

History Happens

News from the GLBT Historical Society Archives & Museum



May 2016

In This Issue

[From the Executive Director](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Visit Us](#)

DONATE

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Many Ways to
Get Involved

The Queerest Library

The Hormel Center in San Francisco: Celebrating 20 Years of LGBTQ Culture



Karen Sundheim with James Hormel

The [James C. Hormel LGBTQIA Center](#) at the San Francisco Public Library is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year as the first special collection and study center in a public library to focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and asexual communities. Located at the Main Library in Civic Center, the Hormel maintains a world-class collection of books, periodicals and archives. In addition, it regularly sponsors programs and exhibitions.

The Hormel Center and the GLBT Historical Society stand as sister institutions that help mark the Bay Area as an international center for queer scholarship and culture. Karen Sundheim, the public library's LGBTQIA program manager since 2007, responded to three questions from *History Happens* about the Hormel Center's accomplishments.

From the vantage point of the 20th anniversary, what has been the Hormel Center's greatest impact?

The Hormel Center was created as the first permanent center in a civic institution in the United States to document and preserve LGBTQIA history and culture. We're known worldwide, and visitors come year round from all over the United States and the world. We are especially proud that young students, many in middle school, come to tour the center and reveal that they know quite a bit about LGBTQIA history. They know what these letters stand for more clearly than many of the older adults!

What are some of the most memorable events that have happened at the Hormel Center?

LGBTQIA icons as well as emerging writers have spoken under the ceiling mural in the ceremonial room at the Hormel Center. Historian Lillian Faderman recently read from her new book *The Gay Revolution*. Robi Rapp and Ernst Ostertag, pioneering activists who worked on the Swiss homophile journal *Der Kreis* in the 1950s-1960s, were here a couple of years ago. In addition, regular curators have brought in hundreds of poets, writers and artists. The RADAR Reading Series founded by Michelle Tea has featured four writers each month since 2003, and Oakland poet Marvin K. White invited over a dozen poets from the Cave Canem writers center as well as other African American writers. Other programs have ranged from queer punk rock bands to Cuban authors to Lambda Literary Award finalists.

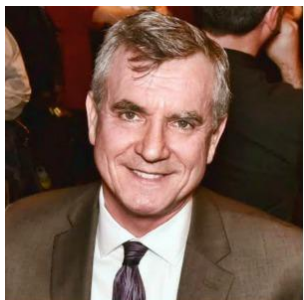
How have the Hormel Center and the GLBT Historical Society worked together?

The two institutions have a cooperative relationship -- and sometimes engage in friendly competition, too. Books are a cornerstone of the library, so our collecting in that area allows the Historical Society to focus on archives and artifacts. We also have significant archival collections of our own, so that's an area where our missions overlap. Back in 1996, the GLBT Historical Society even placed a few of its archival collection on long-term loan at the library. We've also been able to work together to keep important collections in San Francisco. For instance, the estate of Harvey Milk donated his papers to the Hormel Center and his belongings to the Historical Society. In addition, the society has cosponsored many programs here at the library. The Historical Society has members who are very serious about studying and collecting our history, and the library has been honored to provide a venue for some of their programs.

From the Executive Director

Giving Our Past Room for the Future: Grant Doubles Donations Through May 14

by Terry Beswick



For over five years, the [GLBT History Museum](#) in the Castro has been the most visible face of the GLBT Historical Society. Last year alone we had about 15,000 visitors to exhibitions, lectures and other programming.

But it's the archives that were the impetus for founding the Historical Society 31 years ago, and today they remain the core of what we do: collecting and preserving our history -- and making it accessible to researchers, our members and the public.

More than 200 authors have published books in a wide variety of fields based on research in our archives. These works have made a significant impact over the last 30 years. Each has shared amazing stories of the LGBTQ past in myriad ways to countless people

around the globe.

This month, we're very excited to be moving the archives to new accommodations at 989 Market St. in San Francisco's mid-Market neighborhood. Almost doubling our square footage, the space will allow us to welcome more researchers and greatly expand our collections.

So many people have helped us get to this point, especially over the last several weeks as we launched "[Queer History is on the Move](#)" -- our first online crowd-funding campaign. We're grateful to all of you.

We just received a \$5,000 challenge grant from the Excelerate Foundation, so we're extending the campaign for two weeks through May 14 to give more of you a chance to help us reach our

goal. The foundation will match all support for donors up to \$5,000. To donate, [click here](#).

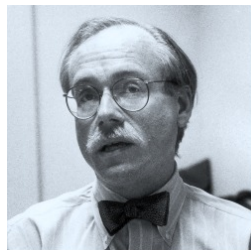
Next month, we'll be hosting special "hard hat" preview tours of the new space for all who donate to the moving campaign. I hope to see you there! Donors to the campaign also get a one-year membership in the Historical Society and other cool gifts.

We're working hard at the GLBT Historical Society to prepare for future growth, which I believe is vital to our mission. We're relying on continued support from the community to make this growth possible. Your help keeps LGBTQ history alive. If you're not currently a member, please consider [signing up today](#).

And a final word: Congratulations to the James C. Hormel LGBTQIA Center on 20 years of service. Here's to many more years of collaboration!

Terry Beswick is the executive director of the GLBT Historical Society.

Upcoming Events



Author Talk Dying Words: The AIDS Reporting of Jeff Schmalz

Tuesday, May 10
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco
Admission: \$5; free for members

Samuel G. Freedman and Kerry Donahue present their book and related radio documentary *Dying Words: The AIDS Reporting of Jeff Schmalz and How It Transformed the New York Times* (CUNY Journalism Press, 2015). The authors will describe how AIDS ousted

Jeff Schmalz, a rising star at *Times*, in 1990, and will discuss how Schmalz's subsequent work as a reporter deeply changed the newspaper, sensitizing it to the humanity of gay people. As Freedman and Donahue note, "The *Times* of today -- publishing same-sex wedding announcements, editorializing in favor of marriage equality -- is the fruition of changes that Jeff helped set into motion but never lived long enough to fully see." Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).



Panel Discussion Queering the Castro: Black Queer Artists in Conversation

Tuesday, May 17
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco
Admission: Free (donations welcome)

As part of their ongoing "Queering the Castro" series, *RADAR Productions* and the GLBT History Museum host a conversation facilitated by Beatrice Thomas with Bay Area artists about the intersections of blackness, queerness and creative practice. Participants will include Alicia Bell, a Southern-born black queer femme

whose performance focuses on building freedom and liberation, and Brooklyn-born Mustafah Greene, whose visual work connects the classic and the contemporary to synthesize art that he describes as "speaking truth to the times." Follow the Facebook conversation [here](#).



Discussion & Performance Dishing 'Daughters of a Riot': Comptons, Courts, Nuns & Punk

Thursday, May 19
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco
Admission: \$5; free for members

On May 27, noted drag queens Lol McFiercen, Honey Mahogany, Dulce De Leche and VivvyAnne ForeverMORE! will perform "Daughters of a Riot" at the *Brava Theatre*, where they will bring to life moments of queer history when gender transgression exploded into resistance. The museum program will offer a sneak-

peak at the oral histories and artistic processes involved in creating the show. In this kitchen conversation brought out in public, the queens will mix it up with three iconic queer activist and artists who sparked their inspiration, including "My Name Is" campaigner Sister Roma, two-spirit drag diva Landa Lakes, and queercore artist and punk entrepreneur Lynn Breedlove. Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).



Film Showing Movies From the Archives: White Night Fright

Friday, May 20
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco
Admission: \$5; free for members

Kicking off the new monthly "Mighty Reels" series of film and video from the GLBT Historical Society archives, "White Night Fright" brings together scarce archival finds to mark the 37th anniversary of the White Night Riot. The riot took place on May 21, 1979,

following the jury verdict finding Dan White, the killer of Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk, guilty of manslaughter instead of murder. Curated by media preservationist John Raines, the museum program will include untelevised footage of the riot, an amateur documentary, a satirical radio montage, and raw video from the tenth anniversary commemoration in 1989. Join the Facebook conversation [here](#).



Author Talk Girls Will Be Boys: Cross-Dressed Women, Lesbians & American Cinema

Tuesday, May 31
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco
Admission: \$5; free for members

Laura Horak, author of the recently published *Girls Will Be Boys: Cross-Dressed Women, Lesbians and American Cinema, 1908-1934* (Rutgers University Press, 2016), will discuss her work with Jenni Olson, filmmaker, author and LGBTQ cinema expert. The book excavates a rich history of gender-bending film roles,

enabling readers to appreciate the wide array of masculinities that actresses performed in the early decades of film -- from sentimental boyhood to rugged virility to gentlemanly refinement.

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Exhibitions & Programs

The GLBT History Museum
4127 18th St., San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 621-1107
www.glbthistorymuseum.org

Monday - Saturday: 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Sunday: Noon-5:00 p.m.

Archives & Reading Room

The GLBT Historical Society
(415) 777-5455
www.glbthistory.org/archives

NOTE: Closed in May and June for move to the new archives location.

CREDITS: Photo of Terry Beswick by Gareth Gooch. Photo of burning police car at White Night Riot by Marie Ueda; collection of the GLBT Historical Society (all rights reserved).

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