



# The Great Wall of Los Angeles

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1960s – Present

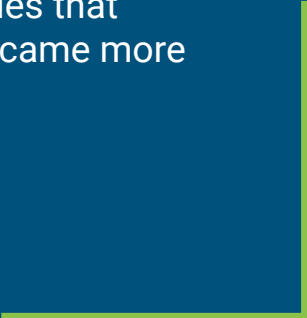




# LGBTQ RIGHTS

## AN OVERVIEW:

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.



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 20th 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:

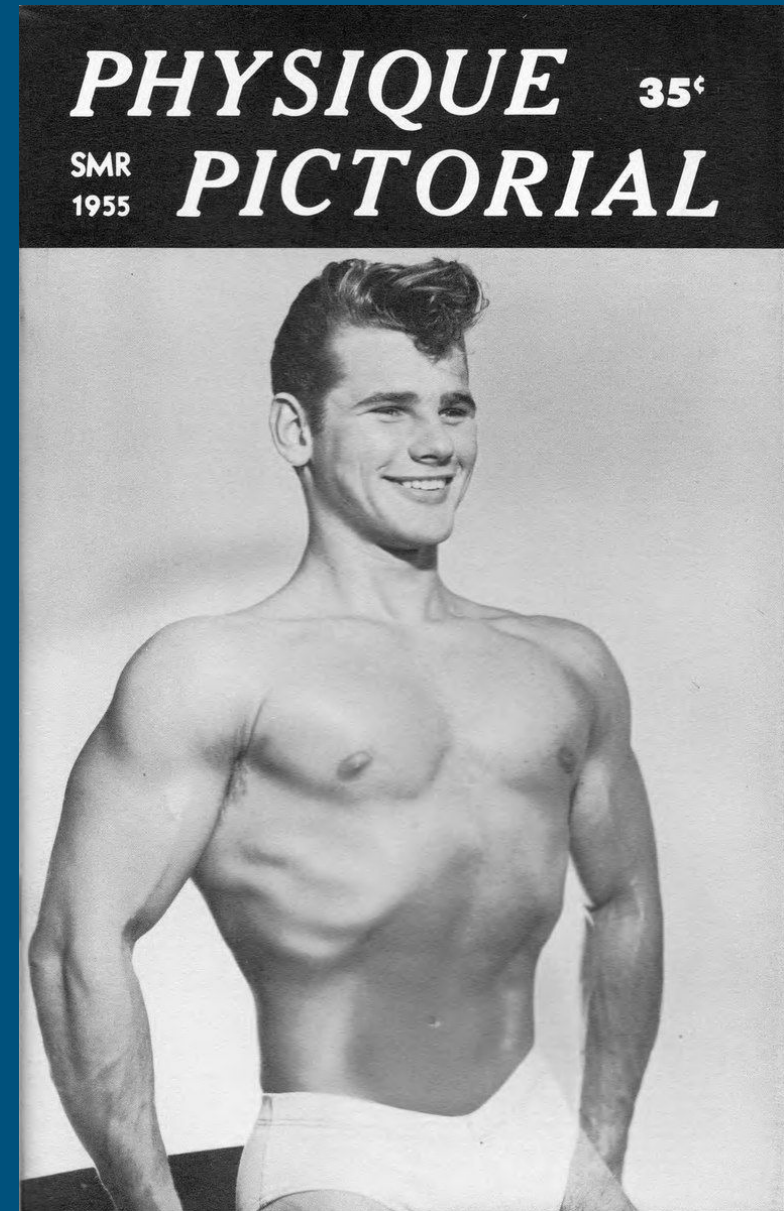
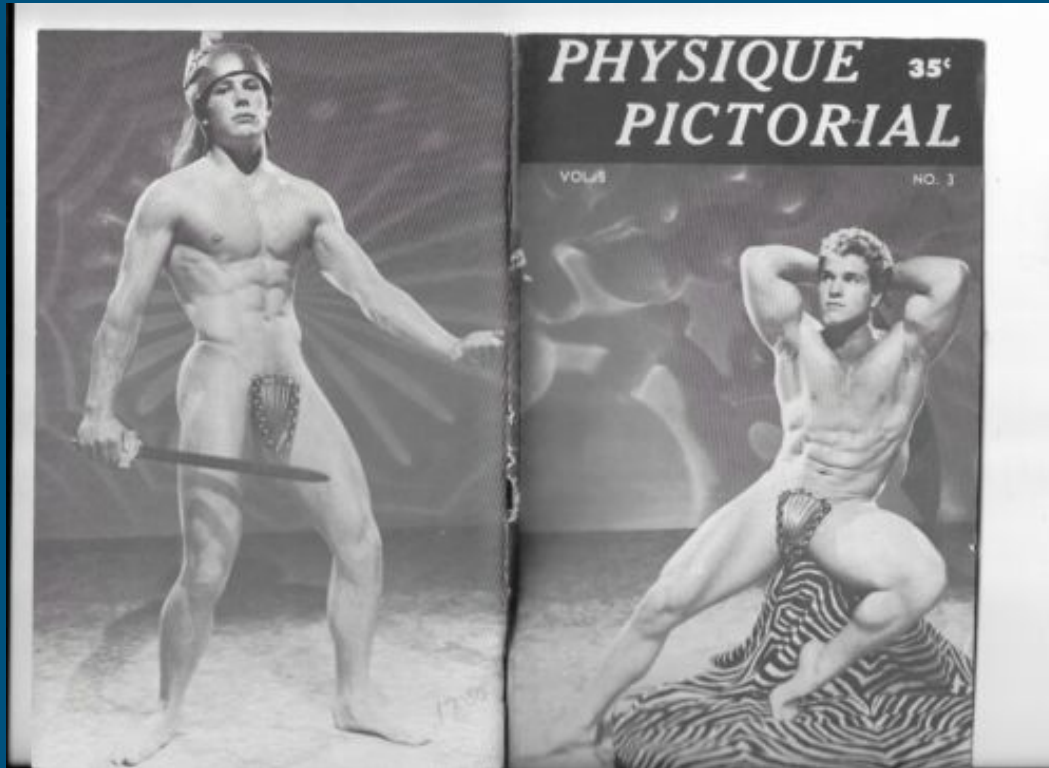
- are significant places of social interaction (e.g., city parks, bars, and nightclubs);
- are significant sites of political action and reaction (e.g., bars, cafes, and parade routes);
- are associated with LGBT persons or key LGBT supportive persons who were significant in the political, cultural,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



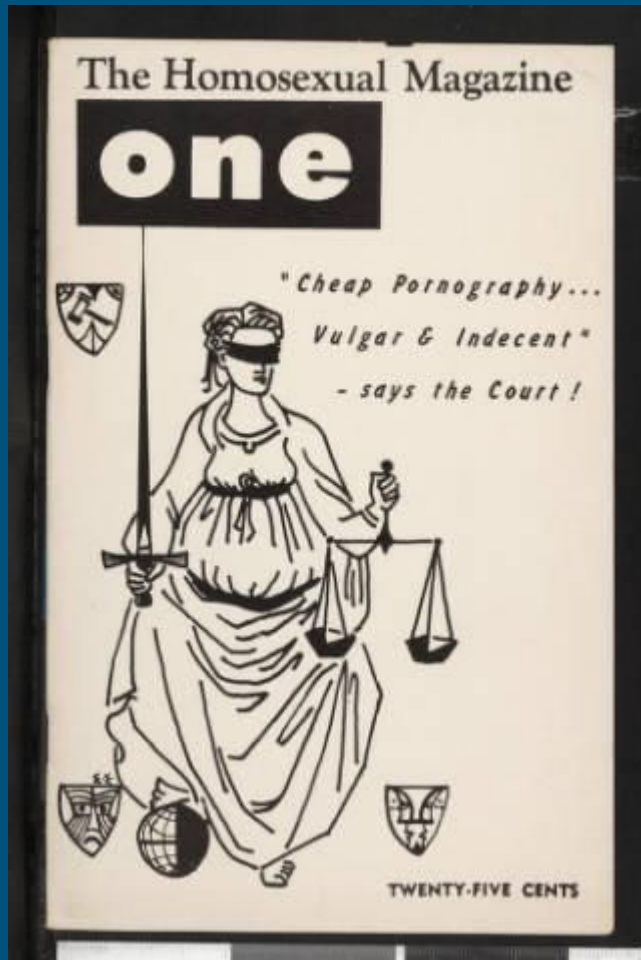
## 1959 Cooper Do-nuts

Predating the Stonewall Riots by ten years, Cooper Do-nuts was the site of a 1959 protest against the LAPD's harrassment of the gay and transgender clientele frequenting the shop. Due to Cooper&Do-nuts' proximity to several gay and lesbian establishments, a case of resisting arrest evolved into a full-scale riot that is remembered as the first open act of LGBTQ resistance toward police abuse in the United States.

**Physique Pictorial** is an American magazine, one of the leading beefcake magazines of the mid-20th century.<sup>[1][2]</sup> During its run from 1951 to 1990 as a quarterly publication, it exemplified the use of bodybuilding culture and classical art figure posing, as a cover for homoerotic male images, and to evade charges of obscenity.



- Mattachine Society (Co-founded by Harry Hay, Edith Eyde, W. Dorr Legg) fizzled out in 1950s
- 1952 - West Hollywood - an extension of Mattachine Society formed ONE- 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.



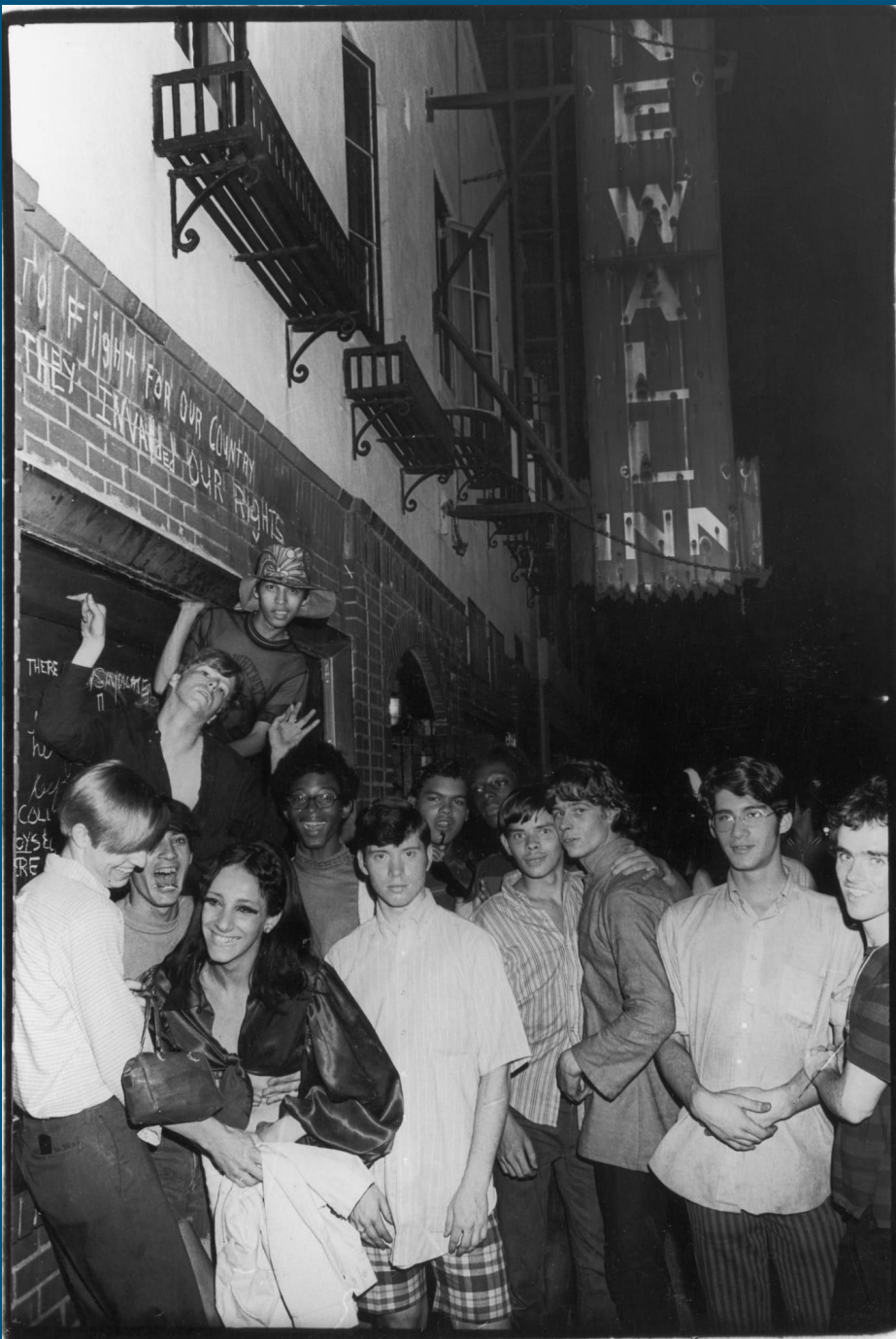
ONE Magazine was a nationally-distributed publication put out by ONE, Incorporated, a homophile organization based in Los Angeles. The magazine was published from **1952 to 1967**, surviving threats from the police and federal government to provide news, essays, fiction, and more to gay and lesbians across the United States.

**Physique Magazines** (under the pretense of being “exercise magazines”) preceded One Magazine.



[After the Stonewall Riots](#) - a message was painted on the outside of the boarded-up bar reading, "We homosexuals plead with our people to please help maintain peaceful and quiet conduct on the streets of the village." The sign was written by the Mattachine Society, an early organization dedicated to fighting for gay rights - Fred W. McDarrah/ Getty Images





### The LGBTQ Community

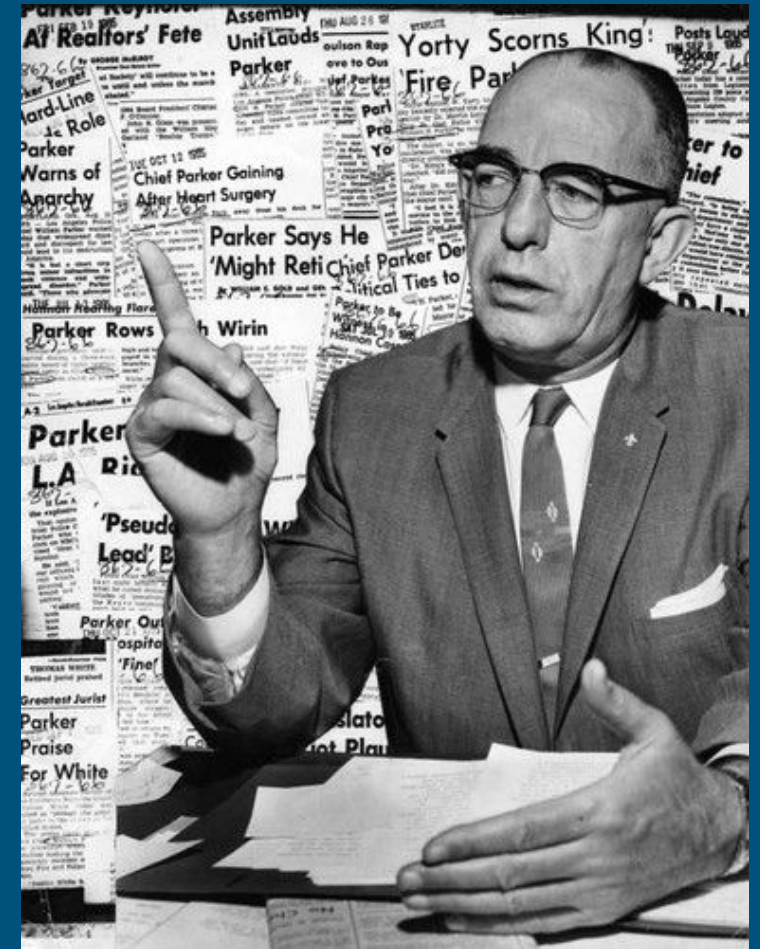
An unidentified group of young people celebrate outside the boarded-up Stonewall Inn after the riots. The bar opened the night after the riots, although it did not serve alcohol. More and more supporters gather outside the bar, chanted slogans like "gay power" and "we shall overcome".

- ***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.

*“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. “*

*– 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)*

- In Los Angeles - effort to ferret out homosexuals was led by **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 reinstated 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.



Chief Parker sits at a desk with his finger pointing upwards, behind him is a collage of newspaper articles.

## 1960s SHIFT From Educating the Mainstream to Building Gay Institutions

- 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

# The BLACK CAT TAVERN

- 1967 - 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. PRIDE led aggressive, in your face, demonstrations against the suppression by the LAPD of gay gatherings or same-sex meetings in Los Angeles.



The **1969 Stonewall Uprising** in New York has been widely regarded as the beginning of the Gay Civil Rights Movement, but the true heart of the movement, and what we know as "Gay Culture" was born in Los Angeles. "L.A.: A Queer History" sheds light on historical figures who are largely unacknowledged, creating a newfound dialogue about LGBTQ history but also a better understanding of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

**The Black Cat** in the Silver Lake neighborhood became the site of what was, at the time, the largest documented LGBTQ civil rights demonstration in the nation, leading many to recognize it as the birthplace of a worldwide movement. The demonstration took place on Feb. 11, 1967, in response to a New Year's Eve police raid at the popular gay bar weeks before. Hundreds gathered outside the bar in peaceful protest of police brutality and discriminatory laws and procedures.

# 1968 The Patch Bar Flower Power Protest



### 1968 THE PATCH BAR - Wilmington, CA



The Patch Bar was the site of the 1968 arrest of two gay men that inspired the LGBTQ bar patrons and the venue's owner, Lee Glaze, to stage a peaceful "flower power" protest in the Harbor Division Police Station. The unique sit-in was characterized by the act of protestors buying large bouquets of flowers and holding them while occupying the police lobby.

Glaze had been warned repeatedly by the LAPD that in order to legally stay in business, he was required to prohibit drag queens, prevent men from dancing together, and refuse to allow more than one person at a time to enter the bar bathrooms. At this time, homosexuality was effectively illegal in California, as was any form of dressing that did not match one's assigned gender in the eyes of the law. As a result, undercover police vice squads often targeted the gay and lesbian bars of Los Angeles, raiding the establishments and subjecting patrons to harrassment and arrest on exaggerated charges. Read more [HERE](#).

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. [[Source](#)]





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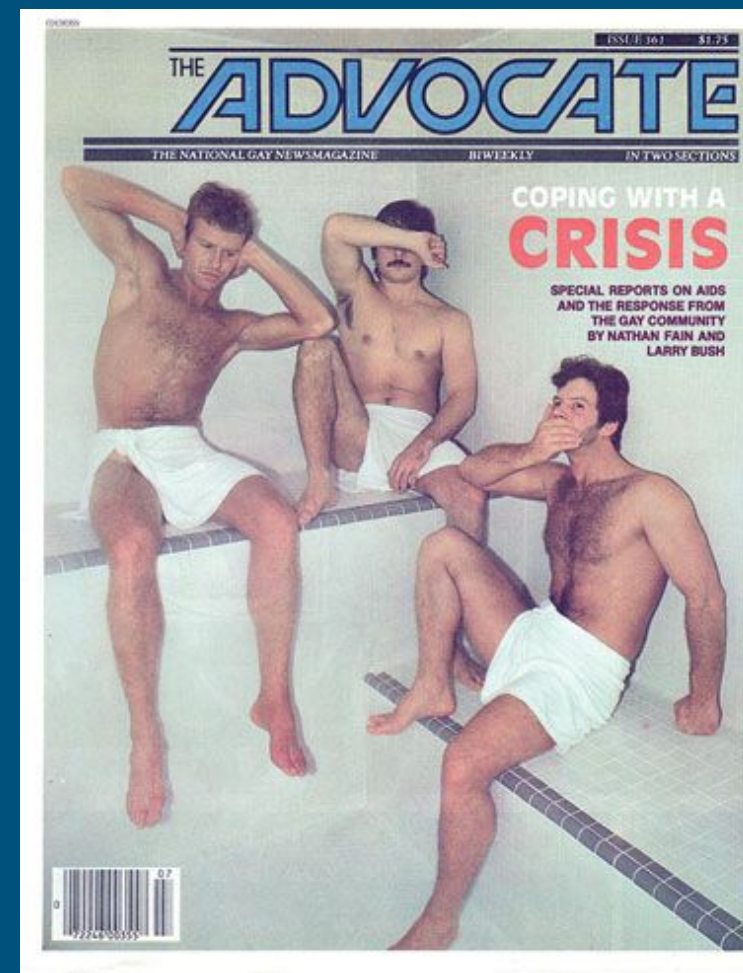
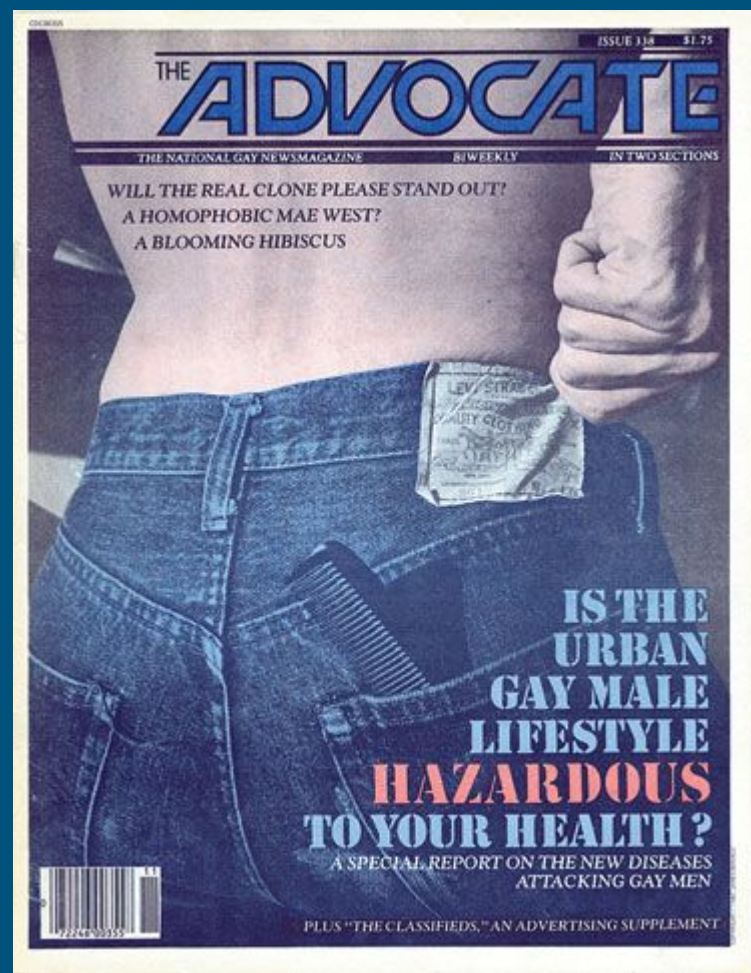
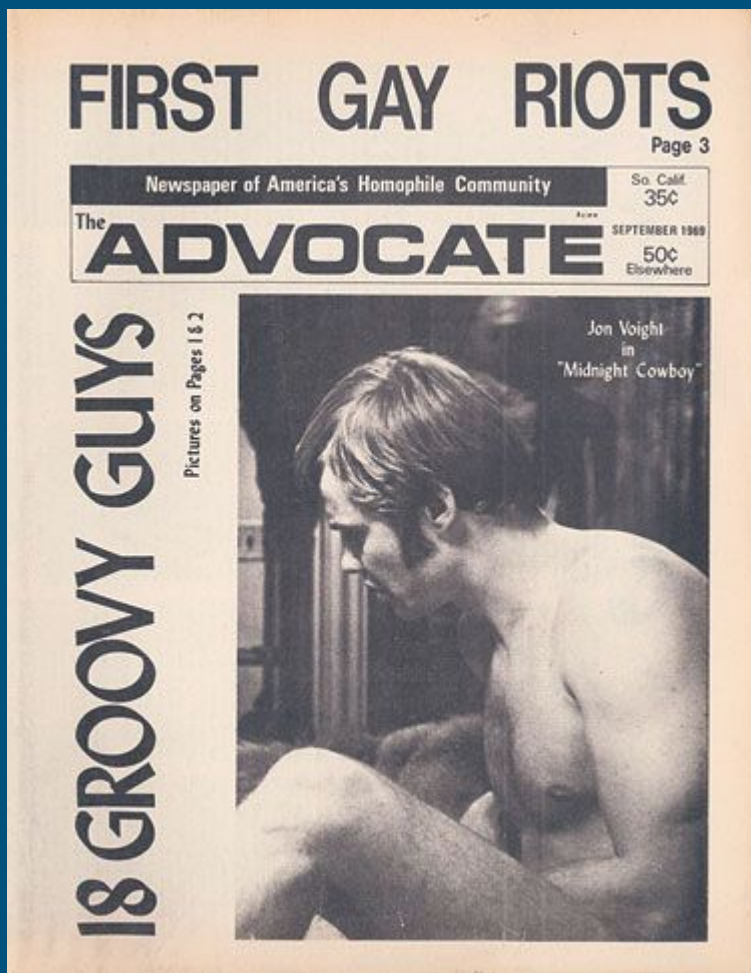


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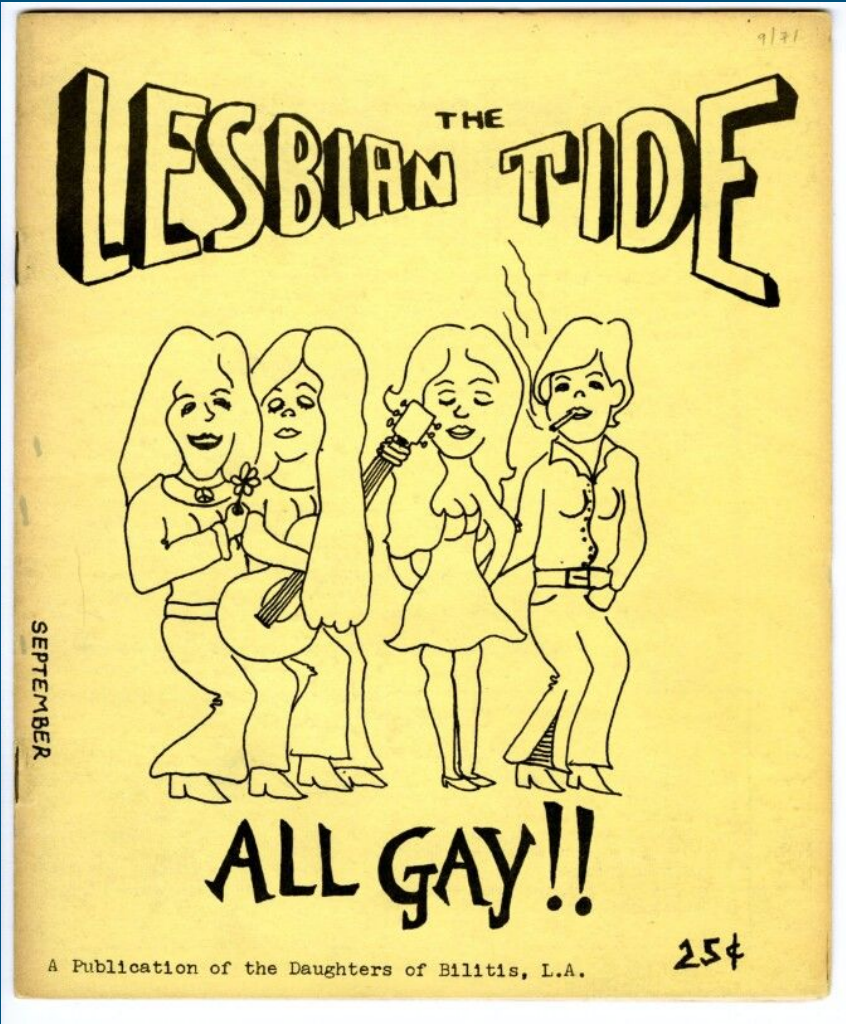
## The Advocate and The Lesbian Tide

- 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.
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- The development of LGBT media also greatly expanded social networking opportunities beyond what had been possible during preceding decades.
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- 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).



September 1969: The “Newspaper of America’s Homophile Community,” as *The Advocate* called itself then, relegated the Stonewall riots to page 3, while a still image from *Midnight Cowboy* featuring a naked Jon Voight took the cover.

Lesbian Tide, which started as the newsletter of the Los Angeles chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, was transformed by Jeanne Cordova into a feminists' lesbian women's magazine.



Cover of September 1971 issue of The Lesbian Tide, courtesy of the ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives at the USC Libraries.



## Community Service Centers

- In 1969, the **Gay Community Services Center (GCSC)** and the Los Angeles Chapter of the **Gay Liberation Front** were founded
- The GCSC later became the **Gay and Lesbian Center** - 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 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.



Gay activists, for several nights after the riots, took advantage of the moment to spread information and build the community that would fuel the growth of the gay rights movement. THE GAY LIBERATION FRONT was formed in the years after the riots. They are pictured marching in Times Square, 1969 - [Diana Davies/ The New York Public Library](#)





The Gay Liberation Front = Marsha P. Johnson is seen at the Gay Liberation Front demonstration at City Hall in NYC - [Diana Davies/ The New York Public Library](#)



Sylvia Rivera - A Latina- American drag queen who became one of the most radical gay and transgender activists of the 1960s/70s. As co-founder of the Gay Liberation Front, Rivera was known for participating in the Stonewall Riots and establishing the political organization STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries) - Kay Tobin/ The New York Public Library

# 1969 Sodomy Repeal Effort

- 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

# Formation of the Women's Health Center

- 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.
- 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."
- The Supreme Court decision in *Roe vs. Wade* legalizing abortion strengthened the women's movement.
- Feminist and lesbians across the county, 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.

# 1970s - Proposition 6

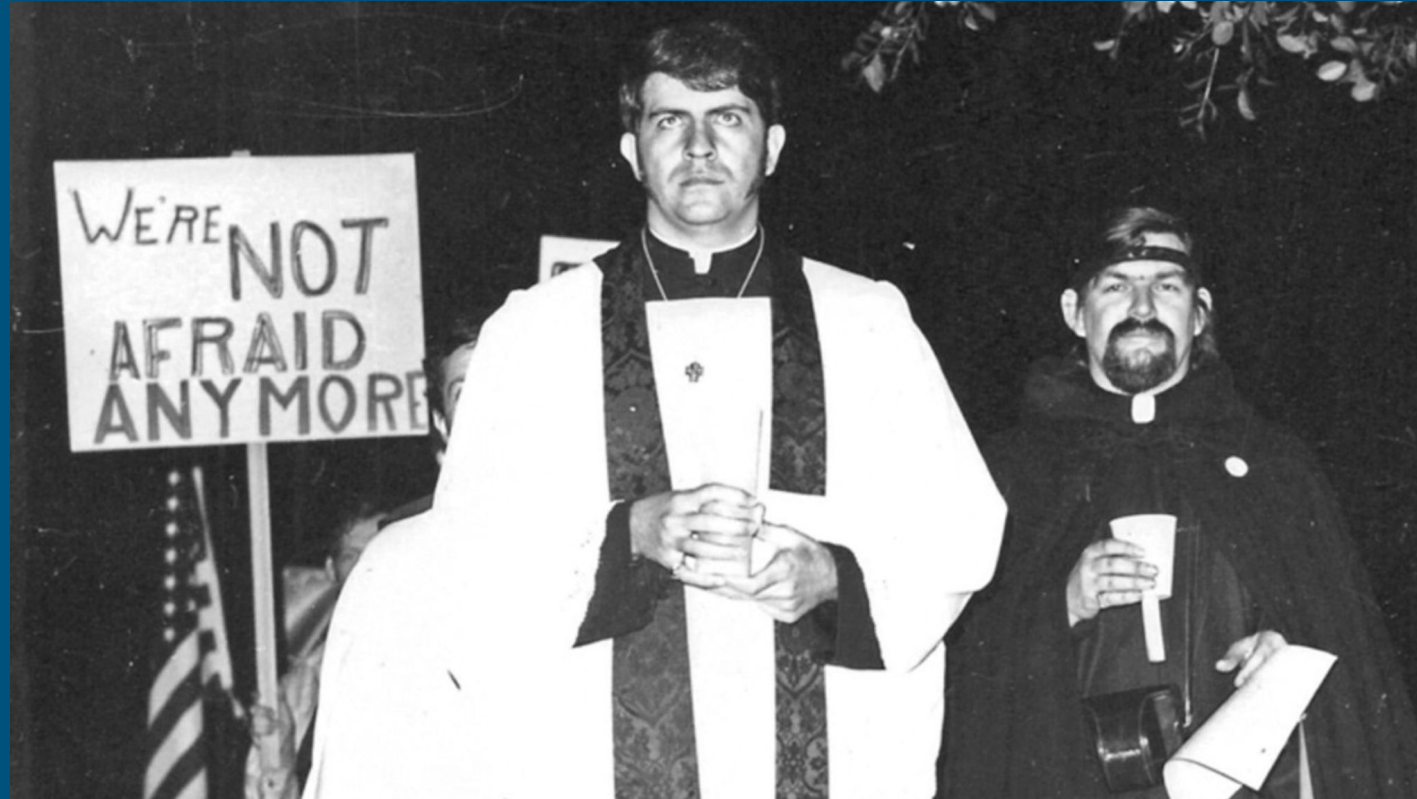
- 1970s - the new visibility of the LGBT community prompted significant homophobic backlash in the political arena – a defining example being Proposition 6 - the so-called Briggs Initiative of 1978, which sought to purge LGBT persons from teaching in the public schools.
- Ironically, as the LGBT community 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.



[Photograph](#) caption dated July 3, 1978 reads, "Members of Los Angeles gay community march down Hollywood Boulevard July 2, 1978 to protest a proposed ban on homosexual teachers." The Briggs Initiative, also known as, **California Proposition 6**, was on the California State ballot on November 7, 1978.

Named for its sponsor, John Briggs, the initiative was designed to ban gays and lesbians from working in California's public schools.

[Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection](#)



**1968** The Metropolitan Community Church is formally organized by Rev. Troy Perry <https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-troy-perry-metropolitan-community-church-founder-made-lgbtq-history-with-gods-help>. 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.

# From Protest to Policy: Women's Social Movement Activities in Los Angeles, 1960 - 1999

## UCLA Center For the Study of Women

- 1960 FDA Approves First Oral Contraceptive
- On May 11, 1960 the FDA approved the sale of the first oral contraceptive, Enovid, by the pharmaceutical company Searle.
- 1965 Creation of the Commission on the Status of Women - California Governor Jerry Brown authorized the establishment of AB9, which created the Commission on Status of Women.
- 1967 Abortion Laws Reformed in California - California Governor Ronald Reagan signed the Therapeutic Abortion Act after having been Governor for six months. While the act does provide doctors the consent to perform abortions it does not mandate them or hospitals to do so, i.e. their right to refuse is maintained.
- 1970 - "Abortion Referral Ad" Printed in the Los Angeles Times by the Los Angeles Women's Center - Los Angeles Women's Center, advertised its opening by printing "abortion referral ad" in the Los Angeles Times.
- 1970 Abortion Seminar at Crenshaw Women's Center - In November of 1970, Cherly Libbey held an abortion seminar at the Crenshaw Women's Center. The seminar covered the 'abortion situation' as it pertains to California and what actions can be taken from a feminist standpoint for improvement.



## LGBTQ HISTORY TIMELINE REFERENCE

**1956** James Baldwin, African American novelist and intellectual, publishes his first novel, *Giovanni's Room*, a critically acclaimed work that explores bisexuality, as well as intimate relationships between men.

**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 law from its criminal code.

**1963** The first gay rights demonstration in the USA takes place on September 19th at the Whitehall Induction Center in New York City, protesting against discrimination in the military.

**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."

**1966** Compton Cafeteria Riot broke out at a San Francisco eatery when trans women were denied service and arrested for breaking gendered clothing laws.

## LGBTQ HISTORY TIMELINE REFERENCE

**1967** - New Years Eve, LAPD swarmed Black Cat Tavern - beating and arresting 16 patrons and bartenders for exchanging same-sex kisses

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** Flower Power Protest in the Harbor Division Police Station, Wilmington, CA.

**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 13th District.