee of Friends on Bisexuality published the “Ithaca Statement on Bisexuality” in *The Advocate*, which is thought to be the first instance of a religious body specifically addressing bisexuality.<sup>98</sup> The first openly gay minister, Reverend William R. Johnson, was ordained in the UCC in 1972, and the first openly lesbian minister, Reverend Anne Holmes, was ordained to the same church in 1977.<sup>99</sup> In 1975, the historically anti-gay Vatican issued a statement reaffirming their stance and condemning same-sex attraction, relations and LGBT-allies as an “opposition to the... moral sense of the Christian people.”<sup>100</sup>



**Figure 15:** Demonstration at Hollywood High School in 1977 against Anita Bryant. Source: Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection.

Today, many—but certainly not all—organized religions are beginning to welcome LGBT members to worship, be ordained to the clergy, and come out in support of same-sex marriages. As the fight for LGBT equality continues, more options for worship in a wide range of denominations are being made available in Los Angeles through progressive and allied religious groups.

There are no currently designated resources associated with this theme. The following table describes known resources associated with LGBT-friendly religious groups. Eligibility Standards address institutional property types such as churches and synagogues.

### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Beth Chayim Chadashim	6000 W. Pico Boulevard	BCC was the first gay and

<sup>96</sup> “Resolution on Homosexuals and the Law (Adopted by the Council for Christian Social Action, United Church of Christ, April 12, 1969),” *United Church of Christ*, accessed May 9, 2014, <http://www.ucc.org/assets/pdfs/1969-RESOLUTION-ON-HOMOSEXUALS-AND-THE-LAW.pdf>.

<sup>97</sup> “LGBT History Timeline,” *United Church of Christ*, accessed May 9, 2014, <http://www.ucc.org/lgbt/lgbt-history-timeline.html>.

<sup>98</sup> “June 1972: The Ithaca Statement,” *Bimedia.org: Bisexual News & Opinion*, accessed May 9, 2014, <http://bimedia.org/1984/june-1972-the-ithaca-statement>.

<sup>99</sup> “LGBT History Timeline.”

<sup>100</sup> “*Persona Humana*: Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics,” *Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, accessed May 9, 2014, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19751229\\_persona-humana\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19751229_persona-humana_en.html).

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

	This became their first and permanent location in 1977.	lesbian synagogue in the world, and the first religious group to be officially recognized by the religions' larger governing body.
Metropolitan Community Church	2201 S. Union Avenue MCC has been located in numerous buildings. The church was founded in the home of Rev. Perry in Huntington Park. Their original church was located in West Adams, but was destroyed by a fire.	Founded in 1968 by Rev. Troy Perry, a defrocked Southern Pentecostal minister. He was one of the first to argue for scriptural justice for the LGBT community. By 1969, MCC had 150 congregants. Today, there are hundreds of congregations all over the world.
DignityUSA	310 S. Van Ness Avenue Research indicates that St. Bernard's Church on Van Ness was the location of the group's first meeting on church property.	In 1969, Father Patrick X. Nidorf started a ministry for gay and lesbian Catholics. Father Pat resigned after the Archbishop asked him to sever ties with the group.
First Universalist Church	757 Crenshaw Boulevard	This church, once the home of a progressive Protestant congregation, was the site of two events in gay history. The Mattachine Society was allowed to hold two meetings here in April and May of 1953 while they formed their charter. This support of gay rights, which was unusual during this period, created discord in the congregation and resulted in the departure of the pastor, Wallace de Ortega Maxey.

## Eligibility Standards

*Theme:* The Reconciliation of Homosexuality and Religion

*Property Type:* Religious Building

*Property Type Description:* Properties associated with LGBT religious groups may or may not have been purpose built as churches or synagogues.

*Property Type Significance:* Properties significant under this theme played a significant role in the religious, spiritual, and social life of LGBT people in Los Angeles.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles



*Area(s) of Significance:* Religion, Social History

*Criteria:* A/1/1

*Period of Significance:* 1950-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Institution must have played a significant role in the religious, spiritual, and social life of LGBT people in Los Angeles

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties must meet Criteria Consideration A
- For National Register, properties associated with institutions that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Exceptionally important properties include the location where the significant institution was founded
- May be located in a building designed for another use or religious institution
- Institution must have occupied the property for a significant period in its history
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the institution occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant institution occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Some original materials may have been altered, removed or replaced

*Property Type:* Residential

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include single-family and multi-family residential buildings that were the homes of prominent religious leaders

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with persons who played an important role in the religious, spiritual, and social life of LGBT people in Los Angeles. In most cases, the property that best represents the productive life of the person is the religious building in which they worked. However, if that building no longer remains or if the institution that they led moved frequently, their residence may be eligible.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Religion, Social History

*Criteria: B/2/2*

*Period of Significance: 1950-1980*

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Individual must be proven to have played an important role in the religious, spiritual, and social life of LGBT people
- Is directly associated with the productive life of the person who played an important role the religious, spiritual, and social life of LGBT people

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

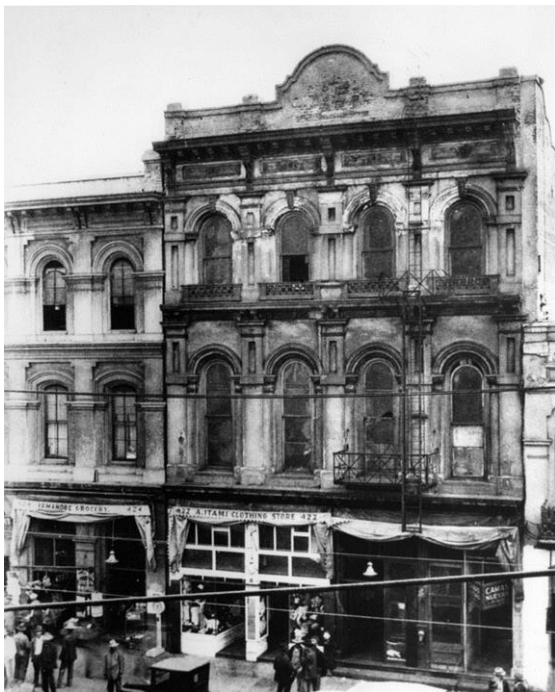
- For National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Individual may have formed or significantly influenced an important religious institution or movement
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the institution occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant individual occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

## Theme 4 – Gay Bars as Social Institutions (1920-1980)

The writer and critic John Loughery observed in *The Other Side of Silence*, “the gay bar was an important focus of homosexual life in America, for the practical purposes of seeing new faces and old friends and as an emblem of cultural survival.”<sup>101</sup> While Loughery was writing specifically about gay men and bars, the statement is equally true for lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders. Furthermore, the gay bar as a social institution also applies to other businesses that catered to LGBT persons such as nightclubs, restaurants, and coffee shops. Despite the fact that they could be raided by the police at any time, these were often the only places where LGBT persons could be themselves. The character of these places varied widely, reflecting the socioeconomic and ethnic/racial diversity within the LGBT community.



**Figure 16:** The Merced Theater was a common meeting place for LGBT persons at the turn of the century. Source: Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection.

During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, bars, nightclubs, and other venues were neither exclusively gay nor exclusively straight. Masked balls at places like the Merced Theater provided cover for nonconforming sexual and gender behavior. There were also numerous bars, dance halls, and theaters in Downtown Los Angeles where like-minded men and women could find one another. However, such places tended to be more favored by gay and bisexual men than lesbians, and were more patronized by working-class than middle-class LGBT persons.

The earliest concentration of gay bars and establishments in Los Angeles began on Bunker Hill and extended south on Hill Street to Pershing Square and then east to Main Street, specifically between Hill and Main. Bunker Hill and Pershing Square have great significance in early gay life in Los Angeles. Bunker Hill was a bohemian neighborhood that was already known to gay men by the

1910s, and it persisted as a haven for gay men through the 1950s. Pershing Square was not only a cruising area, but also a place where people gathered to discuss issues, including homosexual issues.

The adoption of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1919 prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages. Promoted by social conservatives as a means of improving public morals and health, the ban went into effect on January 17, 1920. As the federal

<sup>101</sup> John Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence: Men's Lives & Gay Identities – A Twentieth Century History* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Co., 1998)

government lacked the means to enforce the ban, it resulted in the proliferation of organized criminal syndicates that produced, imported, and transported alcohol throughout the country. In urban areas such as Los Angeles, an underground speakeasy culture developed where people from all walks of life in search of a drink were forced to mix with one another. The ascent of the motion picture industry and the influx of actors, writers, and designers during this era brought about particularly glitzy speakeasies. These speakeasies allowed for the emergence of a more visible and tolerated gay and lesbian life in a largely middle-class context for the first time.



**Figure 17:** The Montmartre on Hollywood Boulevard was a typical speakeasy where gay and straight people mixed. Source: Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection.

The side streets off of Hollywood Boulevard, such as Ivar, Cosmo, and Cahuenga, were home to numerous speakeasies. They did not advertise their existence, and many were open only briefly before they would be raided by the LAPD and closed. Nightclubs that endured slightly longer included B.B.B.'s Cellar, the Montmartre, and Jimmy's Backyard. Although they were also patronized by straights, they were referred to as "queer bars" and "pansy joints" because they featured female impersonator revues.<sup>102</sup> So accepted were such performances, that the

nightclubs and the movie stars that attended were actually written up in magazines like the *Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety*.<sup>103</sup> An African American entertainment district developed around the same time along Central Avenue. It was anchored by the Dunbar Hotel, which opened in 1928. The jazz club that occupied the ground floor also featured performances showcasing male and female impersonators. The Club Alabam, next door to the Dunbar, hosted an annual drag ball.

After the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, drinking alcohol was once again legal, but being homosexual was not. Male and female impersonators continued to perform, but not in drag. A new law had been enacted forbidding even entertainers from wearing clothing of the opposite gender.<sup>104</sup> The Rendezvous nightclub in Hollywood booked female impersonators Julian Eltinge and Ray Bourbon. On opening night, Eltinge dressed in a tuxedo, referred to his gowns on stage, and re-counted his famous performances. After a few nights, he was so discouraged that he retired to his house in Silver Lake. Eltinge was followed by Bourbon who had been performing at B.B.B.'s Cellar and Jimmy's Backyard. At the Rendezvous, he starred in his own revue, "Don't Call Me Madam." Like Eltinge, Bourbon was very private about his sexuality. He was married

---

<sup>102</sup> Mann, 144.

<sup>103</sup> Mann, 145.

<sup>104</sup> Mann, 147.



**Figure 18:** Actor/female impersonator Ray Bourbon was the star of his own revue at the Rendezvous in Hollywood. He recorded an album by the same name, "Don't Call Me Madam."

twice and fathered at least one son.<sup>105</sup> The revues during this period were notably less glamorous and more vulgar than those that occurred during the so-called "Pansy Crazy" when the audience was more mixed.<sup>106</sup> At any rate, the LAPD began to crack down on such nightclubs. The difference is that instead of liquor law violations, the owners, performers, and patrons were charged with indecency or lewd conduct.

LGBT persons and gay-friendly businesses adopted several survival strategies in response to the escalation in surveillance and harassment from the LAPD during the 1930s. Many bars and nightclubs moved to the Sunset Strip. Positioned between Hollywood and Beverly Hills, the Sunset Strip was an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County at the time. Today it is part of the City of

West Hollywood. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department was more lax in policing homosexual behavior and regulating bars and nightclubs catering to LGBT persons. This permissiveness allowed for the gradual ascendancy of West Hollywood as the fulcrum of the LGBT community during the late 1960s and 1970s.

Establishments in Los Angeles responded by keeping a lower profile. One approach was to cater to both gays and lesbians and sympathetic straights, making it difficult to tell a gay bar from a straight one. Bars and nightclubs also had self-imposed rules of conduct that prohibited same-sex dancing or even touching. Thus, minimizing the potential for entrapment by the LAPD Vice Squad. Middle-class LGBT persons had the option of patronizing hotel bars such as the Biltmore in Downtown or the Christie in Hollywood. During the Great Depression, such businesses went into survival mode, just like gays and lesbians. Needing all of the customers they could get, gays, bisexuals, and lesbians were permitted, so long as they were discreet, in other words, so long as they were not too flamboyant in their dress or manner. Middle-class gays and lesbians, however, already took pains to distance themselves from the "obvious" crowd, believing that they perpetuated negative stereotypes and drew unwanted attention.

The outbreak of World War II was felt throughout Los Angeles and the LGBT community was no exception. As a major port of embarkation on the West Coast and with the build up of the local defense industry, Los Angeles was flush with new employment opportunities as well as sailors and soldiers. This new economy and population led to the proliferation of gay and lesbian bars during the war years. According to Allan Bérubé, "These were among the first exclusively gay and lesbian bars in America. They branched out from, and sometimes replaced, the bohemian cafes, hotel bars, skid row taverns, nightclubs, and cafeterias of the 1930s where "queers," "fairies," and "dykes"

<sup>105</sup> "Pansy Craze," *Wikipedia*, accessed on July 1, 2014, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pansy\\_Craze](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pansy_Craze).

<sup>106</sup> Mann, 147.

could blend in with other social outcasts."<sup>107</sup> The military attempted to keep men and women away from known gay and lesbian establishments by posting signs that proclaimed "OUT OF BOUNDS TO MILITARY PERSONNEL," but were largely unsuccessful.<sup>108</sup> The influx of military personnel reinvigorated "The Run," a section of 5<sup>th</sup> Street that connected Pershing Square with the gay bars on Main Street.

Gay bars that emerged during World War II included the Crown Jewel, Harold's, and Maxwell's in Downtown and the House of Ivy and the Windup in Hollywood. However, the bar and nightclub scene expanded well beyond Downtown and Hollywood during the 1950s. This growth was partly supported by a California Supreme Court case that allowed homosexuals to assemble in public places, so long as they were not committing any illegal or immoral acts on the premises. The case involved the Black Cat, a popular gay bar in San Francisco not to be confused with the bar by the same name in Silver Lake. After the repeal of Prohibition, the state's most common way of controlling the growth of the gay subculture was the revocation of liquor licenses. In 1951, the State Board of Equalization suspended the liquor license of the Black Cat based upon the fact that it was a place where homosexuals socialized. The owner, Sol Stoumen hired an attorney to appeal the decision that made its way to the Supreme Court. The Court ruled in *Stoumen v. Reilly* that a bar could not lose its liquor license because it catered to a gay clientele. Thus, California became the first state where gay bars could legally operate.<sup>109</sup>

There was a notable increase in lesbian bars and nightclubs during the 1950s, particularly in the neighborhoods of Westlake and North Hollywood. Here again, these gathering places illustrate the class distinctions in the LGBT community. Middle-class lesbians tended to socialize in private homes with small groups of friends. Professional women during this period could not risk being arrested in a lesbian bar for fear of losing their jobs, which were already limited to certain fields such as education and medicine. But for working-class and young women still living at home, bars were the only places to meet other lesbians and feel like they were part of a community.<sup>110</sup> The Lakeshore Club, the If Club, and Open Door became fixtures in Westlake with working-class lesbians of all races and ethnicities.

Redheads and the Star Room were also working-class lesbian bars, but they catered to specific ethnic/racial groups. Redheads, later just Reds and now Redz, began operation in Boyle Heights in the 1950s and drew a predominately Latina clientele. The Star Room, although not in the City of Los Angeles, was notable for attracting mostly African American patrons from South Los Angeles and Watts. The owner Jo Heston had to marry a man in order to buy the bar because laws at that time didn't allow women to own bars. The laws also prevented Heston from pouring liquor, so the bar had male

---

<sup>107</sup> Bérubé, 390.

<sup>108</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 73.

<sup>109</sup> William Eskridge, *Gaylaw: Challenging the Apartheid of the Closet* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 94.

<sup>110</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 90.

bartenders.<sup>111</sup>

The Westlake neighborhood became popular with gay men as well, especially after the redevelopment of Bunker Hill. The decline of Bunker Hill as a gay neighborhood and the rise of Westlake, Echo Park, and Silver Lake during the 1950s, resulted in the increasing level of class and ethnic/racial segregation of the venues remaining Downtown. Gender-transgressive persons and lower-income African Americans and Latinos became the primary patrons at the remaining venues including the Waldorf and Harold's as well as the inexpensive nearby cafes and theaters that also served as gathering places.

In 1955, the state once again attempted to reign in the number of gay and lesbian bars. The California legislature made it illegal for a bar to serve as a "resort for illegal possessors or users of narcotics, prostitution, pimps, panderers, or sexual perverts." Though this legislation was unconstitutional, it emboldened the Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control to suspend or revoke the licenses of gay bars simply as a result of seeing persons they deemed homosexual on the premises, because homosexuality was considered a sexual perversion. Not until 1959 did the California Supreme Court reaffirm that "a license may not be suspended or revoked simply because homosexuals or sexual perverts patronize the bar in question."<sup>112</sup> This ruling, however, can hardly be viewed as a victory for gay rights. On the one hand the Court ruled again that it was legal for LGBT persons to congregate, but on the other hand the language in the ruling conflated homosexuality with sexual perversion.

During this period, LGBT persons began to realize that they would continue to be treated like second-class citizens unless they took action. The first known resistance to arbitrary police harassment in Los Angeles occurred at Cooper's Donuts, a popular gathering place for transgender persons on E. 5th Street. According to *Queerty*, this is the way the event unfolded:

Two cops entered the donut shop that night, ostensibly checking ID, and arbitrarily picked up two hustlers, two queens, and a young man just cruising and led them out. As the cops packed the back of the squad car, one of the men objected, shouting that the car was illegally crowded. While the two cops switched around to force him in, the others scattered out of the car.

From the donut shop, everyone poured out. The crowd was fed up with the police harassment and on this night they fought back, hurling donuts, coffee cups and trash at the police. The police, facing this barrage of [pastries] and porcelain, fled into their car calling for backup.

Soon, the street was bustling with disobedience. People spilled out in to the

---

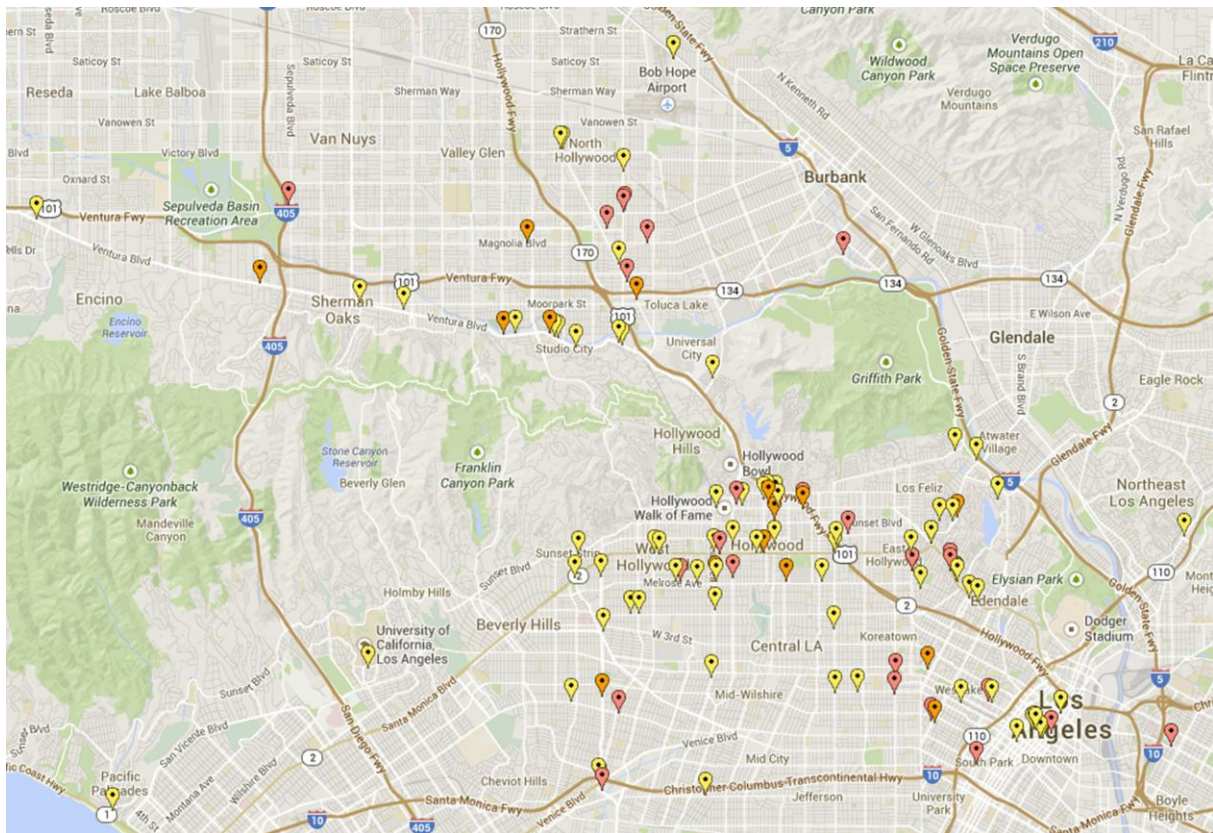
<sup>111</sup> "Remembering LA's Earliest Lesbian Bars," *WEHOville*, accessed on July 1, 2014, <http://www.wehoville.com/2013/05/06/remembering-las-earliest-lesbian-bars/>; The Star Room was located between Watts and Gardena in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County.

<sup>112</sup> Eskridge, 94. The case was *Vallerga v. Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control*.

streets, dancing on cars, lighting fires, and generally wreaking havoc. The police return with backup and a number of rioters are beaten and arrested. They also closed the street off for a day [sic].<sup>113</sup>

This minor but significant rebellion transpired ten years before the better-known rebellion at the Stonewall Inn in New York City and seven years before a similar occurrence at Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco. The event demonstrated that while the lives of gays and lesbians was difficult, transgenders were the most abused and discriminated against members in the LGBT community because they were so visibly nonconforming. Indeed, many gay and lesbian bars rejected transgender persons because they were targets for the police.

In 1965, a San Francisco businessman by the name of Bob Damron published and sold an address book of all of the bars, nightclubs, restaurants, and coffee shops he visited in his travels across the U.S. Damron's Address Book has been updated annually since 1968 and has been called Damron Men's Travel Guide since 1999. The first volume of the



**Figure 19:** This map depicts the LGBT-friendly establishments in the 1965, 1966, and 1968 editions of Damron's Address Book.

<sup>113</sup> "Before Stonewall, There Was the Cooper's Donuts and Compton's Cafeteria Riots," QUEERTY, accessed on July 1, 2014, <http://www.queerty.com/before-stonewall-there-was-the-coopers-donuts-and-comptons-cafeteria-riots-20111007/2>.



Address Book listed 84 bars, restaurants, and coffee shops that catered to gays and lesbians in the greater Los Angeles area. The Address Book divided Los Angeles into four segments: Hollywood, Metropolitan Area (which included Downtown, Westlake, Echo Park, and Silver Lake), West and Southwest (Including West Hollywood), and the San Fernando Valley.<sup>114</sup> While most of these establishments are now gone and it is unknown how long they operated, the Address Book helps to document the settlement patterns of LGBT persons in Los Angeles.

The increase in the number of neighborhood bars and nightclubs during the 1960s reflected not only the geographic dispersion of the LGBT community, but also an increasing segregation of patrons along gender, ethnic/racial, and class lines. The places that epitomize this phenomenon are the Catch One Disco and Circus Disco in Hollywood. Catch One in Midcity was established in 1972 as a nightclub for African Americans, while the Circus was established in 1975 for Latinos. Both were founded in response to the discrimination gay men of color experienced at predominately white venues in West Hollywood. Nightclubs like Studio One would discourage non-whites from entering by demanding multiple forms of identification. Both places are still in business and played vital roles for LGBT persons of color, not just places to have fun but also places to develop social support.

Gay bars were also places where people became engaged politically. It is no coincidence that two gay bars played prominent roles in the gay liberation movement in Los Angeles. In 1967, the LAPD swarmed the Black Cat in Silver Lake, beating and arresting sixteen patrons and bartenders for exchanging same-sex kisses. The police raid sparked the largest public gay rights demonstration to date. A similar incident in 1968 occurred at The Patch in Wilmington. Ironically it was the liberation of LGBT persons that resulted in the decline of gay bars by the end of the century. LGBT persons now have other opportunities to meet one another and feel safe socializing in straight bars and restaurants.

The following tables describe designated and known resources associated with businesses that catered to the LGBT community. Eligibility Standards address commercial property types such as restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and coffee shops.

#### **Designated Resources**

Resource Name	Location	Comments
B.B.B.'s Cellar	1651 Cosmo Street	This Hollywood nightclub was a popular gathering place for LGBT persons and featured female impersonators during the 1930s. This property is located in the Hollywood Boulevard National Register

---

<sup>114</sup> Dave in Northridge, "The Los Angeles Context for Harry Hay and the Mattachine Society," *Daily Kos*, accessed on February 24, 2014, <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2012/10/06/1140223/-The-Los-Angeles-context-for-Harry-Hay-and-the-Mattachine-Society#>.

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

		District.
Café Montmartre	6763 Hollywood Boulevard	A speakeasy in Hollywood where gays and straights mixed. Then a gay bar during the 1930s. This property is located in the Hollywood Boulevard National Register District.
Club New Yorker	6724 Hollywood Boulevard	This nightclub in the Christie Hotel was a popular gathering place for LGBT persons and featured female impersonators during the 1930s. This property is located in the Hollywood Boulevard National Register District.
Merced Theater	418 N. Main Street	This was a popular meeting place for LGBT person at the turn of the century. This property is located in the El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historical Park.
The Black Cat	3909 Sunset Boulevard	A gay bar in Silver Lake during the 1960s and 1970s. The site of the first large protest against police harassment in 1967. This property is designated LAHCM #939.

**Known Resources**

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Anna's	Need Address	A lesbian bar in Silver Lake during the 1960s.
Bradley's	Need Address	A gay bar in Hollywood during the 1940s. On Selma between Wilcox and Hudson.
Catch One	4076 W. Pico Boulevard	The nation's first black gay and lesbian disco opened its doors in 1972.
Circus Disco	6655 Santa Monica Boulevard	A disco in Hollywood that opened in the 1970s with a predominately Latino patronage.
Cooper's Donuts	316 East 5 <sup>th</sup> Street (Demolished)	A Downtown coffee shop where transgender persons gathered during the 1950s. The site of the first known resistance to police harassment in 1958.
Crown Jewel	754 S. Olive Street	A gay bar in Downtown during

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

		the 1950s and 1960s. Listed in 1965 Address Book.
Gayaway Cafe	514 S. Main Street	A gay bar in Downtown during the 1940s.
Gay Inn	710 S. Hill Street	A gay bar in Downtown during the 1940s.
Geri's	666 S. Alvarado Street	A gay bar in Westlake during the 1950s and 1960s. The site of a well-publicized raid in 1962.
Grand Avenue Bar	506 S. Grand Avenue	This bar in the Biltmore Hotel in Downtown was a popular gather place for LGBT persons from the 1930s to the 1940s.
Harold's	555 S. Main Street (Demolished)	A gay bar in Downtown during the 1940s.
Hialeah House	8540 Lankershim Boulevard	A lesbian bar in North Hollywood from the 1940s through the 1960s.
House of Ivy	1640 N. Las Palmas	A gay bar in Hollywood during the 1950s.
If Club	810 S. Vermont Avenue (Demolished)	This was the earliest known lesbian bar, opening in approximately 1947. It was a working class, racially mixed bar in the Westlake area.
Jimmy's Backyard	1608 Cosmo Street	This Hollywood nightclub was a popular gathering place for LGBT persons and featured female impersonators during the 1930s.
Joanie Presents	6413 Lankershim Boulevard	A lesbian bar in North Hollywood during the 1960s and 1970s. Listed in 1965 Address Book.
Lakeshore Bar	Need Address	A lesbian bar in Westlake during the 1940s and 1950s. Somewhere on W. 8th Street.
Laurel Club	12319 Ventura Boulevard	A lesbian bar in North Hollywood during the 1960s.
Maxwell's	214 S. Hill Street (Demolished)	A gay bar in Downtown during the 1940s and 1950s.
New Faces	4001 Sunset Boulevard	A gay bar in Silver Lake during the 1960s. Listed in 1965 Address Book.
Oil Can Harry's	11052 Ventura Boulevard	A gay bar in Studio City that opened in 1968 and is still in business.

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

Open Door	831 S. Vermont Avenue	A lesbian bar in Westlake during the 1950s and 1960s. Listed in 1968 Address Book.
Redhead/Reds/Redz	2218 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	A lesbian bar in Boyle Heights since the 1950s.
Rendezvous	Need Address	This Hollywood nightclub was a popular gathering place for LGBT persons and featured female impersonators during the 1930s. Somewhere on N. Cahuenga Boulevard.
Slim Gordon's	6721 Hollywood Boulevard	A gay bar in Hollywood during the 1940s.
Smitty's	242 S. Main Street	A gay bar in Downtown during the 1940s.
S.S. Friendship	110 N. West Channel Road	A gay bar in the Pacific Palisades fictionalized as the "Starboard Side" in Christopher Isherwood's 1964 novel "A Single Man."
The Big House/Buddy's Rendezvous	5732 Hollywood Boulevard	This Hollywood nightclub was a popular gathering place for LGBT persons and featured female impersonators during the 1930s.
The Cellar	Need Address	This Hollywood nightclub was a popular gathering place for LGBT persons and featured female impersonators during the 1930s.
The Patch Bar	610 W. Pacific Coast Highway	A gay bar in Wilmington during the 1960s. The site of resistance to police harassment that sparked the Flower Power Protest in 1968.
The Waldorf	527 S. Main Street (Demolished)	A gay bar in Downtown from the 1940s through the 1960s. Listed in 1965 Address Book. Fictionalized as "Wally's" in John Rechy's 1963 novel "City of Night."
Vieux Carre	1716 N. Las Palmas	A gay bar in Hollywood during the 1960s. Listed in 1965 Address Book.

## **Eligibility Standards**

*Theme:* Gay Bar as Social Institutions

*Property Type:* Commercial

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include commercial buildings such as hotels, bars, nightclubs, coffee shops, and restaurants that were important gathering places for LGBT persons.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with LGBT culture. These will likely be the earliest known resources in the neighborhood in which they are located or the longest in operation.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Social History

*Criteria:* A/1/1

*Period of Significance:* 1920-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Played a significant role in the social life of the LGBT community

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with venues established within the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Is strongly associated with the social history of the LGBT community
- May be the first or long-time location of the venue
- May be located in a building used for multiple purposes
- Venue must have occupied the property for a significant period of time
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the venue occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant LGBT venue occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Some original materials may have been altered, removed, or replaced

## **Theme 5 – Homosexuality: The Mental Illness That Never Was (1948-1980)**

At one time, homosexuality was considered both a criminal act and a mental disorder. In both legal and medical texts, the term homosexuality was applied to both men and women and a broad range of transgressive sexual or gender behaviors. It was decriminalized in most of the United States, although not California, before it was removed from the diagnostic manuals as a pathology that should be cured. More enlightened behavioral science perspectives began to emerge in the 1950s. The research of Dr. Alfred Kinsey and Dr. Evelyn Hooker challenged the traditional notion of the male-female, masculine-feminine, homosexual-heterosexual binaries. The works of Kinsey, Hooker, and other behavioral scientists played an important role in the history of the gay liberation movement. Finally free from the stigma of being considered mentally ill, LGBT persons began to experience more tolerance from mainstream American society during the 1970s; however, achieving greater acceptance would take several more decades.

The scientific study of sexuality began in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe with the medical profession. Doctors were called on as experts in legal proceedings against individuals who were engaging in homosexual behavior, which was a crime. Indeed, the Hungarian writer Karl Maria Kertbeny coined the term “homosexual” in 1869 while campaigning against German sodomy laws. The medical and psychological fields during this period established the theory that individuals were innocent because same-sex attraction was innate; therefore individuals should be placed under psychiatric care rather than prosecuted as criminals. The term “sexual inversion” was popularized by the English sexologist Havelock Ellis who believed that homosexuality was a congenital variation of sexuality and not a disease. The notion of sexual inversion continued to dominate behavioral science theories about homosexuality into the 20<sup>th</sup> century as researchers employed the latest techniques to uncover its biological basis.

Even before sex hormones were discovered, homosexuals were hypothesized to be neuro-endocrinological hermaphrodites. This was the preferred theory of German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld. Hirschfeld was perhaps the first physician who was public about his own sexual orientation and was a tireless advocate for gay rights. He founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee in Berlin in 1897, which lobbied for the decriminalization of homosexual acts. Hirschfeld argued homosexuality was an intermediate sex and a natural, biological variant in the spectrum between absolute maleness and femaleness. Hirschfeld was also a pioneer in writing about what is now referred to as gender identity disorder.<sup>115</sup>

During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many psychiatrists and psychologists believed that homosexuality should and could be “cured” through therapy. In the 1940s and 1950s, LGBT persons could be involuntarily committed to psychiatric facilities by their families. Men and women arrested for unconventional sexual or gender behaviors were sometimes forced to accept incarceration in a mental hospital as a part of a plea

---

<sup>115</sup> Raymond Melville, “Famous GLBT People: Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld,” *Stonewall Society*, accessed February 17, 2014, <http://www.stonewallsociety.com/famouspeople/magnus.htm>.

bargain. For example, in 1954 *ONE Magazine* contributing artist Sidney Bronstein was entrapped by an LAPD vice officer in Pershing Square. The judge in the case offered Bronstein his choice between three months in a mental hospital or one year in prison. "The judge did not expect the hospital to cure Bronstein of his homosexuality, but he believed that psychotherapy would curb Bronstein of his promiscuity and help him 'adjust to society'."<sup>116</sup> While some hospitals practiced psychotherapy, Bronstein was sent to the Atascadero State Mental Hospital in San Luis Obispo County, which was designed for sexually violent criminals.

About sixty percent of the inmate population at Atascadero were sex offenders, including many convicted of consensual adult sodomy or oral sex. At the beginning, the institution was relatively relaxed, even if ineffective in "curing" those incarcerated there. A key philosophy of the institution was controlling inmates who were resistant to treatment or authority. Doctors performed a steady but small stream of lobotomies. However, the main treatment, which Atascadero pioneered, was an aversion therapy involving the drug succinylchloride, commonly known as Anectine, a muscle relaxant. While the victim was unable to breathe, but fully conscious, the 'therapist' would tell him to stop having "unnatural" thoughts about men.<sup>117</sup> This drug was used continually at Atascadero until 1969, when a visiting law student raised a scandal about its use.



**Figure 20:** The pioneering work Dr. Evelyn Hooker challenged the widely held belief that homosexuality was a disease. Source: [http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/faculty\\_sites/rainbow/html/hooker2.html](http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/faculty_sites/rainbow/html/hooker2.html)

In 1952, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) included homosexuality under "sociopathic personality disturbance" in its first official list of mental disorders. But the idea that homosexuality was a disease began to slowly change by the middle of the century thanks to the work of Dr. Alfred Kinsey, Dr. Evelyn Hooker, and Dr. Blanche Baker. Kinsey was a sexologist who founded the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University in 1947. He is best known for writing *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), commonly referred to as the Kinsey Reports. The

Kinsey Reports demonstrated that homosexuality was more common than was assumed, suggesting that these behaviors are normal and part of a continuum of sexual behaviors.

---

<sup>116</sup> Craig M. Loftin, *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012), 193.

<sup>117</sup> This very polite account was drawn from graphic exposes of Atascadero in the early 1970s. See John LaStala, "Atascadero: Dachau for Queers?" *The Advocate*, April 26, 1972, 11, 13 (LaStala was an inmate in 1955); Rob Cole, "Inside Atascadero IV: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Treatment" in *The Advocate*, October 11, 1972, 5.

Hooker was a psychologist who taught at UCLA during the 1940s and 50s. One of her students introduced her to the gay and lesbian subculture of Los Angeles, which became her life's work. In 1954, she applied for a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to conduct a scientific study comparing homosexual and heterosexual men. Through her contacts at the Mattachine Society and ONE Incorporated, she found homosexual men who were willing to participate in the study.<sup>118</sup> In 1956, she presented her paper "The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual" at a meeting of APA in Chicago. Her research showed that gay men are as well-adjusted as straight men.<sup>119</sup>

Baker was a psychologist from San Francisco who travelled frequently to Los Angeles to collaborate with the administrators of ONE Incorporated. "She consulted with ONE Inc. and their Social Services Division from 1955-1958, before beginning a column in *ONE Magazine* in 1958 called "Toward Understanding." Dr. Baker's advice column took on a wide array of issues including the causes of homosexuality, social isolation, gay marriage, gays in the military, latent homosexuality, and fetishes. Unfortunately the column lasted only until 1960 when Dr. Baker passed away. Although Dr. Baker's collaboration with ONE Inc. was short lived, the courage to use her status to speak out against the prejudices of her profession gave sorely needed support to ONE Inc. and its readers the world around."<sup>120</sup>

In the 1960s, the leaders of the gay liberation movement used the works of Kinsey and Hooker to confront the APA and other mental health professional organizations. LGBT persons were denied many basic rights under the law, in part, because homosexuality was designated a mental disorder. The designation also exacerbated societal prejudices towards the LGBT community. The APA made one small step toward accepting homosexuality as an aspect of normal sexual behavior in 1968 when they moved it from the "sociopathic" to "sexual deviation" category. In 1969, a National Institute of Mental Health study chaired by Hooker urged the decriminalization of private sex acts between consenting adults.

In 1970, members of the Gay Liberation Front disrupted the APA conference in San Francisco, which effectively forced one of the first dialogues between mental health professional and the LGBT community. In 1973, the APA finally removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses. The declassification of homosexuality as a mental illness allowed gay and lesbian psychiatrists and psychologists and issues affecting LGBT patients to achieve greater visibility. Prior to 1973, gay and lesbian professionals in the field of mental health feared that they would lose their jobs and licenses if their true identities were known.

---

<sup>118</sup> Incidentally, Hooker was friends and neighbors with the author Christopher Isherwood.

<sup>119</sup> Katherine S. Milar, "The Myth Buster," *Monitor on Psychology*, February 2011, Vol. 42, No. 2, accessed February 17, 2014, <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2011/02/myth-buster.aspx>.

<sup>120</sup> "Dr. Blanche Baker and One Inc.," *ONE Archives at the USC Libraries*, accessed February 18, 2014, <http://one.usc.edu/dr-blanche-baker-and-one-inc/>.





**Figure 21:** The Alcoholism Center for Women is an example of a residential treatment center.  
Source: <http://www.alcoholismcenterforwomen.org/>

By the late 1970s, the focus of the mental health community shifted from attempting to “cure” homosexuality to assisting the special needs of LGBT persons who were at higher risk for mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse because of the stress of societal condemnation. The increased tolerance of LGBT persons by mainstream American society in the 1970s did not necessarily translate into acceptance. This was especially true for teenagers coming out to their families. Rejection by family members resulted in higher rates of homelessness and suicidal thoughts among LGBT persons

than their straight counterparts. Among the early organizations to support the medical and mental health needs of LGBT persons were the Gay Community Service Center (GCSC), the Van Ness Recovery House, the Los Angeles Women's Center, the Feminist Women's Health Center, and the Alcoholism Center for Women.

The following tables describe designated and known resources associated with healthcare and social service agencies that supported the LGBT community. Eligibility Standards address purpose-built clinics, residential properties used by therapist as well as those converted into treatment facilities.

#### Designated Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Alcoholism Center for Women	1147 S. Alvarado Street	This property is known as the Thomas Potter Residence and is designated LAHCM # 327 for its architecture. It also appears to be significant in this context for its association with the Alcoholism Center for Women. Founded by Brenda Weathers in 1974, this was a pioneering residential treatment center for women/lesbian alcoholics.

### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Van Ness Recovery House	1919 N. Beachwood Drive	Founded by Don Kilhefner in 1973, this was the first residential substance abuse and treatment facility specifically for LGBT persons.
Evelyn Hooker Residence	400 S. Saltair Avenue	Hooker (1907-1996) was a psychologist and professor at UCLA. Her research played a critical role in refuting the idea that homosexuality was a mental illness.
Liberation House	1168 N. Edgemont Street	In 1971, the GCSC opened the initial "Liberation House" on Edgemont Street, the nation's first facility for homeless gay adults and youth. This would be followed later that year by four additional "Liberation Houses," one exclusively for female adults and youth, and a fifth free overnight "crash pad" for up to 12 men and women (houses were located on Van Ness, Oxford, Central and Las Palmas). A sixth, opened on in 1972, was coed.
The Women's Center	1027 Crenshaw Boulevard	The Women's Center opened in 1972. Services included psychological, job, and abortion counseling, a suicide hotline for lesbians, a volunteer switchboard and a small bookstore (which morphed into Sisterhood.) Raided by the LAPD in 1972 for practicing medicine without a license.
Feminist Women's Health Center	746 Crenshaw Boulevard	Founded in 1971, the Feminist Women's Health Center was the first self-help health clinic in the country. Raided by the LAPD in 1972 for practicing medicine without a license.

## **Eligibility Standards**

*Theme:* Homosexuality: The Mental Illness that Never Was

*Property Type:* Residential, Commercial, and Institutional

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include institutional buildings that were purpose-built as treatment facilities and clinics as well as former residential and commercial buildings that have been converted into treatment facilities and clinics.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with organizations that made significant contributions to the physical or mental health and wellness of LGBT persons.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Health/Medicine, Social History

*Criteria:* A/1/1

*Period of Significance:* 1948-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Organization must have played a significant role in improving the physical or mental health and wellness of LGBT people in Los Angeles

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties affiliated with organizations founded within the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- May be located in a building designed for another use
- Organization must have occupied the property for a significant period in its history, if it is not the founding location
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the organization occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant organization occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Some original materials may have been altered, removed, or replaced

*Property Type: Residential*

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include single-family and multi-family residential buildings used by therapists, physicians, or mental health professionals how treated LGBT persons.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with individuals that made significant contributions to the physical or mental health and wellness of LGBT persons.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Health/Medicine, Social History

*Criteria:* B/2/2

*Period of Significance:* 1948-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Individual must be proven to have made an important contribution to improving the physical and mental health and wellness of LGBT people
- Is directly associated with the productive life of persons who made important individual contributions to improving the physical and mental health and wellness of LGBT people

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the individual occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant individual occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

## Theme 6 – The LGBT Community and the Media (1945-1980)

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, periodicals such as magazines, newspapers, and newsletters became an important medium for LGBT communities. More than just reading material, they became a source of valuable information, ranging from social networking and personal ads to business advertisements and legal advice. A number of these influential publications originated in Los Angeles, including the earliest known example of an LGBT magazine in America, *Vice Versa*. Other important Los Angeles publications included *ONE Magazine*, *Tangents*, *The Lesbian Tide*, *The Advocate*, *Transvestia*, *Lesbian News*, and *Physique Pictorial*.



**Figure 22:** Edythe Eyde. Source: Gay L.A. Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons. New York: Basic Books, 2006.

*Vice Versa* was produced by Edythe Eyde,<sup>121</sup> a young woman who moved to Los Angeles in 1945. At that time, there were several instances of lesbian publications in Europe, such as *Garçonne* and *Frauenliebe*, but *Vice Versa* was the first of its kind in America. Beginning in 1947, Eyde wrote the newsletter, geared towards fellow lesbians, during work hours as a secretary at RKO Studios. She typed several copies and would distribute the free magazine in person—at this time, sending material that could be considered “obscene” through the mail was a prosecutable offense.<sup>122</sup> Eyde nearly single-handedly wrote all twelve issues, the only other contributor being a male friend. After just twelve issues, the magazine came to an end in 1948, when Howard Hughes purchased RKO Studios and Eyde lost her job. While she found subsequent work, she was often in secretarial pools where she lacked the necessary privacy. *Vice Versa*, though short-lived, paved the way for the

numerous LGBT publications that would follow.<sup>123</sup>

Stemming from a Mattachine Society meeting in West Hollywood, *ONE Magazine* began publication in early 1953. The founding members, several of which were former members of Knights of the Clock, included Don Slater, his partner Antonio Reyes,

---

<sup>121</sup> Eyde adopted the pseudonym “Lisa Ben,” an anagram of “lesbian.”

<sup>122</sup> Vern L. Bullough, PhD., ed. *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (New York, NY: The Haworth Press, 2002), 63-64.

<sup>123</sup> Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2009), 106-108.

Merton Bird, and John Nojima.<sup>124</sup> The first issue was printed in the basement of a friend's home. Newsstands refused to sell the magazine, so members took to the streets, handing out copies to curious readers at gay bars across Los Angeles for twenty-five cents each.<sup>125</sup> Readership would grow to over 5,000 copies sold a month, though the vast majority of its subscribers paid an additional fee for *ONE* to be mailed in a sealed envelope without a return address. Finding they needed more space, the operation moved to two rented rooms at 232 S. Hill Street downtown.<sup>126</sup>

The early issues of *ONE Magazine* flew under the radar, its covers described as “bland,” but quickly became more forthcoming. A few issues in, its contents were clearly indicated with attention-grabbing headlines and “The Homosexual Magazine” printed on the covers. In August of 1953, the magazine was confiscated in what would become the first of several brushes with Los Angeles postmaster Otto Oleson. This August issue was determined not obscene by the solicitor general and returned. Attorney Eric Julber, who helped *ONE* retrieve their confiscated magazine, worked *pro bono* to review each issue before being published.<sup>127</sup> Just over a year later, the October 1954 issue too was confiscated by Oleson, citing a lesbian love story published that month. Julber filed a court action against Oleson for preventing the distribution of the magazine, which led to a series of court cases and appeals ruling against *ONE*, declaring the magazine to be “filthy and obscene.” Julber, unwilling to give up, decided to bring the case to the Supreme Court. In 1958, four years after it was printed, the United States Supreme Court concluded that the October 1954 issue was not obscene, but “an exercise of American free speech.”<sup>128</sup> This was an extremely important precedent as from then on, homosexual content in a publication could no longer be considered obscene, and could be freely mailed.<sup>129</sup> *ONE* continued publication until 1967.<sup>130</sup>

In 1965, tensions and artistic differences between Bill Lambert (also known under the pseudonym W. Dorr Legg) and Don Slater came to a head. After Slater lost control of *ONE* to Lambert, the founding members split sides and Slater created a new magazine called *Tangents*. Borrowing the name from a regular feature in *ONE Magazine*, *Tangents* was published until 1970. Money was always an issue at *ONE*, and the situation was no different for the new magazine as sales declined—trends were leaning towards newer, fresher magazines with glossy, color pages and nude photographs, none of which *Tangents* offered. They were forced to stop publication in 1970.<sup>131</sup>

*The Lesbian Tide*, a lesbian feminist magazine, was first published by Jeanne Cordova and Barbara McLean in 1971. Originally the newsletter for the Los Angeles chapter of the Daughters of the Bilitis, McLean and Cordova began to publish it independently as

---

<sup>124</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 116.

<sup>125</sup> Bullough, 106-107.

<sup>126</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 116-117.

<sup>127</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 118.

<sup>128</sup> Bullough, 109.

<sup>129</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 119.

<sup>130</sup> “History,” *ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives*, accessed March 5, 2014, [www.onearchives.org/about/history](http://www.onearchives.org/about/history).

<sup>131</sup> Bullough, 112.



a magazine. The magazine was later renamed *The Tide* and developed a more polished look as it moved away from its more radical roots. The publication was popular for its news coverage and sensual portraits of lesbians, taken by professional photographers such as Nancy Rosenblum.<sup>132</sup> Cordova went on to publish the *Community Yellow Pages*, a gay and lesbian business directory that contributed to rise of the LGBT consumer culture in Los Angeles.



**Figure 23:** Front page of the first issue of *The Los Angeles Advocate*. Source: <http://www.kamenypapers.org>.

different columns appealing to different interests, such as fitness and cooking tips, to increase readership. He also introduced a tongue-in-cheek personals section that was increasingly popular. As *The Los Angeles Advocate* began to cover national news stories of interest to the gay community, Mitch raised the bar of the writing and editing to meet professional journalism standards. As a result, the magazine became the go-to source of news for gay readers and "Los Angeles" was removed from the publication title, shortening it to *The Advocate*.

Mitch sold the newspaper—now with over 40,000 readers nationwide—for \$350,000 to investor David Goldstein in 1974. Goldstein changed the focus of the magazine to target wealthier gay men and moved headquarters to an affluent area of Northern California. The magazine returned to Los Angeles in the 1980s and is still in print today,

In 1966, a man named Richard Mitch joined PRIDE (Personal Rights in Defense and Education) after being arrested and wrongly accused of carrying out sex acts in public. Mitch, a writer for a scientific journal, lent his time to create a newsletter for PRIDE. A few months later in 1967, Mitch wanted to elevate the newsletter to a full-blown newspaper. Mitch (acting under the pseudonym Dick Michaels), his partner Bill Rau and Rau's coworkers Sam Allen and Aristide Laurent, who were also gay, produced the first issue of *The Los Angeles Advocate* in the print shop basement of ABC Studios. The front page of the first issue was the first recorded use of the phrase, "Gay Power."<sup>133</sup>

When troubles in the organization endangered the newspaper, Mitch purchased the rights to the publication for \$1.00. Now in complete control, he mimicked heavy-hitting papers such as the *Los Angeles Times* and began to introduce

<sup>132</sup> Marcia M. Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007), 180-181.

<sup>133</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 158-159.

making it the longest-running LGBT magazine in the U.S.<sup>134</sup>

Virginia Prince was born 1912 in Los Angeles as Arnold Lowman. At an unknown time prior to 1957, Lowman adopted the name Virginia Prince. Prince earned her PhD in pharmacology from University of California, San Francisco in 1939 and returned a few years later as a lecturer and research assistant. This position provided her access to the medical library where she was able to research cases of transvestism.<sup>135</sup> In 1960, Prince gathered \$4.00 from twenty-five people and used the total as start-up for her magazine, *Transvestia*. The magazine was directed towards heterosexual individuals seeking to express their “other side.” The magazine extended to the “Heels and Hose” club, a gathering in Los Angeles organized by Prince that evolved over time to the national organization, Full Personality Expression, FPE or *Phi Pi Epsilon*. FPE merged with another Southern California group, “Mamselle,” and became the present-day Society for the Second Self, or “Tri-Ess.”<sup>136</sup>

By 1962, *Transvestia*'s readership had reached countries like England and Australia. Prince began to publish transvestite fiction and advertise products such as artificial breasts.<sup>137</sup> One of *Transvestia*'s most lasting contributions was Prince's coining of the term “transgender.”<sup>138</sup> The magazine was published bi-monthly until 1980 when Prince decided to retire.<sup>139</sup>

During the particularly contentious period in the gay liberation movement in the 1970s, Jinx Beers founded *The Lesbian News*. Beginning in 1975,<sup>140</sup> Beers started producing the magazine in response to conflict at the Gay Community Services Center, attempting to provide a “moderate voice” in the face of radically opposing viewpoints.<sup>141</sup> Beers ran the newspaper until 1989. In that time, she expanded the newspaper from its humble, Xeroxed beginnings to a fully-fledged newspaper with global news, numerous columns on a wide variety of topics, and national personal ads.<sup>142</sup>

In 1989, Beers sold *Lesbian News* to Deborah Bergman, a former *Los Angeles Times* reporter. With Bergman at the helm, the magazine became the first to present glamorous lesbians in print—a departure from the plainer, more severe public image of the 1970s and prior. It featured ads for popular nightspots and “Hollywoodized” lesbians with typically feminine features—long hair, curvy figures. It is said that this contributed to the popularity of the term “lipstick lesbian.”<sup>143</sup> *Lesbian News* was sold again in 1994 to entrepreneur Ella Matthes. Mirroring the success of *The Advocate*, the magazine is still in print today. With over 100,000 monthly subscribers and is distributed through major

---

<sup>134</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 162, 274.

<sup>135</sup> Richard Ekins and Dave King, eds., *Virginia Prince: Pioneer of Transgendering* (Binghamton, NY: Haworth Medical Press, 2005), 6.

<sup>136</sup> Ekins and King, 9.

<sup>137</sup> Ekins and King, 8.

<sup>138</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 352.

<sup>139</sup> Ekins and King, 9.

<sup>140</sup> “About Us,” *The Lesbian News*, accessed March 11, 2014, <http://lesbiannews.com/about-us>.

<sup>141</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 206.

<sup>142</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 274.

<sup>143</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 274-275.



chains such as Barnes and Noble.<sup>144</sup>

*Physique Pictorial* represented an entirely new and different facet of LGBT media, a magazine glorifying the male body. *Physique Pictorial* was first published in 1951 by Bob Mizer, a Los Angeles photographer at the forefront of erotic art. In 1945 Mizer began taking photographs of men at Muscle Beach in Venice. He started a small business catering to bodybuilders who needed photographs for competitions. This business evolved into the Athletic Model Guild, a photography studio specializing in handsome natural-bodied men. *Physique Pictorial* was sold on newsstands and in bookstores along with heterosexual muscle magazines like *Mr. America* and pinup magazines like *Playboy*. Similar publications such as *Grandeur*, *Tomorrow's Man*, *Adonis*, and *Grecian Guild Quarterly* quickly emerged. Magazines like *Physique Pictorial* were sometimes the only connection closeted gay men had to their sexuality. The artist known as Tom of Finland was responsible for many of the covers.<sup>145</sup>

There are no currently designated resources associated with this theme. The following table describes known resources associated with prominent newspapers and magazines as well as persons who played important roles in LGBT media. Eligibility Standards address commercial property types such as office buildings as well as the homes of historically significant persons.

### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
<i>Vice Versa</i>	780 N. Gower Street (Site of RKO Studios, now Paramount)	The first lesbian publication in the United States, <i>Vice Versa</i> was subtitled "America's Gayest Magazine."
<i>ONE Magazine</i>	232 S. Hill Street ( <i>ONE Magazine's</i> first office, 1953-1962, demolished)  2256 Venice Boulevard ( <i>ONE's</i> headquarters beginning in 1962)	<i>ONE Magazine</i> was first published in 1953 by members of a Mattachine Society. The magazine was printed until 1967.  Home of William Lambert, northwest corner of 27 <sup>th</sup> and Dalton. Lambert was <i>ONE Magazine's</i> business manager, and by extension the home of the publication. The demolition of the house was featured in an article in October 1958.
<i>Tangents Magazine</i>	3473 ½ Cahuenga Boulevard	Don Slater began <i>Tangents Magazine</i> after splitting from <i>ONE Magazine</i> and Bill Lambert (W. Dorr Legg). The magazine had money troubles

<sup>144</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 275.

<sup>145</sup> Michael Bronski. *A Queer History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2011), 188-189.

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

		and was only published from 1965-70.
<i>The Lesbian Tide</i>	8855 Cattaragus Avenue	A national lesbian feminist magazine, founded in 1971 and published until 1980. The first publically-circulated lesbian publication in Los Angeles.
<i>The Advocate</i>	863 N. Virgil Avenue	Founded in 1967, <i>The Advocate</i> grew from a small newsletter for a local gay rights group to the longest-running LGBT publication in print today.
<i>Physique Pictorial</i>	1834 W. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street	In 1951, Bob Mizer started the first physique magazine, <i>Physique Pictorial</i> , aimed a gay men interested in appreciating the, rather than becoming, the idealized male form.
Virginia Prince Residence	2144 Nichols Canyon Road	Virginia Prince was born Arnold Lowman. A. Lowman was listed at this address from 1960 to 1964.
Don Slater Residence	1354 W. Calumet Avenue Research indicates that Slater lived with his partner, Tony Reyes. Reyes is listed at 1354 W. Calumet Avenue from 1961 and 1987.	Slater was a founding editor of <i>ONE Magazine</i> and later <i>Tangents</i> . In addition, he was the first vice president of the ONE Institute.

## Eligibility Standards

*Theme:* The LGBT Community and the Media

*Property Type:* Commercial

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types include commercial buildings that were rented or owned by LGBT media enterprises.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with businesses that made significant contributions to the LGBT media such as newspapers, journals, and magazines.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Communications, Social History

*Criteria: A/1/1*

*Period of Significance: 1945-1980*

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Was the founding or long-term location of a business important in LGBT media

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with individuals or businesses whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- May be located in a building designed for another use
- Business must have occupied the property for a significant period in its history, if it is not the founding location
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant business occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Some original materials may have been altered, removed, or replaced

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include commercial buildings such as offices as well as single-family and multi-family residential buildings.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the LGBT media such as newspapers, journals, and magazines.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance: Communications, Social History*

*Criteria: B/2/2*

*Period of Significance: 1945-1980*

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Individual must be proven to have made an important contribution to the LGBT media

- Is directly associated with the productive life of persons who made important individual contributions to LGBT media

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the individual occupied the property

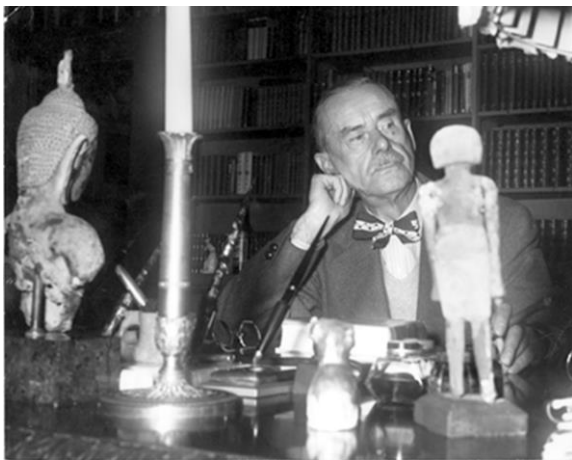
*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant individual occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

## Theme 7 – Gays and Lesbians in the Los Angeles Literary Scene (1912-1980)

Despite the fact that some of the greatest writers in history have been gay and lesbian (Walt Whitman, Henry James, Radclyffe Hall, James Baldwin, and Tennessee Williams, to name just a few), books with LGBT characters and themes have been banned from most classrooms in the U.S. The portrayal of the world in solely heterosexual terms has contributed to the marginalization of the LGBT community. California has just begun to redress this imbalance. In 2011, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB48 requiring public schools to teach gay and lesbian history, the first state to do so in the country.

LGBT writers may or may not have spoken publicly about their sexual orientation or tackled it as a theme in their writing. Therefore, the focus of this theme is not writers who are LGBT, but rather writers who addressed LGBT culture in their work, though the two are not mutually exclusive. Some of the most important writers in LGBT literature lived in Los Angeles, including Thomas Mann, Gore Vidal, Christopher Isherwood, John Rechy, and Patricia Nell Warren.



**Figure 24:** Mann photographed in his Pacific Palisades home, c. 1940s. Photo by Florence Homolka. Source: <http://www.kcet.org>

Thomas Mann was born in Lübeck, Germany in 1875. His first works, a series of short stories titled *Der kleine Herr Friedemann*, were published in 1895. In 1905, he married Katia Pringsheim, the daughter of a mathematician. His novel *Death in Venice* was written in 1912 and published in German by 1913. It was translated to English in 1924.<sup>146</sup> Mann describes the novella as being “considered [his] most valid achievement in that genre.”<sup>147</sup> *Death in Venice* is set in Venice, Italy and recounts a middle-aged man's increasingly obsessive infatuation with a young boy.<sup>148</sup> It was one of, if not the first mainstream work in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to address same-sex attraction,<sup>149</sup> making Mann an “icon of gay literature.”

Other works by Mann had homoerotic overtones, including *Confessions of Felix Krull: Confidence Man* (1954).<sup>150</sup>

Mann was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1929 for his writing, namely his novel *Buddenbrooks* (1901).<sup>151</sup> In 1933, Mann criticized the Third Reich and defected from

<sup>146</sup> “Tadzio Speaks: Death in Venice Revisited,” accessed March 6, 2014, <http://www.tadziospeaks.co.uk>,

<sup>147</sup> “Thomas Mann – Biographical,” Nobel Prizes and Laureates, accessed March 6, 2014, [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1929/mann-bio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1929/mann-bio.html).

<sup>148</sup> “Tadzio Speaks.”

<sup>149</sup> Hugh Stevens, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Gay and Lesbian Writing* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), xv.

<sup>150</sup> Gabriele Griffin, ed., *Who's Who in Lesbian and Gay Writing* (New York, NY: Routledge Press, 2002), 172.

<sup>151</sup> “Thomas Mann – Biographical.”

Germany; Germany responded by revoking his citizenship. He and his family moved to the United States, eventually relocating to the Pacific Palisades. The Manns remained there until 1952, when the McCarthy hearings forced him back to Europe. Mann died in 1955 in Switzerland.<sup>152</sup>

Born in 1925 at the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York, Gore Vidal would become one of the most prolific and well-rounded writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the course of his career, Vidal wrote numerous plays, movie and television scripts, essays and over twenty novels.<sup>153</sup> In 1949, Vidal wrote *The City and the Pillar*, a novel that follows Jim, a young American man exploring his sexuality with partners of both genders. Critically, the novel was deemed scandalous and pornographic—which in turn garnered attention for the work. The *New York Times* published a scathing review, after which Vidal found he had difficulty getting his work reviewed—so much so that he felt he had been blacklisted. He would go on to adopt the pen name “Edgar Box” for his novel writing, and turn his attention to the entertainment industry.<sup>154</sup> In another of Vidal's pivotal novels, a satire titled *Myra Breckinridge* (1974), it is revealed that the protagonist has undergone sex re-assignment surgery.<sup>155</sup> Although Vidal moved to Italy in the 1960s, he purchased another home in the Hollywood Hills in 1977, and died there in 2012.

English author Christopher Isherwood was born 1904 in Cheshire, England. He attended Corpus Christi College in Cambridge and King's College in London, but never completed a degree. Between 1930 and 1933, Isherwood lived in Berlin and compiled an account of his experience in 1939's *Goodbye to Berlin*. His short story “Sally Bowles” was also inspired by his time in Berlin, and was later adapted into the popular musical *Cabaret*. *A Single Man*, written in 1964, recounts a story of a British professor in Los Angeles grieving the death of his male lover.<sup>156</sup> Isherwood relocated from England to the United States in 1939 and would live the rest of his life in Los Angeles.<sup>157</sup> He died in his Brentwood home in 1986.<sup>158</sup>

---

<sup>152</sup> Anne-Marie Gregg, “Billy Wilder, Thomas Mann and Arnold Schoenberg: Los Angeles Exiles,” KCET Artbound: Southern California Cultural Journalism, September 19, 2013, <http://www.kcet.org/arts/artbound/counties/los-angeles/billy-wilder-thomas-mann-arnold-schoenberg-los-angeles-exiles.html>.

<sup>153</sup> Charles McGrath, “Gore Vidal Dies at 86; Prolific, Elegant, Acerbic Writer,” *New York Times*, August 1, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/01/books/gore-vidal-elegant-writer-dies-at-86.html?smid=pl-share>.

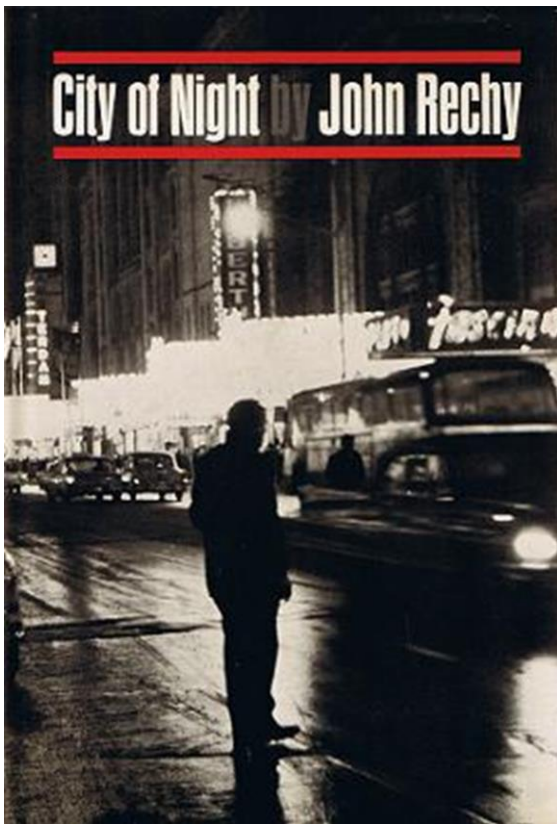
<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Griffin, 269.

<sup>156</sup> Griffin, 136-137.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> “Biography,” *The Christopher Isherwood Foundation*, accessed March 6, 2014, <http://www.isherwoodfoundation.org/biography.html>.



**Figure 25:** Much of the book *City of Night* takes place in Los Angeles. Source: <http://www.johnrechy.com/city.htm>

John Rechy became known in the 1960s for his partially-autobiographical novels, *City of Night* and *This Day's Death*. Rechy was born in El Paso, Texas in 1934. Following a stint in the army, Rechy traveled across the United States through major cities such as New York, New Orleans, and Los Angeles, hustling for money. This period in his life inspired his novel *City of Night*, which was published in 1963 and has since become an international bestseller.<sup>159</sup> *This Day's Death* tells the story of a young man on trial for prostitution in Griffith Park. Of Mexican descent, Rechy has also made major contributions to Latino literature, notably in his work *The Miraculous Day of Amalia Gomez*. Rechy is still living and actively writing—his most recent book was published in 2008. He currently lives with his partner in the Hollywood Hills.

Patricia Nell Warren was born in 1936 on a cattle ranch near Deer Lodge, Montana.<sup>160</sup> She is known for her novels addressing gay male relationships alongside popular U.S. culture, several of which were written under the pseudonym Patricia Kilina. As Kilina, she published *The Last Centennial* (1971), but

1974's *The Front Runner* cemented Warren as an LGBT author. *The Front Runner* tells the story of Billy Sive, a gay athlete who is assassinated during the Olympics. Warren was awarded the Walt Whitman Award for Excellence in Gay Literature in 1978. While her later works postdate the period of significance, Warren produced two sequels to *The Front Runner*, as well as a number of "mainstream" novels. Her most recent novel on the topic, *The Wild Man*, was published in 2003.<sup>161</sup> Warren lives in the Los Angeles area and is currently a columnist for [www.outsports.com](http://www.outsports.com), where she chronicles the achievements of LGBT athletes.<sup>162</sup>

There are no currently designated resources associated with this theme. The following table describes known resources associated with prominent authors. Eligibility Standards address the homes of historically significant persons.

<sup>159</sup> "Biography," *John Rechy*, accessed March 6, 2014, [www.johnrechy.com/bio.htm](http://www.johnrechy.com/bio.htm).

<sup>160</sup> "Patricia Nell Warren: Biography," *Wildcat International*, accessed March 10, 2014, [wildcatintl.com/pnw.cfm](http://wildcatintl.com/pnw.cfm).

<sup>161</sup> Griffin, 273.

<sup>162</sup> "Patricia Nell Warren: Biography."

### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Christopher Isherwood Residence	145 Adelaide Drive	Isherwood (1904-1986) was an English novelist who moved to Los Angeles during World War II. His greatest achievement is considered the novel <i>A Single Man</i> (1964), which depicts a day in the life of a gay, middle-aged Englishman who is a professor at a Los Angeles university. He purchased this residence in 1956 and lived here until his death.
Thomas Mann Residence	1550 San Remo Drive	Mann (1875-1955) was a German novelist who received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1929. He moved to Los Angeles in 1940 and built this residence in 1941. His book <i>Death in Venice</i> (1912) is significant in LGBT literature because it introduced same-sex desire into the general culture. He moved back to Europe with his family in 1952.
Gore Vidal Residence	Senalda Road	Vidal (1925-2012) was an American playwright, novelist, and actor. He is best known for his historical novels <i>Julian</i> , <i>Burr</i> , and <i>Lincoln</i> . His third novel, <i>The City of Pillar</i> (1948) is considered the first novel in American literature to feature unambiguous homosexuality. Vidal purchased this residence in 1977.
John Rechy Residence	/	Rechy is still living as of March 2014. Addresses for living persons are not typically published. Rechy lives in the Hollywood Hills with his partner.
Patricia Nell Warren Residence	/	Warren is still living as of March 2014. Addresses for living persons are not typically published. Warren lives in the Los Angeles area.



## **Eligibility Standards**

*Theme:* Gays and Lesbians in the Los Angeles Literary Scene

*Property Type:* Residential

*Property Type Description:* Associated property types may include single-family and multi-family residential buildings.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with LGBT persons who made significant contributions to the history of literature.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Literature, Social History

*Criteria:* B/2/2

*Period of Significance:* 1912-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Individual must be proven to have made an important contribution to the history of literature as it relates to LGBT culture
- Is directly associated with the productive life of the person

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the individual occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant individual occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

## Theme 8 – Queer Art (1945-1980)

LGBT persons have found success in all aspects of the Los Angeles art scene from commercial to fine. However, they were not always able to express their sexuality or identity in their work. Following World War II, driven in part by nostalgia and in part by paranoia, the general need for America to return to “normal” resulted in a very conservative political and social climate. Popular media promoted the ideal nuclear family, seen in television shows such as *Leave it to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best*. Officials were on the lookout for communists and “sex perverts.” In this era that so valued “sameness,” it was difficult, even risky, to express same-sex attraction, and the traditionally liberal art world was no exception. Expressions of nonconforming sexual and gender behavior in art prior to the 1960s were mostly restricted to the underground or the extremely subtle.<sup>163</sup> Los Angeles emerged as an important center for modern art in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s when LGBT artists were becoming more visible within the art community and when lesbians were seeking autonomy from the gay liberation movement. During this period, artistic expressions of homosexuality became more acceptable, but were not without controversy.

### Commercial Artists

During the 1920s, the rise of a modern consumer culture led to the development of whole new fields of commercial art. American corporations hired artists to design and produce goods that had previously been made at home and/or by hand, and they hired other artists to market their wares. These new fields of fashion, interior, industrial, and graphic design, created new opportunities for artists to make a living, and many of those artists were LGBT persons. Some LGBT artists, such as Sasha Brastoff, first found employment in the entertainment industry as production or costume designers, and then left after World War II to form their own businesses when the studio system began to crumble.

Brastoff was born Samuel Brostofsky in Cleveland, Ohio in 1918. He trained and danced with the Cleveland Ballet as a teenager and attended the Western Reserve School of art. Before joining the U.S. Air Force in 1942, he designed Macy's window displays and held an exhibit of his terra cotta sculptures, which he called “whimsies.” During his time in the Air Force, Brastoff designed costumes and backdrops for shows and events to entertain the troops—often appearing on stage himself in drag as Carmen Miranda. Near the end of World War II, Brastoff moved to Los Angeles and got a contract with 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox as both a designer and entertainer. By 1947, he opened his first plant, producing hand painted ceramics. He expanded to a factory in 1952, which was unfortunately destroyed by a fire. In 1953, he opened a new 35,000 square foot factory and showroom and would go on to employ over 100 people. While Brastoff suffered a nervous breakdown and left as business began to dwindle, the factory would sell his designs up until it closed in 1973. In the meantime, he produced sculptures, jewelry, and other decorative arts for other companies and exhibits until 1985 when his health

---

<sup>163</sup> James M. Saslow, *Pictures and Passions: A History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts* (New York, NY: Viking, 1999), 243-244.

prevented further artistic pursuits. Brastoff passed away in 1993 from cancer, but the designs he produced at his factory are still quite popular and sought-after.

While commercial artists such as Brastoff may have been able to lead openly gay lives, their sexual orientation was not necessarily an explicit theme in their work. One of the first and few arenas for LGBT artists to express their identities was the gay media. The emergence of gay culture in Los Angeles after World War II led to the development of a gay media, including newspapers, newsletters, and magazines. These publications called for artists to create a positive gay iconography through photographs, drawings, and paintings. Subtlety was a critical component of this art; however, as publications were bound by censorship laws that deemed homosexual images obscene and restricted their sale and distribution.<sup>164</sup>



**Figure 26:** *ONE Magazine* cover, December 1956. Source: *Masked Voices*. Craig M. Loftin. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012.

ONE Inc. debuted *ONE Magazine*, America's first gay male journal in 1953. Joan Corbin, working under the pseudonym Eve Ellore, was the primary illustrator and later art director for *ONE Magazine* until 1963.<sup>165</sup> Corbin's work was often abstract, but always very striking. She believed the visual impact was extremely important, as it was often the first impression readers had of the magazine.<sup>166</sup> Corbin also produced graphics for the interior of the magazine, illustrating articles and stories and as art director, helped with the planning and design of each issue.<sup>167</sup> Corbin lived with her partner, Irma Wolf (who went by the pseudonym Ann Carl Reid), *ONE Magazine*'s chief editor. After her tenure as art director, Corbin would draw and write poetry until her death in 2004.<sup>168</sup>

Sidney Bronstein was another artist affiliated with *ONE Magazine*. Bronstein was a poet and painter who was active in the Los Angeles art scene and gay community beginning in the 1950s. He is best known for his portraits of servicemen in uniform whom he met while cruising in downtown Los Angeles. He also kept a detailed record of his encounters with these

men, which was later used by Dr. Alfred Kinsey as part of his then-controversial studies on human sexuality.<sup>169</sup>

---

<sup>164</sup> For more information on the gay media, please see Theme 7.

<sup>165</sup> For more information on *ONE Magazine*, please see Theme 7. Kyle Morgan, "Finding aid to the Joan Corbin papers, 1937-2013," accessed May 12, 2014, [http://www.usc.edu/libraries/finding\\_aids/records/finding\\_aid.php?fa=Coll2013.012](http://www.usc.edu/libraries/finding_aids/records/finding_aid.php?fa=Coll2013.012).

<sup>166</sup> Craig M. Loftin, *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 23.

<sup>167</sup> "Finding aid to the Joan Corbin papers."

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> For more information in Kinsey, please see Theme 6.



**Figure 27:** "Untitled Soldiers on Beach," Sidney Bronstein, 1951. Source: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives.

Bronstein volunteered at ONE Inc. and contributed his poetry and paintings to *ONE Magazine*.<sup>170</sup> His work was emblematic of many gay artists working during the period in its subject matter and tone. Bronstein only touched upon homosexuality in scenes with men communing with one another. To straight audiences paintings such as "Untitled, Athlete Supporting Seven Youths" (1943) and "Untitled, Soldiers on Beach" (1951) appeared wholesome and playful, but to gay audiences they spoke of male love. Bronstein is also a representation of the artists that floated back and forth between the commercial and fine arts.

### Photographers

While the gay media was focused on writing about political and cultural subjects and projecting affirmative images of the LGBT community, a market was developing for homoerotic material. Professional photographers such as Bob Mizer stepped in to fill this demand. Mizer, the publisher of *Physique Pictorial*, was one of the earliest to circulate erotic photographs of muscular men.<sup>171</sup> Produced under the guise of a fitness magazine, the images really appealed to—and were aimed at—an underground market of gay men. Mizer began his career in 1945 taking photographs of bodybuilders at Venice Beach. While the photographs would be considered modest by today's standards, they attracted the attention of legal authorities. In 1947, he was convicted of contributing to the delinquency of a minor for taking nude photographs of a 17-year old model, and spent a year in jail. Although Mizer has been portrayed as solely a purveyor of beefcake, an exhibition of his work at the Museum of Contemporary Art in 2014 highlighted his talent as a photographer and revealed his interest in other themes.

While Mizer's work in *Physique Pictorial* was unabashedly erotic, it was always upbeat and playful, which was the counter opposite of the artist he so inspired, Robert Mapplethorpe.<sup>172</sup> Mapplethorpe was one of the most influential photographers of the 1970s and 80s, producing a large body of work that ranged from stylized portraits inspired by classical nudes, to large-scale photographs of flowers, to his unflinching photographs documenting the underground homosexual sadomasochistic community of New York.<sup>173</sup> One of the earliest exhibitions of his work occurred in Los Angeles in 1978 at the now defunct Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art (LAICA). The exhibition, which featured thirteen homoerotic sadomasochistic images that were printed and packaged as "X Portfolio," immediately sparked controversy and raised issues with

---

<sup>170</sup> "Trade Secrets: ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives," Nottingham Contemporary Museum, accessed May 12, 2014, <http://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/art/one-national-gay-lesbian-archives>.

<sup>171</sup> For more information about Mizer, please see Theme 7.

<sup>172</sup> Ken Johnson, "Beyond Beefcake in the Work of Gay Pioneer," *New York Times*, January 9, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/10/arts/design/devotion-excavating-bob-mizer-at-nyus-80wse.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/10/arts/design/devotion-excavating-bob-mizer-at-nyus-80wse.html?_r=0)

<sup>173</sup> "In Focus: Robert Mapplethorpe," *The J. Paul Getty Museum*, accessed May 14, 2014, [http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/focus\\_mapplethorpe/](http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/focus_mapplethorpe/).

LAICA donors. While the controversy in Los Angeles quickly faded, an exhibition of his work in 1989 that included photographs from "X Portfolio" resulted in museums and curators charged with obscenity.<sup>174</sup> Although Mapplethorpe is indelibly a New York artist, much of his life's work is in Los Angeles at the J. Paul Getty Museum and Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



**Figure 28:** "Hustlers, Selma Avenue," Anthony Friedkin, 1971. Source: <http://www.drkrm.com/friedkin.html>.

Artists have also used the medium of photography to chronicle LGBT culture for themselves as well as for the larger society. Anthony Friedkin is a Los Angeles native who, at the young age of 19, began chronicling gay life in San Francisco and Los Angeles in his "The Gay Essay" photographic project.<sup>175</sup> Between 1969 and 1973, Friedkin produced dozens of black and white images as part of his essay, which is now considered one of the most extensive and important historical records of the gay community during the period.<sup>176</sup> The images were first shown in Europe and

Asia due to the attitude towards the subject matter in the United States at the time, but have since been displayed and published worldwide. His work is also found in major art collections such as the New York Modern Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty Museum.<sup>177</sup> Friedkin completed subsequent photo essays that were equally as poignant, including the "Beverly Hills Essay," "The Hollywood Series," "California Prisons," and "Los Angeles." He is still living and working in the Los Angeles area.

### **Erotic Artists**

While magazines such as *Physique Pictorial* could be sold on newsstands under the pretext that they promoted physical fitness, an underground market developed for far more explicit imagery. The leader in gay erotica was the artist known as Tom of Finland. Born Touko Laaksonen in 1920, he was raised in a small town in Finland and eventually established Los Angeles as his part-time home. Growing up, he was intrigued by the masculine figures—such as farmers and loggers—that surrounded his countryside home. He took an interest in art and music at an early age, and went on to attend an art school in Helsinki to study advertising. During his studies, World War II broke out, and he was conscripted to the Finnish Army; during his time as a lieutenant he had his first

---

<sup>174</sup> "Crackdowns on Creativity," *Time Magazine*, April 5, 2011, [http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2063218\\_2063273\\_2063220,00.html](http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2063218_2063273_2063220,00.html); [http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1902809\\_1902810\\_1905179-1,00.html](http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1902809_1902810_1905179-1,00.html)

<sup>175</sup> Advocate.com Editors, "Anthony Friedkin: The Gay Essay," March 28, 2014, accessed May 12, 2014, <http://www.advocate.com/arts-entertainment/art/photography/2014/03/28/anthony-friedkin-gay-essay>.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> "Anthony Friedkin: Gay, A Photographic Essay, 1969-1972," DRKRM Gallery, accessed May 12, 2014, <http://www.drkrm.com/friedkin.html>.

sexual encounters with other enlisted men, which would inspire much of his artwork. After the war he returned to art school and worked as a freelance designer in advertising, and piano player for local cafes.<sup>178</sup>



**Figure 29:** "Untitled," Tom of Finland, 1973. Source: <http://www.kcet.org/arts/artbound/counties/los-angeles/tom-of-finland-bob-mizer-moca.html>.

Word of his artwork got out, and a friend convinced Touko to submit samples to *Physique Pictorial* in 1957. Erring on the side of caution, he submitted his work under the name "Tom," and when it was credited in the spring issue of the magazine as "Tom of Finland," his pseudonym was coined. Demand for his work grew, and he was eventually able to quit design work and give "Tom of Finland" his undivided attention. His first exhibition was in 1973 in Hamburg, Germany; the exhibit was so popular, all but one of his pieces were stolen. He was hesitant to put on another show after the

experience, but in 1978 he had his second exhibition in Los Angeles, which led to many more and frequent trips to the United States. Eventually, he was spending almost as much time in Echo Park as he did Finland, until his death in 1991.<sup>179</sup>

The Tom of Finland Foundation, which he founded in 1984, was formed to catalog his own work as well as to provide a "safe haven" for similar artwork. The foundation seeks to protect erotic art from discrimination by presenting it within the appropriate context, so it can be appreciated and acknowledged free from the opposition that its subject matter might cause. The foundation is housed in the Echo Park Craftsman that Tom called his home away from home.<sup>180</sup>

### Lesbians in the Feminist Art Movement

Even in the liberal art community, female artists (both straight and un-straight) struggled for recognition in a male-dominated world. Although women played leadership roles at *ONE Magazine*, they longed for separate spaces and organizations from men. Lesbians were beginning to wonder if they had more in common with the feminist movement than the gay liberation movement. In Los Angeles, one of the most compelling examples of the attempt to create a lesbian space within the context of the feminist art movement was the creation of The Woman's Building.<sup>181</sup>

---

<sup>178</sup> Valentine Hooven III, "Tom of Finland: A Short Biography," *Tom of Finland Foundation*, 1992, accessed May 12, 2014, <http://tomoffinlandfoundation.org/foundation/touko.html>.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> "Purpose Statement," *Tom of Finland Foundation*, accessed May 12, 2014, <http://tomoffinlandfoundation.org/foundation/purpose.html>.

<sup>181</sup> Moira Rachel Kenny, *Mapping Gay LA: The Intersection of Place and Politics* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001) 126.



In the early 1970s, three women working at the California Institute of the Arts were frustrated with the art programs offered at the school. Judy Chicago, Arlene Raven, and Sheila de Bretteville formed an independent women's art school that they called the Feminist Studio Workshop (FSW). The earliest classes were held in Bretteville's house but by 1973 they had enough students to lease room in the two-story building that once housed the Chouinard Art Institute. They would call their new facility The Woman's Building. They added more female artists to the faculty and shared the space with other female-operated organizations such as the National Organization of Women and the Associated Feminist Press.<sup>182</sup> Although The Woman's Building was first and foremost a feminist organization, it was a supportive environment that encouraged artistic expression and personal growth, and a place where many female artists came out as lesbians.<sup>183</sup>

In 1977, the FSW began one of their biggest projects, the Lesbian Art Project (LAP). LAP sought to redefine lesbian culture and promote a more glamorous and less "somber" self-image through social events, salons, and art shows. These events ran through 1979. The FSW's next large-scale project was the Great American Lesbian Art Project (GALAS) beginning in 1980. During GALAS, the women of the FSW discussed the current state of lesbian art while holding simultaneous exhibitions across the United States, ranging from full-blown museum galleries to underground shows in private venues. Photographs of the shows were collected in Los Angeles, converted to slides and submitted to four LGBT archives. The project sought to increase the visibility of lesbian artists and promote a dialogue about the feminist and lesbian communities.<sup>184</sup> GALAS was addressed in the mainstream arts media in Los Angeles, and was inclusive of lesbians of color, a portion of the community that had, until then, been largely overlooked and hesitant to participate for fear of discrimination.<sup>185</sup>

## **Fine Artists**

The line between commercial and fine art has always been blurry, especially as each has influenced the other during the 20th century. While commercial art is created on-demand by a company and is usually intended for mass exposure, fine art is created primarily for aesthetics purposes. Many of the most important American fine artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender persons, and during the 1960s and 1970s they became increasingly visible. In some cases, their sexual orientation or gender identity had no apparent influence over the content of their work, while in other cases it was a constant and clear presence.

---

<sup>182</sup> Laura Meyer, "The Los Angeles Woman's Building and the Feminist Art Community, 1973-1991," in *The Sons and Daughters of Los: Culture and Community in L.A.*, ed. David E. James (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2003), 44-47.

<sup>183</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 187.

<sup>184</sup> Kenny, 130-131.

<sup>185</sup> "American Art: Lesbian, Post-Stonewall," *GLBTQ: An Encyclopedia of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Culture*, accessed May 12, 2014, [http://www.glbtq.com/arts/am\\_art\\_lesbian\\_post\\_stonewall,2.html](http://www.glbtq.com/arts/am_art_lesbian_post_stonewall,2.html).



**Figure 30:** "Christopher Isherwood and Don Bachardy," David Hockney, 1968. Source: [http://www.hockneypictures.com/works\\_painting\\_s\\_60.php](http://www.hockneypictures.com/works_painting_s_60.php)

David Hockney, one of the most acclaimed artists of the late 20th century, is British, but much of his work is inspired by Los Angeles, where he has lived off and on since 1964. Unlike other openly gay artists such as Andy Warhol and Ellsworth Kelly, Hockney candidly explored the nature of same-sex attraction in his portraiture. It should be noted that during the 1960s, the height Pop Art and Abstract Expressionism, figurative art was considered unfashionable. Thus, the abstract tradition in which most artists were working at the time did not lend itself to overt expressions or depictions of same-sex attraction and sexuality.

Hockney's "We Two Boys Together Clinging" (1961) is a rare example inspired by the Walt Whitman poem.

While Hockney was associated with the British Pop Art movement, a visit to Los Angeles inspired him to make a series of paintings of swimming pools in a highly realistic style. In Los Angeles, he began to paint portraits of his friends and acquaintances, including Christopher Isherwood and Don Bachardy. Hockney rented a house in Nichols Canyon and later bought the property and added a studio. He now spends most of his time in England.



**Figure 31:** "Jerry Brown," Don Bachardy, 1984. Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gubernatorial\\_portrait\\_of\\_Jerry\\_Brown](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gubernatorial_portrait_of_Jerry_Brown)

Don Bachardy is arguably L.A.'s most celebrated portrait painter. Working primarily with acrylics and watercolors, his style is quasi-abstract. He was born in Los Angeles in 1934, and trained at the Chouinard Art Institute (which, coincidentally, would later become The Woman's Building). His first exhibition was at the Red Fern Gallery in London in 1961. One of his most famous portraits is also one of the least popular, Jerry Brown during his first term as governor of California (1975-1983). Bachardy's painting of Brown boldly broke with the longstanding tradition of gubernatorial portraits that favored realism.

Bachardy is almost as well known for his portraits as for his longtime relationship with author Christopher Isherwood. Though there was a considerable age difference between them, they remained partners for years, living together in their Brentwood home until the death of Isherwood in 1986. The two collaborated on projects, and much of Bachardy's work consists of



portraits of Isherwood. In the late 1980s, he painted the portraits of twelve gay rights leaders. Bachardy has been exhibited a number of times in solo art shows across the United States and his work has been published in numerous volumes.<sup>186</sup>

While artists such as Hockney and Barchardy worked within the recognized conventions of the contemporary art world, a younger generation of LGBT artists was beginning to move into riskier territory. Visual artists began collaborating with one another as well as poets, musicians, and dancers and broaching more political themes in their work. A group of Mexican American artists with roots in the Chicano movement emerged in Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles in the late 1960s. During this highly politicized period, artists such as Robert Legoretta employed performance art to explore issues of gender, race, and sexual identity. Best known by his performance persona Cyclona, Legoretta began collaborating with Edmundo "Mundo" Meza and Glugio "Gronk" Nicandro on performances including "Caca Roaches Have No Friends" (1969), "La Loca en Laguna, the Liberation of Laguna Beach" (1971), and "Cyclorama" (1972). These highly planned and executed performances, which sometimes used murals as backdrops, were captured by photographs. Gronk was a founding member of the multi-media arts collective ASCO that included Harry Gamboa Jr., Willie Herrón, and Patssi Valdez.<sup>187</sup>

With the LGBT artists of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s paving the way, a vibrant LGBT art community emerged in the 1980s and is still thriving today. In 2011, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archive, in conjunction with the Getty Foundation put on an exhibit curated by David Frantz and Mia Locks called *Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945-1980*. The exhibit, shown in three parts, was the largest and most comprehensive showing of the ONE Archive's extensive art collection to date.<sup>188</sup>

There are no currently designated resources associated with this theme. The following table describes known resources associated with cultural organizations and institutions as well as LGBT persons who were prominent in the visual arts. Eligibility Standards address cultural property types such as gallery spaces as well as the homes and studios of historically significant persons.

#### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Don Bachardy Residence/Studio	/	Bachardy (1934-0000) is arguably L.A.'s most celebrated portrait painter. One of his most notable works is the official gubernatorial portrait of Jerry Brown.

---

<sup>186</sup> "Biography," *DonBachardy.com*, accessed May 12, 2014, <http://www.donbachardy.com/biography.html>.

<sup>187</sup> *Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945-1980*, ed. Sarah Kessler and Mia Locks (Los Angeles, CA: ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archive, 2011), 147-51.

<sup>188</sup> "About," *Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles, 1945-1980*, accessed May 12, 2014, <http://cruisingthearchive.org/exhibition>.

SurveyLA  
LGBT Historic Context Statement

Sidney Bronstein Residence/Studio	3949 Hillcrest Drive	Bronstein (1939-1968) was a painter and active member in the LGBT community who, in addition to painting, volunteered at <i>ONE Magazine</i> and participated in Dr. Kinsey's study on sexuality.
Joan Corbin	232 S. Hill Street (Demolished) With the loss of ONE Magazine's office on Hill Street, Corbin's residence may be the property that best represents her life; however, she lived in Glendale.	Corbin (1937-2013) was a founding board member of ONE Inc. and the artistic director of ONE Magazine.
Anthony Friedkin	/	Friedkin (1950-0000) is still living as of May 2014. Addresses for living persons are not typically published. Friedkin lives and works in the Los Angeles area.
Tom of Finland House	1421 Laveta Terrace	Touko Laaksonen (1920-1981) was a Finnish artist known for his stylized homoerotic art.
David Hockney Residence/Studio	Need Address	Hockney (1937-0000) is one of the most acclaimed artists of the late 20th century, is British, but much of his work is inspired by Los Angeles, where he has lived off and on since 1964.
The Woman's Building	743 S. Grandview (1973-1975) 1727 N. Spring Street (1975-1991)	Founded in 1973, the Woman's Building was the hub of the lesbian and feminist art movement.
Sascha Brastoff's Ceramics Factory	11520 W. Olympic Boulevard	Brastoff (1918-1993) was a sculptor, designer, and entertainer. He produced hand-painted ceramics at this factory until 1962.
Bob Mizer Residence/Studio	1834 W. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street	Mizer (1922-1992) was a photographer who established the Athletic Model Guild and <i>Physique Pictorial</i> , a fitness magazine aimed at gay men.

### Eligibility Standards

Theme: Queer Art

Property Type: Residential and Commercial

Property Type Description: Associated property types include residential and

commercial buildings that were used as artist studios.

*Property Type Significance:* Significant properties are directly associated with LGBT persons who made significant contributions to the history of art.

*Geographic Locations:*

- Throughout Los Angeles

*Area(s) of Significance:* Art, Social History

*Criteria:* B/2/2

*Period of Significance:* 1945-1980

*Eligibility Standards:*

- Individual must be proven to have made an important contribution to the history of art as it relates to LGBT culture
- Is directly associated with the productive life of the person

*Character-Defining/Associative Features:*

- For National Register, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period the individual occupied the property

*Integrity Considerations:*

- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant individual occupied the property
- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance

## Selected Bibliography

Armstrong, Elizabeth A. and Susan M. Cage. "Movements and Memory: The Making of the Stonewall Myth," in *American Sociological Review*, October 2006, Vol. 71, 724-251.

Bérubé, Allan. *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two*. New York, NY: Penguin Group, 1991.

Bérubé, Allan. "Marching to a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II," in *Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, edited by Martin B. Duberman, Martha Vicinius and George Chauncey Jr. New York, NY: New American Library, 1989, 383-394.

Bronski, Michael. *A Queer History of the United States*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2011.

Bullough, Vern, ed. *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context*. New York: The Haworth Press, 2002.

Clendinen, Dudley and Adam Nagorney. *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

Córdova, Jeanne. *When We Were Outlaws*. Midway, FL: Spinsters Inc., 2011.

D'Emilio, John. *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Ekins, Richard and Dave King, eds. *Virginia Prince: Pioneer of Transgendering*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Medical Press, 2005.

Eskridge, William. *Gaylaw: Challenging the Apartheid of the Closet*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Faderman, Lillian and Stuart Timmons. *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006.

Faderman, Lillian. *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth Century America*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1991.

Gallo, Marcia. *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007.

Hurewitz, Daniel. *Bohemian Los Angeles and the Making of Modern Politics*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.

Kaiser, Charles. *The Gay Metropolis: The Landmark History of Gay Life in America*. New York, NY: Grove Press, 2007.

Katz, Jonathan. *Gay American History*. New York, NY: T.Y Crowell Co, 1976.

Kenny, Moira Rachel. *Mapping Gay L.A.: Intersection of Place and Politics*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001.

Kepner, Jim. *Rough News and Darling Views: Pioneer Gay Press Journalism in the 1950s*. Los Angeles, CA: Hawthorn Press, 1998.

Loftin, Craig M. *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012.

Mann, William. *Wisecracker: The Life and Times of William Haines, Hollywood's First Openly Gay Star*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1999.

Mann, William. *Behind the Screen: How Gays and Lesbians Shaped Hollywood, 1910-1969*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2002.

Miller, Neil. *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1995.

Meyer, Richard. *Art and Queer Culture*. New York, NY: Phaidon Press, 2013.

Meyer, Laura. "The Los Angeles Woman's Building and the Feminist Art Community, 1973-1991," in *The Sons and Daughters of Los: Culture and Community in L.A.*," edited by David E. James. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2003, 44-47.

Meyerowitz, Joanne. *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Saslow, James M. *Pictures and Passions: A History of Homosexuality in the Visual Arts*. New York, NY: Viking, 1999.

Scott, Damon and the Friends of 1800. *The Development of Sexual Identity Based Subcultures in San Francisco, 1933-1979, Historic Context Statement*. Courtesy of Gerald Takano, Daly City, California. July 5, 2007.

Sherry, Michael S. *Gay Artists in Modern American Culture: An Imagined Conspiracy*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. 2007.

Terry, Jennifer. *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Timmons, Stuart. *The Trouble with Harry Hay*. New York, NY: Alyson Books, 1990.

Wolverton, Terry. *Insurgent Muse: Life and Art at the Woman's Building*. Los Angeles, CA: City Lights Books, 2002.