

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

CITY OF RIVERSIDE
LGBTQ+ HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT
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LOVE IS LOVE



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INTRODUCTION

This historic context statement was prepared at the request of the City of Riverside (City). In December 2022, the City contracted with Historic Resources Group (HRG) to prepare a LGBTQ+¹ Historic Context Statement. As a focused study, this document is limited in scope to LGBTQ+ history in Riverside and is intended to supplement other existing studies.² This project will serve as a foundation for historic preservation planning efforts regarding LGBTQ+ resources in Riverside going forward.

This historic context statement is divided into two sections. Section 1 provides a narrative overview of significant milestones of LGBTQ+ history in the United States and their association with people and events in Riverside. Section 2 outlines the established eligibility criteria for designation at the federal, state, and local levels and provides guidance for the evaluation of potential historic resources that are associated with LGBTQ+ history in Riverside.³ Because scholarship of LGBTQ+ history in Riverside and known potential resources date to the relatively recent past, the eligibility standards in Section 2 are structured so that they can be expanded and refined as research on this aspect of Riverside’s history continues.

This historic context statement is intended to be a living document that is updated as additional scholarship about LGBTQ+ history in Riverside is completed, and as time progresses and properties that have a recent association with LGBTQ+ history become eligible for historic designation. The project follows guidance and standards developed by the National Park Service and the California State Office of Historic Preservation for conducting historic resources studies; specifically, the project is being developed using the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) approach. Guiding documents include:

- The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Preservation Planning
- *National Register Bulletin No. 15: How to Apply the National Criteria for Evaluation*
- *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Nomination Form*
- *National Register Bulletin No. 16B: How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*
- *National Register Bulletin No. 24: Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*
- The California Office of Historic Preservation’s *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources*

¹ The acronym LGBTQ+ references “lesbian,” “gay,” “bisexual,” “transgender/transsexual” and “queer” or “questioning.” The plus sign (+) has also been added to capture all non-heteronormative identities not specified in the acronym.

² For more information on the general history of Riverside, see current studies maintained by the City. Historic surveys and studies are made available to the public via the City’s website at: <https://riversideca.gov/historic/surveys.asp>. The *Citywide Historic Modernism Context Statement* (2009) contains a comprehensive history of the city’s development. Other groups in Riverside have also received greater in-depth investigation through focused studies, including the history of the Latino, Chinese American, and Japanese American communities.

³ Following additional research, properties mentioned in the narrative will be identified as extant or not extant.

The historic context statement is intended to establish a baseline history of the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside and provide a framework for evaluating potential historical resources. The development of this historic context statement is part of a larger City effort to recognize LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. In addition to this historic context statement, the City and students and staff from the University of California, Riverside (UCR) are preparing a story map and conducting oral histories to document the people, places, and stories of the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside. The oral history project gives voice to the community members who made notable contributions to this history; their stories are also referenced in this document.

Contributors & Acknowledgements

This project was a collaborative effort between the City of Riverside, Historic Resources Group (HRG), and the University of California, Riverside (UCR). The project was completed under the direction of the City's Community & Economic Development Department Planning Division and managed by Scott K. Watson, Historic Preservation Officer. Additional assistance was provided by Katie Dunlap, Planning Technician.

The HRG project team consisted of Alexandra Perlman, Senior Architectural Historian and principal author; Christine Lazzaretto, Managing Principal; John LoCascio, Principal Architect; and Kristen Norton, Associate Historian. All are qualified professionals who meet or exceed the relevant Secretary of the Interior's Standards Professional Qualification Standards.

Dr. Catherine Gudis, Associate Professor at UCR, provided invaluable time and expertise throughout the project, and made significant contributions to the historic context statement. HRG is also grateful to the graduate students of the Public History/Preservation Practicum class at UCR who provided additional research during the early stages of the project: Stacy Flores, Rocio Gomez, Christella Maldonado, Sierra Mitchell, Josh Rawley, Xavier Resendez, Aarohi Raval, Lu Orona, and Jillian (Jill) Surdzial. Dr. Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial led the oral history component of the project.

The project team is indebted to Philip ("Cassie") Bailey, Chani Beeman, Talene Salmaszadeh Beuchu, Jane Carney, Caroline (Connie) Confer, Maggie Hawkins, Rev. Benita Ramsey, Toi Thibodeaux, and Nancy Jean Tubbs, among others, for their willingness to be interviewed for this project; their participation was instrumental to this study.

The project team is further grateful for members of the community who contributed valuable research information and suggestions related to the people and places associated with LGBTQ+ in Riverside. The project team would like to extend their sincere gratitude to Councilmembers Erin Edwards and Clarissa Cervantes for their support and leadership on this project.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology and Limitations

Research into the LGBTQ+ past in Riverside required a nontraditional approach to traditional archives and resources. For the history of the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside, there is limited secondary source material; therefore, this study relied heavily on primary sources where available. Moreover, because nonconforming gender and sexual identities were criminalized, medicalized, and persecuted, secrecy permeated many records until the mid-twentieth century. Prior to the LGBTQ+ rights movement, in general, few people publicly identified as “gay” or “lesbian,” and for the most part were not public about their sexuality. This means that documentation of their lives and activities in available archival materials is rare, and often difficult to identify. As such, research for this historic context statement was conducted in nonconventional sources, including court and police records, and through first-person accounts where possible. The following repositories were consulted for this study:

- University of California Riverside (UCR) Special Collections and University Archives
- Riverside Public Library
- Riverside National Archives
- Patton State Hospital Museum
- March Field Air Museum
- Museum of Riverside
- Riverside Superior Court Records
- Gale: Archives of Sexuality and Gender
- CSUN Bern and Bonnie Bullough Collection on Sex and Gender
- Mazer Lesbian Archive
- California State Archives
- Google Scholar: Case Law
- Historical Newspapers

Several LGBTQ+ historic context statements provided helpful guidance for researching and organizing this study, including the *Los Angeles Citywide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Historic Context Statement* (2014) by GPA Consulting, Carson Anderson, and Wes Joe; *Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco* (March 2016) by Donna J. Graves and Shayne E. Watson; *Historic Context Statement for LGBT History in New York City* (May 2018) by Jay Shockley with contributions by Amanda Davis, Andrew Dolkart, and Ken Lustbader; *Historic Context Statement for Washington’s LGBTQ Resources* (September 2019) by Rebecca Graham and Kisa Hooks; and *Maryland LGBTQ Historic Context Study* (September 30, 2020) by Susan Ferentinos and Benjamin Egerman, among others.

Terminology has dramatically evolved over the past several centuries and continues to change on a regular basis. In order to locate archival materials, the project team used those historical terms that would have been employed during the period studied and thereby provide the most accurate

results. Many historical records include terms that reflect the attitudes and biases of their time, some of which are today considered prejudicial, outmoded, and offensive.⁴

Additionally, certain historically underrepresented groups within the larger LGBTQ+ community (including African American, Native American, Latino, Asian American, Muslim, Jewish, bisexual, transgender, and queer, among others) remain inadequately documented in available sources about the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside and nationwide. We acknowledge and hope this historic context statement serves as a living document that will continue to be expanded as additional information and history is brought to light.

Period and Scope of Study

The study area for the project reflects the current boundaries of the City of Riverside. The scope of this historic context statement covers national, State, and local events and movements in order to provide a broad framework for understanding local LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. The period of study begins with a discussion of gender fluidity associated with the earliest inhabitants of the area, namely the Cahuilla, Luiseño/Juaneño, Serrano, and Tongva Native Americans, and ends in 2003.

The 2003 end date for this study was chosen for several reasons. In general, significant, documented events associated with the LGBTQ+ rights movement took place in major urban centers in the United States, such as New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago, and did not reach smaller cities and communities, such as Riverside, until much later; or there is little documentation of LGBTQ+ history in places outside of large urban centers from earlier periods. Therefore, there are relatively few known resources in Riverside that pre-date the 1970s and 1980s.

Important events in LGBTQ+ history of Riverside took place in 2003, which is now 20 years in the past. The identification and preservation of resources significant for their association with LGBTQ+ history is relatively rare, both in Riverside and nationwide, and as a result these resources are threatened.⁵ Therefore, it is appropriate to consider a broader period of study to allow for the identification of potential resources before they are lost. In this way, this document also provides the groundwork for future studies in Riverside and the identification of resources associated with the more recent past. The end date of study was also chosen to be consistent with other context statements related to LGBTQ+ history in California. For example, the San Diego LGBT Historic

⁴ For a list of common terms previously in use, as well as general guidance on researching sexuality and gender identity history see: "How To Look for Records of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual History," *National Archives United Kingdom*, accessed on January 19, 2023 at: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/gay-lesbian-history/>; "Gay and Lesbian Studies," *New York Public Library*, accessed on January 19, 2023 at: <https://www.nypl.org/collections/nypl-recommendations/guides/gay-lesbian-studies>

⁵ As stated by historian Susan Ferentinos, "...Knowledge of the LGBTQ past, and the preservation of resources related to it, is still relatively rare...LGBTQ historic sites hide in plain sight and are in danger of being lost before we can assess their significance." Susan Ferentinos, "Beyond the Bar: Types of Properties Related to LGBTQ History," *Change Over Time* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2018): 145.

Context statement covered history up to 25 years in the past, and the San Francisco LGBTQ Historic Context Statement includes events approximately 20 years in the past.

Guidelines for Evaluation

A property may be designated as historic by national, state, and local authorities. In order for a building to qualify for listing in the National Register, the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), or as a local landmark, it must meet one or more identified criteria of significance. The property must also retain sufficient integrity to continue to evoke the sense of place and time with which it is historically associated.

This historic context statement provides guidance for listing at the federal, state, and local levels, according to the established criteria and integrity thresholds. In general, a higher integrity threshold is needed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; properties that may not retain sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register may be eligible for the California Register or for local designation. In addition, properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years must be “exceptionally important” as outlined in National Register Criteria Consideration G. In general, evaluation criteria focus on four overarching concepts:

1. Properties associated with historic events.
2. Properties associated with significant people.
3. Properties that are significant for their design, architectural style, or association with a significant architect.
4. Properties that have potential archaeological significance.⁶

These concepts are included in the designation criteria for listing at the federal, state, and local levels. In general, properties associated with those aspects of LGBTQ+ history discussed in this study will be eligible for an association with an important event or person. Section 2 provides additional information about criteria for designation and the evaluation of potentially eligible properties.

Intersectionality

The concept of intersectionality attempts to address the diverse voices within a community, and the layers of nuanced history of specific communities. By their very nature, in thematic studies such as this one, cross-group connections and intersectional identities are often not adequately addressed. Associating resources or buildings with one group of people over another “...runs the risk of denying the layering of history and the shared streets of the present.”⁷ As described by historians Donna Graves and Gail Dubrow, “applying a single lens of gender, race or ethnicity, sexuality or any category of social analysis to the practice of historic preservation risks

⁶ Archaeological significance is outside of the scope of this project.

⁷ Donna Graves and Gail Dubrow, “Taking Intersectionality Seriously: Learning from LGBTQ Heritage Initiatives for Historic Preservation,” *Public Historian* 41, no. 2 (2019), 310.

misrepresenting the layered histories of place and forecloses possibilities for political mobilization across identity lines in the interest of fostering greater social cohesion.”⁸ As such, resources included in this document have a nuanced history that deserves in-depth exploration.

Notes on Terminology

The language used to discuss sexuality and gender is constantly evolving. Terminology used over the past few centuries can be highly fraught and prejudiced by today’s standards, while also reflecting the generally held beliefs that defined each historical era. Such terminology has been the subject of debate amongst scholars.

This historic context statement recognizes that there is a sensitivity in the application of certain terms for LGBTQ+ history and seeks to use appropriate and generally accepted terminology. Specifically, this document uses terms and phrases that would have been present at the time of an account, when possible. It does so not out of adoption of those terms inherently, but rather to better couch events and people within their appropriate historic context. In situations where no accurate terminology exists, umbrella terms are employed. This is to prevent the projection of any unknown factors, such as gender expression or sexuality, onto the past. For example, the term “lesbian,” which was not commonly used until the end of the twentieth century, will not be used to describe a person in the mid-nineteenth century.⁹ A brief discussion of certain terms present in this document is included below. Additional information on the theories and histories that informed this terminology is included in the Historical Background section.

For much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Americans were unfamiliar with the concept of sexual identity. As such, the term “same-sex sexuality” is typically used in this document to indicate those persons who engaged in sex with, or identified an attraction to, a person of the same sex. The term “homosocial” is used for clearly defined same-sex cultures that emerged in the nineteenth century and were often associated with “romantic friendships.” “Romantic friendships” were especially common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and denoted a particularly close and socially accepted same-sex relationship.¹⁰

In 1869, the term “homosexual” was coined, although it did not gain wide usage in the United States (along with the term “heterosexual”) until the mid-twentieth century.¹¹ For those persons expressing gender in a way considered outside of society’s social norms of the time, the terms “gender nonconforming” or “gender-crossing” are used. The terms “cross-dressing” and “cross-

⁸ Graves and Dubrow, 313.

⁹ As articulated by Lillian Faderman when describing female romances: “In the context of their day, the general absence of a name for their loves and lives is not surprising. I have found no articulated concepts of lesbianism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with which they would have been entirely comfortable.” Lillian Faderman, *To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America—A History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 4.

¹⁰ Dáša Frančková, “Romantic Friendship,” in *Understanding and Teaching U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History* ed. Leila J. Rupp and Susan K. Freeman (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 143; Michael Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011), 32.

¹¹ The term was first published in the United States in an 1892 article by Dr. James G. Kiernan. Bronski, 90.

dresser” are used in this context to refer to a large group of varied people with many different reasons for dressing in the garb of the other sex.

By the mid-twentieth century, the term “gay” was increasingly used as an umbrella term that encompassed both men and women. Following the gay liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the terms “gay,” “homosexual,” “lesbian,” “transgender” and “queer,” were more widely adopted. These terms are expressed in the acronym LGBTQ for “lesbian,” “gay,” “bisexual,” “transgender/transsexual” and “queer” or “questioning.” The acronym has also been elongated to LGBTQIA, adding “intersex” and “asexual,” “allied” or “aromantic.” The plus sign (+) has also been added to capture all non-heteronormative identities not specified in the acronym. This historic context statement adopts the term LGBTQ+ for greater inclusivity.

This historic context statement uses several umbrella terms. The term “heteronormative” is used when describing a society’s commonly held belief that heterosexuality is the normal or preferred sexual orientation. In this paradigm, social expectations around gender and sexuality align with American ideals of the heterosexual male or female. Similarly, the terms “nonconforming” and “nonconformity” are used to identify those expressions that deviated from socially held norms. Finally, for better inclusion, the term “queer” is employed when referring to a diversity of sexual orientations. The LGBTQ+ community has generally reclaimed the term “queer” to reference a broad range of identities and reflect the fluidity of gender and sexuality.

An individual’s pronouns are used when self-identified (she/her; he/him; they/them). Additionally, they/them pronouns are used in cases where an individual was non-heteronormative, expressed multiple genders, or no records exist as to their preferred or used pronouns.

SECTION 1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of gender identity and human sexuality in America is the subject of lively scholarly debate. Historians are actively tracing the political, medical, and social construction of identities and categories such as “gender” and “sexuality,” to better understand how they were established and popularized in American society and how they have changed over time.

This section provides a general history of the social perception of gender and sexuality in Riverside from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century. It is organized chronologically and explores the history of gender and sexuality and its relationship to LGBTQ+ history in Riverside, along with a discussion of significant local events, people, places, and potential historic resources.

NATIVE AMERICANS AND GENDER FLUIDITY

At the time of European contact there were an estimated 400 Native American tribes in North America, representing a diverse array of social organizations, family structures, languages, and subsistence strategies. Present-day Riverside is the ancestral home to several Native American groups, including the Cahuilla (Ivilyuqaletem); Luiseño/Juaneño (Payómkawichum; Acjachemen); Serrano (Maarrênga’yam; Yuhaviatam); and Tongva (Gabrielino; Gabrieleno; Kizh).¹² While tribal lands historically shifted, generally, the Luiseño were located to the northern portion of present-day Riverside; Serrano to the east; Cahuilla to the south; and Tongva to the west.¹³ A neighboring tribe in eastern Riverside County was the Mohave (Mojave).

Within the diversity of Native American groups, comparative studies show that one of the most widely shared features amongst tribes was the presence of alternative gender roles, including third or fourth genders, or a cultural, social, and religious space for blurred gender. The existence of gender diversity has been documented in over 150 tribes, at least 36 of which have ancestral lands located in California.¹⁴ British, French, and American explorers and colonists who encountered Native Americans that took on the dress and tribal duties of the other sex often referred to them as “berdache,” a name derived from the Arabic word for a young male prostitute.¹⁵ Another term used in colonial California was “*joya*,” possibly a Spanish translation of the Chumash term “coia” which referred to people who took on different gender expressions.¹⁶ Beginning in the 1980s, some

¹² This historic context statement acknowledges and respects that each Native American tribe has the right for self-identification and for that choice to be honored. Because the area that now comprises the City of Riverside is in the ancestral home of several distinct Native American tribes, this historic context statement adopts a single name when referring to each tribe. Other names that are associated with the group are included in the first mention of a tribe in parenthesis to foster greater inclusivity in the discussion of Riverside’s original inhabitants.

¹³ *Native Land Digital*, accessed on January 17, 2023 at: <https://native-land.ca/>

¹⁴ Will Roscoe, *Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 7.

¹⁵ Roscoe, 7.

¹⁶ The term has been identified as both of Native American origin (derived from the Chumash word “coia”) and as a Spanish translation of the Chumash term for male berdache “*’axi*,” Roscoe, 176.

Native American scholars have rejected these terms for their colonial origins and have instead employed the term “two-spirit.”¹⁷

Historians have found that alternative gender expression served different purposes for various tribes and could be both liberatory and punitive.¹⁸ In the greater Riverside area, both ethnographic interviews and historical records evidence the presence of persons with alternative gender identities amongst both the Luiseño and Tongva.¹⁹

SPANISH AND MEXICAN ERAS

From the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, Spanish explorers sailed along the west coast of North America on behalf of the Spanish empire. This territory included the present-day state of California, which encompassed the area known as Alta-California. Early explorers included Hernando de Alarcón in 1540 and Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542. Alarcón and Cabrillo were amongst the first Europeans to set foot on California soil.

The earliest recorded Spanish account of perceived nonconforming gender among Native Americans in this territory was likely by Hernando de Alarcón. Traveling along the coast of present-day Baja California in 1540, Alarcón recounted that “there were among these Indians three or four [sic] men in women’s apparel.”²⁰ He also documented the Yuma (Quechan) tribe, whose ancestral lands are located in eastern Riverside and Imperial Counties in California, as practicing a third gender role, in which the traits of men and women were combined.²¹

In 1769, the Spanish government dispatched an expedition led by Captain Gaspar de Portolá, the newly appointed governor of Baja California, and Franciscan Father Junípero Serra to establish the first Spanish settlement in Alta California. Portolá founded a military outpost at the Presidio of San Diego, thereby claiming Alta California as Spanish territory. The Franciscans subsequently

¹⁷ Scott Lauria Morgensen, *Spaces Between US: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonialization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Quo-Li Driskill, *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2011); Gregory D. Smithers, *Reclaiming Two-Spirits: Sexuality, Spiritual Renewal & Sovereignty in Native America* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2022).

¹⁸ Scholars debate the role of alternative gender expression amongst Native Americans. For additional information see: Charles Callender and Lee M. Kochems, “The North American Berdache,” *Current Anthropology* 24, no. 4 (August–October 1983); Roscoe, *Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America*; Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986); *Two Spirit People*, ed. Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Ramon Gutierrez “Warfare, Homosexuality, and Gender Status Among American Indian Men,” in *Long Before Stonewall*, ed. Thomas A. Foster (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2007); Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States*, 3.

¹⁹ The Cahuilla do not recognize the existence of two-spirits in their tribe. See: Will Roscoe, “Native Americans,” *GLBTQ*, (2015), accessed on January 17, 2023, at: http://www.glbqtarchive.com/ssh/native_americans_S.pdf

²⁰ Hernando de Alarcón, *The Relation of the Navigation and Discovery which Captaine Fernando Alarchon Made...* vol. 4 of *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation...* ed. Richard Hakluyt 12 vols. (Glasgow: J. MacLehose, New York, NY: Macmillan, 1903-1905) in Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians & Gay Men in the U.S.A* (New York, NY: Meridian, 1992), 285.

²¹ Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and Conquest: Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 92.

established 21 missions in California, including the Mission San Gabriel Arcángel (San Gabriel Mission), which was located approximately 45 miles west of present-day Riverside.

These efforts marked the beginning of a coordinated campaign by the Spanish missionaries and military to impose European religious beliefs and social and cultural ideals upon the existing indigenous population, leading to the widespread abuse of, and injury to, Native Americans through enslavement, forced religious conversion, and the introduction of infectious diseases. European religious and social dogma held that people who did not uphold Christianity's expectations for gender expression and sexual behavior were less than human.²²

Several Spanish expeditions traveled through the area that would become Riverside County on their way to the San Gabriel Mission. Juan Bautista de Anza's first and second expeditions traveled through the area in 1774 and 1776, respectively. Much of de Anza's first journey was recorded by Jesuit Father Pedro Font. Font wrote the following regarding the Yuma (Quechan):

Among the women I saw some men dressed like women, with whom they go about regularly, never joining the men. The commander called them *mamaricados*, because the Yumas call effeminate men *maricas*. I asked who these men were, and they replied that they were not men like the rest, and for this reason they went around covered this way. From this I inferred they must be hermaphrodites, but from what I learned later I understood that they were sodomites, dedicated to nefarious practices. From all the forgoing I conclude that in this matter of incontinence there will be much to do when the Holy Faith and the Christian religion are established among them.²³

The Luiseño/Juaneño at the Mission San Juan Capistrano also had third gender roles, as later recalled by Father Geronimo Boscana in 1846:

One of the many singularities that prevailed among these Indians was that of marrying males with males... Whilst yet in infancy they were selected, and instructed as they increased in years, in all the duties of the women—in their mode of dress—of walking, and dancing; so that in almost every particular, they resembled females. Being more robust than the women, they were better able to perform the arduous duties required of the wife, and for this reason, they were often selected by the chiefs and others, and on the day of the wedding a grand feast was given.²⁴

²² Bronski, 5.

²³ Pedro Font, *Font's Complete Diary of the Second Anza Expedition*, trans. and ed., Herbert Eugene Bolton, vol. 4 of *Anza's California Expeditions* (5 vols, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1931), 105.

²⁴ Geronimo Boscana, *Chinigchinich: A Historical Account of the Origin, Customs, and Traditions of the Indians at the Missionary Establishment of St. Juan Capistrano, Alta California Called the Acagchemem Nation* (Franciscan Publications, 1846), Digital Commons at CSUMB: 283-284.

Boscana noted that these individuals were called “*Cuit*” at the mission; “*Uluqui*” in the mountains; and “*Coias*” in other parts of the territory. Among the tribe, *Cuit* expressed male and female sexuality and inhabited a unique role in the tribe.²⁵

Tongva informant Felicitas Montaña also confirmed that third gender roles existed amongst the Tongva when interviewed by anthropologist John P. Harrington in the early twentieth century. According to Montaña, elaborate rituals marked the emergence of these individuals, and they often lived with men and accompanied women in female-related tasks, such as seed gathering.²⁶

The Franciscans violently punished those exhibiting third gender roles. In 1777, Junípero Serra found a Chumash man and a *Coia* (the term used for third gender) at the Mission San Antonio de Padua committing “the nefarious sin.” They were punished and were never again seen at the mission. Serra predicted that with the establishment of the missions “these detestable people will be eradicated and that this most abominable of vices will be exterminated.”²⁷ After several similar incidents, the Franciscans began to exclude persons with alternative genders from the missions.²⁸ They also made a concerted effort to wipe out “berdachism”²⁹ in California. By the 1820s, Boscana at the San Juan Capistrano reported that while berdachism was once very common among the Native Americans, “at the present time this horrible custom is entirely unknown among them.”³⁰ Despite this statement, third gender roles continued to exist in several Native American communities.

Following the secularization of the Mission system by Mexico in 1834, lands owned by the California missions were divided into land grants. In 1838, Juan Bandini was granted the Rancho Jurupa, an approximately 40,500-acre land grant that encompassed the area that is now downtown Riverside. Early settlements in the area included Agua Mansa and La Placita, collectively known as San Salvador. Settled by Spanish-speaking residents of Spanish, Mexican, and Native American descent, San Salvador boasted approximately 200 residents by 1855.³¹ In 1850, California became a U.S. State. This brought about a new period of migration and immigration, as people of various backgrounds settled in the newly American territory.

²⁵ James A. Sandos, *Converting California* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 26.

²⁶ John P. Harrington, “Culture Element Distributions: XIX Central California Coast,” *Anthropological Records* 7, no. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942): 32.

²⁷ C. Scott Williams, trans. Francisco Palou, “Life and Apostolic Labors of the Venerable Father Junipero Serra,” (Pasadena, CA: George Warton James, 1913): 215.

²⁸ Andrew Gilden, “Preserving the Seeds of Gender Fluidity: Tribal Courts and the Berdache Tradition,” *Michigan Journal of Gender & Law* 13, no. 2 (2007): 248.

²⁹ Berdachism was the term occasionally applied by the Spanish to persons occupying a third gender.

³⁰ Boscana, 284.

³¹ Debi Howell-Ardila, Rincon Consultants, Inc., *Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement*, prepared for the City of Riverside (2018), 21.

EARLY UNDERSTANDINGS: CHURCH, LAW, AND SCIENCE, 1850-1939

Prior to the nineteenth century, ecclesiastical authorities conceived of nonconforming sexuality as a sin, or essentially a theological-moral phenomenon. By the nineteenth century, legislative bodies increasingly declared it a crime, or a legal matter.³² Within the judicial system, the consequences of living an open or suspected queer life were punishable by threat of bodily harm, penal reform, and even death. In Riverside, early legal and medical understandings of perceived gender and sexual nonconformance are evident in legislation and court cases. Sodomy laws, morals charges, and vagrancy laws were used to enforce social and cultural “normative” behaviors.

The following section explores the history of sexuality and gender in American society in general, and Riverside specifically, from the admittance of California to the Union in 1850 to just before the country’s entrance into World War II. The lack of documentation of LGBTQ+ history during this period is the result of the discriminatory laws and social prejudices that forced LGBTQ+ people to live closeted lives.

Early Sodomy Laws and Medicalization

The American government’s policing of sexuality in California began with the state’s admission to the Union in 1850. American law heavily relied on Judeo-Christian religious doctrine, and the legal persecution of sodomy, or anal copulation, was no exception. The primary historical justification for penalizing sodomy derived from its perceived undermining of marriage and its denial of the procreative imperative of Roman Catholic natural law and Protestant (Puritan) fundamentalism.

In the late nineteenth century, religious and legal discourse held that sexual activity between people of the same sex was “unnatural,” or contrary to what “natural law” intended. From this argument came the language of “unnatural acts” and codification of the crime of sodomy as the “infamous crime against nature.”³³ This terminology dominated the laws adopted by new states and territories. Laws against “sodomy, buggary, and crimes against nature,”—often collectively referred to as “sodomy laws”— were adopted in states across the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, including California.³⁴

“CRIME AGAINST NATURE” (1850)

At the time of its admission to the Union in 1850, the Statutes of California Chapter 99 §48 included “crime against nature.” As recorded:

³² Katz, *Gay American History*, 130.

³³ Bronski, 25.

³⁴ William Eskridge, *GayLaw: Challenging the Apartheid of the Closet* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 158.

§ 48. The infamous crime against nature, either with man or beast, shall subject the offender to be punished by imprisonment in the State Prison for a term not less than five years, and which may extend to life.³⁵

By 1881, laws criminalizing sodomy were adopted in thirty-six of the thirty-nine states in the Union. Despite this prolific criminalization, the crime of sodomy was limited in its application. Sodomy laws criminalized “unnatural” intercourse between men and women and men and men but did not apply to women and women. Moreover, the crime was rarely applied to consenting same-sex American adults in a court of law; in 1881, a total of sixty-three prisoners were incarcerated for crimes against nature in the entire country. Two-thirds of those imprisoned under sodomy charges were people of color and foreign immigrants.³⁶ In many regards, Americans viewed the “crime against nature” as a “foreign infection threatening to native purity.”³⁷

Sodomy laws were significant for situating certain sexual expressions outside the normal protections of the law. As pointed out by legal theorist and historian William Eskridge, sodomy laws stigmatized certain conduct while also normalizing the conduct not prohibited. In this way, Eskridge argues, sodomy laws reflected at least three different normalizing regimes of the nineteenth century that sexual acts must be: consensual and mutual; procreative and occur within the constraints of marriage; and gendered or heterosexual. Through the enactment of sodomy laws, society increasingly categorized nonheteronormative sexuality as an illegal vice and a “social problem.”³⁸

In Riverside, one of the first recorded trials for the “crime against nature” occurred in 1893; in this case, the Grand Jury found that evidence against the two male defendants was “insufficient to warrant a conviction.”³⁹ In 1896, a trial for sodomy in neighboring Redlands resulted in the defendant sentenced to seven years in state prison.⁴⁰

THE “SCIENCE” OF SEXUALITY AND GENDER

The history of the medicalization of sexuality and gender has evolved over time. As identified by scholar Jonathan Ned Katz, in America there has been a historical change in the perception of “homosexuality from sin to crime to sickness.”⁴¹

Prior to the nineteenth century, same-sex sexuality and gender nonconformity were considered within the authoritative discourses of religion and law. This changed in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, with the growing credibility of medical practices in the United States. The establishment of specialized medical training and standards of practice, alongside several breakthroughs in the management of contagious diseases, gave credence to the newly disciplined medical order. Medical

³⁵ *Statutes of California 1850*, page 229, ch. 99, enacted April 16, 1850.

³⁶ Eskridge, *GayLaw*, 19, 158.

³⁷ William Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions: Sodomy Laws in America, 1861-2003* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2008), 23.

³⁸ Eskridge, *GayLaw*, 161.

³⁹ “Grand Jury Report,” *Riverside Enterprise*, January 26, 1893.

⁴⁰ “Harry Cottrell,” *Redlands Facts*, October 12, 1896 and October 24, 1896.

⁴¹ Jonathan Katz, *Gay American History* (New York, NY: Meridian, 1992), 130.

schools, which excluded women and most men of color, ensured greater conformity in theories and practices among the ruling-class white men that dominated the profession.

It is within this context that a uniquely medical approach to the subject of same-sex sexuality emerged in the medical field. Physicians and psychiatrists, positioning themselves as medical and scientific authorities, increasingly sought to identify and cure the cause of same-sex sexuality, and determine whether it was innate or acquired. The medicalization of sexuality was based on strict gender roles (man = masculine, woman = feminine). When the term “homosexual” was adopted in America, it referenced a medical construct and new way of identifying a person engaging in certain sexual acts as a *type* of person.⁴² Medical experts engaged in this debate increasingly inhabited a new discipline: sexology.⁴³

Early sexologist theorists debated the cause of “inversion,” a so-called sexual pathology in which a male or female revealed the physical or psychological characteristics of the opposite sex.⁴⁴ Sexology proponents argued that the gender of a person who desired their own sex was somehow reversed, or the result of physical, emotional, or psychological “inversion.” The metaphysical explanation for same-sex attraction was published widely and the idea of the “invert” or “third sex” came to influence the lasting stereotypes of the mannish lesbian and the effeminate homosexual male.⁴⁵ Sexologists Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, Richard von Krafft-Ebing, and Havelock Ellis all posed theories on the origin and reason for “inversion” or “homosexuality” from an inborn benign anomaly to a congenital defect in a person’s brain.

Into the twentieth century, growing evidence that same-sex sexuality was not based on sexual inversion spurred the development of psychogenic theories, proposed by psychoanalysts. Mostly led by pioneer psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, psychogenic theorists asserted that same-sex sexuality was not hereditary, nor a congenital defect manifesting in sexual inversion, but rather a “perversion” of the normal sex drive. These perversions were thought to occur because of stresses and strains of psychosexual development (from a combination of nature and nurture). Freud argued that same-sex sexuality was a symptom of “arrested development” in adolescence that prevented the young man or woman from moving on to “normal” attraction to members of the opposite sex. Despite the negative connotations of “arrested development,” Freud tried to remove the moral and legal criticism of homosexuality.⁴⁶

Few of Freud’s followers continued his attempt to destigmatize homosexuality. Instead, many psychoanalysts of his era argued that if homosexuality wasn’t congenital, then perhaps the childhood “damage” could be fixed, and the “arrested development” could be overcome.⁴⁷ Treatments or “cures” for nonheteronormative sexuality and gender were often aimed at

⁴² David D. Doyle, “Nineteenth-Century Male Love Stories and Sex Stories,” in Rupp and Freeman, 139.

⁴³ Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 41-42.

⁴⁴ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 47.

⁴⁵ Bronski, 95-96.

⁴⁶ Terry, 55-56; Neil Miller, *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the present* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1995), 23.

⁴⁷ Miller, 25; K. S. Morgan and R. M. Nerison, “Homosexuality and Psychopolitics: An Historical Overview,” *Psychotherapy* 30 (1993): 134.

asexualization or heterosexual reorientation. Among the treatments employed were surgical measures, including castration, hysterectomies, and vasectomies; drug therapies; hypnosis; shock treatments; aversion therapy; and other behavioral therapies.⁴⁸

MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS

Beginning in the early twentieth century, medical practitioners sought to analyze and diagnose persons who had perceived nonconforming sexuality and/or gender expressions. For patients committed in Riverside, medical institutions included the Griffith & Tucker Sanatorium and the Patton State Hospital.

The Griffith & Tucker Sanatorium was established in 1912 by doctors Thomas R. Griffith and George E. Tucker as a tuberculosis sanatorium. The institution occupied approximately 7 ½ acres near the present-day intersection of Linden Street and Watkins Drive at the base of the Box Springs mountains in Riverside (demolished). It was improved with ten three-room cottages and a six-room bungalow.⁴⁹ As recounted in the story of James A. Baker below, Griffith & Tucker worked with patients suffering from a variety of maladies in addition to those suffering from tuberculosis. They also advised the legal system on certain perceived medical cases, including those involving nonheteronormative sexuality and gender.

Located in San Bernardino, Patton State Hospital was the site of incarceration for several Riverside residents who “suffered from sex perversion” and is thereby inextricably linked to the City’s history. Patton State Hospital’s population grew from 1,372 in 1910 to 4,128 in 1950.⁵⁰

Progressive Era Legislation

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, state and local sodomy laws were expanded in response to new social anxieties of the era. The massive influx of residents into urban areas, expanded roles for women, and a shift in the racial balance, led to anxieties that moral, social, and class lines were changing. During the Progressive Era, which generally spanned from the 1880s to the 1920s, there was an increased effort to reform and control society in the United States. A strict heteronormative interpretation of legal rhetoric and enforcement permeated court cases in Riverside during this period.

Increased urbanization, an expanding middle class, and a growing number of women involved in the labor and reform movements brought issues of gender inequality to the forefront of political thought. Women challenged existing gender relations and distribution of power. The “New Woman” had entered American society and intellectual life. These women were mostly middle-class white women who were able to enter the workforce, earn higher educations, and avoid marriage and children.⁵¹ The “New Woman” was part of first-wave feminism; she demanded rights

⁴⁸ Katz, *Gay American History*, 129.

⁴⁹ The sanatorium was in operation until at least the 1930s. “To Begin on Sanatorium,” *Riverside Daily Press*, February 24, 1912; “Opening New Institution,” *Riverside Daily Press*, May 25, 1912; “Astronomers Meet Here This Evening,” *Riverside Daily Press*, July 11, 1932.

⁵⁰ Patton State Hospital is discussed in greater depth in the eugenic movement chapter; Stern, 118.

⁵¹ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 41.

and privileges that were customarily accorded only to white middle-class men, ushering in decades of debate on the social and sexual legitimacy of female personhood.⁵²

By the turn of the twentieth century, prostitution had helped popularize non-procreative sex, although many Americans saw the female prostitute as the antithesis of “True Womanhood” for engaging in nonprocreative sex outside of marriage.⁵³ The rise of prostitution also coincided with a rise of sexually transmitted diseases. Largely supported by middle-class urban society, reformers sought to limit deviation from an increasingly rigid view of appropriate gender roles and sexuality.⁵⁴ To this end, Americans formed hundreds of social purity and social hygiene groups that sought to change American attitudes toward sex by bringing attention to issues of “dangerous” sexuality, specifically prostitution and venereal disease, while also extolling desirable moral standards and family life. Groups included the Union for Concerted Moral Effort; National Union for Practical Progress; National Congress of Mothers; and American Purity Alliance, among others.⁵⁵

Throughout California, including in Riverside, vagrancy laws were used to monitor and harass people identified as “degenerate,” including those who engaged in same-sex sexual relations.⁵⁶ In 1886, the City of Riverside adopted Ordinance No. 61, “Relating to Vagrants and Vagrancy.” Ordinance No. 61 defined “vagrants” as including “every lewd and dissolute person who frequents or lives in or about houses of ill fame” and “every common prostitute found within the corporate limits of this city.”⁵⁷ The crime of vagrancy was punishable by a fine between one and one hundred dollars and imprisonment in city prison or county jail for between five days and three months. In 1903, California simplified and broadened its vagrancy law to anyone who was a “common prostitute” or an “idle, or lewd, or dissolute person.”⁵⁸ The crusade against vagrancy and prostitution continued into the twentieth century with several raids in Riverside in the 1910s.⁵⁹

In addition to prostitution and vagrancy, persons who fell outside socially acceptable ideals for gender and sexuality were increasingly stigmatized, and society constructed caricatures of “socially dangerous” persons. As noted by Eskridge, “The country was in the throes of a sex panic: the sexuality represented by the homosexual child molester, the black rapist, and the vampire lesbian” came to define discussions of nonconforming sexuality and gender.⁶⁰ These anxieties peaked when several mass arrests of gay men made national news. The arrests in Portland, Oregon (1912-1913); Long Beach, California (1914-1915); and San Francisco, California (1918) were sensationalized in newspaper articles across the country. The seeming increase in “social vagrancy” of these cases,

⁵² Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 41.

⁵³ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 44.

⁵⁴ John C. Burnham, “The Progressive Era Revolution in American Attitudes Toward Sex,” *The Journal of American History* 59, no. 4 (March 1973), 885-886; Eskridge, *GayLaw*, 20.

⁵⁵ Bronski, 87.

⁵⁶ There was one case of the “crime against nature” in Riverside in 1902. *Biennial Report of the Attorney General of the State of California (1900-1902)*: 80.

⁵⁷ “City of Riverside – Ordinance No. 61,” *Riverside Daily Press*, September 16, 1886.

⁵⁸ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 59; Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 2017).

⁵⁹ “Woman Arrested,” *Riverside Enterprise*, May 1, 1910; “Raid Late Last Night Discovers Conditions That Are Quite Un-Riversidelike,” *Riverside Enterprise*, August 2, 1913.

⁶⁰ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 40.

coupled with the rise of the Progressive Movement, influenced a revolution in American sodomy laws, in which many states redefined sodomy to include oral sex.⁶¹

CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE SECTION 288A (1915)

In 1915, California was the first state to designate “cunnilingus” and “fellatio” as felonies. California added Section 288a “relating to sex perversions” to the Penal Code. As recorded:

288a. The acts technically known as fellatio and cunnilingus are hereby declared felonies and any person convicted of the commission of either thereof shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for not more than fifteen years.⁶²

The expansion of sodomy laws to include oral sex had a profound impact on the criminalization of nonheteronormative sexuality. As argued by historian William Eskridge:

The reconfiguration of sodomy laws to include oral sex was an essential move in the expansion of arrests after 1880. Because oral sex was more widespread than anal sex and could be accomplished more quickly and in compact spaces, such as a public restroom, its criminalization was a necessary prelude to heightened police enforcement and the creation of sodomy stakeouts in big cities. Oral sex could also be perpetrated by women with other women, and for the first time in Anglo-American history lesbian relationships could be made illegal.⁶³

While sodomy laws penalized and criminalized certain acts at the state level, some local ordinances went even further to police citizens’ behavior. Riverside was one such city to adopt a local ordinance to stem the rise of “moral crimes.”

RIVERSIDE LOCAL ORDINANCE 286 (1918)

In 1918, the City of Riverside adopted Ordinance No. 286 as “an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of the public space, health and safety” of the community.⁶⁴ Described as a “Drastic Anti-Vice Ordinance,” Ordinance No. 286 sought to address “morality” issues in the city, specifically the existence of “disorderly houses,” or brothels. As recorded in the *Riverside Daily Press*, the ordinance was brought to vote with an “anti-kissing clause.” A delegation that urged the council to adopt the ordinance without change, especially as regarding the “kissless clause,” argued that military camps and unsanitary considerations made the clause necessary.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Eskridge, *GayLaw*, 158.

⁶² *Statutes and Amendments to the Codes of California 1915*, page 1022, chapter 586, enacted June 1, 1915.

⁶³ Eskridge, *GayLaw*, 159.

⁶⁴ “Drastic Anti-Vice Ordinance Adopted with But Slight Change,” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 23, 1918; “Legal Notices: Ordinance No. 286 (New Series),” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 24, 1924.

⁶⁵ “Drastic Anti-Vice Ordinance Adopted with But Slight Change,” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 23, 1918.

The City Council debated the issue, and although at first hesitant to include the word “kiss,” it ultimately decided to insert the word “promiscuous” before the word for clarity. The ordinance was officially adopted, reading:

Section 11— It shall be unlawful for persons to indulge in caressing, hugging, fondling, spooning, promiscuous kissing, etc. while in or upon or about or near any of the streets, walks, drives, parks or other public spaces in the city of Riverside.⁶⁶

The ordinance also addressed social concerns for the “moral wellbeing” of Riverside regarding disorderly houses. Sections 1 through 10 established rules and regulations for lodging houses and hotels in an attempt to end “prostitution, fornication or lewdness” and “lascivious co-habitation, adultery, fornication, or other immoral practice[s].”⁶⁷ Section 8 specified that it was unlawful for “any person to invite or entice or suggest to any person or persons” that they “follow him or her to any place for immoral purposes or where immoral acts are indulged in.”⁶⁸ The Ordinance charged the Chief of Police with enforcement and mandated that violation of its provisions be punishable by up to a \$500 fine and 180 days in City Jail.⁶⁹

Following passage of the ordinance, Riverside was heavily criticized by news outlets, including the *Los Angeles Times*:

The anti-kiss ordinance is described as a war measure, and surely it is. No wonder they say war is hell. If there is to be no kissing until after the war we don’t care how quick it is over with—we mean the war. Are our soldiers and sailors to go away unknissed?... It seems that it spoils our warriors and at the same time tears down that chaste barrier of modesty which is presumed to shield our maidens... Will the wave of regulation never subside?⁷⁰

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, men stationed at the nearby military base March Field felt the clause was aimed at them and the city was “subjected to unfortunate notoriety by reason of its adoption.”⁷¹ *The Riverside Enterprise* criticized the then-mayor for the ordinance, writing: “It would appear the better part of wisdom to talk about the practical problems of running a city instead of whether wives like to be kissed goodbye or whether it is proper to hug a sweet young thing on a bench in the park.”⁷² In 1919, a year after adoption, the “anti-kissing clause” of the ordinance was annulled by the City Council.⁷³

⁶⁶ “Legal Notices: Ordinance No. 286 (New Series),” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 24, 1924.

⁶⁷ “Legal Notices: Ordinance No. 286 (New Series),” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 24, 1924.

⁶⁸ “Legal Notices: Ordinance No. 286 (New Series),” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 24, 1924.

⁶⁹ Ordinance No. 138 appears to have reiterated these sections several months later in July of 1918; “Legal Notices: Ordinance No. 138,” *Riverside Daily Press*, July 10, 1918.

⁷⁰ “Kissless Town,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 20, 1918.

⁷¹ “Riverside Discards Kissing Ordinance,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1919, 19.

⁷² “Sight Seeing as Nymphs Dip at Riverside: Riverside Paper Roasts Pastor-Mayor Because of His ‘Sex’ Interviews,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, June 16, 1919.

⁷³ “Riverside Discards Kissing Ordinance,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1919, 19.

Gender Impersonation and Masquerading

In addition to sodomy laws, which targeted perceived nonconforming sexual practices, traditional gender roles were monitored in Riverside. During the Progressive Era, some Americans worried that the “soft” modern life had stripped men of masculinity, and increased rights had stripped women of femininity. Popular figures, including President Theodore Roosevelt, extolled “manly” pursuits in the face of society’s perceived decline in masculine vigor.⁷⁴ Society increasingly came to see those men who were not “masculine” as threatening the social order. As argued by historian David F. Greenberg, “The preservation of male domination in the face of women’s aspirations to equality depended on men possessing qualities that clearly differentiated them from women. It consequently became necessary to police men who lacked those qualities just as much as women who exhibited them. Continued male rule required that male effeminacy be repudiated.”⁷⁵

Specifically, gender was socially streamlined and constrained through the establishment of laws aimed at penalizing cross-dressing throughout California, including in Riverside. As historians have noted, there were many reasons that people dressed as the opposite sex, including to complete work associated with a gender; for a sense of security; for entertainment; to commit crimes; and for gender identity expressions.⁷⁶ In Riverside, the rationale for cross-dressing was varied. For example, in 1912, a man dressed as a woman for disguise while committing crimes.⁷⁷ Sumptuary laws were used to restrict gender expressions, and those who broke with these social norms were often publicly criticized. In 1891, an editor of the *Riverside Enterprise* wrote of the “manly woman of today” and her dress:

If women want to use canes, let them do so. We will not pass an ordinance against it, but it is to our mind and way of thinking, unbecoming their sex. Bye and bye, [*sic*] the dear girls will want to dress as men do nowadays. The divided skirt is a stupendous stride in this direction. Some of the queer maidens take pattern after their brother, and I saw not long since a young lady who had on a supposable vest, black necktie and a kid’s hat similar to the one worn by all representatives of perfect dudeism [*sic*].⁷⁸

Ordinances were passed to penalize persons concealing or misrepresenting their sex. Between 1863 and 1900, 34 cities passed anti-cross-dressing laws across 21 states. Eleven more states passed such laws between 1900 and 1914.⁷⁹ In 1903, California made it a misdemeanor to “personif[y] anyone other than himself” with the “intent of accomplishing any lewd or licentious purpose.”⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Ullman, 48.

⁷⁵ Greenberg, 388.

⁷⁶ Peter Boag, *Re-Dressing America’s Frontier Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross Dressing & Cultural Anxiety* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992).

⁷⁷ “Claims Thief is Man in Woman’s Clothes,” *Riverside Enterprise*, February 15, 1912.

⁷⁸ “Facts and Fancies: Of Women Who Do Not Know How to Dress,” *Riverside Enterprise*, February 7, 1891.

⁷⁹ Red Vaughn Tremmel, “Industrial Capitalism and Emergent Sexual Cultures,” in Rupp and Freeman, 160; Eskridge,

⁸⁰ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 59.

IMPERSONATION IN THE THEATER

One of the only arenas in which cross-dressing was socially acceptable was the theater. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, cross-dressing on the stage appeared with ubiquity in California, specifically in male-to-female impersonators in vaudeville.

In Riverside, vaudeville shows were held at the Loring Opera House, the Orpheum (also known as the Auditorium), and the Riverside Theater (now known as the Riverside Fox Performing Arts Center). Female impersonators performed in Riverside as early as 1912, and the popularity of these entertainers was described in several articles in the early 1900s. The *Riverside Enterprise* detailed that Mazie Martell, female impersonator, received such an enthusiastic reception at the Loring in March of 1912 that the theater's management opted to extend Martell's engagement.⁸¹

Several entertainers who performed in Riverside during this time incorporated female impersonation into their vaudeville acts including the vaudeville duo, Rags and Tags; Mazie Martell; and Julian Eltinge. Eltinge performed frequently in Riverside and was lauded as "one of the greatest stars of the legitimate stage."⁸²



Julian Eltinge in advertisement and on stage, 1919; 1913. *Riverside Daily Press* and *Riverside Enterprise*.

Many men who donned women's clothing came under scrutiny for their gender ambiguity and sexuality.⁸³ There was increased pressure for female impersonators to cultivate an unquestionably masculine and heterosexual identity offstage.⁸⁴ Julian Eltinge was pressured to exhibit highly

⁸¹ "Complete Change at the Loring," *Riverside Enterprise*, March 5, 1912.

⁸² "Julian Eltinge Comes July 24," *Riverside Daily Press*, November 14, 1914.

⁸³ Boag, 112.

⁸⁴ Ullman, 45.

masculine personas when not on the stage. Newspaper articles often included both his stage name and given name, William “Bill” Dalton. Newspapers of the time highlighted Eltinge’s traditional masculine interests when his performances were reviewed or advertised, stating he was a great sportsman and past middleweight boxer:

If you think that Mr. Eltinge is inclined to be ‘sissy,’ just dispel that notion. He isn’t. He’s a regular man, and off the stage does not reflect his ‘female’ ways in any manner.⁸⁵

The Loring Opera House (NW corner of 7th & Main, demolished) was the venue that Eltinge performed at most frequently. The Richardsonian Romanesque-style opera house was designed by notable Chicago-based architect James M. Wood and was constructed in January 1890 by Charles M. Loring, a wealthy businessman.⁸⁶



The Loring Opera House, c. 1910 (left) and 1978 (right). *Los Angeles Public Library; UCR Highlander.*

CROSS-GENDER ENTERTAINMENT IN SOCIAL CLUBS

Beyond celebrities of the stage and screen, displays of cross-gender entertainment included amateur performers and members of local social clubs, fraternal and sororal societies and lodges, and schools. Although there is no mention of professional male impersonators in local newspapers, there are examples of costumed affairs that involved male impersonation, such as the Patriotic League’s 1918 gala at the Riverside YWCA. It was rumored that female high school students in attendance planned to “masquerade as very masculine Sammies and Tommy Adkins.”⁸⁷ In 1924, a

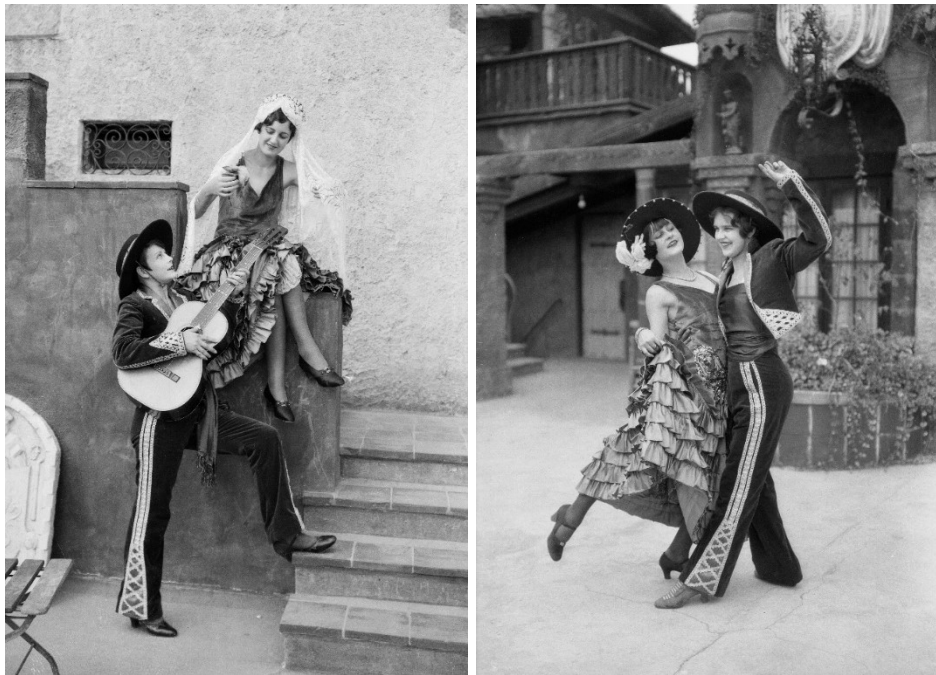
⁸⁵ “Julian Eltinge Tells Enterprise Reporter About His Female Clothes; Despite His Fluffy Ruffles, He’s No Sissy,” *Riverside Enterprise*, July 25, 1919.

⁸⁶ The opera house closed in 1973 and remained vacant for nearly two decades. A fire broke out in the century-old theater on October 11, 1990, and the following day city officials approved its demolition; Joan H. Hall, *Riverside’s Invisible Past*, reprinted in the *Mission Inn Museum Newsletter*, July/Sept 2018, https://missioninmuseum.org/files/8815/4048/8027/July-Sept._2018_digital.pdf (Accessed 13 January 2023); Terry Pristin, “Riverside to Raze Charred Classic Theater,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 13, 1990.

⁸⁷ “Patriotic League to Give Party for High School Girls Saturday,” *Riverside Enterprise*, January 15, 1918.

farewell surprise party was given as a “stag party” in which the girls dressed in boys’ costumes, including the “farmer boy, sailor, and cowboy.”⁸⁸

One noteworthy example of male impersonation occurred at the “Fiesta de Anza” pageant held in Riverside in 1925. The pageant’s main event was a “stirring scenario of 14 scenes” depicting the early days of California and Riverside. One of these “colorful” scenes was that of the dons: “the days which were filled with a little work and much play will be shown... Indian war dances gave way to the sinuous sway of the lovely señoritas. La Jota, tripped to the strumming of the Spanish guitar, displayed the dainty curves of ankles and brought the roguish smiles to the red lips which the vaqueros longed to kiss.”⁸⁹ As shown in photographs of the event, several women dressed in Spanish style male garb, and serenaded and danced with other women as part of the festival’s reenactments.



Photographs of actresses at the “Fiesta de Anza” in Riverside, 1925. *USC Digital Libraries, Dick Whittington Photograph Collection.*

Female impersonation also occurred in male social societies and groups. On several occasions, the Woodmen of the World, a fraternal benefit society with a branch in Riverside, staged celebrations which included member Meritt Barton as a female impersonator.⁹⁰ In 1937, the first annual “men’s night” of the Riverside Lodge No. 635 included a female impersonation with several “soprano”

⁸⁸ “Surprise Party,” *Riverside Daily Press*, May 3, 1924, 12.

⁸⁹ Florabel Muir, “Fiesta de Anza’ Historic Review,” *Riverside Daily Press*, September 28, 1925, 1-3.

⁹⁰ “Woodmen Welcome Home Service Men,” *Riverside Daily Press*, May 29, 1919; “Woodmen of World Party Successful,” *Riverside Daily Press*, January 29, 1920.

solos.⁹¹ The following year, the Riverside Firemen's annual benefit ball had George Stevens, automobile driver at the Central station, advertise their annual event:

George Stevens... attired as a henna-haired charmer, with chic hat, fur cape, high-heeled shoes and a modish gown, masqueraded as a representative of the advertising committee. "She" attracted much attention, riding around in a bright-red fire-department equipage yesterday.⁹²

Female and male impersonation was increasingly criticized during the Progressive Era, and by the 1930s its popularity had declined. By the early 1940s, many major cities in the United States, including neighboring Los Angeles, had banned female impersonation.⁹³

There are numerous other recorded cases of cross-dressing in Riverside. The cases of James A. Baker and Jane Bowers (John Bauer) in Riverside are local examples of the growing medicalization of nonconforming gender and sexual expressions during this period.

JAMES A. BAKER

One of the most widely publicized instances of gender/sexual nonconformity and societal pathological medicalization was the case of James Arthur Baker. Baker's story was reported in the western press between 1910 and 1913, following them to Oklahoma, Colorado, Oregon, and ultimately to Riverside, California.

Baker's story began in Harrah, Oklahoma, where they were outed as "masquerading as a woman" as a teacher at a local school. Baker left for Oklahoma City, where a man fell in love with them but, upon learning that Baker was a man, reported them to the police. Baker was released and traveled to Segundo, Colorado where they again taught at a local school as a woman. Several students suspected Baker was a man and they were again reported to the police. Baker was brought to court, with the prosecutor supplying evidence that Baker had also gone by Madeline Baker, Mabel Baker, and Irene Pardee. The judge ultimately dismissed the case, and Baker moved to Portland, Oregon.

In Portland, Baker, dressed in men's attire, asked the Woman's Peniel Mission for female attire, claiming they had traveled west in men's clothing for safety. Several people helped furnish Baker with women's clothing, and Baker began teaching at a local school. Shortly after the move, Baker fell sick and ended up in the hospital, where a physician discovered they were a man. Baker then fled to California where, after forging blank money orders from a post office in Summerfield, they were arrested.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Masonic Men's Night Notable," *Riverside Daily Press*, March 19, 1937.

⁹² "Female Impersonator Advertises Firemen's Ball for This Evening," *Riverside Daily Press*, February 12, 1938.

⁹³ Tremmel, 162; Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 38.

⁹⁴ Boag, 128.

It is at this time that Baker appeared in Riverside, where sections of their long and complex history were recorded in a June 1913 *Riverside Enterprise* article titled “Remarkable Story is Heard by Court; Ten Year Sentence Made.” This article recorded Baker’s plea to the Riverside judge regarding extenuating circumstances for their crime of forging money orders. Baker implored the judge to be lenient in sentencing, stating “I desire to present to your honor some facts which I think make my case one of extenuating circumstances, in the hope that after you hear it you will temper justice with mercy.”⁹⁵ Baker is recorded as giving the following testimony at their hearing:

...Spanked, marked, and cursed with a dual sexuality, I began a life destined to be marked with sorrow. As I grew older and realized my physical condition I was impressed with a feeling of indescribable horror. I learned why I was considered effeminate, why I was called by girl’s names, and later why I was insulted by degenerates. Oh, that I might be either a man or a woman! When I left home to teach school this peculiar condition brought sorrows thick and fast upon me. In many places, several of them in California, Colton being among them, I was accused of being a woman masquerading. I found no peace on earth, no rest anywhere...

I yielded to medical operations and consulted many physicians. All of them advised me to change my mode of dress. My sister would not believe me and became angry, telling me that I was insane. I rolled about the country in a crucible of agony.⁹⁶

Baker described the many medical treatments they sought across the West, including treatments in Riverside by doctors Griffith & Tucker of the Griffith & Tucker Sanatorium, who diagnosed Baker as suffering from a “loathsome disease caused by having a boil on [their] wrist.”⁹⁷ Baker also sought medical treatment in Banning and San Francisco. After hearing Baker’s plea, the judge noted that, while he was sorry for Baker’s “unfortunate condition,” he had no choice but to sentence Baker to the maximum term of ten years at San Quentin State Prison.⁹⁸

The case of James A. Baker is an example of a person adopting or “passing” with various gender expressions. Baker lived and worked as both a man and woman and presented their gender/sexual nonconformance as a defense in a case of law. In seeking empathy and mercy, they also presented past and anticipated future medical treatments to request leniency in sentencing. This example evidences the complexities of gender nonconformity in both medical and legal settings in the early twentieth century.

⁹⁵ “Remarkable Story is Heard by Court; Ten Year Sentence Made,” *Riverside Enterprise*, June 7, 1913, 1.

⁹⁶ “Remarkable Story,” *Riverside Enterprise*, June 7, 1913.

⁹⁷ “Remarkable Story,” *Riverside Enterprise*, June 7, 1913.

⁹⁸ “Remarkable Story,” *Riverside Enterprise*, June 7, 1913.

JANE BOWERS (JOHN BAUER)

Jane Bowers (John Bauer) is another known local example of a gender nonconforming person who was subjected to medical examinations and imprisonment. Bowers dressed as a man for several years while working on a ranch near Blythe, in eastern Riverside County. They were identified as a potential draft dodger during World War I and brought to San Bernardino County jail. It was determined at the jail that they “might be insane” and in 1919 was transferred to Patton State Hospital (asylum). At Patton, Bowers told a nurse that they were actually a woman; they were subsequently given several mental tests and “found to be insane.”⁹⁹

Over the next year, Bowers was noted to be “steadily improving, but her hatred of her sex has continued.”¹⁰⁰ In 1920, Bowers escaped from the asylum, and it was posited that “when captured she will be garbed in men’s clothes.”¹⁰¹ The story was recorded in *The Bulletin*:



Newspaper article recounting the escape of Jane Bowers, 1920. *The Bulletin*.

⁹⁹ "Dressed as Man," *Riverside Daily Press*, January 6, 1919; "Seek Woman Whose Sex Revealed by Draft," *The Bulletin*, March 9, 1920.

¹⁰⁰ "Mystery Woman Escapes from Asylum," *Riverside Enterprise*, March 4, 1920.

¹⁰¹ "Seek Woman Whose Sex was Revealed by Draft," *The Bulletin*, March 4, 1920.

There are other documented examples of law enforcement persecuting cross-dressing in Riverside in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1924, two girls in the Riverside area were arrested for traveling as man and wife; one of the girls was charged with “vagrancy” and “masquerading” in a boy’s suit.¹⁰² In 1932, an 18-year-old girl “dressed as a youth” was arrested on vagrancy charges and admitted to the women’s ward of the Riverside County jail.¹⁰³ A “young man dressed like a girl” was also arrested by Riverside police on a vagrancy charge. The man was a hitchhiker dressed “in blue jeans and a feminine style shirt” who “wore a woman’s head scarf, had on lipstick and was wearing ‘falsies.’” The man explained that he was hitchhiking to Los Angeles and “found it easier to catch a ride dressed as a girl.”¹⁰⁴

Gender and Sexual Nonconformance at the Sherman Institute

The first federal off-reservation boarding school in California opened in 1892 as the Perris Indian School. In 1903, the school relocated to Riverside and was re-named the Sherman Institute (9010 Magnolia Avenue).¹⁰⁵ The school sought to “Americanize” and assimilate students into “civilized” society. By forbidding students to visit their families, to speak their native languages, and to act on their traditions, these boarding schools sought cultural genocide. The Sherman Institute was a popular tourist destination for visitors to the nearby Mission Inn with the hotel’s owner, Frank Miller, organizing trips to the school for curious white patrons.¹⁰⁶



Domestic science class at Sherman Institute, 1915. *Los Angeles Public Library.*

¹⁰² “Officers Find Girl Dressed in Boy’s Suit,” *Colton Daily Courier*, August 11, 1924.

¹⁰³ “Girl is Booked,” *Riverside Daily Press*, February 29, 1932.

¹⁰⁴ “Woman Hitchhiker Really a Male, Police Discover,” *Riverside Daily Press*, November 21, 1957.

¹⁰⁵ The school was originally opened in 1892 as the Perris Indian School but later relocated to Riverside. The administration building is listed as City of Riverside Landmark No. 16.

¹⁰⁶ Christina Rice, “The Sherman Institute of Riverside, California: A History in Photos,” *LAPL Blog*, November 1, 2017, accessed on February 24, 2023 at: <https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/sherman-institute>; William Medina, “Sherman Institute: The Pride of Riverside,” *Journal of the Riverside Historical Society* 10 (February 2006): 19-29.

As argued by historian Katrina A. Paxton, students at the Sherman Institute faced an educational system that included gender assimilation. Two programs at the Sherman Institute – the Young Women’s Christian Association and the “outing system” (whereby students were sent to work in local white homes) — sought to instill Euro-American gender norms on students.¹⁰⁷

Native American boarding schools, including the Sherman Institute, also “sought to normalize the sexuality of” the Native American students “by strictly surveilling and rigidly controlling their bodies.”¹⁰⁸

Polingaysi Qoyawayma (also known as Elizabeth Q. White), a student, and later teacher, at the Sherman Institute is a notable case of gender nonconformity at the school. Polingaysi was a Hopi born in Oraibi, Arizona in 1892. At the age of 14, she traveled to Riverside, likely in an attempt to evade marriage. As recounted in her as-told-to autobiography *No Turning Back*, Polingaysi was ostracized from her family and community partially for her nonconforming views on gender.



Polingaysi Qoyawayma, c. 1914.
Leonore Friesen Klassen, Mennonite Church Library and Archive.

In *No Turning Back*, Polingaysi describes how “tradition-bound” Hopis gossiped that she “wanted to be a white man,” evidencing the importance of gender to both colonial and decolonial discourses.¹⁰⁹ Polingaysi subverted both Hopi and Western gender roles with such activities as sewing, which was typically Hopi men’s work, and public singing. Her strong vocal performances at the Sherman Institute defied cultural norms in both groups: the school extolled soft feminine voices while Hopi culture restricted membership of women’s singing groups to married women. Polingaysi had a strong aversion to marriage and motherhood, which were gendered imperatives in both Hopi and Euro-American cultures at the time. Although there is no evidence that Polingaysi was romantically attracted to women, she did mention that she “had never been seriously attracted to any young man.”¹¹⁰

In part owing to her variant gender expression, Polingaysi came to inhabit a third space between Hopi and Euro-American cultures, where she “cultivated a sovereign selfhood and survived the assimilation era” thereby constructing a “legacy of decolonial transformation.”¹¹¹ Polingaysi’s story serves as a notable example of a person challenging gender conventions to forge their own unique identity.

¹⁰⁷ Katrina A. Paxton, “Learning Gender: Female Students at the Sherman Institute, 1907-1925,” in *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, ed. Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 182.

¹⁰⁸ Alicia Marie Cox, *Autobiographical Indiscipline: Queering American Indian Life Narratives*, diss. (University of California Riverside, June 2014), 159.

¹⁰⁹ Qoyawayma and Carlson, 65; Cox, 57.

¹¹⁰ Cox, 68.

¹¹¹ Cox, 75.

There is also a firsthand example of homosexuality in Riverside during the early twentieth century, in Don Talayesva's account, *Sun Chief: The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian*. Talayesva, a student at Sherman Indian School, recorded his early experiences with sex education through the YMCA, in which he was given literature about masturbation. This "education" misguided Talayesva into believing the pseudoscientific belief that the act "ruined a boys health" and caused mental problems.

"Sexual Deviance" in the 1920s and 1930s

By the 1920s, sexual desire was no longer understood as a gendered characteristic that only men possessed, nor as a morally inappropriate trait in women. Increasingly, opposite-sex desire and sex became not only accepted, but imperative.¹¹² Sexual instinct during this period came to be seen as men's and women's erotic desire for each other, regardless of its procreative function. This decade, commonly hailed as a time of new sexual freedoms, introduced sexual issues such as the freedom of middle-class youth, discussions of birth control, and debates over the future of marriage.

As the century progressed, gender identity and sexuality became increasingly intertwined in American society. As Historian Sharon Ullman noted, "what you did in bed determined who you were. If a man did not engage in heterosexual practice, he was not really male at all."¹¹³ Medical interest regarding "normal" sexual intercourse, "normal" men, and "normal" women came to define the era, what historian Jonathan Ned Katz describes as the medical theorists "defining and defending their normal sexuality—heterosexuality."¹¹⁴ This established a medical and social stance on heterosexuality as normal and superior, and homosexuality as "deviating" from normality. Concepts of heterosexuality and homosexuality emerged as categories that defined a person's sexual and personal identity, and a new scientific regulatory grid of laws helped gauge this identity. It is within this context that the eugenic movement was launched.

THE EUGENIC MOVEMENT

Eugenics, a social-political theory that advocated the improvement of the human race by deterring the reproduction of people deemed to have "less-than-desirable" traits, was popular in the United States beginning in the early twentieth century. Eugenics was a social purity movement adopted and espoused by legal and medical institutions. One outcome of this thinking was the widespread use of sterilization.

The 1927 Supreme Court ruling in *Buck v. Bell* found that compulsory sterilization was constitutional "for the protection and health of the state."¹¹⁵ This created a scientific model of "fitness" that for generations to come affected the lives of persons nonconforming to society's gender and sexuality expectations. In several states, substantial numbers of persons targeted for sterilization were classified as "sexual deviants," or men caught having sex with other men. The

¹¹² Ullman, 19, 42-44.

¹¹³ Ullman, 45.

¹¹⁴ Katz, *Invention of Heterosexuality*, 43.

¹¹⁵ Bronski, 133.

use of sterilization in these cases shows how eugenic practices operated as methods of sexual regulation.¹¹⁶ California led the nation in sterilizing people deemed to be “sex perverts.” In 1941, the state established procedures for asexualization, or castration, of repeat sexual offenders who were considered “sexual degenerate[s] or pervert[s].”¹¹⁷

Historian Alexandra Minna Stern notes that “some scholars split hairs about whether sterilizations performed in institutions in California can be defined as eugenic. The answer to this question is an unequivocal yes.”¹¹⁸ She goes on to argue that California’s sterilizations were made possible by state laws that were firmly rooted in eugenic theories of hereditary improvement:

Eugenics encompassed more than strict hereditary control, extending into strategies of reproductive regulation such as institutional segregation... patriarchal containment of women who transgressed gender and sexual norms, and remedial vasectomies on men classified as homosexual who posed little threat of unrestrained procreation.¹¹⁹

A leading eugenicist in Southern California during this period was Dr. Paul Popenoe. Popenoe resided in Thermal, Riverside County for several years in the 1920s where he operated a date farm, prior to his work in eugenics.¹²⁰ In the mid-1920s, Popenoe began work at the American Social Hygiene association in New York. He then moved to Pasadena, where he specialized in California’s eugenic sterilization law.¹²¹ In 1930, Popenoe founded the American Institute of Family Relations in Los Angeles.

Popenoe was active in Riverside. He gave numerous speeches in Riverside in the 1920s and 1930s encouraging “eugenics, human betterment, social welfare, and sterilization as a remedy for prison conditions.”¹²² In a 1931 talk at a luncheon for the Riverside County Health and Welfare group, he urged “eugenic sterilization as a means of controlling births and bettering humanity” and ensuring “a stronger race of people and prevent[ing] race degeneration.”¹²³ He was active in Riverside into the 1950s and was a regular columnist for the *Riverside Enterprise*. Popenoe wrote hundreds of articles in the newspaper as a “Modern Marriage” columnist.¹²⁴ Popenoe was also a known homophobe. He later wrote that the “homosexual revolution” should “be regarded as an intolerable evil that should not exist in a sound Society.”¹²⁵

¹¹⁶ Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), 23.

¹¹⁷ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 94.

¹¹⁸ Stern, 114-115.

¹¹⁹ Stern, 114-115.

¹²⁰ “One Thousand Date Palms Soon to Arrive and Will Immediately be Planted in Valley,” *Riverside Enterprise*, May 31, 1912; “Popenoe Brothers, Pioneers in Dates, Avocados, Visit in City,” *Riverside Enterprise*, June 1, 1951.

¹²¹ “Conference Health Workers Here Friday,” *Riverside Daily Press*, February 7, 1929.

¹²² “Lions Hear Talk by Dr. Paul Popenoe,” *Riverside Daily Press*, November 20, 1929; “Dr. Paul Popenoe to Give Riverside Talk,” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 5, 1933.

¹²³ “Eugenic Sterilization for Human Beings Urged in Talk Here,” *Riverside Daily Press*, May 8, 1931.

¹²⁴ “Enterprise to Carry New Marriage Problem Column,” *Riverside Enterprise*, July 10, 1950.

¹²⁵ Stern, 221.

At Patton State Hospital in San Bernardino, homosexuality was a reason for committal, and sterilizations were commonly performed as “treatments.”¹²⁶ Between 1937 and 1948, the hospital performed the second highest number of sterilizations among state hospitals. In 1942, Dr. G. Max Webster, superintendent of Patton State Hospital, claimed that many patients benefited from the state’s sterilization program, as they could never be cured of their defects. Webster claimed that patients “are born that way and will never be any different.”¹²⁷ In 1949, Patton State Hospital released a statement regarding some patients: “we never release sexual cases until we have given them at least one year’s treatment and then only indirectly through the judge that committed each case.”¹²⁸ According to hospital records, a disproportionate number of patients with Spanish surnames were sterilized in the state at the time.¹²⁹

PEOPLE V. JORDAN (1937)

Riverside’s first major legal persecution of same-sex sexuality occurred in 1937. *People v. Jordan* (1937) was a rare mass arrest of adult men who were suspected of engaging in private, consensual sex in Riverside. In 1937, Riverside was the site of an undercover stakeout operation that resulted in the conviction of 16 men for “morals charges.” Three men and one juvenile pleaded guilty while 13 men pleaded not guilty and were brought to trial.¹³⁰ The resulting court case of *People v. Jordan* (1937), tried at the Riverside County Superior Court (4050 Main Street), was highly publicized.



Court cases significant in LGBTQ+ history, including *People v. Jordan*, were heard at the superior court in in Riverside. Riverside County Courthouse, 1910.
University of Southern California Libraries and California Historical Society.

¹²⁶ “Youth Faces Gas Chamber,” *San Bernardino County Sun*, June 12, 1956, 3; “Girl Accused of Assaulting School Matron Gets Probation,” *Ventura County Star*, Mar5ch 25, 1969, 18.

¹²⁷ “Extension of Sterilization Law Urged,” *Petaluma Argus-Courier*, November 16, 1942, 6.

¹²⁸ “Offenders Held,” *San Bernardino County Sun*, December 9, 1949, 13.

¹²⁹ Natalie Lira, “Of Low Grade Mexican Parentage: Race, Gender and Eugenic Sterilization in California, 1928-1952,” diss, (University of Michigan, 2015), 21.

¹³⁰ “Two Get Terms at San Quentin,” *Riverside Daily Press*. March 23, 1937.

Of the 13 defendants, three were from Riverside, one was from Colton, and nine served at March Field.¹³¹ In *People v. Jordan*, these 13 men were convicted of “crimes against nature” and “sex perversion” (Penal Code Sections 286 and 288a, respectively). Court filings and newspaper articles documenting the event reflect the prejudiced attitudes and biases of the time. Terms such as “obscene,” “improper,” and “suggestive,” permeate documentation of the case.

As recorded in court filings, the sting operation began on March 4, 1937, when a service station operator notified the Riverside Sheriff’s office that several cars were regularly visiting an isolated cabin in the Box Springs area of Riverside.¹³²

On March 6, the officers hid in a ravine near the cabin and observed a party. Presiding Judge Justice Charles Barnard later summarized testimonies regarding the event:

There followed what is referred to in the record as a party. There was some drinking and some dancing, and two of the men were dressed in women’s clothes. At various times during the evening the officers observed certain of the persons present entering the various bedrooms, at times the light in a bedroom was turned out, at times the lights in the entire house were turned out, and at such times there was considerable screaming “like women screaming.” Early in the evening two of the men came outside of the cabin and embraced each other and the officers heard one of them say to the other that this was a marvelous place, that “no one would ever think of coming up here,” and that everything was perfect safe. During the evening several of the men came outside and peeked in at various knot holes. On one occasion another man came out and told them to stop this as they would not like others peeking at them under similar circumstances. The officers heard someone make an announcement that one of the defendants would give a hula hula dance and a little later the announcement was made that another person “will now give a demonstration” of how section 288a should be violated, [this] announcement was followed by general laughter and applause. Later on an announcement was made that all present were invited to return on the night of the 13th and that a party would then be put on which would make the present one seem like a “teaser.”¹³³

The above testimony demonstrates that the group of men utilized the cabin as a site of resistance, meeting and fraternizing in a place they perceived as a safe and private venue. They persevered to create a space where they felt comfortable to express themselves fully. On March 13, the officers returned to the cabin and hid in the cupola and in the nearby ravine and forest. Justice Charles Barnard later summarized testimonies on that night’s party:

¹³¹ “Twelve Men Get Terms in Prison,” *Riverside Daily Press*, May 19, 1937; “Hold Fourteen Persons on Delinquency Charges,” *Riverside Daily Press*, March 15, 1937.

¹³² Research has not uncovered the location of this cabin and whether it is still extant.

¹³³ *People v. Jordan*, 24 Cal, App. 2nd 39 (December 13, 1937), 44-45.

Shortly after the party started an obscene picture was tacked on the wall and obscene remarks were made concerning it. Liquor was served and there is ample evidence of these men kissing and caressing each other, of various ones dancing together in what may be summarized as a highly improper manner, and of other acts which need not be referred to which are highly suggestive as to the nature of the party. About 1 o'clock a.m. the officers appeared openly and arrested all the participants except Bill Doe who had previously left.¹³⁴

At the start of the trial, Joseph Seymour, defense attorney for the 13 defendants, argued demurrer¹³⁵ against the grand jury indictment. The demurrer was denied, and the thirteen men entered pleas of not guilty.¹³⁶ In the trial of *People v. Jordan*, which was heard in Riverside, a jury charged all 13 of the defendants with conspiracy to violate sections 288a and 286 of the Penal Code and with actual violation of section 288a and 286.¹³⁷

Ten of the defendants appealed the charges; however, the judge found that the “congregating of these men” in an isolated cabin and the “lewd and lascivious acts” which followed immediately after their arrival there, indicated a previously conceived scheme or plan and was evidence of conspiracy to violate section 288a (“sex perversion”).¹³⁸ Ultimately, four of the counts were reversed while 11 other counts were upheld.¹³⁹

The twelve defendants who pleaded not guilty were sentenced to serve time at San Quentin State Prison.¹⁴⁰ The three men who pleaded guilty were sentenced to work in the Riverside County industrial road camp (Camp Keen near Mount San Jacinto) or to county jail, while the minor was transferred to juvenile court.¹⁴¹ One man who originally entered a plea of not guilty reversed his plea to guilty and was given probation.¹⁴²

The case of *People v. Jordan* is significant in illustrating the deep prejudices and biases that permeated the country at the time of the trial. As a result of sodomy and vagrancy laws, 12 men were persecuted for the mere suspicion of engaging in private, consensual, adult sex.

¹³⁴ *People v. Jordan* (1937), 45-46.

¹³⁵ A demurrer is a formal pleading in a lawsuit that objects to or challenges a pleading filed by the opposing party. The word demur means “to object.”

¹³⁶ “Demurrer Argued Today in Grand Jury Indictment,” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 1, 1937.

¹³⁷ “Trail for Defendants in Morals Case Will Be Held on April 27,” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 2, 1937; “Defendants in Morals Case Trial Convicted,” *Riverside Daily Press*, May 15, 1937.

¹³⁸ *People v. Jordan* (1937), 40.

¹³⁹ “Partial Reverse in Morals Case,” *Riverside Daily Press*, December 14, 1937.

¹⁴⁰ Newspaper and San Quentin records do not record the length of time each man was sentenced to serve at San Quentin.

¹⁴¹ “Four More Men Appear in Superior Court on Recent Morals Charges,” *Riverside Daily Press*, May 20, 1937; “Year in Jail Given Man in Morals Case,” *Riverside Daily Press*, June 5, 1937.

¹⁴² “Man Pleads Guilty on Charge, Asks Probation,” *Riverside Daily Press*, April 10, 1937.

WORLD WAR II & IMMEDIATE POST-WAR ERA, 1940-1959

During World War II, military institutions served as both liberatory and discriminatory spaces for gay and lesbian members of the military. The mass mobilization and movement of people during the war brought a modicum of liberation to sexual and gender expressions, as homosocial situations allowed greater contact between groups. At the same time, the military punished servicemembers who engaged in same-sex relationships. In Riverside, the complex relationship between the military and its gay and lesbian servicemembers is evidenced in events that occurred at the two nearby military bases in the region: March Field and Camp Haan.

World War II

World War II brought about a period of mass mobilization, including the drafting of young men as soldiers; migration of African Americans from the rural south to the west; incarceration of Japanese Americans in detention camps; admittance of Mexican workers into the country; and recruitment of women to fill traditionally male jobs as part of the war effort. Mass mobilization in many ways relaxed the social constraints of peacetime and allowed many people the opportunity to experiment in ways previously impossible.

By the end of 1945, the military had enlisted 16 million citizens and residents, including 10 million draftees, many of whom were unmarried young men. In addition to the drafted male population, many women also volunteered for military duty during the war. Women entered the military in the Army's Women's Army Auxiliary Corps/Women's Army Corps (WAAC/WAC); the Navy's Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES); the Coast Guard's Women's Reserve; the Marine Corps' Women's Reserve; and the Air Force's Women's Army Air Force.¹⁴³ By the end of the war, at least 350,000 women had served in a military capacity.¹⁴⁴

Sex segregation in the military increased the likelihood that people with same-sex desires would meet others like themselves. Increasingly during the war years, men and women serving in the military came to terms with their sexual desires, fell in love, and made lasting friendships. Increased mobility also disseminated gay slang and brought lesbian and gay men from across the country into contact with one another on an unprecedented scale. This in turn began the process of nationalizing lesbian and gay subcultures.¹⁴⁵

At the same time, the military's expanding homophobic policies stigmatized and ostracized gay people. World War II ushered in major changes to the way that the U.S. military viewed people with nonheteronormative gender or sexuality. Traditionally, the military had not excluded or discharged such servicemembers, but instead focused on the associated acts, such as sodomy; from the end of the Revolutionary War onwards, American soldiers guilty of sodomy could be sent

¹⁴³ Marilyn E. Hegarty, "The Other War: Gay Men and Lesbians in the Second World War," in Rupp and Freeman, 181.

¹⁴⁴ Tanya L. Roth, "'AN Attractive Career for Women': Opportunities, Limitations, and Women's Integration in the Cold War Military," in *Integrating the U.S. Military: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation Since World War II*, ed. Douglas Walter Bristol, Jr. and Heather Marie Stur (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2017), 75.

¹⁴⁵ Marilyn E. Hegarty, "The Other War: Gay Men and Lesbians in the Second World War," in Rupp and Freeman, 178.

to prison. However, beginning in 1940 with the conscription act, the military shifted its attention from the *sexual act* to the *person*.¹⁴⁶ Psychiatrists set out to persuade the Selective Service System that psychiatric, as well as physical, examinations should be given to selectees. Psychiatrists used economic arguments to convince the War Department, referencing the large cost of treating psychiatric cases from World War I. As a result of these efforts, the Selective Service System adopted psychiatric screening during World War II. Screening included leading questions meant to identify homosexuals, who were considered unfit for military service.¹⁴⁷ The U.S. Army and Navy defined homosexuality as a “constitutional psychopathic state” and diagnosed homosexual men and women as “sexual psychopaths.”¹⁴⁸ Despite attempts to screen for homosexuality, many gay and lesbian servicemembers enrolled in the military.

During the war, the military increasingly diagnosed, interrogated, hospitalized, and discharged men and women on the basis of their sexuality. If discovered to have engaged in same-sex relations while in the service, servicemembers could be imprisoned, sent to psychiatric hospitals, or dishonorably discharged. Section 8 discharges, also called “blue discharges” for the blue paper they were printed on, were frequently issued to gay and lesbian servicemembers. Blue discharges denied recipients access to veterans’ benefits and excluded them from military and government employment. Recipients of Section 8 discharges were often committed to hospital psychiatric units for examinations, where they were questioned on their sexual thoughts and partners. Many recipients were physically and sexually abused. Over 5,000 people were released from the military with Section 8 discharges.¹⁴⁹

MARCH FIELD AND CAMP HAAN

Originally known as the Alessandro Aviation Field, March Field (now known as the March Air Reserve Base [ARB], 22550 Van Buren Boulevard) was founded in 1918 during World War I as an Army airfield for coastal defense and pilot training. March Field is located immediately southeast of Riverside and has had a significant impact on the city and its inhabitants. For example, the establishment of March Field was one impetus for Riverside’s passage of its Anti-Vice Law of 1918. As recorded in the *Riverside Enterprise*, the “proximity of March Field, a government reservation full of United States soldiers, makes it imperative, city officials believe, that such disorderly places [brothels] be put out of commission at once and not be allowed to gain a foothold in Riverside in the future.”¹⁵⁰

Following the establishment of the Army Air Corps (Air Force) in 1926, March Field underwent a major expansion program. In the late 1920s, master architect Myron Hunt designed an expansive campus at the site that featured Mission Revival buildings using hollow wall concrete construction methods. March Field served as a key West Coast training and bombardment facility from the

¹⁴⁶ Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 2, 10, 14.

¹⁴⁷ Questions about sexual experiences, active and passive sexual roles, orgasms, and remorse, were thought to determine a recruit’s true sexuality. Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire*, 161.

¹⁴⁸ Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire*, 14.

¹⁴⁹ Bronski, 166.

¹⁵⁰ “Officials to Stamp Out All Vice Here,” *Riverside Enterprise*, June 25, 1918.

1920s to the 1940s.¹⁵¹ During World War II, bombardment groups embarking for duty in the Pacific Arena were trained at March Field. During the war years, the site doubled in size and supported approximately 75,000 troops.¹⁵²

Immediately west of March Field, Camp Haan was founded in 1940 as a Coast Artillery anti-aircraft training center. By 1941, the site was improved with 353 buildings, 2,495 floor tents, five chapels, and a hospital. Beginning in 1942, Camp Haan was also used as a prisoner of war camp. In 1945, it became a “debarkee” hospital, where wounded soldiers returning from the Pacific Arena were treated.¹⁵³ Camp Haan closed in 1946, and much of the site has been demolished.¹⁵⁴

AIR-WACS

As World War II efforts progressed, women joined the newly formed Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) at March Field. In a July 1942 article entitled “Women Take Tough Jobs at March Field,” the *Riverside Daily Press* recorded the influx of female workers, often using colorful and discriminatory language that compared military work to housework:

The duties of a housewife and welding a strip of fuselage or hammering rivets into the belly of a gas tank are as different as the poles, yet, so that key machinists and technicians may be relieved for fighting jobs with Uncle Sam’s armed forces, women have answered the call for work in sub-depot machine shops at March Field—and like it! ... Some women were experienced workers before coming to March Field, however others had never had any experience with anything more mechanical than a combination eggbeater and hair curler.¹⁵⁵

By 1943, women were officially enlisted directly into the Army as the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), a change that entitled servicewomen to Army benefits.¹⁵⁶ These female enlistees were informally known as “Air-WACs.” At March Field, women worked in welding, riveting, running heavy presses, packing parachutes, and towing airplanes. In 1944, the *Riverside Daily Press* reported that the Army Air Forces needed “thousands more Air-Wacs.”¹⁵⁷

As greater numbers of women signed up to work in the military, public anxieties grew regarding the “type” of woman who would exchange feminine pursuits for a martial, and perceived masculine, environment, often alluding to lesbianism. In many ways, accusations of lesbianism within the WAC were the “apotheosis of cultural anxieties over women’s entrance into the

¹⁵¹ March Field Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. See: Stephen D. Mikesell and Stephen R. Wee, “March Field Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service (November 1994).

¹⁵² “The March Field Story,” *March Air Reserve Base*, accessed on February 1, 2023 at: <https://www.march.afrc.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/167413/the-march-field-story/>

¹⁵³ “Civilians Called on to Aid Wounded,” *Riverside Daily Press*, June 1, 1945.

¹⁵⁴ Mark Berhow, “California’s World War II Artillery Training Centers,” *The California Military Museum*, accessed on February 6, 2023 at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20080515204457/http://militarymuseum.org/CA%20Tng%20Cntrs.html>

¹⁵⁵ “Women Take Tough Jobs at March Field,” *Riverside Daily Press*, July 10, 1942.

¹⁵⁶ As opposed to earlier auxiliaries; Bérubé, 31.

¹⁵⁷ “Air-Wacs Busy in Many Jobs for U.S. Army,” *Riverside Daily Press*, December 17, 1943.

military.”¹⁵⁸ The press, psychiatrists, and the general public often monitored women in the military, commenting on the masculinity or femininity of their appearance and jobs.¹⁵⁹

Military leaders saw lesbianism as a threat to the legitimacy of all female soldiers, and sought to address the “lesbian threat” within the Corps. One way that the broader WAC program challenged and responded to these accusations was by suppressing and regulating all sexual behavior among servicewomen, based on the idea that only “chaste” women should serve in the Corps.¹⁶⁰ The military also implemented and enforced strict sumptuary laws. While servicewomen were rarely prosecuted for sexual acts, “those who adopted male dress were subject to criminal charges under urban morals codes for cross-dressing.”¹⁶¹

In addition to strict regulations on their sexuality and dress, servicewomen were also restricted in the ways they could socialize in a civilian setting. As recorded by historian Leisa D. Meyer:

“Getting together” at the service club was supplemented by night out “on the town,” as groups of lesbian military personnel tried to find or construct space for themselves within the civilian sector. Although urban areas during the war provided the setting for the creation of a public gay nightlife and culture, opportunities for lesbian servicewomen to associate at civilian establishments were more limited than those available to their gay male counterparts. Civilian vice laws intended to discourage heterosexual promiscuity and repress prostitution made it difficult for women to enter taverns without a male escort. As a result, there were few all-female bars in cities, though all-male bars were fairly common. In addition, due to the segregated nature of military life, civilian entertainments for African American lesbians often developed separately from those of their white counterparts.¹⁶²

ENTERTAINMENT AND CAMOUFLAGE SHOWS

During World War II, theatrical performances, particularly with the establishment of GI drag, took off at military bases across the country. These all-male “soldier shows” almost always featured female impersonation routines and provided gay male GIs with an arena for expression and temporary refuge.¹⁶³ “Camping” was a style and self-awareness that many gay GIs brought to their draft routines; “camping” could be a flamboyant and public announcement through gestures, cosmetics, clothing, and swishes. As defined by historian Allan Bérubé:

Camping could be a way to interpret the world from a gay male point of view, playing with ironies in the realms of gender and sexuality; or a commentary on the

¹⁵⁸ Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World War II* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1996), 149; Bérubé, 59.

¹⁵⁹ Bérubé, 60.

¹⁶⁰ Bérubé, 59.

¹⁶¹ Meyer, 150.

¹⁶² Meyer, 167.

¹⁶³ Bérubé, 68; Bronski, 162.

dominant moral order by elevating the artificial, decorative, sexual, and effeminate to the noble, elegant, tasteful and divine; or a secret, coded language that bonded gay men together into a culture uniquely their own.¹⁶⁴

These “soldier shows” were popular, and several varieties developed over the war years. Perhaps the most famous of the soldier shows was *This Is the Army*, produced by Irving Berlin as a Broadway musical designed to raise money for the military. The show played for four months in New York before touring as a stage show in 1942, breaking “every possible theatrical record in its coast-to-coast advance.”¹⁶⁵ *This Is the Army* had three types of drag performance: comedic routines, impersonators of female celebrities of the period, and singers and dancers.¹⁶⁶

In July 1942, Warner Brothers Studio purchased the motion picture rights to the show, which was transformed into a movie that was shown in theaters across the country. Unlike the original soldier show, the movie featured female actresses and fewer female impersonators. Warner Brothers argued that the female impersonators would prevent the movie from being released overseas.¹⁶⁷ The studio reduced the number of, but did not entirely eliminate, female impersonators. The motion picture, *This Is the Army* played to a sold-out crowd at the Riverside Fox Theater in 1943.¹⁶⁸

In June 1944, soldiers from Camp Haan performed in an all-soldier variety show at the municipal auditorium in San Bernardino. Performers included a ventriloquist, actors, musicians, and members from the Chicago night club circuit. At least three servicemen performed as female impersonators.¹⁶⁹

The following month, Camp Haan hosted a “Soldier Show” conference that studied the production of all-soldier entertainment in combat areas without the aid of professional props, makeup, or personnel. The conference instructed soldiers on how to produce “musicals and serious dramas, costumes, scenery, lighting effects, and soldier dancing.”¹⁷⁰

Other soldier shows focused on camouflage, which taught troops another type of illusion. “Camofleurs,” or those who designed camouflage, were generally believed to contain a disproportionately large number of gay men.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁴ Bérubé, 86.

¹⁶⁵ “Riverside Books ‘This is the Army,’” *Riverside Daily Press*, August 7, 1943.

¹⁶⁶ Matthew M. Peek, “When WWII Was a Drag: WWII Men Performing as Women in War,” *Medium*, August 6, 2021; “GIs as Dolls: Uncovering the Hidden Histories of Drag Entertainment During Wartime,” *World War II Museum*, June 15, 2021; National Park Service, “Gender, Expression, and WWII,” n.d., accessed on February 22, 2023 at: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/gender-expression-and-wwii.htm>.

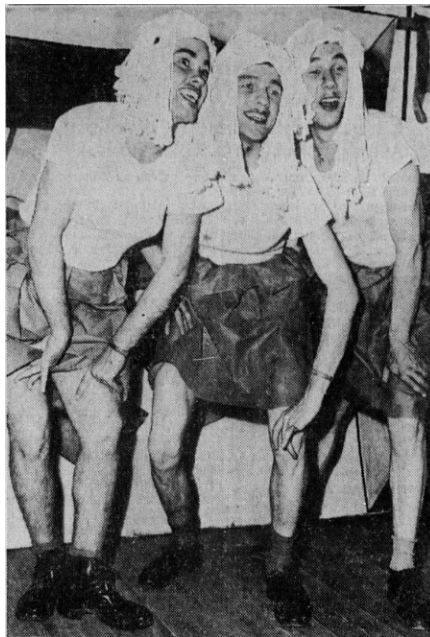
¹⁶⁷ Laurence Bergreen, “Irving Berlin: This is the Army,” *Prologue Magazine* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1996).

¹⁶⁸ “House Sold Out for ‘This is the Army’ Show,” *Riverside Daily Press*, August 13, 1943; “‘This is the Army’ Has Premiere Here Aug. 17,” *Riverside Daily Press*, August 5, 1943.

¹⁶⁹ “Soldiers to Present Show at Auditorium,” *San Bernardino County Sun*, June 14, 1944.

¹⁷⁰ “All- Soldier Program Studied,” *Riverside Daily Press*, July 11, 1944; “Soldiers Learn Show Business,” *Riverside Daily Press*, July 14, 1944; “Army Specialists to Help Plan Military Talent Shows,” *Riverside Daily Press*, July 1, 1944.

¹⁷¹ Bérubé, 58.



Camp Haan Female Impersonators, 1944. *The San Bernardino County Sun*.

At March Field, the 4th Air Force Engineer Camouflage School produced a GI show called *You Bet Your Life* at The War Department Theater/Building 467.¹⁷² The two-and-a-half-hour show was advertised as living up to its “producer’s vocation by not being at all what it seems.” While the show at first appeared to be a “bang-up Broadway revue” with “giddy and multifarious” costumes, it was really a “practical and basic instruction in the art and science of deceiving the enemy and saving the soldier’s own life.”¹⁷³



The War Department Theater/Building 467 at March Field, 1991. *Stephen D. Mikesell*.

¹⁷² Building 467 is the March Field base theater and is a contributor to the March Field Historic District. Mikesell and Wee, “March Field Historic District,” 7.

¹⁷³ Rosamond Gilder, “You Bet Your Life: Report on a Camouflage Show,” *Theater Acts* (September 1944): 521-527.

You Bet Your Life was produced by notable theater and movie performer Sargent Ezra Stone, nationally known for his role on the radio program and Broadway hit “The Aldrich Family,” and as stage director of *This Is the Army*.¹⁷⁴ Other notable cast members included Colonel John F. Ohmer; Captain Ivan Bruce; Sargent Earl McCoy, set designer of MGM; Sargent Laurence Hollings, Columbia Studios artist; and Corporal James Patton, of the Savoy Ballroom, among others. Following its opening showing at March Field, *You Bet Your Life* became a traveling show.¹⁷⁵

Fifty servicemen from March Field followed the show on tour throughout much of the western United States in 1944. The “camoufleurs” performed at Chico Field, Hammer Field, Camp Pinedale, and Camp San Luis Obispo in California; Camp White in Oregon; and Geiger Field and Paine Field in Washington, among other camps.¹⁷⁶ The show included both female actresses and female impersonators.

Historian Allan Bérubé interprets the show as a metaphor for the gay GI’s who created it, as a way to “blend in” by hiding both their identities as gay men and their bodies on the field of combat. Bérubé calls out the tongue-and-cheek aspects of the play, including a song that “the camoufleurs sang about their own craft [which] had parallel meaning that described other artists of illusion as well—including the GI female impersonator and the gay GI who passed as homosexual.”¹⁷⁷ Bérubé recorded the double entendre:

It’s so confusing
But so amusing
The ruses
One uses
Are nature’s own scheme...
Though we’re like mirages,
We’re all camouflages—
Things Are Not What They Seem
No,
Things are never quite what they seem!

| | |
|---|--|
| Oh, you can bet your life, Your body and soul, You’ll have an ace in the hole With camouflage. | For you can bet your life You’ll write the last page And you will live to old age So camouflage. ¹⁷⁸ |
|---|--|

¹⁷⁴ “Radio ‘Henry Aldrich’ Now at March Field,” *Riverside Daily Press*, August 6, 1943.

¹⁷⁵ Gilder, “You Bet Your Life,” 521.

¹⁷⁶ “Fourth to Present ‘You Bet Your Life’ Tuesday,” *Chico Record*, July 8, 1944; “General Praises Air Force Show,” *Oakland Tribune*, July 9, 1944; “Air Force Show ‘Bet Your Life’ Stages at Camp,” *Medford Mail Tribune*, July 17, 1944; “Show’s Lesson in Camouflage,” *The Spokesman-Review*, July 29, 1944; “Show’s Morals Easily Taught,” *Spokane Chronicle*, July 29, 1944; “Fourth Air Force Troops Learn Art of Camouflage the Easy Way,” *Seattle Star*, August 19, 1944; “‘Camouflage’ Show Stages,” *The Tribune*, September 12, 1944; “Fourth Air Force Stages Show in Van Nuys Friday,” *Van Nuys News*, September 14, 1944;

¹⁷⁷ Bérubé, 94.

¹⁷⁸ Gilder, 527.



Scenes from *You Bet Your Life* performance, 1944. *Pittsburg Press*, *Seattle Star*, and *Spokane Chronicle*.

MEETING PLACES AND SPACES

As was common for the LGBTQ+ community, both in and out of the military, for much of the twentieth century, there were limited opportunities for outward social gathering. As a result, little specific information is known about gathering places for the gay and lesbian military community, and meetings were often in clandestine locations.¹⁷⁹ In addition, as with the rest of American society at this time, servicemembers of color were barred from some of the establishments

¹⁷⁹ Due to the lack of safe community gathering spaces, roads between military bases and cities were common spots for “cruising;” and the YMCA and YWCA were also known within the community as meeting places.

frequented by their white counterparts.¹⁸⁰ In Riverside and elsewhere, newspapers reporting legal cases involving a person of color were quick to identify their racial/ethnic identity. The documentation of such trials combined both racial and sexual prejudices. For example, the 1941 felony morals charge for Section 288a of the Penal Code (“sex perversion”) of a Latino man, identified the defendant as a “Bowie Court Mexican.” Found guilty, the man filed an appeal by his defense attorney, Albert Trujillo, who claimed that the “prosecution testimony of the overt act was uncorroborated.”¹⁸¹

However, there were some military service clubs that provided opportunities for the LGBTQ+ community to gather, and there were some service club staff who were protective of their regular gay crowds. Servicemembers stationed at military installations near Riverside would also visit bars and restaurants in nearby cities.¹⁸² In 1945, two girls “posing as boys out for a big time” visited a local night club in Riverside.¹⁸³ The girls began arguing with several soldiers, and a fight ensued. The women were arrested for masquerading as men.

PURGES AND PSYCHIATRIC STUDIES

Over the course of the war, numerous military bases had “purges” or “witch hunts” meant to identify and remove homosexuals from active duty. These purges could target anywhere from a dozen to hundreds of GIs and officers at a time. Officers would conduct interrogations to extract confessions, often holding suspects under armed guard and employing sexual humiliation and good-cop/bad-cop strategies. Suspected homosexuals were held in psychiatric wards of military hospitals or “queer stockades” until their discharge.¹⁸⁴

Confinement in military psychiatric wards with other homosexual servicemen could also be liberatory in some sense, in that patients did not have to keep up a charade of heterosexuality and had greater opportunities for sexual relationships. Author Allan Bérubé documented life in these psychiatric wards, noting several instances in which gay patients sometimes indulged in “outrageous campy antics in public.” One such event occurred in the hospital at Camp Anza near Riverside, where several gay GIs were held.¹⁸⁵

Carl H. Jonas at Camp Haan

During the war, some psychiatrists and doctors conducted their own research projects to better define and describe homosexuality. The punitive raids and purges of homosexual servicemembers ensured that psychiatrists had a large group of subjects. Studies abounded; during World War II, nearly every published psychiatric study of human sexuality to come out of the military dealt with

¹⁸⁰ Bérubé, 108.

¹⁸¹ “Notice Appeal Filed by Fernandez’ Attorney,” *Riverside Daily Press*, February 15, 1941.

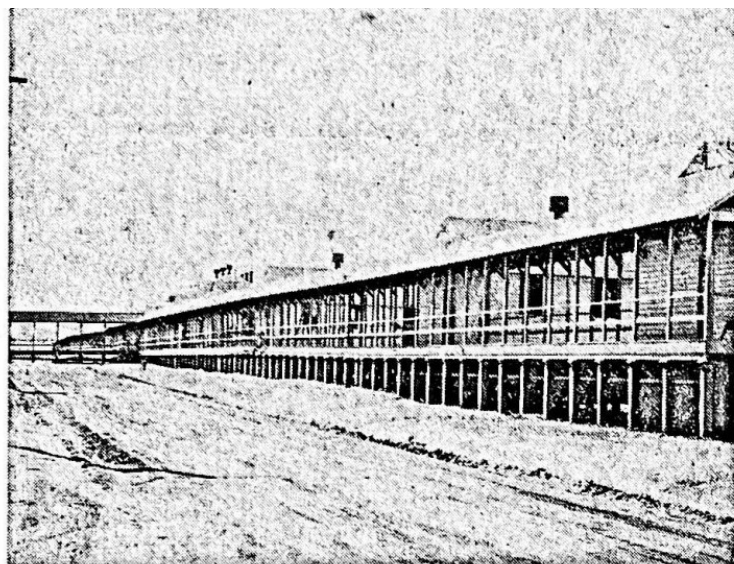
¹⁸² At this time there are no known locations in Riverside that are known to have functioned specifically as meeting places for gay and lesbian servicemembers during World War II.

¹⁸³ “Girls Dressed in Men’s Clothing Seized at Night Club,” *San Bernardino County Sun* May 1, 1945.

¹⁸⁴ Bérubé, 213-216.

¹⁸⁵ Bérubé, 213.

male homosexuality.¹⁸⁶ Major Carl H. Jonas¹⁸⁷ of the Army Medical Corps ran one such military study on homosexuality amongst military personnel at the Camp Haan Hospital (demolished).



HOSPITAL—Camp Haan's main hospital was a completely equipped modern hospital for its time but the building itself was hastily constructed of rough lumber.

View of Camp Haan Hospital, 1961. *Riverside Press*.

Over the course of 20 months from 1943 to 1944, Carl H. Jonas studied 53 white and seven Black servicemen at Camp Haan identified as “overt homosexuals” and 60 “control” heterosexual men. The men Jonas studied ranged in age from 18 to 45 and were employed in various jobs before joining the army, including musician, social worker, and teacher. Jonas’ studies concluded that there was “a remarkable lack of uniformity in the data obtained,” and that “overt homosexuality occurs in a heterogeneous group of individuals.”¹⁸⁸ Historian Allan Bérubé described Jonas as a psychiatrist who approached the homosexual soldier with “liberal and activist humanism.”¹⁸⁹

In a 1946 article entitled “Psychiatry Has Growing Pains,” Jonas noted the disagreements that often arose between psychiatrists at different hospitals, noting in one example that “at one station a psychiatrist would recommend separation for all homosexual individuals, while at another station the psychiatrist would refuse to recommend separation for any homosexual individual.” Jonas concluded that psychiatry during the war “was truly a ship without a rudder.”¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Bérubé, 152.

¹⁸⁷ In Riverside, Jonas and family resided at 3650 Larchwood Place. Carl H. Jonas continued to work in psychiatry after the end of the war, ultimately going on to serve as the assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California Medical School and as a consulting psychiatrist to the Veterans Administration. Jonas received a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship for an advanced study in psychiatry. “Belmont Planning Commission Restored to Full Strength,” *Redwood City Tribune*, May 29, 1951.

¹⁸⁸ Bérubé, 169; Carl H. Jonas, M.C., “An Objective Approach to the Personality and Environment in Homosexuality,” *The Psychology Quarterly* 18 (December 1944): 631, 634.

¹⁸⁹ Bérubé, 169.

¹⁹⁰ Major Carl H. Jonas, “Psychiatry Has Growing Pains,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 102, no. 6 (May 1946): 819-821; “Dr. Carl Jonas to Address Child Growth Class,” *Redwood City Tribune*, April 3, 1951.

At Camp Haan, soldiers who were accused of homosexuality were held in the hospital ward. Robert F. Gallagher, who served as a soldier at Camp Haan, remembered the building:

...I was assigned guard duty at a ward in the camp hospital. The patients were American soldiers who had been either accused or convicted of some crime and had been in the Camp Haan stockade, either doing time, waiting for their court martial, or waiting to be transferred to Fort Leavenworth prison to do time there for a major crime. These men were temporarily assigned to a special section of the hospital for medical and psychological problems. The term psychological problem was never explained to me, but it had an ominous ring to it. I was supposed to keep them from escaping, although this would have been quite difficult to do if they had made any real attempt.

The patients were in a large ward with ten beds along each side of the room. The ward was even more sterile-looking than the inside of our huts, if that was possible. It had the unmistakable smell of antiseptic. The walls and ceiling were painted white, the floor was an off-white tile, and the patients' gowns and the bedding were all white. There was nothing in the room other than beds.¹⁹¹

The Camp Haan hospital ward was demolished following the conclusion of World War II.¹⁹²

Moral Crusades and Resistance in the Mid-Twentieth Century

In the mid-twentieth century, persecution of perceived nonconforming gender and sexual expressions continued across the country, including in Riverside.¹⁹³ Specifically during this era, anxieties surrounding child molestation and Communism were more broadly applied to and associated with homosexuality.¹⁹⁴

In 1939, California enacted a *sexual psychopath* law that, while at first was limited to sexual offenses against children, was expanded in 1945 to sexual “inverts,” or homosexuals.¹⁹⁵ In 1949, California created procedures for the commitment of “sexual psychopaths” to state mental hospitals. That same year, the highly publicized molestation case of a young girl in Los Angeles influenced a statewide all-out “war against sex criminals.” Spearheaded by California governor Earl Warren and the FBI, the crusade lasted from 1949 to 1953 and transformed California’s sex crime laws. State and local governments sought to identify, expose, and imprison “sex perverts” of all sorts, but particularly homosexuals.¹⁹⁶

The end of World War II brought about a social prerogative for young people to settle down and start families. During this period, “the erotic appeared to disappear under a wave of innocent

¹⁹¹ Robert F. Gallagher, “Chapter 3: Camp Haan, California,” *World War II Story “Scratch One Messerschmitt,”* accessed on February 6, 2023 at: <https://gallagherstory.com/ww2/chapter3.html>

¹⁹² “Camp Haan: It’s All But Gone,” *Riverside Press*, August 31, 1961.

¹⁹³ Information pertaining to the military stances on homosexuality during World War II is included in Chapter 3.

¹⁹⁴ By the mid-twentieth century, the term “homosexual” was widely used.

¹⁹⁵ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 95.

¹⁹⁶ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 90.

domesticity... A resurgent purity impulse attacked symbols of sexual permissiveness ... and imposed penalties on those who deviated too sharply from family values.”¹⁹⁷ In the late 1940s and 1950s, the idea of the feminine female and masculine male as prolific breeders dominated gender expectations. At the same time, homosexuality was seen as a “sad symbol of ‘sterility.’”¹⁹⁸ By the mid-twentieth century, homosexuality and race both served as dividing lines separating the “good” sexual mores from the “bad.” As recorded by D’Emilio and Freedman, “male and female homosexuality played to a variety of sexual fears just at a time when an ethic of sexual liberalism has sunk roots into the middle class.”¹⁹⁹

In Riverside, several people were arrested in the 1950s and 1960s for “deviance,” “moral charges,” and/or “sex perversion.”²⁰⁰ In February of 1957, the *Daily Enterprise* ran an article titled “Police Report Heavy Month of Sex Crimes,” which recorded a total of 12 sex offenders and encouraged victims to get “as accurate a description of the offender as possible.”²⁰¹ This and other articles in local papers emphasized the rise in child molestation and consensual teenage sex in the city, noting a “significant gain... in juvenile sex crimes.”²⁰²

That same year, in neighboring Corona, an early morning raid on La Hacienda Café resulted in the arrest of sixteen men, including three Riverside residents.²⁰³ Newspapers noted that the café was “patronized by persons from throughout Southern California” and that the raid occurred after “months of investigation.”²⁰⁴ Several detained men were brought to court in a morals case trial and charged with being “lewd or dissolute” persons that “frequented public toilets.”²⁰⁵ These were coded terms likely referring to homosexuality. Complaints in the case were filed by the District Attorney’s office in Riverside.²⁰⁶ In the autumn of 1960, Riverside police held several stakeouts at the Greyhound bus station (3911 University Avenue, demolished) and arrested at least six men on morals cases.²⁰⁷

PSYCHIATRY AND MEDICALIZATION

Alfred Kinsey’s *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* from 1948, and his 1953 volume on women, argued that there was a chasm between the expectations and realities of sexual behavior in the United States.²⁰⁸ Specifically, the study found that pre-marital sex was common, masturbation was

¹⁹⁷ D’Emilio and Freedman, 242.

¹⁹⁸ Katz, *Invention of Heterosexuality*, 96.

¹⁹⁹ D’Emilio and Freedman, 294; 295.

²⁰⁰ “Two Jailed on Sex Perversion,” *Riverside Daily Enterprise*, May 7, 1957; “Girl Accused as Sex Deviate,” *Riverside Daily Press*, January 24, 1959; “Sex Charge Jails Two,” *Riverside Daily Enterprise*, November 12, 1960.

²⁰¹ “Police Report Heavy Month of Sex Crimes,” *Daily Enterprise*, February 22, 1957.

²⁰² John Haggerty, “Crimes by Girls Soar in County,” *Daily Enterprise*, January 18, 1958; “Police Report Heavy Month of Sex Crimes,” *Daily Enterprise*, February 22, 1957.

²⁰³ The address given for La Hacienda Café was 1353 W. Sixth Street, Corona.

²⁰⁴ “Caps Long Probe by State Men,” *Sunday Press-Enterprise*, May 12, 1957.

²⁰⁵ “Jurors to Be Chosen in Morals Case Trial,” *The Daily Enterprise*, May 23, 1957.

²⁰⁶ “Will Lose License,” *Riverside Daily Press*, November 9, 1957.

²⁰⁷ “Sex Charge Jails Two,” *Daily Enterprise*, November 12, 1960; “Priest Please Guilty in Morals Case,” *Daily Enterprise*, October 29, 1960; “Bus Station Study Brings Two Arrests,” *Daily Enterprise*, November 8, 1960.

²⁰⁸ Alfred Kinsey, Wardell Pomeroy, and Clyde Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders, 1948), 610-66; Alfred Kinsey, Wardell Pomeroy, and Clyde Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders, 1953), 446-500.

widespread, and half of all husbands cheated on their wives. It also found that one-third of male case studies had experienced orgasm with another man during their adult lives.²⁰⁹ Kinsey concluded that sexuality in the United States was diverse. He challenged the idea of sexual normality and argued against the categorization of people as heterosexual and homosexual. Kinsey instead proclaimed that “it would encourage clearer thinking on these matters if persons were not characterized as heterosexual or homosexual, but as individuals who have had certain amounts of heterosexual experience and certain amounts of homosexual experience.”²¹⁰

During this same period, Dr. Evelyn Hooker ran a series of studies that found no discernible psychological differences between gay and straight men. Hooker concluded that homosexuality was not a mental illness, and that homosexuals were neither criminals nor medically ill.²¹¹ Her studies had an enormous impact on the reforms to come in the 1960s and 1970s.

However, despite the studies of Kinsey and Hooker and their relatively progressive conclusions, many psychiatrists continued to categorize and “treat” people based on their sexuality. In 1952, the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* classified homosexuality as a “sociopathic personality disturbance.”

There are several known examples in Riverside of psychiatric analysis of people suspected of gender or sexual nonconformance. In 1957, a young man who was dressed as a woman in order to hitchhike was arrested for vagrancy and a psychiatrist was appointed to examine him. The man was examined by Dr. G.W. Shannon and Dr. Robert P. Cook for an upcoming “sexual psychopathy hearing.”²¹² In 1960, a Catholic priest was arrested in a “morals case” for having sexual relations with a younger man at the Greyhound bus station in Riverside. He pleaded guilty to being a “lewd and dissolute person” and was sentenced to probation. A condition of his probation required him to place himself under the care of a psychiatrist.²¹³

THE “LAVENDER SCARE”

Public paranoia surrounding child molestation and homosexuality was also conflated with fears of Communism in the mid-twentieth century. The 1950 U.S. Senate committee investigation for “The Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government,” determined that homosexuality was a mental illness. The study also found that homosexuals posed as security threats because they could be blackmailed into revealing state secrets.

Senator Joseph McCarthy’s crusade to remove Communists from the government during the 1950s, also known as the “Red Scare,” included the identification and persecution of homosexuals. McCarthy believed that homosexuality was evidence of the “sort of psychological weakness that

²⁰⁹ Craig M. Loftin, “Community and Civil Rights in the Kinsey Era,” in Rupp and Freeman, 215.

²¹⁰ Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, 617.

²¹¹ Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006), 125; Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 11, 2022.

²¹² “Girl-Garbed Hiker Faces Psychiatrist,” *Riverside Daily Press*, December 3, 1957.

²¹³ “Priest Pleads Guilty in Morals Case,” *Daily Enterprise*, October 29, 1960.

made one susceptible to Communist indoctrination.”²¹⁴ Gays and lesbians were singled out as security risks, thereby linking political and sexual “deviancies.” This resulted in what scholars have termed the “Lavender Scare.” The State Department specifically sought to identify homosexuals and adopted a comprehensive antigay campaign.²¹⁵

In 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10450, which banned homosexuals from working for the federal government or any of its private contractors. As a result of this crusade, approximately 500 gay men and women were fired from their jobs with the government.²¹⁶

MILITARY DISCRIMINATION

The U.S. military continued to discriminate in the post-World War II period. In 1950, the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. Article 125 of the UCMJ stated “any person subject to this chapter who engages in unnatural carnal copulation with another person of the same or opposite sex or with an animal is guilty of sodomy. Penetration, however slight, is sufficient to complete the offense.”²¹⁷ The establishment of Article 125 further cemented the military’s stance that homosexuality was “incompatible” with military service.

Beginnings of the Homophile Movement

The homophile movement in the United States emerged in the 1950s following the establishment of American homosexual organizations and periodicals, several of which were founded in California.²¹⁸ In 1950, gay rights activist Harry Hay founded the Mattachine Society in Los Angeles, America’s first sustained national gay rights organization. The group aimed to “eliminate discrimination, derision, prejudice and bigotry,” and forge an “ethical homosexual culture.”²¹⁹ The Mattachine Society opened chapters in several states and began publishing *The Mattachine Review* in 1955. The group enacted change for the community through legal and political channels. In San Francisco, the Daughters of Bilitis was established in 1955 as the first lesbian rights organization in the country. Founded by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, the Daughters of Bilitis published *The Ladder*, which became the first nationally distributed lesbian periodical in the country. Both the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis were instrumental in achieving visibility and acceptance for the LGBTQ+ community and fighting for civil rights.

²¹⁴ David K. Johnson, “The Red Scare’s Lavender Cousin: The Construction of the Cold War Citizen,” in Rupp and Freeman, 187.

²¹⁵ David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 75.

²¹⁶ “Milestones in the American Gay rights Movement,” *PBS: American Experience*, accessed on February 28, 2023 at: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/stonewall-milestones-american-gay-rights-movement/>

²¹⁷ Bronski, 158.

²¹⁸ Gerard Koskovich, “The History of Queer History: One Hundred Years of the Search for Shared Heritage,” in *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*, ed. Megan E. Springate (Washington, D.C.: National Park Foundation, 2016), 04-11.

²¹⁹ “Milestones in the American Gay Rights Movement,” *PBS*.

A CULTURAL REVOLUTION, 1960-1979

The 1960s and 1970s ushered in a sexual revolution in America. Sexual liberalism was the dominant ethic, with people looking to sexual experiences for pleasure. The 1960s saw the rise of second-wave feminism and radical feminist commentaries that sought to expose reproductive politics, gender politics, and pleasure politics in American society.

The era also saw a rise in violence. As noted by historian Josh Sides, one of the legacies of the sexual revolution was the “campaign of physical violence and repression it unleashed,” and the 1970s was an era “marked by shocking violence against...homosexuals.”²²⁰ This violence culminated in the assassinations of major gay rights leaders including San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone in 1978. Partially in response to the violence against the community, the gay rights movement accelerated and made some significant advancements during this period.²²¹

Growing Visibility: Coming Out of the Closet

Beginning in the mid-1960s, American social movements, including the fight for LGBTQ+ rights, became increasingly radical. Major events in the Gay Liberation movement primarily took place in metropolitan areas with large and active LGBTQ+ communities, including New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Several major events in the 1960s and 1970s served as milestones in the American Gay Rights Movement. In 1965, picketers staged the first Reminder Day at Independence Hall in Philadelphia to call attention to the lack of civil rights for LGBT people. In 1966, the Mattachine Society staged a “sip-in” in New York at the Julius Bar in Greenwich Village, and when they were refused service, sued the New York Liquor Authority.

In Los Angeles, a seminal LGBTQ+ civil rights demonstration was held at the Black Cat in the Silver Lake neighborhood in February 1967 following a police raid of the popular gay bar on New Year's Eve. The raid resulted in the arrest of 14 people who were charged with assault and public lewdness. In response, hundreds of demonstrators gathered outside of the bar to peacefully protest the police brutality of the raid and larger discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community. Organized by the Personal Rights in Defense and Education (PRIDE) and Southern California Council on Religion and the Homophile (SCCRH), the protest became an important early precedent for gay and lesbian activism.²²²

In 1969, patrons of Stonewall Inn, a gay club located in Greenwich Village, New York, rebelled when police officers attempted to raid the bar. The event led to five days of protests and violent clashes between bar patrons and neighborhood residents and law enforcement, which became known as the “Stonewall Riots.” In 1970, Christopher Street Liberation Day was held to

²²⁰ Josh Sides, *Erotic City: Sexual Revolutions and the Making of Modern San Francisco* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 7.

²²¹ Katz, *Invention of Heterosexuality*, 139.

²²² Laura Dominguez, “The Black Cat: Harbinger of LGBTQ Civil Rights,” *KCET*, February 11, 2017, accessed on March 13, 2023 at: <https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/the-black-cat-harbinger-of-lgbtq-civil-rights>.

commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, becoming the first gay pride parade.²²³

PSYCHIATRIC DISORDER CLASSIFICATION & REPEAL OF SODOMY LAWS

The growing activism of the gay and lesbian community, findings from doctors, and pressure from law groups eventually led to removal of homosexuality as a psychiatric disorder and repeal of sodomy laws throughout the country.²²⁴ In 1962, Illinois became the first U.S. state to repeal its sodomy law and thereby decriminalize homosexuality.

In 1970, lesbian and gay activists and professionals within the American Psychiatric Association (APA) lobbied for the delisting of homosexuality as a psychiatric disorder at the organization's annual conference in San Francisco. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) also issued a report on the Task Force on Homosexuality that found none of the common stereotypes about homosexuals had any scientific foundation. Dr. Evelyn Hooker²²⁵ and the NIMH agreed that homosexuality was a "social problem" because of homophobia, identified as the mental illness of bigots, rather than anything inherently wrong with homosexuals. As a result, the task force recommended that states repeal their sodomy laws.²²⁶

In 1974, following a series of protests, the APA voted to formally drop homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). The term "sexual orientation disturbance" was adopted instead of homosexuality. With this change in nomenclature, the medical pathologizing of homosexuality was officially ended in the United States.²²⁷ During this same period, Brian D. Pirtle, a patient at Patton State Hospital wrote a letter to the newspaper *Urgent* requesting literature on the "Gay movement, community, and lifestyle."²²⁸ As a result of his letter, the hospital library started to include material on the gay community.

California had a protracted six-year legal battle over the repeal of the state's sodomy law.²²⁹ In 1975, the California state Senate passed the Consenting Adult Sex Bill (Assembly Bill 489). The Bill repealed the state's sodomy law and went into effect in January 1976.²³⁰ In 1979, California's sterilization law was repealed.²³¹

²²³ "Milestones in the American Gay Rights Movement," *PBS*.

²²⁴ This activism had its roots in the 1950s with the growth of the homophile movement and the 1955 recommendation from the American Law Institute to repeal sodomy laws in the United States.

²²⁵ Scientific studies conducted by Dr. Evelyn Hooker in the 1950s are discussed in the section above.

²²⁶ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 173-174.

²²⁷ Eskridge, *Dishonorable Passions*, 174.

²²⁸ Brian D. Pirtle, "New Beginnings," *Update*, March 6, 1981, Issue 52 edition, sec. Letters.

²²⁹ "Getting Rid of Sodomy Laws: History and Strategy that Led to the Lawrence Decision," *ACLU*, n.d., accessed on February 23, 2023 at: <https://www.aclu.org/other/getting-rid-sodomy-laws-history-and-strategy-led-lawrence-decision>.

²³⁰ In 2003, in *Lawrence v. Texas*, the Supreme Court ruled that systematically criminalizing sodomy is unconstitutional. Sodomy is legal in California (except in cases involving sodomy with children or sodomy against one's will or consent).

²³¹ Stern, 137.

Political Organizing in Riverside

In Riverside, LGBTQ+ organizing and protesting began in earnest in the 1970s.²³² This was partially influenced by two major events: the removal of homosexuality as a psychiatric disorder classification in 1973 and passage of the consenting adult sex bill in California in 1975. Although the homophile movement in Riverside appeared to be relatively nascent until the late 1970s, as recalled by local activist Carolyn “Connie” Confer: “We’re invisible to urban centers... even so I think that for a long time San Bernardino and Riverside and the Inland Empire have been dissed as areas that weren’t very forward thinking, as being quite conservative, and that if you were gay why would you want to live in a place like that? ... It’s largely a mistaken view.”²³³

Connie Confer (b. 1942) and Kay Berryhill-Smith (1936-2009) were a lesbian couple who were important local advocates and activists, and heavily involved in local LGBTQ+ political action groups. They were early members of PAC, a local organization that became the Gay and Lesbian Community Center starting around 1978, and cofounders of the Political Action Committee for Elections (PACE) and Inland AIDS Project (IAP). Professionally, Confer was a social worker for Riverside County starting in 1969, and in the 1980s-1990s she served as Assistant City Attorney for Riverside. Confer ties her political awakening to two specific events in the late 1960s: she was denied a hotel room based on her sexuality; and a medical questionnaire required for employment with Riverside County asked whether she had sex with someone of the same gender and Confer knew to lie in her response.

Confer’s partner Kay Berryhill-Smith was a civil rights advocate and social worker for the County of Riverside for 27 years, where she served as head of adoptions for 9 years; fought for fair housing; volunteered for local groups, including Head Start and the Community Settlement Association; and served for eight years on the City of Riverside Human Relations Commission. Recurring general meetings for PACE and other events were held at the Riverside home of Confer and Berryhill-Smith during the 1980s and 1990s, which became a significant local gathering place for the lesbian community. The couple started an annual Holiday Cookie Potluck at the residence in 1980 as an informal gathering for lesbians. The event became a staple for the lesbian community in Riverside and across Southern California. As reported by Janet Zimmerman in the *Press-Enterprise* in 2004:

Most of the women are wary of the public repercussions of being gay. That’s one thing that hasn’t changed since Kay and Connie threw the first potluck in 1980 as a friendly gesture toward lesbians ostracized by their families. Since then, the gathering has become an institution, a constant in the background of a constantly changing gay movement.²³⁴

²³² Recent scholarship argues that the gay liberation movement began with a series of spontaneous protests, including the Stonewall Uprising of 1969 in New York City.

²³³ Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 11, 2022.

²³⁴ Janet Zimmerman, “Caring, Cookies Shared,” *Press Enterprise*, December 19, 2004.

Confer and Berryhill-Smith hosted the potluck for decades, and the tradition became a local institution. It is now hosted by Erin Edwards, who is the first openly LGBTQ+ Council Member of the Riverside City Council, and her wife Elizabeth Przyblyski.²³⁵

NO ON 6

During this period, Proposition 6, also known as the Briggs Initiative, was one of the earliest major political events to spur significant activism from the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside. Authored by John Briggs, former gubernatorial candidate and anti-gay rights spokesman, the 1978 proposition would have given state school districts legal authority to fire homosexual teachers and those who openly supported the LGBTQ+ community. Protestors argued that the proposition would deny teachers freedom of speech in the classroom.²³⁶ In Riverside, the “No on 6” group and UCR’s Gay Student Union were active in protesting the proposition and held several events to spread information about its dangers and infringement on civil rights.²³⁷ The initiative ultimately failed in the November 1978 election.

Campus Groups & LGBTQ+ Events

In the 1960s and 1970s, numerous organizations and communal spaces were established for and by the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside. University campuses often play an important role for the LGBTQ+ community by providing safe and inclusive spaces and establishing community centers and social groups. This is the case at the University of California, Riverside, which fostered numerous spaces for the LGBTQ+ community over the course of its history. Beginning in the 1970s, UCR established a Women’s Resource Center, Gay Student Union, LGBTQ Center, and hosted women’s day/week, and numerous other significant events.

Moreover, UCR and the greater UC system were among the first to protect LGBTQ+ employees.²³⁸ Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Edgar W. Butler, professor of sociology at UCR, engaged in various efforts to advocate for homosexual relationships. He served on the board of advisors for All Together, a membership group that sought to support “alternative relationships” with a variety of resources including professional, economic, and legal assistance.²³⁹ Butler also served as the director of an annual academic conference called Lifestyles, which looked at the family unit through the context of “unique lifestyles.”²⁴⁰ The conference was popular in academic circles, with approximately 1,000 attendees in 1979.

²³⁵ Addresses of current residents are not included in this document.

²³⁶ Sue Parker, “Prop. 6 Criticized at Noon,” *The Highlander* 25, no. 4 (October 26, 1978): 2; Brad Landowski, “Briggs Initiative – Just a Cheap Shot at Gays,” *The Highlander* 25, no. 2 (October 12, 1978): 9.

²³⁷ Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 11, 2022.

²³⁸ University of California and Harvard Protect Gays.” *Sexual Law Reporter*, vol. 3, no. 4, July–October 1977, p. 45. Archives of Sexuality and Gender. Accessed on March 7, 2023.

²³⁹ “All Together.” *Vector*, vol. 12, no. 3, Mar. 1976. Archives of Sexuality and Gender. Accessed 6 Feb. 2023.

²⁴⁰ Series IV. Subject Files: Alphabetical Files: Conventions. 1979-1982. TS The National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce Records, 1973-2000: Series IV. Subject Files Box 140, Folder 16. Cornell University Libraries. Archives of Sexuality and Gender. Accessed on February 6, 2023.

Despite these advancements, there was still homophobic discrimination on campuses. A documented example of this was the 1981 attack of two UCR students by six members of the UCR baseball team in the Barn parking lot. One of the victims was a member of the Lesbian and Gay Students Union who remembered assailants verbally harassing him and calling him ‘fag’ and ‘queer’ before attacking him and his friend.²⁴¹ In a letter to the *San Bernardino County Sun*, a community member wrote “we of the Gay and Lesbian Community Center only hope that the university community will understand the motivation for this violence was prejudice and ignorance and will deal effectively with eradication these problems.”²⁴² As a result of the attack, three of the baseball players were put on disciplinary probation and ordered to undergo an educational program to “increase their awareness and tolerance for the homosexual lifestyle.”²⁴³ UCR later made concerted efforts to create safe spaces for LGBTQ community.²⁴⁴

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

Women’s Resource Center

UCR’s Women’s Resource Center (WRC) was founded in 1973 as an “action-oriented women’s space providing referrals, educational programs, speakers and services for women.”²⁴⁵ The center became an important site for women-only events and served a largely lesbian feminist agenda. The WRC became a “place of progressive women’s politics, a bastion of activism and a location where all women can come together to share poetry, spoken word, and feminist readings.”²⁴⁶ The WRC adopted a group decision-making process for the organization, rather than the traditional hierarchical structure. It provided resources for self-defense, affirmative-action advocacy, welfare and prison reform, domestic abuse, rape prevention, and sexuality and LGBTQ+ rights.

The WRC arranged for notable speakers; hosted a radio show “Women’s Place/Women’s Space” on KUCR; operated a Campus Safety Escort Service; and sent speakers to high schools on contemporary women-related issues. The group established a Rape Crisis Center with a 24-hour hot line, the only rape crisis center in the entire county at that time. One of the WRC’s more popular programs was the Prison Tutorial, which organized female students to tutor inmates at the California Institute for Women outside Corona.²⁴⁷ The WRC was instrumental in the establishment of the university’s women’s studies major in 1978.²⁴⁸

²⁴¹ Devon Colton, “Two Students Attacked by Baseball Players,” *The Highlander* 27, no. 18 (March 12, 1981): 3-5.

²⁴² Craig Henderson, “Proper Punishment for Attackers of Gays,” *San Bernardino Sun*, March 22, 1981, 18.

²⁴³ “Three University of California, Riverside Baseball Players,” *UPI*, April 15, 1981, accessed on March 31, 2023 at:

<https://www.upi.com/Archives/1981/04/15/Three-University-of-California-Riverside-baseball-players-have-been/2966356158800/>

²⁴⁴ In 1996, UCR established a minor in Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual studies. UCR and UC Berkeley, which established a program at the same time, were the first two University of California campuses to offer the program. This notable program was established after decades of activism on the UCR campus. “Gay Studies Minor Okayed at UC Riverside,” *Metro*, June 26, 1996, A-8.

²⁴⁵ “Our History,” UC Riverside Women’s Resource Center, accessed on March 13, 2023, at: <https://wrc.ucr.edu/who-we-are/our-history#1973>.

²⁴⁶ “Our History,” UC Riverside Women’s Resource Center.

²⁴⁷ Jeannine Kadow, “The Women’s Resource Center: Yesterday and Today, But What About Tomorrow?” *The Highlander* 26, no. 25 (May 11, 1978): 3.

²⁴⁸ Jeannine Kadow, “New Women’s Studies Minor Approved by Academic Senate,” *The Highlander* 26, no. 17 (March 2, 1978): 5.



Women's Resource Center Administrators: Jane Brown, Mary Drummond, and Pat Craven, 1978. *The Highlander*.

Members of the group were predominantly white feminists and lesbians, which drew criticism for to the WRC for overlooking intersectional identity politics of women of color. In 1976, a coalition against the WRC was formed, claiming that the WRC was not “radical” enough and did not represent women of color. The chancellor requested an in-depth, comprehensive evaluation of the group. The subsequent 142-page report concluded that a women’s center was both needed and wanted, and suggested the WRC publicize itself more for greater representation and inclusivity.²⁴⁹

International Women’s Day/Women’s Week

International Women’s Day was established in the early twentieth century and was officially recognized by the United Nations in 1977.²⁵⁰ According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the fight for women’s rights and the fight for LGBTQ+ rights, including lesbian invisibility, are interconnected, and some of the cases that have been “litigated in the LGBTQ space were built on early victories in women’s rights.”²⁵¹ As a result of this interconnectedness, International Women’s Day (and later, Women’s Week) events and publications often included topics relevant to LGBTQ+ rights.

At UCR, a special issue of *The Highlander*, the official student newsletter, was published in recognition of International Women’s Day in March 1971. The special edition included articles such as “Roots of the Oppression: The Family Structure,” “Two Welfare Organizers: Motivation to Fight for Your Rights,” and “Black Liberation and Women’s Liberation.” In addition, there was an article entitled, “Your Sexuality is Your Life,” written by an anonymous author. The article started with “I am a homosexual woman” and recounted the author’s journey to accepting her sexuality. The author recounts attending the Riverside chapter of the Gay Liberation Front’s meeting on the UCR campus, where she discussed her “confusion and frustration.” At first debating whether she should live openly as a homosexual and “probably jeopardize any career that I may have planned,” she

²⁴⁹ Kadow, “The Women’s Resource Center,” *The Highlander*, 3.

²⁵⁰ United Nations, “International Women’s Day 8 March,” <https://www.un.org/en/observances/womens-day/background> (accessed April 6, 2023).

²⁵¹ ACLU, “How Women’s Rights Paved the Way for Gender Justice at the ACLU,” <https://www.aclu.org/news/womens-rights/how-womens-rights-paved-the-way-for-gender-justice-at-the-aclu> (accessed April 6, 2023).

ultimately decided that “at least for today, gay is my identity. I feel comfortable with it.” The author writes:

I am sick of people who want to categorize me or who attempt to psychoanalyze my head. Why do people want to tell me what “caused” me to be gay? The reactions I get are incredible: straight men become highly defensive, ultramasculine [*sic*] and giggle a lot. Straight women friends fast become distant acquaintances. How can I respond to someone who calls me sick? I do have conflicts, yes, but since I have become more overt, I am happier. There are straight people who have accepted the recent change in my personality. We communicate on a more human level. That’s all I hope for with anyone.²⁵²

In 1976, UCR Women’s Week hosted a panel on lesbianism and anarchy. Discussing the feminist aspects of anarchy, liberalism, and lesbianism, students Jacqueline May, Jan Schirchild, and Barbara White, offered different approaches to achieving greater equality for women. The discussion included other organizations supportive of women’s rights, including the lesbian rap group and the Riverside Rape Crisis Center.²⁵³



The Highlander, Women’s Week issues, 1971 and 1975. University of California, Riverside.

Gay Student Union/Lesbian and Gay Student Union/Queer Alliance

The Gay Student Union (GSU) was formed in 1970 as a place where students could openly socialize as gay without harassment. As described by the club’s Executive Commissioner Alan Edwards in 1978, the GSU sought to “provide a psychological atmosphere on campus where people are comfortable with their homosexuality. It’s something that should exist at UCR because there are gay people on campus.”²⁵⁴ In 1980, student and gay activist Ron Kraus hoped that the GSU and

²⁵² Anonymous, “Your Sexuality is Your Life,” *The Highlander* 18, no. 20 (March 8, 1971): 3.

²⁵³ Michael Heyerman, “Panel Argues Lesbianism, Anarchy,” *The Highlander* 23, no. 13 (March 6, 1975): 4.

²⁵⁴ “Student Union Stresses Gay Awareness,” *The Highlander* 26, no. 29 (June 8, 1978): 5.

other organizations would “assist homosexuals and lexbians [sic] to recognize themselves as ‘full human beings,’ and that it’s O.K. to be gay.”²⁵⁵

The GSU held regular meetings, which varied in attendance from five to five hundred students. It organized talks and events, such as the annual National Gay Blue Jeans Day, which was meant to bring awareness to the oppression of the LGBTQ+ community. The group’s “Gay Perspective,” a weekly radio program on KUCR, discussed such topics as lesbianism, gays and religion, and coming out.²⁵⁶ GSU meetings were held in various locations both on and off campus, including regular meetings in the Library South rooms of the Rivera Library.²⁵⁷ There was also a coffee house that held events for the LGBTQ+ community located in a private residence at 2243 University Avenue (demolished). In the early 1980s, the Gay Student Union changed its name to the Lesbian and Gay Student Union (LGSU). In 1984, co-chair of the LGSU wrote:

Homosexuality is dangerous to the ruling class of white heterosexual males because it is not set. I would like to see the gay and lesbian movement get to where we can feel comfortable having families and reincorporate ourselves into society, which is threatened by us now.²⁵⁸



UCR Rivera Library, 1954. Photographs by Julius Shulman. ©J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Highlander Hall (demolished) was an important center for GSU activities on campus. This included regular Monday meetings of the GSU in the 1990s;²⁵⁹ the 1991, “Monte Carlo Night” fundraiser, co-hosted with the Southern California Women for Understanding (SCWU);²⁶⁰ And as a meeting point for other events and activities.²⁶¹

²⁵⁵ “Forum Provides Gay Interaction,” *The Highlander* 26, no. 18 (March 6, 1980): 5.

²⁵⁶ “Student Union Stresses Gay Awareness,” *The Highlander* 26, no. 29 (June 8, 1978): 5.

²⁵⁷ “Gay Student Union Topics for March;” and “Exploring Human Sexuality,” Chandler Collection, Box 14.

²⁵⁸ “Gay Rights: Reality or Wishful Thinking,” *The Highlander* 29, no. 17(March 8, 1984): 4.

²⁵⁹ “Inland Valley,” *Lesbian News* 20, no. 7 (February 1995): 73.

²⁶⁰ Advertisement, *Lesbian News* 16, no. 7 (February 1991).

²⁶¹ “SCWA Calendar,” *SCQU Newsletter* 15, no. 2 (April-May 1991): 14.

Today, the Lesbian and Gay Student Union is known as the Queer Alliance. It is credited as the longest-running LGBTQ+-focused student organization at UCR. Queer Alliance is most popularly known for its Pride Prom, which started in 2003 for local area high school students, community college students, and members of UCR's LGBTQ+ and allies' community. In 2004, Queer Alliance initiated the Dragalicious Drag Ball, as a fundraiser for UCR student scholarships.²⁶² In 2004, Tranquil Calley established a scholarship for queer students on campus in honor of her child, Kalyn Smith-Tranquil'son, one of the students targeted by members of the UCR baseball team in 1981.

LGBT Resource Center

In 1993, UCR's LGBT Resource Center (LGBTRC) opened under the leadership of Steven Shum. It was the first professionally staffed LGBT center on any campus in California and west of Iowa.²⁶³ Three years later, UCR became the first UC campus to offer an LGBT studies minor. UCR LGBT students joined LIFE Lobby at the steps of the Capitol in 1996 for Queer Youth Lobby Day. In 1997, Maggie Hawkins became director of the LGBTRC, and annual Pride events became a campus staple. Pride events featured NEA Four notables, including performance artist Tim Miller in 1999.²⁶⁴ Since 2000, the center has been directed by Nancy Jean Tubbs.²⁶⁵ In 2004, UCR Housing, the LGBT Resource Center, and the student organization Students for the Equality of Queers (SEQs) collaborated to plan a new LGBTQ+ living learning community that would also provide gender inclusive housing for all residents. Stonewall Hall and a Gender-Neutral Housing option opened the following academic year, making UCR the first public institution in the nation to offer a gender inclusive housing option to all students.²⁶⁶

Charles Weis: UCR Psychology Center and Chancellor's Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS

A review of queer organizations on UCR campus would be incomplete without discussing the work of Charles Weis (1949-1990), who directed the UCR Counseling Center from 1979 to 1989 and established the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS at UCR. Since his death from AIDS related complications in 1990, the Charles B. Weis Jr. Endowment Fund has supported the continued work of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS and projects that address HIV/AIDS awareness on campus.

²⁶² Information about the Queer Student alliance from the UCR LGBTRC website; pending verification. See https://out.ucr.edu/our-campus/student-organizations#ace_of_clubs (accessed April 6, 2023).

²⁶³ Ryan Ritchie, "A Matter of Pride," UCR Magazine, October 2013, 25-27; <https://magazinearchive.ucr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/UCR-Magazine-Fall-2013.pdf>; Rincon Consultants, Inc., *University of California, Riverside Final Historic Resources Survey Report*, prepared for the University of California, Riverside (May 2021), 73.

²⁶⁴ The NEA 4 refers to Karen Finley, John Fleck, Holly Hughes, and Tim Miller, early 1990s performance artists whose work was funded in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and then de-funded after attacks on the treatment of themes of gender, sexuality, subjugation, and personal trauma in their work. For additional information, see New Residence Museum, "NEA 4 in Context," <https://www.newmuseum.org/pages/view/residence-1> (accessed April 6, 2023).

²⁶⁵ Toi Thibeaux has been involved with the center since 2008.

²⁶⁶ Steven Shum, "LGBRC," *InQueery* (LGBRC Newsletter), January 1996. Publications such as *InQueery*, begun in 1996, documented the happenings and affiliated programs with the UCR Counseling Center and organizations such as the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on the Status of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexuals, composed of staff, faculty, and students. The queer student newspaper, *La Vie en Rose* (Winter 1999) expressed the role of student activism under the tenure of Maggie Hawkins as LGBTRC director, and *Queeriosity* another student paper begun in 2003, offered more about the programs under Nancy Jean Tubbs, who became director of the center in 2000. Also see UCR LGBTQ Resource Center website, https://out.ucr.edu/who-we-are/our-mission-and-history#our_staffing_history.

An out and influential member of the gay community on campus and in the wider community, Weis established mental health resources that met the unique needs of gay and lesbians during the height of the AIDS epidemic. Weis's work in the UCR Counseling center involved setting up a mentor program for gay and lesbian students. Within the wider community, Weis served on the board of directors at the Riverside Area Rape Crisis Center, trained volunteers in crisis intervention at the Volunteer Center of Riverside and Inland AIDS Project and was an active member of the Political Action Committee for Elections (PACE). Weis was also involved in 1987 with passing Riverside City Ordinance 5599, an AIDS Anti-Discrimination Ordinance that is discussed in further detail in the following chapter.

Weis was outspoken about the effects of HIV/AIDS on the gay community in Riverside, linking ignorance about homosexuality and the disease to hateful acts. Both Weis and his partner of 15 years, David Susky (1948-1990), insisted that their deaths be attributed to AIDS, reminding Riverside residents that AIDS "affects the people next door."²⁶⁷

Notable Campus Lectures and Events

UCR held myriad events that helped educate the community on gender and sexuality, including a robust pride week featuring speakers at Highlander Hall, a day of silence, and a day where gay high school students could visit the campus.²⁶⁸ UCR also held annual Riverside/San Bernardino Gay/Lesbian Pride Festivals every July, which typically included both entertainment and informational events. In 1997, proceeds from the festival benefited the Inland AIDS Project.²⁶⁹

In 1984, the school's extension class on human sexuality invited Christine Jorgensen to give a lecture at the campus. Jorgensen was an ex-GI who became famous in the 1950s for undergoing gender reassignment. When asked about the challenges of her transformation, she replied "I think the most difficult hurdle for male-to-female transsexuals is the Cinderella syndrome: the idea that you go in a truck driver and come out Marilyn Monroe." A student at the talk noted that meeting Jorgensen represented the "fulfillment of a lifelong ambition."²⁷⁰

Other clubs on campus discussed gay rights through an intersectional lens. In 1971, the Young Socialist Alliance advertised a presentation/forum titled "Gay Liberation and Socialist Reform" held at UCR at the South Commons Lounge (demolished) in the University Commons. The event was part of a larger lecture series that presented socialist views on different sociocultural topics, including Chicano, Black, and Women's liberation.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ "Charles Weis: In Memoriam," *UC Riverside Committee on HIV/AIDS*, n.d., accessed on July 13, 2023 at: <https://hiv-aids.ucr.edu/charles-weis-memoriam>.

²⁶⁸ PACE Meeting Minutes, March 12, 1997, Kay Berryhill-Smith & Connie Confer Collection, University of California Riverside Rivera Library, Riverside, CA.

²⁶⁹ "Gay Pride Festival," *The Californian*, June 26, 1997, 15.

²⁷⁰ David Haldane, "Christine Jorgensen: 33 Years as a Woman," *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, February 17, 1984.

²⁷¹ "Gay Liberation and Socialist Revolution," flier, May 27, 1971, Robert Chandler Collection, UCR Special Collections, Box 7, Folder 4.

Other notable speakers included Betty Berzon, who lectured on campus in the 1970s. Berzon was a noted lesbian psychotherapist who was among the first to push back on the stigmas against homosexuals that were prevalent in the psychiatric community.²⁷²

People's Place (3617-A Canyon Crest Drive) was an organization located in the Bannockburn student housing and commercial center. During the 1970s, People's Place collaborated with UCR's Gay Student Union to host lectures on sexuality. One of the lectures, "The Gay Experience" was hosted in the UCR campus International Lounge (demolished) in March of 1971. This lecture was part of a series called "Exploring Human Sexuality" that put gay rights and homosexuality alongside other issues, including disability and feminism.²⁷³

RIVERSIDE JUNIOR COLLEGE (RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE)

In 1916, Riverside Junior College (now known as Riverside City College) was established as an extension of Poly High School in Riverside. The college was the seventh community college founded in California. Beginning in the 1990s, students formed the Gender & Sexualities Awareness Club (now known as the Sexuality & Gender Acceptance Club). The LGBTQ+ Ally program was established in the early 2000s to train employees on how to be allies and create safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students.²⁷⁴

Community Organizations, Institutions & Safe Spaces

As a result of the Gay Liberation Movement, a number of LGBTQ+ community groups and organizations were founded in Riverside in the 1960s and 1970s. Seeking to support the community, create safe communal spaces, and continue the fight for civil rights, these groups became integral to the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside. Known examples include religious institutions, such as the Metropolitan Community Church, and social groups, such as the Professional Advisory Committee.

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH/UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH

In October 1968, Reverend Troy Perry founded the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) in Los Angeles, as the earliest continuous religious congregation to provide a safe ministry to the gay community and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights.²⁷⁵ Rev. Perry formed the group following the 1968 Los Angeles police raid on The Patch, a popular gay bar in the Wilmington neighborhood of Los Angeles. Perry was at the bar the night of the raid on a date. His date was arrested in the raid and,

²⁷² Writings on Gay and Lesbian History Series 3. 1940-1997. Biographies Subseries 3.2. 1970-1997: Berzon, Betty 1993. 1993. MS Jim Kepner Papers: Writings on Gay and Lesbian History Series 3. 1940-1997 Box 15, Folder 18. ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives. Archives of Sexuality and Gender. February 6, 2023.

²⁷³ "There's No Place Like People," flier, May 4, 1975, Robert Chandler Collection, UCR Special Collections, Box 14, Folder 2.

²⁷⁴ The program was created in 2011 and was assisted by Nancy Jean Tubbs, who allowed the group to use the UCR training program as a model. Chani Beeman and Jan Muto initiated the District-wide program at Riverside City College, Moreno Valley College, and Norco College; "Riverside City College ALLY and LGBTQIA," *Riverside City College*, accessed on February 22, 2023, at: <https://www.rcc.edu/student-support/cultural-engagement-resources/ally.html>.

²⁷⁵ Metropolitan Community Churches, *Forty Years of Faith, Hope, and Love*, 16, accessed on February 6, 2023 at: <https://issuu.com/mccchurches/docs/mcc40thannbookcarlos>; Rev. Tom Markham, "MCC, The Gay Church," *MCC News* 3, no. 28, April 25, 1971.

upon release, told Perry that “we’re just a bunch of dirty queers. God doesn’t care [about us.]”²⁷⁶ This event inspired Perry to establish a congregation for the gay community.

Rev. Perry believed that to successfully advocate for LGBTQ+ rights throughout the country, the first step was to shift the opinion of the church leadership. Once members of the church establishment welcomed the LGBTQ+ community, then change could come to the legal landscape.²⁷⁷ Within four years, the church had grown to 35 congregations. Representatives from each congregation voted during the 1972 conference to establish MCC as a permanent denomination.²⁷⁸

In early 1972, Trinity Metropolitan Community Church (Trinity MCC) was founded in Riverside to serve members of the LGBTQ+ community in the Inland Empire.²⁷⁹ On March 5, 1972, Trinity MCC held its first service in the living room of a congregant with Reverend Hal Young as Interim Pastor.²⁸⁰ In its first Newsletter to potential congregants, Trinity MCC was described as a “Christian outreach to the homophile community.”²⁸¹ In addition to the Sunday services, Trinity MCC provided programs to support the Inland Empire’s gay community. Early in its history, the church established a Crisis Intervention Committee, hosted Alcoholics Together meetings (formed by a group of gay and lesbian members of Alcoholics Anonymous to support the LGBTQ+ community) and conducted marriage ceremonies.



Universalist Unitarian Church, temporary home of Trinity MCC, 2023. HRG.

²⁷⁶ City of Los Angeles, “Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Context Statement,” prepared by GPA Consulting, September 2014, 49.

²⁷⁷ Los Angeles Conservancy, “Metropolitan Community Church: Overview,” <https://www.laconservancy.org/locations/metropolitan-community-church> (Accessed 6 February 2023).

²⁷⁸ Los Angeles Conservancy, “Metropolitan Community Church: Overview,” <https://www.laconservancy.org/locations/metropolitan-community-church> (Accessed 6 February 2023).

²⁷⁹ “From the Pastor’s Desk,” *The Triangle* 1, no. 1, November 26, 1972, 5.

²⁸⁰ “Trinity Anniversary,” *The Triangle* 1, no. 4, February 25, 1973, 1; the establishment of a Riverside mission was acknowledged in the May 1972 issue of *In Unity*. <https://issuu.com/mccchurches> (Accessed 3 February 2023).

²⁸¹ “A Note to Our Readers,” *The Triangle* 1, no. 1, November 26, 1972, 2.

Additionally, regular social gatherings for congregants were held after Sunday services, including potluck suppers and social hours, planned by the church's Social Committee. Crisis Intervention services were expanded in 1973 to include a crisis hotline that operated on weekends.²⁸² Trinity MCC's newsletter, *The Triangle*, was the only free publication in circulation in the Inland Empire that was exclusively intended for the LGBTQ+ community. The newsletter was distributed to several neighboring communities including San Bernardino, Rialto, Fontana, Pomona, Pasadena, and Palm Springs.²⁸³

Following receipt of its charter in July 1972, Trinity MCC operated out of the Universalist Unitarian Church in Riverside (3525 Mission Inn Ave). The Universalist Unitarian Church shared their space with Trinity MCC in exchange for care of the church yard.²⁸⁴ Trinity MCC held services at the Universalist Unitarian Church until at least June 1973; sometime between June 1973 and February 1976 they relocated to 2928 University Avenue in Riverside.²⁸⁵ On August 13, 1976, 2928 University Avenue was damaged by a fire.²⁸⁶ This was one of several fires that occurred in MCC buildings across the country in the 1970s, which may have been set by arsonists.²⁸⁷

Trinity MCC relocated to San Bernardino for several years, from 1977 until at least mid-1980. The congregation went dormant in the early 1980s.²⁸⁸ By 1983, MCC returned to Riverside as the Good Shepherd Metropolitan Community Church, led by Pastor Larry Bernier.²⁸⁹ In the early 1980s, MCC's services and programs were held temporarily in the Menagerie, a nightclub in downtown Riverside established specifically to serve the gay community, until a permanent building could be secured. In 1984, the congregation moved to 5327 Mission Boulevard in neighboring Rubidoux. Shortly after this move, the church was again operating out of rented facilities, occasionally in Riverside.

In 1986, MCC held a 50-hour AIDS vigil of prayer at Magnolia United Presbyterian Church (7200 Magnolia Avenue). The vigil posted cards bearing AIDS victims' names. Trinity Reverend Paul Breton declared that "each of these [names] is a real person. Someone who has tested positive for (AIDS)... someone who has died from AIDS. Pray for them, their families and friends. These are real people."²⁹⁰

²⁸² "Gay Crisis Intervention," *The Triangle*, 1, no. 4, February 25, 1973, 7; "Fellowship in Action," *In Unity*, Spring Quarter 1973, 13. <https://issuu.com/mccchurches> (Accessed online 3 February 2023).

²⁸³ "Help!" *The Triangle* 1, no. 3, January 24, 1973, 5.

²⁸⁴ "Board of Directors," *The Triangle*, Vol. 1, No. 1, November 26, 1974, 4.

²⁸⁵ "Hot Line established for gays," an article published on June 22, 1973 in the *San Bernardino Sun* lists the Unitarian-Universalist Church as the church's address. A February 1976 advertisement in the same publication lists the address 2928 University Avenue & Park in Riverside.

²⁸⁶ "Fire Damage, \$31,000" *San Bernardino Sun*, August 15, 1976.

²⁸⁷ In 1972, several MCC buildings were damaged or destroyed by fire including MCC Los Angeles and MCC Nashville. In June of 1972, a fire was deliberately set in a French Quarter bar where MCC New Orleans was meeting, which resulted in a tragic loss of life. Twenty-nine people perished, including Reverend William Larson, an MCC Pastor. Metropolitan Community Churches, *Forty Years of Faith, Hope, and Love*, 16. <https://issuu.com/mccchurches> (Accessed online 3 February 2023).

²⁸⁸ Deborah Dorsett, "Inland Items," *The Lesbian News* 5, no. 11, June 1980, 8.

²⁸⁹ "Gays..." *San Bernardino Sun*, July 23, 1983.

²⁹⁰ "Prayer Vigil for AIDS Victims," *San Bernardino Sun*, September 9, 1986.



Worshippers and Reverend Jerry Motto at the Trinity MCC AIDS vigil, 1986 (left); Magnolia United Presbyterian Church, c. 1930 (right). *San Bernardino Sun*; *University of California Riverside Rivera Library*.

Supporters of the vigil included Roman Catholics, United Methodists, United Church of Christ members, United Presbyterians, and a Pentecostal minister. MCC Reverend Jerry H. Motto said of the event, “It’s been a beautiful weekend. There’s not been a problem, a protest or a picketer. I’ve been very pleased with the response we’ve received from the religious community.”²⁹¹

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The Professional Advisory Council (PAC) was a non-profit organization founded in 1977 to support political and social action among the gay and lesbian community in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Early members included Irvin Howard, Linda Elliott, John Tibbals, Ruth Halman, Craig Henderson, and Allen R. Briggs, among others. It was an influential group within the community, and by 1981 it had amassed 400 members; by 1987 it had a mailing list of over 500.²⁹²

The PAC financed the Gay and Lesbian Community Center and Hotline beginning in 1979. Through the community center and hotline, they provided a variety of services to the LGBTQ community including crisis and peer counseling; weekly rap groups; mediation/arbitration commission to assist with dispute settlement; monthly venereal disease clinic; and information and resources including a library and speakers bureau. The PAC also partnered with other civil rights organizations, including the ACLU and NOW, to provide workshops on gay rights.²⁹³

²⁹¹ “Prayer Vigil for AIDS Victims,” *San Bernardino Sun*, September 9, 1986.

²⁹² “Center Provides Information for Gay Men and Lesbians,” *San Bernardino Sun*, 1 February 1981; “Inland Empire Gays: A Life Apart” *San Bernardino Sun*, November 22, 1987.

²⁹³ “Gay Rights Workshop Planned for S.B.,” *San Bernardino Sun*, May 11, 1979; Kathy Rebello-Rees, “Center Provides Information for Gay Men and Lesbians,” *San Bernardino County Sun*, February 1, 1981, 33.

LGBTQ+ HISTORY IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

AIDS Epidemic / End of the Sexual Liberation Era

The Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic is among the most significant events to shape LGBTQ+ history throughout the world. As noted in the LGBT Context Statement prepared for the City of Los Angeles:

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 20th 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.²⁹⁴

The AIDS epidemic again brought sexuality, and specifically homosexuality, to the forefront on the national, state, and local stage. In June 1981, the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) published an article that identified unusual infections in five young, previously healthy gay men in Los Angeles. By the end of the year, there were over three hundred reported cases of individuals with severe immune deficiency. In May 1982, the *New York Times* published the first mention of the term “GRID,” or Gay-Related Immune Deficiency, which deepened the public perception that the disease only affected gay men. A few months later, the CDC adopted the term “AIDS” to describe the disease. However, Congress did not approve research funding for HIV/AIDS until May 1983, nearly two years after the virus was first identified. President Ronald Reagan did not publicly acknowledge the AIDS epidemic until September 17, 1985. Continued denial from conservative factions at all levels of government played a significant role in ongoing discrimination against queer people and the heightened the death toll from HIV/AIDS.

Across the nation, the failure of the federal government to acknowledge the existence of AIDS in the early days of the epidemic resulted in the organization of grassroots gay and lesbian organizations during this period, including the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, better known as ACT UP (formed 1987), and Queer Nation (formed 1990). These groups worked for the political advancement of LGBTQ+ social rights, as well as greater legal protections in housing, the workplace, and beyond. These health and social activism groups aimed at combating social stigma faced by queer people who had or were perceived to have HIV/AIDS. ACT UP blamed government inaction as a significant contributor to high death tolls in early years. These organizations often employed confrontational methods of public demonstration and political protest to bring attention

²⁹⁴ City of Los Angeles, “Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Context Statement,” prepared by GPA Consulting, September 2014, 2.

to the cause. This included staging “die-ins,” during which protestors laid motionless in the street to symbolize people who died from AIDS.

In addition, activists increasingly pushed for legal protection within their local communities. By 1991, Riverside was identified by the CDC as one of the 40 metropolitan areas most heavily affected by the HIV epidemic.²⁹⁵ In Riverside, networks of short-lived but influential political action groups organized around specific pieces of legislation (such as AB 101 and Proposition 6). Activist groups conducted rallies, demonstrations, political campaigns, and fundraising efforts centered on promoting political candidates and legislation that would benefit the queer community. Prior to the election of the first out lesbian council member in 2019, the City of Riverside Human Relations Commission was an arena for gay and lesbian residents to work for LGBTQ+ rights within local government. Notable local advocates include Kay Berryhill-Smith, who served as the first openly gay commissioner in 1990, David St. Pierre, Chani Beeman, and Robert “Bob” Melsh. In 1991, representation of LGBT members in the local political space was crucial, as anti-LGBT commission member Lillian Hernandez circulated a ballot measure to reverse the city’s anti-discrimination AIDS ordinance and prevent city funding from being spent on “the homosexual agenda.”

THE INLAND AIDS PROJECT (IAP)

In Riverside, the queer community and its allies organized to combat the spread of AIDS, counter discrimination, and provide care for individuals infected with HIV/AIDS. A key organization in this fight was the Inland AIDS Project (IAP), incorporated in 1983. The group occupied several sites over the course of its history, including 3638 University Avenue, Suite 223; 1240 Palmyrita Avenue #E; 6700 Indiana Avenue; and 6040 Magnolia Avenue. The IAP’s main goal was to provide legal, financial, educational, and emotional support to individuals infected with HIV/AIDS. Connie Confer spearheaded IAP efforts to provide legal assistance by writing wills, and later was significant in keeping the organization afloat during economically difficult times. As Chani Beeman remembers. “A lot of the people I knew working on it were women, lesbians, making sure that the center was available.”²⁹⁶

The IAP challenged the loss of employment due to discrimination and handled the estates of those who died from HIV/AIDS. The group also provided financial help, and health and nursing support, which was particularly important given the cost of healthcare in the United States. Fundraising efforts were conducted at multiple locations in the region to support these efforts, often with celebrity guests.²⁹⁷ Dr. Charles Weis, who directed UCR’s Counseling Center, led one of IAP’s support groups for “persons experiencing concerns and anxiety about their [HIV] seropositivity...[and] those who fear HIV testing because of the possible consequences.”²⁹⁸

²⁹⁵ “Funding Alert,” United States Conference of Mayors, Washington, DC (1992), The National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce Records, Series II: Field Files Box 112, Folder 37.

²⁹⁶ Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 24, 2023.

²⁹⁷ See PACE Newsletters in the UCR Kay Smith and Connie Confer Collection, including March 1994 flier for fundraiser with Bea Arthur; Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 22, 2022.

²⁹⁸ Inland AIDS project HIV/HTLV-III Support Group, 1987.

Additionally, the IAP helped to educate and increase awareness about AIDS within the Riverside community by sharing information on how to limit the spread of AIDS; they held annual marches to bring attention to the AIDS epidemic; and they assisted grieving families and participated in events to memorialize and honor those who had lost their lives.²⁹⁹

The IAP was actively involved in public education for the citizens of Riverside and specifically the gay and lesbian community. In 1993, Fairmount Park, a popular location for gay cruising, became the center of a debate on AIDS and safety.³⁰⁰ At a neighborhood meeting, several residents claimed that although the practice of cruising in the park had been common for over 20 years, men had begun to “actively” solicit others walking in the park. Residents at the meeting claimed that over the course of an average day, more than 100 men entered the area for “quick, anonymous sex.”³⁰¹ The police chief at the meeting replied that police would investigate residents’ claims that over 20 boys had been molested in the area, but reminded residents that “homosexuality is not illegal, nor is being homosexual in a public park... we are never going to eliminate homosexual conduct in public parks.”³⁰²

In June of that year, facing increased discrimination from the community and over anxieties regarding the transmission of AIDS, members of the gay and lesbian community, including Kay Berryhill-Smith, provided advice on how to combat public sex in Fairmount Park. Community members recommended the police department enact a campaign of deterrence, education, and information. Consultation with the IAP was one of the major results of these efforts, and the IAP produced pamphlets and held talks aimed at educating the public and addressing public sex at the park.³⁰³

AIDS NAMES PROJECT QUILT

The national NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt was initiated in 1985 by longtime human rights activist Cleve Jones. The project was originally intended to memorialize the 1978 assassinations of San Francisco politicians Harvey Milk and George Moscone and expanded to remember the thousands lost to AIDS. The quilt is composed of individual three-foot by six-foot panels, representing the size of the average grave. The quilt was particularly resonant in the early years of the AIDS epidemic, when proper funeral celebrations were not always possible due to social stigma against gay men and fear of the disease. As a result, many funeral homes refused to embalm, bury,

²⁹⁹ “Protect Yourself, Know the Facts,” sticker, in box 3, folder 17, Kay Smith & Connie Confer Collection, University of California Riverside Rivera Library, Riverside, CA; IAP AIDS Walk, photograph, Facebook, posted April 12, 2012. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=381179228581766&set=ecnf.100067729723793>.

³⁰⁰ Fairmount Park was also listed as a popular gay cruising area in the 1976 through 1984 editions of Damron’s guide, which is discussed further in the section below. In 1987, longtime Democratic Assemblyman Walter Ingalls, who had never publicly come out as gay, pleaded guilty to charges of lewd conduct after being arrested by undercover policemen who he had propositioned in the park restroom. It spelled the end of his political career. Mark Takano, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, June 9, 2023; Jane Carney, interview by Catherine Gudis, July 5, 2023; “Ex-Assemblyman Cited for Lewd Conduct,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 4, 1986; and Dan Walters, “Coming Out of the Closet Best for Politicians,” *Orange County Register*, March 9, 2010.

³⁰¹ “Gay Sex in Park Issue Dominated Meeting,” *The Press-Enterprise*, July 15, 1993.

³⁰² “Gay Sex in Park Issue Dominated Meeting,” *The Press-Enterprise*, July 15, 1993.

³⁰³ Memorandum for Immediate Release, “Gay and Lesbian Community Responds to City’s Request for Help with Fairmount Park,” 1993, on file at ONE Archives.

or cremate the remains of gay people and those who died from AIDS. Maggie Hawkins recalled one such instance:

“[A]t least locally, the people that were...doing the caregiving during that time were primarily women, you know, and obviously gay men, you know, and just queer, queer folk in general were the ones that provided care... I remember going to see a friend who was positive and very sick, who was actually in Kaiser [Permanente] and, you know, like we had to suit up, like in hazmat suits practically and it was pretty isolated. Now that was a typical experience. And so it really was the queer folks that did the bulk of the caregiving at that point. And I also remember and it was that same friend when he died– and he was only like thirty-two when he died–one of the local mortuaries, when they found out he had died from AIDS, all of us showed up for the funeral and they hadn't prepared the body. They hadn't embalmed [the body] and they hadn't done anything because he died from complications from AIDS. And I just remember I mean; his mother just went ballistic on the funeral home.”³⁰⁴

The quilt also raised awareness for the AIDS epidemic by providing a stark visual representation of the devastating impacts of the disease. The quilt was displayed for the first time at the National Mall in Washington D.C. in 1987.³⁰⁵ In 1988 and 1989, there were two national tours of the quilt which raised millions of dollars for AIDS service organizations. At the conclusion of the second tour in 1989, panels collected from across the country were added to the quilt, increasing its size from 8,000 to over 12,000 panels.

Riverside activist and resident Madaline Lee became involved in the AIDS Name Project Quilt and became close with Cleve Jones; they helped add local names to the quilt and to bring it to Riverside with the support of Kay Berryhill-Smith, who was a commissioner on the City's Human Relations Commission in 1990. Jones and Lee held the exhibit in the Riverside Convention Center in 1991, where it was accompanied by other events, including a walk to raise funds benefiting the Inland AIDS Project, and a tour by gay rights advocates.³⁰⁶ Activist Connie Confer remembered the event:

People were very inventive and very creative in the way they represented their loved one's lives [in the quilt]. It was a very, very touching experience to experience in Washington, even more so in Riverside. The enormity of it in Washington was overwhelming, but there were so many local people displayed in Riverside. And to see people who, you know, weren't family members, they were

³⁰⁴ Maggie Hawkins, interview by Jill Surdzial, February 24, 2022.

³⁰⁵ “History,” *AIDS Memorial*, accessed on April 5, 2023 at: <https://www.aidsmemorial.org/quilt-history>.

³⁰⁶ 1990-91 Community Relations Commission Timeline; Joan Radovich, “Anti-gay Rights Initiative Fails,” *Press Enterprise* September 7, 1991, B-1; Alicia Robinson, “Riverside: Gay Rights Activist Who Opened Menagerie Bar Dies,” *Press Enterprise*, December 18, 2010.

community members coming in to just look at it, to be there, to be present, to acknowledge the loss to the community.³⁰⁷

The project was also significant as an educational effort, to combat discriminatory acts at a time when ballot initiatives were being proposed by homophobes, aimed to repeal an ordinance barring discrimination against gay people and people with AIDS. The AIDS quilt sought to promote healing. The Inland Chapter of the NAMES Project continued to meet monthly in 1993 at the Riverside YWCA, to create additional panels for the quilt, which were displayed locally in decades thereafter.³⁰⁸

AIDS MASTERY FOUNDATION

In 1992, the AIDS Mastery Foundation held a fashion show and auction at Shelter West Park, a restored historic home and grounds in Riverside. The fashion show was supplied by Chantilly Place and proprietor Marty Spencer. The auction included fine art photography by Tom Bianchi, a limited-edition book signed by Gore Vidal, and jewelry. The AIDS Mastery Workshop was intended to be an “intensive weekend experience” in a “safe and comfortable environment allowing those dealing with the day-to-day emotional issues around AIDS to examine practical ways of coping and living with HIVC disease while also accessing the support so urgently needed.”³⁰⁹

AIDS LEGISLATION & ACTIVISM IN RIVERSIDE

During the 1980s, public health guidance from the CDC focused on “the four H’s” as the social groups most likely to become infected with AIDS: heroin addicts, homosexuals, Haitians, and hemophiliacs. Although a CDC report clarified that “each group contains many persons who probably have little risk of acquiring AIDS,” the additional attention resulted in social discrimination against these groups.³¹⁰ Within the LGBT community, gay men and transgender women especially faced discrimination. During this period, it was not uncommon for AIDS patients to become homeless or lose their jobs once diagnosed. However, along with significant social, political, and legal discrimination, some cities, including Riverside, enacted proactive policies to protect the civil rights of people diagnosed with AIDS.

AIDS Anti-Discrimination Ordinance 5599, Chapter 6.26 (1987)

In 1987, the Riverside City Council adopted Ordinance 5599, adding Chapter 6.26 “Prohibition Against AIDS Discrimination” to the Riverside City Code. This ordinance protected people with AIDS and AIDS-related conditions from housing and employment discrimination in Riverside. Crucially, the code protected people diagnosed with AIDS, related medical conditions such as HIV, and any “perception that a person is suffering from the medical condition AIDS or ARC [AIDS Related Condition], whether real or imaginary.”³¹¹

³⁰⁷ Connie Confer oral history clip: 01:12:41 - 01:13:23; Inland AIDS Name Project Quilt photograph.

³⁰⁸ *Desert Breeze* 1, no. 7 (March 1993): UCR Smith and Confer collection.

³⁰⁹ “The AIDS Mastery Foundation,” *Gay and Lesbian Times* 232 (June 4, 1992): 10.

³¹⁰ CDC, “Current Trends of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS): Report of Inter-Agency Recommendations”, Monthly Morbidity and Mortality Report (MMWR), March 4, 1983.

³¹¹ Riverside Municipal Code Section 6.26.010.

Section 6.26.020 prevented employers from discriminatory hiring practices, including refusing to hire applicants because of AIDS diagnosis, or segregating applicants based on AIDS status. Employees already working within the city gained protection from discrimination in the workplace, including dismissal, denial of membership, or discrimination against any person with respect to compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment on the basis of AIDS status.

Section 6.26.030 prevented landlords from refusing to lease, adding additional unfavorable stipulations to the lease, and refusing to inspect or repair apartments, on the basis of AIDS status. Further sections gave protection to consumers at businesses, people seeking admission into schools, and access to city facilities services. However, the ordinance did not apply to “bona fide religious organizations” or “where a course of conduct is pursued which is necessary to protect the health or safety of the general public.” The ordinance was first proposed by the Political Action Coalition for Elections of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties (PACE).³¹²

In 1990, Riverside Councilmember Jack B. Clarke, Sr. proposed an ordinance that would prohibit discrimination in employment and housing on the basis of sexual orientation. The ordinance was briefly put on hold until after the July elections. Following the hold, a citizens anti-gay rights group named the “Citizens for Responsible Behavior” organized and circulated a petition to block the ordinance and systematically attack the existing ordinance for anti-discrimination on the basis of AIDS (Ordinance 5599). The group then authored their own initiative that would codify their position. This led to the legal case known as *Citizens for Responsible Behavior v. Superior Court*.³¹³

Citizens for Responsible Behavior v. Superior Court

In 1991, the “Citizens for Responsible Behavior” sought to place a discriminatory initiative entitled “Citizens’ Ordinance Pertaining to Homosexuality and AIDS,” on the City of Riverside ballot. The initiative was spearheaded by the group’s President Robert T. Andersen, Vice President Lillian Hernandez, and Secretary Reverend Harold Peck, among others.³¹⁴ The Riverside Coalition Against Discrimination (RCAD) was founded to oppose the proposed initiative.

The “Citizens for Responsible Behavior” initiative aimed at repealing the City’s 1988 ordinance protections against AIDS discrimination; sought to prevent the City Council from enacting laws that “single out” homosexuals for protection from discrimination; and would prohibit the spending of city funds on any individual or group that ‘promotes, encourages, endorses, legitimizes, or justifies homosexual conduct.’³¹⁵ The group distributed discriminatory pamphlets to Riverside residents which read:

Do you want the City Council to spend your Tax Money to Promote and Encourage Homosexual activity? They can unless you stop them.

³¹² “AIDS Anti-Discrimination Ordinance Approved in Riverside,” *The News*, January 8, 1988.

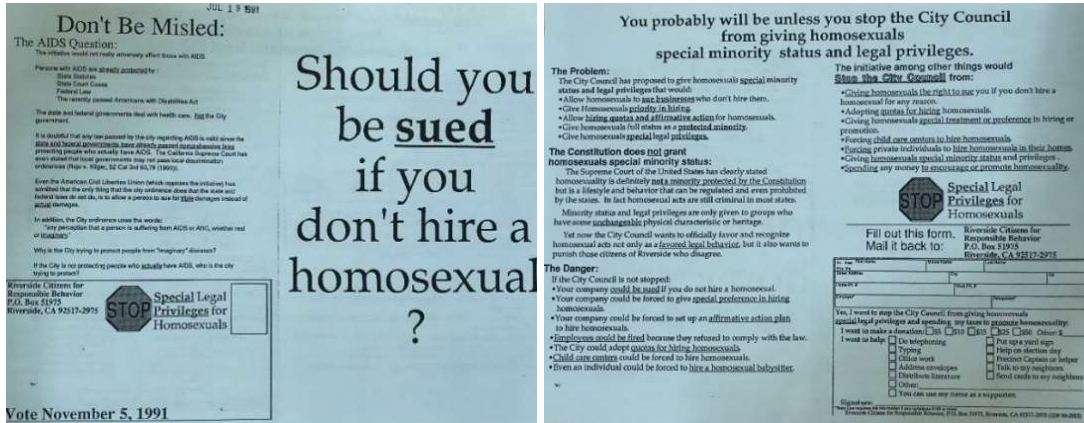
³¹³ Raymond Smith, “Pearson Faces Big Challenge,” *Press-Enterprise*, July 26, 1991; Joan Radovich, “Anti-Gay Rights Measure Backers Lose Court Round,” *Press-Enterprise*, March 13, 1992.

³¹⁴ “Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition,” *Riverside Citizens for Responsible Behavior*, November 18, 1990.

³¹⁵ Augustin Gurza, “Anti-Gay Rights Bill Off Ballot,” *Press-Enterprise*, July 24, 1991.

Should you be sued if you don't hire a homosexual? You probably will be unless you stop the City Council from giving homosexuals special minority status and legal privileges.

The U.S. Supreme Court does not recognize Homosexuals as a minority. Why should the City of Riverside?³¹⁶



Pamphlet distributed by the Citizens for Responsible Behavior, 1991. *ONE Archives*.

The Riverside Coalition Against Discrimination (RCAD) was founded by community activists in response to the proposed ballot measure, with California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB) Professor Irv Howard serving as president. RCAD was a progressive community coalition made up of grassroots activists, students, professionals, community service organizations, and communities of faith. Some Democratic members had previously worked on Jack Clarke's campaign, electing Riverside's first Black Councilmember in 1986, and supported his and other civil rights initiatives.³¹⁷ RCAD solicited support from organizations that provided social services to the LGBT community in town, including the Riverside Public Library and Temple Beth El, which wrote letters officially in support of the LGBT community.

RCAD held community meetings and fundraisers at the homes of active members, including civil rights advocate and UCR Political Science Professor Francis Carney and his activist attorney wife Jane Carney, as well as at local queer social hubs, including the Menagerie and venues at UCR. Using the local press and distributing fliers at local businesses in downtown Riverside, RCAD ran public information campaigns to de-stigmatize homosexuality. RCAD members shadowed Citizen's signature gathering efforts outside of grocery stores and local venues, in order to counteract their disinformation.³¹⁸ This actively combatted the homophobic scare tactics in Riverside Citizens for Responsible Behavior's fliers and news articles, which claimed that homosexuals were unnaturally promiscuous, practiced pedophilia and bestiality, and posed a health hazard to Riverside, among other falsehoods. Smear campaigns against RCAD president Irv Howard claimed he promoted a

³¹⁶ Pamphlet, Citizens for Responsible Behavior, July 13, 1991, on file with the ONE Archives.

³¹⁷ Jane Carney, interview by Catherine Gudis, July 5, 2023; "The Region: Riverside Elects First Black to Council," *Los Angeles Times*, January 16, 1986.

³¹⁸ Maggie Hawkins, personal communication with Alexandra Perlman, July 10, 2023.

“homosexual agenda...could be a pedophile...[or] an AIDS carrier” and posed a danger to children by being a gay educator. In response to this hate speech, RCAD made liberal use of the local press, working connections with local reporters to expose hate campaigns against Howard.³¹⁹

RCAD’s efforts and the role played by Riverside City Attorney Connie Confer resulted in the City Council dismissing the 1991 anti-gay initiative from the ballot. But the legal battle continued at the state court of appeals for the next year. Through three levels of appellate court, three RCAD members provided legal testimony about the detrimental effects that the proposed measure would have on their lives. Confer represented the defense on the case and collaborated with lawyers from the ACLU and national LGBTQ+ rights organization Lambda Legal. Speaking to the nationwide importance of the case, Confer stated, “there were measures like this going on all over in Oregon and in Colorado and Florida and this, there was a big network of groups who were right-wing, somewhat affiliated with religion, who on the basis of their religious beliefs and their belief that homosexuality was wrong and that HIV was punishment for these terrible acts that gay people did.”³²⁰

At each step of the legal battle, the court ruled in favor of the City, finding that the proposed initiative was constitutionally defective, and represented an impermissible effort to amend the City’s charter by ordinance. Following the state appeals court ruling that the initiative should *not* go before voters, the Riverside Citizens for Responsible Behavior group petitioned the California Superior Court to review the case. At the same time, City Attorneys and RCAD applied for declaratory relief, to insist that the ballot initiative was unconstitutional. The two efforts were consolidated. Respondents included not only Riverside City Attorneys and RCAD, but also two petitioners, Dr. Francis Carney and June E. Forman. Notably, neither Carney nor Forman were gay, likely an intentional act to defuse the personal attacks that had characterized previous interactions with Citizens for Responsible Behavior; both petitioners, however, had strong statewide political ties to the Democratic Party. As luck would have it, the case was heard by Riverside Superior Court Judge Charles Field, a former labor lawyer with Riverside’s firm Best, Best & Krieger. Judge Field was well known within the community and helped ensure that the initiative was struck down as unconstitutional before moving onto the ballot and books, after which it could have been subjected to additional lawsuits. By declaring it unconstitutional from the start, the Court Justices shut down what might have otherwise been a long, drawn-out period of hate mongering.³²¹ In March 1992, the California Superior Court voted 6-1, with Justice Edward Panelli dissenting, to deny the request to hear the case.³²² A notable section of the Superior Court opinion by Justices Dabney, Timlin, and McDaniel stated:

In short, the [proposed] ordinance may reflect valid concerns about both public health and offensive public conduct. However, its provisions do not sensibly address either. It fails utterly to make any distinction between homosexuals based

³¹⁹ Howard Irvine Collection on Riverside Coalition Against Discrimination, 1977-1994, on file with ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.

³²⁰ Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 11, 2022.

³²¹ Jane Carney, interview by Catherine Gudis, July 5, 2023; Mark Takano, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, June 9, 2023.

³²² Joan Radovich, “Anti-gay Rights Measure Backers Lose Court Round,” *Press-Enterprise*, March 15, 1992.

on actual conduct or deportment, tarring all homosexuals—male and female alike—with the same brush of bizarre practices, gross promiscuity, and wilful [*sic*] exposure to probable disease. It purports to solve the perceived problems by driving away the perceived perpetrators as a class, “guilty” and “innocent” alike. All that is lacking is a sack of stones for throwing.³²³

The court ruling in *Citizens for Responsible Behavior v. Superior Court* was a major victory for the gay community in Riverside. Significant state-wide legislation followed. In 1992, Governor Pete Wilson signed into law a measure that reformed existing California anti-discrimination statutes to cover sexual orientation in employment. However, it did not protect workers from harassment based on sexual orientation. In 2000, the California legislature proposed and passed *AB 1001*, which amended the Fair Housing and Employment Act (FEHA) to include sexual orientation as a lawful basis for employment discrimination claims, thereby providing its protection as an employee class. This further provided protection for gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals in employment, housing, and credit.³²⁴

RCAD’s community activism and coalition building allowed Riverside’s queer community to come together and contemplate how to create a future for queer life in the city. Maggie Hawkins, member of RCAD, stated in an interview that support from the City Council gave her the “...feeling like, okay, I have a place in this community, too, because that hasn't always been clear for queer folks here, right? That that we belong... It was like a ... moment in time to say, ‘Okay, maybe this can be different.’”³²⁵



Riverside Coalition Against Discrimination (RCAD) Booth, c. 1991. *ONE Archive*.

³²³ *Citizens for Responsible Behavior v. Superior Court* (Riverside City Council), 1 Cal, App. 4th 1020 (1991), 1032, <https://law.justia.com/cases/california/court-of-appeal/4th/1/1013.htm>

³²⁴ In 2004, the California legislature again amended the FEHA to include gender discrimination as an unlawful form of employment discrimination.

³²⁵ Maggie Hawkins, interview by Jill Surdzial, February 24, 2022.

RCAD adopted the symbol of the pink triangle for the group, which Nazi Germany historically forced homosexuals to wear on their clothing. As recorded by RCAD, the symbol was previously used as a “sign of the separation and oppression of homosexuals. The Gay and Lesbian community has reclaimed this symbol as a source of pride and solidarity. It represents the community’s ability to overcome its historical oppression.”³²⁶

Social & Political Activism

As a result of the AIDS epidemic, and other social and political upheaval directed at the LGBTQ+ community during this period, significant activism was taking place throughout the country and numerous social and political groups were formed. Their agendas ranged from influencing local political races and advocating for LGBTQ+ friendly laws and policies, educating the larger community about LGBTQ+ issues, to providing social support and gathering places. On the local level, in addition to the significant and successful advocacy of RCAD, discussed above, there were numerous organizations established in Riverside in the 1980s and 1990s that played important roles in advocating for, and providing a sense of community for, the local LGBTQ+ population. Many of the organizations founded during this period were spearheaded by women, and specifically members of the lesbian community, who often had to fight for recognition within the larger gay community. The significance of these organizations to the lesbian community was recounted by Chani Beeman:

I felt listened to in the organizations. I think my experience was much more, you know, as a lesbian, I was much more involved in women's issues and women's rights and, you know, and so you're always working alongside with straight women. There's primarily lesbians, but there were straight women there, too. And so that felt more like my community than the greater, larger LGBTQ community.³²⁷

Beeman hosted meetings of the local chapter of Solidarity International at her house from about 1988 to 1995. Other women-led groups from the period included Riverside for Reproductive Rights (RRR), the antiwar movement, and Peace and Freedom in Riverside.

In addition to organizing for civil rights, some in the queer community recognized in the 1980s and 1990s that simply being out and proud could be the most resonant of political acts. Kay Berryhill-Smith and Connie Confer, for instance, were regularly featured in the press when journalists were looking for a queer perspective. They worked for nearly a decade at the Riverside Volunteer Center in the 1980s, training suicide hotline volunteers to address gay issues.³²⁸ David St. Pierre, a successful businessman and later owner of the Menagerie, was involved in Riverside’s Downtown Partnership and active on nonprofit boards. St. Pierre, and other gay businessmen, helped to mainstream queer identity within Riverside’s largely conservative business culture. St. Pierre, who

³²⁶ “Why Pink Triangles,” *RCAD*, n.d., on file in binder 4 of the Irv Howard RCAD at ONE Archives.

³²⁷ Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 24, 2023.

³²⁸ Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 1, 2022.

became owner of the Menagerie in 1999, also co-founded Riverside Pride and the Jeffery Owens Community Center.³²⁹

POLITICAL ACTION COALITION FOR ELECTIONS (PACE)

The Political Action Coalition for Elections (PACE) was founded in 1985 by Connie Confer and Kay Berryhill-Smith. At the time of its founding, PACE was the largest LGBTQ+ collective action group in Riverside. PACE sought to educate the community on the views of various political candidates regarding LGBTQ+ issues and endorsed those candidates that sought to foster greater inclusivity and rights for the community in Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

PACE played a key role in fundraising for supportive candidates, often holding events at Highlander Hall 140 at UCR, at 2285 LeRoy Street, San Bernardino, and at other members' homes.³³⁰ Events such as concerts, dinners, and raps were all held to raise funds for their local campaigns. Some notable events included “NO” on 69 and Honor our Heroes events. PACE events served as networking opportunities for the greater LGBTQ+ community at the local, state, and national levels.³³¹

In 1994, PACE helped fundraise and raise awareness for the political campaign of Riverside resident Mark Takano, with the hope of increasing representation of both the gay and Asian American communities at the federal level. Takano, a Democrat, was running against conservative Republican Ken Calvert to represent Riverside in Congress. During the primary race, Takano's office received anonymous messages questioning his sexuality. Soon after, "Moreno Valley Republican State Assemblyman Ray Haynes added heat to the campaign...when he called Takano a 'nutzoid liberal' homosexual during a meeting at a church" in Moreno Valley, which publicly outed Takano as a gay man. Haynes was an ally of Calvert, and this was an attempt at distracting attention from Calvert's own well-publicized dalliance with a prostitute the year before. Calvert's campaign distributed mailers in pink and lavender that claimed Takano had a “secret agenda” and asked whether Takano would be a “Congressman for Riverside... or San Francisco.”³³² Though Takano lost the 1994 election, in 2012 he was elected as the first openly gay person of color in Congress.

PACE held fundraisers and met at a combination of local gay residents' homes and gay-friendly businesses, including The Menagerie, Skylark, and Back to The Grind, among other venues. Connie Confer said in her oral history that the Menagerie kept lists of pro-LGBT local political candidates behind the bar for patrons. Several PACE events were held at the residence of Confer and Kay Berryhill-Smith, as it was “often easiest and cheapest to arrange to have [events] at someone's home.”³³³ Perhaps one of the most noteworthy events at their residence was a reception for Dr.

³²⁹ Mano Mirandé, “Forever Fabulaus’ David St. Pierre’s Eternal Love for Riverside,” *The Riversider Magazine*, December 2022, 12-13.

³³⁰ PACE Recruitment Newsletter, 1984, Kay Berryhill-Smith & Connie Confer LGBT Activism Collection, UCR Special Collections, Binder 1, Folder 74.

³³¹ PACE Newsletter, October 1993, Kay Berryhill-Smith & Connie Confer LGBT Activism Collection, UCR Special Collections.

³³² Seema Mehta, “A Real Twist’: GOP Congressman with anti-LGBTQ past tries to win over gay Palm Springs voters,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 14, 2022; Congressman Mark Takano, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, June 9, 2023; Steve Lawrence, “Southern California Race Sounds Like a Plot from a Soap Opera,” AP News, November 2, 1994.

³³³ Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 11, 2022.

Evelyn Hooker, whose scientific research led to removal of homosexuality as a mental illness. The event was recalled by Confer, “it was wonderful to see the look on the faces of the people in the audience... as they realized they were in the presence of someone who had materially changed the quality of their lives in our society. It was a very moving experience.”³³⁴ PACE dissolved in 1998.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WOMEN FOR UNDERSTANDING (SCWU)

Founded in Los Angeles in 1976, the Southern California Women for Understanding (SCWU) was an educational nonprofit organization dedicated to “enhancing the quality of life for [the lesbian] community and for lesbians nationwide.” SCWU was one of the earliest known lesbian organizations. In 1986, a gathering of Riverside women bemoaned the fact that “there was nothing for women to do in the Inland Empire,”³³⁵ and therefore they decided to form a local chapter of the SCWU. One of their first articles in their publication, *Inland Voice*, encouraged women to join the group:

Membership is open to all women living in Riverside and San Bernardino counties including the desert area. Our membership is varied—we come in all ages, abilities. Shapes and sizes; all colors, ethnic backgrounds, religious preferences, political affiliations and economic levels. We are lesbian women of the 80s and we have much in common with women everywhere.³³⁶

The SCWU was active in Riverside and San Bernardino, and within two years had over 170 members. On June 24, 1988, the Central Board of Directors of SCWU voted to grant the Inland SCWU official Chapter status.³³⁷ The organization hosted social events on the third Friday of every month known as “Special Interest Programs,” or SIPs, and had regular field trips and parties. Topics covered by SCWU included “coming out to family and friends,” “monogamy vs. non-monogamy,” and “how and why do we choose the friends, lovers or people we just hang out with.” The SCWU created their own newsletter, *Inland Voice*, which published news and information regarding upcoming events.

SCWU was active politically and referred members to important ballot measures and initiatives. In 1986, they published a blurb “help needed to defeat 64,” regarding the LaRouche initiative, which sought to restore AIDS to the list of communicable diseases.³³⁸ SCWU also collaborated with the UCR Women’s Resource Center and the American Foundation for AIDS Research in Los Angeles.

REGIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

As in other urban and rural areas, gay men in Riverside played important roles as culture keepers, involved in rescuing and restoring old buildings and preserving landscapes.³³⁹ In 1975, Hal Synder

³³⁴ Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 11, 2022.

³³⁵ “Come Join Our Family,” *Inland Voice* (July 1986): 1.

³³⁶ “Come Join Our Family,” *Inland Voice* (July 1986): 1.

³³⁷ “Inland Becomes a Chapter,” *Inland Voice* 2, no. 8 (August 1988): 1.

³³⁸ “Help Needed to Defeat 64,” *Inland Voice* (September 1986): 1.

³³⁹ Will Fellows, *Passion to Preserve: Gay Men as Keepers of Culture* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005).

(1933-2018) and his partner Bill Kleese (1932-2023) moved into the oldest home on Victoria Avenue (Hartee Grove, 6475 Victoria Avenue, at Maude Street, built c. 1891), and became champions of preservation. Kleese served as a longtime director of Old Riverside Foundation (the local historic preservation organization), founder of Riverside Renovators, and a collector of antique glass and ceramics. Working with other local open space preservationists, Snyder led the charge in the 1980s for the establishment of a “greenbelt” aimed to limit development of sensitive areas, resist the grading of Arlington Mountain promontories, and ensure continuity of use of agricultural sites at a time when Riverside’s citrus heritage had been nearly entirely plowed under. He also brought people together from the Tri-County Conservation League and Riversiders for Reasonable Growth to found Victoria Avenue Forever in 1990, which he continued to serve on until 2002. Through countless meetings at Snyder and Kleese’s house, the group advocated for and tended to the historic landscape of Victoria Avenue, built as a grand parkway and scenic wooden truss bridge in 1891, and landscaped with pepper and eucalyptus trees the following year. Victoria Avenue connected downtown merchants to citrus growers in Arlington Heights. It was acknowledged as a masterpiece of roadway and landscape design with a City of Riverside Cultural Heritage Landmark designation in 1969; in 2000, Victoria Avenue was added to the National Register of Historic Places.³⁴⁰

Legal Battles of the 1980s and 1990s

Several significant court cases were heard in Riverside during the 1980s and 1990s, as the LGBTQ+ community continued to fight for equal rights. This movement often conflicted with the new purity movements that emerged in the 1980s. Sexual conservatives increasingly sought to restore “traditional” American gender and sexual values. Largely reacting to the gains of gay liberation and feminism, the new purity movement found ground in religious fundamentalism and political conservatism.³⁴¹ Several seminal court cases involving residents of Riverside, including adoption, anti-discrimination, and the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy reflected the stamina and perseverance of the local LGBTQ+ community.

THE FRATER ADOPTION CASE

In 1980, gay Riverside resident David Frater started proceedings to adopt his foster son Kevin Dorman.³⁴² Frater was met with resistance from the social services department when he requested adoption; both David and Kevin were forced to undergo psychological and counseling tests, which indicated their relationship was “normal.” The department at first refused to endorse or oppose the adoption “because it was afraid of setting the precedent of allowing an openly homosexual person to adopt a child,” according to Frater’s attorney, Gloria Allred.³⁴³

³⁴⁰ “Victoria Avenue Forever,” *Victorian Avenue*, February 2018, accessed on July 10, 2023 at: <https://victoriaavenueforever.org/our-history/history-of-victoria-avenue/> and <https://victoriaavenueforever.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/February2018newsletter.pdf>

³⁴¹ D’Emilio and Freedman, 345.

³⁴² The address of the Frater residence was not able to be ascertained through research efforts to date.

³⁴³ “County Oks Youth Adoption by Gay Man,” *Desert Sun*, December 10, 1982; Paul Nash, “Riverside Agrees to Adoption by Gay,” *Update Magazine*, December 15, 1982.

Behind the scenes, social worker Kay Berryhill-Smith, who was then the head of adoptions for Riverside County, was meeting with social workers, attorneys, and judges about gay parenting, bringing information from other cases in Los Angeles, and serving as a primary facilitator in support of Frater's case.³⁴⁴ After two years, the County finally agreed to the adoption, and in December 1982, the request was approved by Superior Court Judge Grover. Frater considered the adoption a "major personal victory" and an "important gain for the homosexual community, demonstrating that sexual preference is only one aspect of a life, not the dominant aspect."³⁴⁵ The case was celebrated at the international level in gay periodicals as far away as New Zealand. Tim Sweeney, executive director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Educational Fund in New York, said the case was significant because it was the first court case involving an openly gay man requesting adoption, and he won. According to Sweeney, the case represented:

[The] single most emotional and irrational fear of straight people vis-à-vis gay people... What we're fighting is a stereotype of child molestation. It's absurd to say to all gay people, "You can't adopt a child because you're going to molest him." There are no more child molesters in the gay community than there are in the straight community.³⁴⁶



David Frater, Attorney Gloria Allred, and Kevin (Dorman) Frater, 1982. *Desert Sun*.

By 1985, Frater reportedly ceased serving as a foster parent because of public accusations of child molestation. These charges were dropped, and the subsequent court case was declared a mistrial due to insufficient evidence. Frater was disappointed that he did not win acquittal and called the deadlock "indicative of the situation here that I could not get a fair trial in this country because of media coverage."³⁴⁷ The negative public attention from the case caused Frater to close his foster home and relocate to West Hollywood.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁴ Connie Confer, conversation with Catherine Gudis, May 31, 2023.

³⁴⁵ Judith Cummings, "A Gay's Fight to Become a Father," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 19, 1983.

³⁴⁶ Judith Cummings, "A Gay's Fight to Become a Father," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 19, 1983.

³⁴⁷ "Mistrial is Declared for Homosexual Father," *Desert Sun*, February 25, 1985.

³⁴⁸ "Gay Plans to Sue DA, Deputy for Malicious Prosecution," *San Bernardino County Sun*, March 8, 1985.

THE MILITARY & “DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL”

In 1983, the military sought to discharge a sergeant accused of homosexuality in Riverside. The sergeant, who was stationed with the Air Force at March Field, had previously written letters to his wife in which he discussed earlier sexual encounters with men. Following a marital disagreement, his wife gave the letters to an Air Force officer and the military began discharge proceedings against him. Following the advice of his military lawyer, the man admitted to his superiors that he had sex with men in 1976 and 1979. His civilian lawyer then argued that the military lawyer had failed to communicate with the sergeant that his letters to his wife were privileged, and as such could not be used against him in a court of law.³⁴⁹ The military was thereby barred from discharging him.³⁵⁰

In 1993, President Bill Clinton instituted the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy, which allowed gay, lesbian, and bisexual Americans to serve in the military with the condition that they did not disclose their sexuality. Military personnel were banned from harassing and discriminating against service members that they believed to be gay. If service members disclosed their sexual orientation or were otherwise found to have engaged in “homosexual conduct,” the military could discharge them. The policy was heavily criticized by gay rights activists, who argued that the policy forced people into secrecy and did little to promote acceptance of gay and lesbian service members.

Harold (Mac) McCarthy, a Staff Sergeant in the Air Force reserves stationed at March Field, made a major stand against “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” In 1993, McCarthy publicly announced he was gay; a few days later, he was “excused from participating” with his reserve unit. The ACLU, Lambda Legal Defense, and Education Fund filed suit in the U.S. District Court on behalf of McCarthy and five other gay service members to challenge the policy.³⁵¹ When interviewed by the *Los Angeles Times* about the lawsuit, McCarthy said:

Putting my name on the lawsuit was not easy; it was not easy at all. But it’s not just for me or the others that have their names on the lawsuit. Somebody needs to do this. Somebody needs to take some risks for the greater good... It’s a civil rights issue. I cannot understand how, in this day and age, we can put something down in writing that says it’s OK to discriminate... In very many ways, I am fighting for the country. I am fighting for equality for all men and women.³⁵²

Although the lawsuit was unsuccessful, and the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy was adopted by President Clinton, McCarthy found support among his community at March Field. According to McCarthy, if he was allowed to return to active reserve duty, he felt that “he would be welcome. Everyone from basic enlisted members to a ‘full bird’ colonel told me I would be welcome back.”³⁵³

³⁴⁹ “Air Force Tries to Use ‘Gay’ Letters,” *The Connection*, June 1-14, 1983, 9-11.

³⁵⁰ John Whitehair, “March AFB Barred from Discharging Gay,” *San Bernardino County Sun*, March 30, 1983, 15.

³⁵¹ “Military Gay Policy Assailed on Two Fronts,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, July 28, 1993, 5.

³⁵² Gebe Martinez, “Orange County Reservists Join Challenge of Gays Policy,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 1993, 16.

³⁵³ Gebe Martinez, *Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 1993, 16.

While active in the lawsuit, McCarthy resided at 5238 Sierra Vista Avenue in Riverside; he passed away in 2019.³⁵⁴

In 2008, Judge Virginia Phillips, a Clinton appointee to the Federal District Court for the Central District of California in Riverside (where she had spent the bulk of her career as an attorney and on the Riverside Superior Court), began work on a complaint, "Log Cabin Republicans v. USA," initially filed in 2004 against the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.³⁵⁵ In 2010, she declared the rule unconstitutional.³⁵⁶ She wrote her opinion supporting a national injunction banning enforcement of the law that it "infringes the fundamental rights of United States service members and prospective service members." As a result, she received numerous death threats, and a federal Marshall was positioned outside of her Craftsman home.³⁵⁷ The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was finally repealed by President Barack Obama in 2011.

Gathering Places & Social Institutions

Gay bars and other commercial establishments served as important social spaces for the LGBTQ+ community in cities throughout the country. The gay bar as a social institution applies to other businesses that catered to the LGBTQ+ community, including restaurants, coffee shops, nightclubs, and movie theaters.³⁵⁸ As historian Susan Ferentinos writes:

Considering the ostracism and discrimination faced by people with LGBTQ identities throughout the twentieth century, businesses catering to this specific part of the population, as well as organizations aimed at addressing their specific needs, were an important part of the creation of a lively queer subculture.³⁵⁹

As previously noted, research into the places associated with LGBTQ+ history is ongoing. A source of information for identifying early or long-term queer friendly spaces are the gay guides that were produced starting in the 1960s. Members of the LGBTQ+ community relied on these guides, including the Bob Damron's *Address Book* and the *Homosexual National Classified Directory*, to find bars, businesses, and cruising spots that were queer-friendly throughout the United States.³⁶⁰

A number of properties in Riverside were listed in the guides, providing insight into existing and former spaces associated with local LGBTQ+ history. Examples include the Circus Room (3800 7th Street, demolished), which may have been the earliest gay-friendly bar in Riverside. It was opened

³⁵⁴ *U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993, 1993, vol. 1*, accessed on March 10, 2023 at: Ancestry.com; It is unclear from available records whether McCarthy was readmitted to the reserves following the lawsuit.

³⁵⁵ Locally, Log Cabin Republicans expressed aims to educate the gay community to Republican ideals and to educate the Republican Party about the "concerns and needs" of the gay community; Log Cabin Republicans of Riverside brochure, c. 1993, Box 1, Folder 63, pp. 7-8, Kay Berryhill-Smith and Carolyn "Connie" Confer Collection, UCR Special Collections and University Archive.

³⁵⁶ Meena Hartenstein, "Who is Virginia Phillips?" *Daily News*, October 13, 2010.

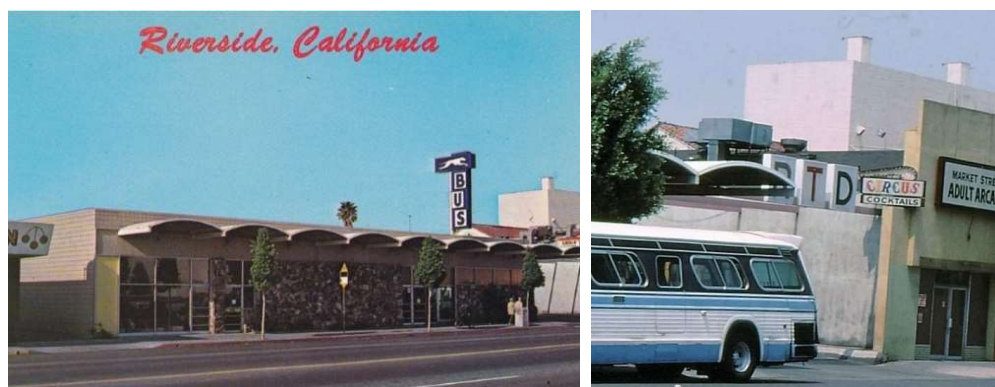
³⁵⁷ Jane Carney, interview by Catherine Gudis; John Schwartz, "Judge Orders Military to Stop 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,'" *New York Times*, October 12, 2010.

³⁵⁸ City of Los Angeles, "Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Context Statement," prepared by GPA Consulting, September 2014, 56.

³⁵⁹ Ferentinos, "Beyond the Bar," 150.

³⁶⁰ Bob Damron, *The Address Book, 1966-1970; 1977; 1978*. Mapping the Gay Guides, Amanda Regan and Eric Gonzaba, (2019-): <http://www.mappingthegayguides.org>

by Art Conti in 1960 and was included in Damron’s guide from 1966 to 1983. The Circus Room was located next to the Greyhound Bus Depot, which was also identified in *Damron’s* in the early 1980s. The Circus Bar and the Greyhound Bus Depot at Seventh and Market streets were both demolished in 1984. Circus Bar reopened as Art’s Bar & Grill (extant; 3356 University Avenue).³⁶¹



Postcard showing Circus Room and Greyhound Bus Station, c. 1971. *Ebay; Scott Richards (Facebook)*.

Other Riverside locations listed in Bob Damon’s *Address Book* in the early 1980s included Fairmount Park; the Grove, a “cruisy area” at the south end of Evans Lake; the UCR Physical Education Building; and the Tyler Mall J.C. Penney; the Night Court (3711 Orange Street, demolished) was described as having (Some L) – “Ladies,” or lesbians; and several theaters that catered to the LGBTQ+ community.

In addition to consulting with the guides, other primary and secondary source research is ongoing to identify important commercial spaces associated with the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside; the earliest known examples at this time date to the 1980s and 1990s, which are summarized below.

THEATERS

The Daisy Chain, Cinema X, and the Pussycat Theater were theaters that catered to the gay and lesbian community. Adult movie theaters were common places for cruising, and by the 1960s and 1970s existed as queer spaces of collective contact.³⁶² As liberatory spaces, these sites were also heavily policed and regulated by society, often under the umbrella charge of “obscenity.”³⁶³ The Daisy Chain opened on December 5, 1969 (3745 Market Street, demolished). Not long after its establishment, the theater was charged by Riverside police with showing “obscene films,” and subsequently closed.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 24, 2023; Bruce Todd, “Venerable Watering Holes and Naugahyde Lounges,” *Riverside Lawyer*, October 2008, 14.

³⁶² Finley Freibert, “Obscenity Regulation and Film Exhibition: Policing Gay and Feminist Media Industries in Southern California, 1960 to 1979,” diss. (University of California Irvine, 2019), 10.

³⁶³ Finley Freibert, “Obscenity Regulation and Film Exhibition: Policing Gay and Feminist Media Industries in Southern California, 1960 to 1979,” diss. (University of California Irvine, 2019), 10-17.

³⁶⁴ Tom Green, “Filming,” *San Bernardino County Sun*, December 12, 1969.

In approximately 1973, the Daisy Chain was rebranded as “Cinema X.”³⁶⁵ On October 8, 1973, Cinema X began showing the movie “Deep Throat.”³⁶⁶ Over the following two weeks, police raided the theater five times, confiscated a copy of the movie each time.³⁶⁷ In December of that year, executives and employees of the Cinema X theater were charged with displaying obscene material. At first entering pleas of innocent, they ultimately pleaded guilty to “conspiracy to commit an act injurious to public morals.” The theater executives “agreed never to show the film again in the county and to divest themselves by January 31 of the Cinema X and Cinema Arts theaters.”³⁶⁸ Despite this setback, Cinema X continued to be a popular site for the gay community and was listed in Bob Damron’s 1977 edition of *Address Book*.

In 1978, the Pussycat Theatre opened in the former Lido Theatre, which was a secondary theater built from the stage and dressing areas of the Riverside Fox Theater (3843 Mission Inn Avenue). The Pussycat Theatre included events including a “Ladies Night,” for adult films catering to women.³⁶⁹



Pussycat Theatre, c. 1978 (left) and Fox Performing Arts Center, 2023 (right). Ken Roe, *Cinema Treasures*; HRG.

Riverside Cinefest

In 1996, the Riverside Film Festival co-sponsored the inaugural Riverside Cinefest, an international gay and lesbian film showcase. The festival was held at the Fox Theater in downtown and featured screening of *Man of the Year*; *Okoge*; *Jeffrey*, and *French Twist*. Tickets were available at the Riverside Arts Foundation, the UCR California Museum of Photography, the Menagerie, and the UCR Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Resource Center.³⁷⁰ The following year, the “Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert” was shown in conjunction with UCR’s Gay Pride Weekend.³⁷¹

³⁶⁵ Frank Moore, “With a Grain of Salt,” *Redlands Daily Facts*, February 25, 1971.

³⁶⁶ Advertisement, *San Bernardino County Sun*, November 18, 1973, 41.

³⁶⁷ “4 Plead Innocent to Porno Charges,” *Progress Bulletin*, October 19, 1973; “Riverside Police,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 14, 1973.

³⁶⁸ “Deep Throat’ 6 Plead Guilty,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 20, 1973, 50.

³⁶⁹ Ken Roe, “Lido Theatre,” *Cinema Treasures*, accessed on March 3, 2023 at: <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/9677>

³⁷⁰ “Riverside Holds Inaugural Movie Festival,” *Gay and Lesbian Times* (March 28, 1996): 18.

³⁷¹ “Riverside Theater Goes Mad with ‘Priscilla,’” *San Bernardino County Sun*, July 11, 1997, 64.

GAY BARS AND BUSINESSES

The Courtroom Bar was established in 1982, and although it was not specifically established to serve the gay community, it was LGBTQ+ friendly and became an important gathering place for the gay community. Located on the second floor of Riverside's original City Hall in downtown Riverside, the bar was accessible via an exterior staircase from the parking lot (3612 Mission Inn Avenue). The Courtroom Bar was also regularly raided by police vice squads, who used the excuse of missing permits to shut down the bar.

In May 1982, Michael Bussee and his partner, Gary Cooper, were married at the bar. The invitation for Bussee and Cooper's matrimonial event read: "The Courtroom: Riverside's First and Foremost Gay Bar Requests the Pleasure of your Company at Riverside's First Gay Wedding."³⁷² Both men were previously married to women and were among the five founders of Exodus International in 1976, a coalition of interdenominational Christian ministries that counseled gay Christians to "deliver" (and reorient) them from their same sex attractions through conversion therapy. In 1979, Bussee and Cooper acknowledged their love for one another and left their wives and Exodus. Bussee later renounced Exodus, becoming an outspoken critic.³⁷³



Michael Bussee and Gary Cooper at their wedding in the Courtroom Bar and Mission Inn St. Francis of Assisi, 1982. *Southern Poverty Law Center, Courtesy of Michael Bussee.*

On February 14, 1983, local activist and community leader Madaline Lee founded The Menagerie (3581 University Avenue). Lee previously owned the bar the Stage Door; however, the Menagerie was the first bar in Riverside specifically catering to the LGBTQ+ community. The Menagerie is a

³⁷² "One Nation Under God," by Teodoro Maniaci and Francine M Rzeznick, Interview with Michael Bussee, *YouTube*, 1993, accessed on March 29, 2023 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xg093GG7FyE&t=298s>.

³⁷³ Michael Bussee, conversation with Catherine Gudis, Riverside, March 26, 2023; Michal Bussee "Statement of Apology by Former Exodus Leaders," June 27, 2007, <https://www.beyondexgay.com/article/busseeapology.html>.

significant local institution - it served as a safe communal place for the gay community, with popular traditions established in the 1980s like Prom Night and Easter Bonnet contests.³⁷⁴ It was also a center of political activism and site of numerous fundraisers, and a place to grieve during the AIDS epidemic. Reverend Benita Ramsey noted that during the 1990s, Sunday nights at the bar were a common after-church hang out for members of the Divine Truth Unity Fellowship Church of Riverside. The church was established as an LGBT-affirming space, particularly for young Black men who were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS during the peak of the AIDS epidemic—and Menagerie certainly continued to provide them with a safe space.³⁷⁵

Madaline Lee (1934-2010) was a significant community leader and played an important role in LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. As noted in her obituary: “[Lee] is also survived by numerous dear friends and colleagues, especially in the womens [sic], LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities for who she worked so tirelessly and passionately.”³⁷⁶ Lee spearheaded the Inland AIDS Project, helped establish Riverside’s Pride Festival; worked to bring the NAMES quilt to Riverside and founded the Inland Empire Chapter of that organization; and was a co-founder or sponsor of numerous other local organizations. In 1999, a gala was held in her honor at Riverside’s Fox Theater to recognize her significant contributions and outstanding service.³⁷⁷ Lee was remembered by activist Connie Confer as a person who “threw her whole self into every activity that she ever did, and the woman never said no.”³⁷⁸



Madaline Lee (right), c. 1991. *The Press Enterprise*.

In 1999, local businessman David St. Pierre purchased the Menagerie from Lee. St. Pierre sought to “turn the gay nightclub into a gender-blind club where everyone [could] mingle without worrying

³⁷⁴ “About,” *The Menagerie*, accessed on June 7, 2023 at: <https://www.menagerieriverside.com/about>

³⁷⁵ Rev. Benita Ramsey, interview by Jill Surdzial, May 3, 2023.

³⁷⁶ “Madeline Lee Obituary,” *The Press-Enterprise*, December 10, 2010.

³⁷⁷ “Madeline Lee Obituary.”

³⁷⁸ Alicia Robinson, “Riverside: Gay Rights Activist Who Opened Menagerie Bar Dies,” *Press-Enterprise*, December 18, 2010; “The Riverside/San Bernardino Directory,” *Gay and Lesbian Times* no. 342 (July 14, 1994): 125.

about sexual preferences.”³⁷⁹ The Menagerie was open 365 days a year to provide a safe space for its guests including on major holidays. St. Pierre introduced live DJ’s, dancing, karaoke, and beginning in 2002, a Thursday drag show run by Philip Bailey. The bar remains an important gathering place for the LGBTQ+ community.

Located adjacent to the Menagerie with a shared patio space at the rear, Back to the Grind (BTTG; 3575 University Avenue) was opened in 1996 by Darren Conkerite, with the explicit goal of involving the community to create an inclusive, non-judgmental queer space. From the start it was far more than a coffee shop. It was, by design, an all-ages event space, with art, poetry, and music (see below) and a place for Riverside’s youth to visit, no matter what “religious background, sexual preference, color of your skin, [or] any kind of financial disposition,” as Conkerite put it.³⁸⁰ It also had ample public space on the first floor and basement for meetings, events, and fundraisers, and was used liberally for all those purposes from its opening until today. PACE was among the groups that held fundraisers at the coffeehouse.³⁸¹



David Conkerite (left) of Back to the Grind, n.d. *Courtesy of David Conkerite.*

Conkerite opened his shop for artists, poets, and musicians to program a full calendar of events that would bring queer and alternative culture events to all ages.³⁸² Down the street was the punk club Spanky’s, but it was solely a 21+ music venue. With few other outlets for nonnormative cultural expression, BTTG became an important local venue, with queer open mic nights, poetry readings, zine workshops, ska and punk bands playing in the basement, and visual arts exhibitions.

A key part of the scene at BTTG early on were poetry readings, including a legacy event for queer punk poet Drew Blood on November 7, 1996, whose self-published zines from the 1980s through 1996, when he died from AIDS, influenced other nonbinary youth in the area. Angela Asbell remembers finding a copy of one of Drew Blood’s zines at a record store on Main Street and being inspired by its raw expressions of gay sexuality.³⁸³ Having grown up in

Riverside, Annie Knight had a similar experience upon finding the zines at a local record store. She later recounted that, “as a teenager struggling with identity issues, specifically those pertaining to gender and sexuality, zines were the only non-commercial format through which

³⁷⁹ Jorge A. Arizmendi-Penalosa, “Local Club a Treat Every Day of the Week,” *ViewPoints*, April 12, 2005.

³⁸⁰ Jake Rich, “Building Culture: Back to the Grind Brings Creative Space and Community Together,” *Highlander*, May 12, 2025; Talene Salmaszadeh Beuchu, Interview by Catherine Gudis, June 15, 2023.

³⁸¹ PACE Meeting Minutes, 10/9/1996, Kay Berryhill-Smith and Carolyn “Connie” Confer Collection, UCR Special Collections and University Archives.

³⁸² Darren Conkerite, presentation at BTTG for UCR LGBTQ+ Resource Center Tour, May 6, 2023; Talene Salmaszadeh Beuchu, interview by Catherine Gudis, June 15, 2023.

³⁸³ Angela Asbell, presentation at BTTG for UCR LGBTQ+ Resource Center Tour, May 6, 2023.

others like me spoke plainly and honestly in such a way that I didn't have to struggle alone."³⁸⁴ Others include Stephanie "Alaska" Whelan and Talene Salmaszadeh (later Beuchu) were also part of BTTG's poetry scene, using zines as individual forms of artistic expression, with BTTG serving as a gathering place to make and share zines. RUPO—Riverside Underground Poetry/Performance Organization—held weekly events at BTTG starting around 1998; it was hosted by Salmaszadeh and Jason Soto from around 2001 to 2006, when she started a 19-year employment at BTTG.

In 2001, Whelan started organizing an arts festival at BTTG called Saturation Fest. It started with a visual arts exhibition, "Subway Series," and grew over the years into an annual 3- to 14-day, multi-site, multimedia extravaganza of local talent, which continued until 2019.³⁸⁵ Much of the local art scene that took place at BTTG was documented in seven issues and some 10,000 copies of the zine *Dissent*, by Annie Knight, who saw the zine as "a free space for artists (including writers, musicians, and activists) to promote their work and ideas."³⁸⁶ Such events were a central means of community building, particularly for queer folks in the area. "The IE is not queer friendly," Asbell explained. "It wasn't even *friendly* friendly. BTTG gave us a space to speak freely and coalesce art and organizing."³⁸⁷



The Menagerie (left) and Back to the Grind (right), 2023. HRG.

The VIP Club (3673 Merrill Avenue) is a gay bar and drag venue in Riverside that opened in 1993. The venue was advertised in the 1993 *Desert Breeze* as "Riverside's Newest Dinner/Dance Club" and in the 1994 *Gay and Lesbian Times*.³⁸⁸ The VIP Club also became a significant site for drag performances, as discussed in greater detail below.

³⁸⁴ Elke Zobl, "Digress Magazine and Queer Zinesters Have Lives Too: An interview with Annie Knight from Riverside, USA," Grrrlzines.net, June 2005, <https://www.grrrlzines.net/interviews/digress.htm>.

³⁸⁵ Talene Salmaszadeh Beuchu, interview; Angela Asbell, presentation; Annie Knight, presentation at BTTG for UCR LGBTQ+ Resource Center Tour, May 6, 2023.

³⁸⁶ Zobl, "Digress."

³⁸⁷ Asbell presentation.

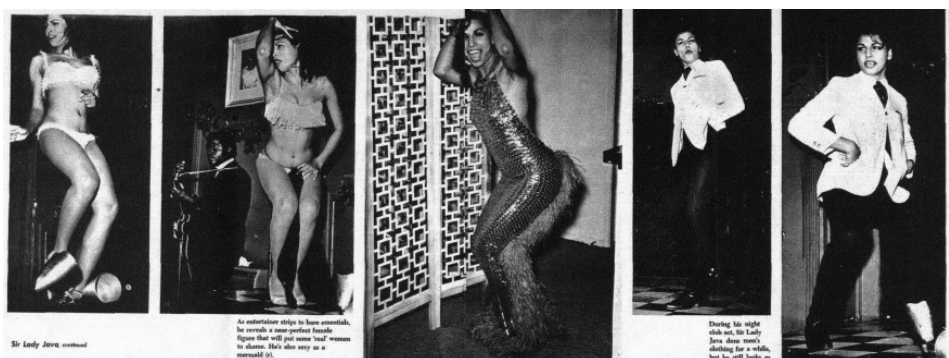
³⁸⁸ "The Riverside/San Bernardino Directory," *Gay and Lesbian Times* no. 342 (July 14, 1994): 125.

Community and Performing Arts

Art has been a common space for the expression of queerness in Riverside since at least the early twentieth century. This section explores the history of the arts and culture in nonnormative gender and sexuality expressions, as well as later LGBTQ+ identity and performance. Although there were known drag performances in Riverside dating to the mid-twentieth century, drag performances became more common and widely known in the late twentieth century. Other arts and community events in Riverside were established to raise awareness and provide resources to support the LGBTQ+ community.

DRAG SHOWS

Sir Lady Java, also known as Archille DeVille and Sheila DuValle, was one of the earliest known drag queens from Riverside.³⁸⁹ Sir Lady Java was a Black female impersonator who was born in New Orleans in 1940 and raised in Los Angeles and Riverside. Sir Lady Java remembered being a “rambunctious boy” as a child but was later given many housekeeping and child-rearing responsibilities. Sir Lady Java was “taunted for his girlish looks as a child” and began “to project a quality like a Lesbian.”³⁹⁰ Java attended Riverside Poly High School and Riverside Junior College. Following adolescence, Sir Lady Java frequently performed in Los Angeles at the Redd Foxx Club and other venues, where she played an important role in the battle for racial and transgender equality. Although it appears most of her working career was spent in Los Angeles, Sir Lady Java did live in Riverside later in life (at 3870 La Sierra Avenue).³⁹¹



Sir Lady Java, 1960. *TV Clipsheet*, *Gale Archives of Sexuality and Gender*.

Self-proclaimed “Architect of Rock-n-Roll” Little Richard (Richard Wayne Penniman) whose explicitly sexual moves and song lyrics galvanized an entire genre of music and the nation, also had personal connections to Riverside. Little Richard had “honed his craft as a teenage drag queen in touring minstrel tent shows and vaudeville revues, as well as in an extended network of clubs and bars in the southern and eastern United States known as the ‘chitlin’ circuit.” At one of these clubs,

³⁸⁹ Research into local venues where Sir Lady Java performed is ongoing; it is unclear at this time whether they had a significant connection to Riverside as a performer.

³⁹⁰ “Sir Lady Java,” *TV Clipsheet* no. 31 (1960). *Gale Archives of Sexuality and Gender*.

³⁹¹ “He’s Bottomless,” *Jet* (September 8, 1966): 37; “That’s Life,” *Jet* (November 16, 1967): 37; “Lena Meets Sir Lady Java at Festive L.A. Birthday Bash,” *Jet* (August 10, 1978): 22-24, available at: <https://www.houstonlgbthistory.org/black-articles-jet.html>.

Little Richard met Billy Wright, who had also started his career as a female impersonator, and who influenced Little Richard, and helped him get his first record contract in 1951. Among Little Richard's first blockbusters was the song Tutti Frutti, which he played to raucous response in bars and clubs.³⁹²

In 1956, Little Richard moved with his mother, brothers, and sisters to Riverside, "to give them something he had never had before."³⁹³ The following year, Little Richard denounced rock and roll to join a ministry. He was back and forth between Nashville and Riverside, where he also met and became friends with Sir Lady Java. In the 2023 documentary, "Little Richard: I Am Everything," Sir Lady Java is interviewed about Little Richard's gender nonconformity and the challenges he experienced reconciling his Christian faith and queer sexuality. This included his changing public assertions about his own queer identity. Little Richard lived in Riverside at least through the 1970s and 1980s, and his family members continued to reside in the area. Reflecting on Little Richard's impact on her, Sir Lady Java said, "I would never have taken a chance to go into the clubs in a dress if it wasn't for Little Richard."³⁹⁴

Beginning in the mid-1990s, the VIP Club began running weekly drag shows at the club. Run by Montana Halston, these shows were at the time the only drag show in Riverside. The new performance venue began to attract queens from across Southern California, including Philip Bailey, who performs as Cassie Bailey.³⁹⁵ Montana Halston was the drag daughter of Brittany Halston, originally from Orange County. Thanks to Brittany, the Halston name has become known as one of the biggest drag families in the Los Angeles/Inland Empire area.³⁹⁶



Advertisement for AIDS Benefit, 1994. *The San Bernardino County Sun*.

One of the draws of VIP Club was its younger age requirement for entry. Unlike other bars that required patrons to be 21 and over, the VIP Club was open to 18-year-olds. As remembered by Toi Thibodeaux: "For me, the vibe of VIP was that it was the first club I got to go to when I was eighteen. And that's the thing. Everyone who went in there, it's their first club when they turn

³⁹² Lisa Cortes. *Little Richard: I Am Everything*. Magnolia Pictures, 2023.

³⁹³ Lisa Cortes. *Little Richard: I Am Everything*. Magnolia Pictures, 2023.

³⁹⁴ Lisa Cortes. *Little Richard: I Am Everything*. Magnolia Pictures, 2023.

³⁹⁵ He would later become the founder of fantashees drag show and the Menagerie's drag shows in 1998 and 2002.

³⁹⁶ Today, Vanity Halston, of the same drag family, currently hosts at the night club.

eighteen, and maybe they really got a chance to go when they were seventeen. So, it was this young vibe of having nowhere else to go in this area.”³⁹⁷ She noted the clientele at the bar:

Everyone was there, everything was happening. There were different price points for entry related to your age. Though it was a majority male-identified club space owned by two white gay men, we kind of found our own place and space to be in there, but it depends on who you talk to... And that’s one of the things I will say, like when it comes to Black folks being in there, that wasn’t a thing.³⁹⁸

In 1997, local community activist Phillip Bailey coordinated a drag show “Fant-A-She” at the Riverside Municipal Auditorium. The “female impersonation show” had at least a half dozen performers, who dressed as “legendary performances such as Madonna, Selena, Bette Midler, Michael Jackson, and Tina Turner.”³⁹⁹ The show moved to the Menagerie in 2002, and established themes for each night. Past Fant-A-She shows include “Where all your Fant-A-Shes Come True,” which featured Latin, Broadway and 1980s montages, and “All that Glitters” with Go-Go dancers. The show continues to the present day.⁴⁰⁰



Fant-A-She Performers, c. 1997. *Courtesy of Phillip Bailey.*

Riverside drag royalty Mayhem Miller and her drag sister Raven began doing drag together in Riverside on the same day, May 10, 2002, during an amateur drag competition at the VIP Club. While outside the period of study, drag in Riverside received international attention when local drag queens Mayhem and Raven appeared in the seasons of RuPaul’s Drag Race and seasons of All Stars. Mayhem proudly calls VIP her home bar, and today often hosts “Fuck Yeah Friday!” events.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁷ Toi Thibodeaux, interview by Catherine Gudis, March 23, 2023.

³⁹⁸ Toi Thibodeaux, interview by Catherine Gudis, March 23, 2023.

³⁹⁹ “Fant-A-She’s,” *San Bernardino County Sun*, January 16, 1998, 69.

⁴⁰⁰ Arizmendi-Penaloza, “Local Club a Treat Every Day of the Week,” 2005.

⁴⁰¹ In 2013, after 20 years in business, VIP was faltering, until it was featured (season 5, episode 2) on “Tabatha Takes Over” on

Places of Worship

During this period, churches continued to serve as important spaces for the LGBTQ+ community. Riverside was the home to several inclusive churches, notably the Metropolitan Community Church, which was founded in the 1970s and is discussed in the section above, and other spaces of worship established during this period, including the First Congregational Church of Riverside and the Divine Truth Unity Fellowship Church. Religion could also be derisive to the LGBTQ+ community, as some religious institutions actively sought to ostracize and discriminate against those identifying as gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender/queer.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF RIVERSIDE

The First Congregational Church of Riverside (FCC; 3504 Mission Inn Avenue) was founded in 1872 and has inhabited its current building since 1914.⁴⁰² The FCC is one of the few places of worship that is accepting of everyone, including gay, lesbian, and transgender congregants. In 1995, the FCC became an “open and affirming” congregation, “affirming the dignity and worth of all races, ethnicities, ages, abilities, genders, and sexual orientation.”⁴⁰³ Senior Minister Jane Quandt at the FCC performed the first gay marriage in Riverside County after the Supreme Court overturned the ban on gay marriage.

Transgender activist Eva-Genevieve Scarborough was an early supporter of the church and remembers how she was accepted as a trans woman in the congregation: “I was more and more drawn to attend; I fell in love, I just love it.”⁴⁰⁴

OTHER SUPPORTIVE RELIGIOUS SPACES

The Universalist Unitarian Church (UUC) continued to be an important space for the gay community in Riverside into the 1990s. When Daniel (Dan) Brogan and his partner Jeffrey Dangermond moved from Redlands to Riverside in 1988, Dan became active in the UUC and Jeffrey attended the First Congregational Church (FCC) across the street, joining FCC’s “Open and Affirming Committee.” The couple also organized their churches to be part of the first AIDS Walk in Riverside. UUC hosted numerous LGBTQ+ events, including a 1998 meeting of the Rainbow Council of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, organizations, and friends to “facilitate communication and networking, and to promote activities, services and political action among LGBT individuals and organizations.”⁴⁰⁵

Brogan and Dangermond were also active in Riverside Community Players and in historic home restoration in the 1990s. When Dan died in March 1995, the community took up a collection to

RuPaul’s Drag Race. The media and makeover rebuilt the business. In the interviews at the start of the show, co-owners Cal Warner explained: “The simplicity of just acceptance. We had straight people, we had gay people, transvestites. Everybody was welcome. And we succeeded for 20 years.” Among the many drag queens to get their start at VIP is Adore Delano, of RuPaul’s Drag Race fame.

⁴⁰² The FCC church is a City of Riverside Cultural Landmark, a Riverside County Landmark, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

⁴⁰³ “Faith in the Inland Empire: Riverside’s Oldest Church More Open Than Most,” *IE Voice*, May 14, 2015, accessed on April 3, 2023 at: <https://theievoice.com/faith-in-the-inland-empire-riversides-oldest-church-more-open-than-most/>

⁴⁰⁴ “Faith in the Inland Empire,” *IE Voice*, May 14, 2015.

⁴⁰⁵ “Rainbow Council Announces Town Hall Meeting,” *Gay and Lesbian Times* 539 (April 23, 1998): 22.

install and dedicate a stained-glass window for the church (located in the foyer of the Lemon Street entrance) as a memorial. Jeffrey, in turn, decided to purchase the facing windows, to honor their commitment to one another.⁴⁰⁶ The windows still serve as reminders of not only the union between Dan and Jeffrey, but also the wider embrace of LGBTQ+ individuals and partnerships.

Another local congregation that was established to support the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside is the Divine Truth Unity Fellowship Church (3504 Mission Inn Avenue). Unity Fellowship was founded in 1997 by a coalition of Riverside residents had been traveling to Los Angeles for a Sunday liberating worship experience. The church was founded to bring spiritual hope and freedom to LGBTQ+ people of African descent. Elder Claude Bowen traveled each week to help create the space. The church was born in Fairmount Park. As remembered by Rev. Benita Ramsey:

[The church] carried the message that social justice was our you know, was our platform. And that we were coming to say to people in the I.E., that God is love, love is for everyone, and that you...if you join us, you know, you will receive that message of love and compassion, and... So, that's sort of, you know, how that started. I mean, they met in the park, in Fairmount Park as a matter of fact. The very first Bible study for the church was in Fairmount Park, and they would meet there weekly until they grew enough in size to rent a facility.⁴⁰⁷

The church's first permanent location was St. Brides Celtic Catholic Church (3649 Locust Street). Rev. Benita Ramsey, one of the first Deacons and Ministers of Riverside, later co-founded Rainbow Pride Youth Alliance. Another notable local leader was Nosente Uhuti.

Other churches showed their allyship to the community through education and awareness. The New Jerusalem Foursquare Full Gospel Church (6476 Streeter Avenue) and Temple Beth El (2675 Central Avenue) provided services for the LGBTQ+ Community. Temple Beth El was led from the late 1990s until 2005 by openly gay Rabbi Harold Caminker, who was a supporter of gay rights and gay marriage, providing a safe space for LGBTQ+ Jews and non-Jews alike. Caminker also participated in the 2002 mass demonstrations after the stabbing of Jeffery Owens and Michael Bussee. Caminker "urged the crowd to not let the attack, which he called a display of unspeakable cowardice, go unnoticed."⁴⁰⁸

In 1971, the First United Methodist Church (4845 Brockton Avenue) held a talk with Phyllis Lyon titled "Understanding Homosexuality." A gay Narcotics Anonymous (N.A.) group was held at St. Aelreds Church (1044 E. La Cadena) in the mid-1990s.

⁴⁰⁶ Jeffrey Dangermond, email correspondence with Catherine Gudis, July 7, 2023.

⁴⁰⁷ Rev. Benita Ramsey, interview by Jill Surdzial, May 3, 2023.

⁴⁰⁸ "Slaying at Gay Bar Probed," *Democratic Pride*, May/June 2002.

Discrimination & Community Solidarity

Violence and hate crimes⁴⁰⁹ against lesbians and gay men has occurred throughout history. Despite advances in civil rights, and the presence of significant federal, state, and local organizations to promote and support the LGBTQ+ community, discrimination and violence persisted through the late twentieth century. This includes systemic discrimination imposed by the state and anti-gay violence perpetrated by private citizens. These crimes often go unreported due to the stigma associated with them. There are several known instances of discrimination, violence, and hate crimes against the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside during this period. As recalled by local activist Connie Confer when she moved in with her partner Kay Berryhill-Smith:

We had had some kind of nasty things happen during this period of time. When I moved into her house in 1981 or so, there was a phone call, someone left a message on her phone answering machine saying, ‘You finger fucking lesbians, get out of the neighborhood.’ Pretty hostile there and obviously someone knew that lived in the neighborhood and it was very disturbing to Kay to think that she had been neighbors with these people for years and some one of them, unknown because they were disguising their voice, had left that kind of a message on her machine.”⁴¹⁰

In 1992, local lesbian activist Nancy Willem, who provided domestic violence and rape crisis counseling, and was active in the Women’s Resource Center at UCR, was raped, robbed, and beaten to death at her office in Rialto.⁴¹¹ The murder catalyzed the women of Riverside to come together, and the group Women Enraged! (WE!) was founded, aimed at disrupting violence against women. As WE! cofounder Maggie Hawkins explains, “there had actually been thirteen assaults that had not been addressed by law enforcement or they hadn’t found a perpetrator.... What happened to her was part of a series of crimes against women that had really not been addressed” and where police had failed “to serve and protect.”⁴¹² Chani Beeman explains that “a lot of lesbians and some straight women were involved in WE!, focusing primarily on the invisibility of women.”⁴¹³ WE! was formed by a group of women “enraged about the constant presence of violence in our lives.”⁴¹⁴

WE! met weekly for three years at Chani Beeman’s residence. One of the group’s first fundraisers was held at the progressive St. Andrews Newman Center, on Box Springs and Watkins Drive.⁴¹⁵

⁴⁰⁹ Hate crimes are defined as the victimization of individuals because of their actual or perceived race, ethnicity or national origin, sexual orientation, religion, gender, gender identity, or disability.

⁴¹⁰ Connie Confer, interview by Jill Surdzial, November 11, 2022.

⁴¹¹ Patrick J. McDonnell, “Tests Link Ex-Convict to Series of Rapes, Murder,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 25, 1992.

⁴¹² Maggie Hawkins, interview by Jill Surdzial, February 24, 2022. In a press release, WE! defined themselves as “a group of women enraged about the constant presence of violence in all women’s lives.... We! seeks to establish the fundamental right of women to work and live in any community free from fear and violence, through education and action: by whatever means necessary.” Maggie Hawkins collection, WE! Clothesline Project Press Release, 27 January 1993.

⁴¹³ Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 27, 2023.

⁴¹⁴ Press Release, 27 January 1993.

⁴¹⁵ The fundraiser was held at Newman Center because it was associated with the UCR campus, where Nancy had been a significant member of the UCR community. Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 27, 2023; Maggie Hawkins, personal communication with Alexandra Perlman, July 10, 2023.

WE! held regular demonstrations about violence against women that took all different forms, including “Take Back the Night” marches and demonstrations against sexist media coverage.⁴¹⁶ Beeman explained, “We did chalk outlines downtown with statistics about violence against women. We did guerrilla theater in a downtown market, you know, the weekly market they had on Wednesday nights. And on dollar bills, we would write statistics about violence against women, and then we put them in vending machines” to circulate our message. “The idea,” she explained, “was that you shock people and then once you had their attention, share some information maybe that they didn’t have. And then resources, obviously, someone passing out fliers.” For instance, in 1992, [Gov.] “Pete Wilson vetoed Assembly Bill 101, which would have included sexual orientation into the nondiscrimination policy, in effect saying it’s okay to continue to discriminate against LGBTQ people.” In protest, WE!, PACE, and other LGBTQ+ organizations met at the Courthouse and held a funeral procession, carrying candles and a casket, and circulating fliers.⁴¹⁷

WE! also started the “Clothesline Project,” in which female survivors of violence designed t-shirts with graphic messages and illustrations. The clothing was hung on clotheslines in public spaces—the commons at UCR in the case of Riverside’s inaugural presentation in 1993 and at Market Night in downtown—each item bearing witness to a women who has been a victim of sexual violence.⁴¹⁸ It aimed to reverse the usual silence around sexual assault by instead airing the “dirty laundry” of participants, who would write a phrase, name, or something about the issues or what had happened to them, or to family members, allowing each item to also stand in memorial.⁴¹⁹ The group’s manifesto, authored by activist Chani Beeman, stated that “the Clothesline Project is a grassroots network and lifeline of support. It is rooted in the understanding that violence against women is a manifestation of sexism rooted in a hierarchical society.”⁴²⁰

Another hate crime aimed at the LGBTQ+ community shook Riverside in 2002. On June 5, 2002, Jeffery Owens and Michael Bussee were attacked and stabbed by gang members outside of the Menagerie, a downtown Riverside nightclub popular in the gay community. Owens died from complications from multiple stab wounds and an overdose of an anti-clotting drug administered at the hospital.⁴²¹ Bussee survived the attack. Police arrested four men associated with the attack, who received jail sentences ranging in length from three to 25 years.⁴²²

Chani Beeman was newly appointed chair of the City’s Human Relations Commission when Jeffrey Owens was murdered. Beeman, David St. Pierre, and the rest of the commission, organized a community vigil after the murder, at which Mark Takano and then-Mayor Ron Loveridge spoke. Bussee was scarred by the incident. He visited the attack site every day, removing dead flowers and caring for the shrine. Bussee said he was proud of the outpouring of support from Riverside

⁴¹⁶ Chani Beeman, “WE! Confronting Violence,” *Against the Current: A Socialist Journal* no. 51, (July/August 1994).

⁴¹⁷ Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 27, 2023.

⁴¹⁸ “Viewing the Horrors of Violence,” *Press Enterprise* 3 February 1993, C-2.

⁴¹⁹ Maggie Hawkins, interview by Jill Surdzial, February 24, 2022.

⁴²⁰ Beeman, “WE! Confronting Violence,” *Against the Current: A Socialist Journal*.

⁴²¹ “Brother of Gay Man Killed in Riverside Files Lawsuit,” *Advocate*, July 18, 2003; “Obituary: Mr. Jeffrey Tod Owens,” *Press-Enterprise*, June 14, 2002.

⁴²² “Gang Members Plead Guilty in Antigay Killing,” *Advocate*, September 27, 2003; “Gay Man’s Killer Gets 25-to-Life Tern,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 26, 2005.

residents, and that the hate crime “shocked the whole community, not just the gay community. We had 500 people at a vigil, people with babies in strollers, elderly people, people of color... I would have expected nothing less from Riverside.”⁴²³ In the aftermath, the Human Relations Commission held hearings around nondiscrimination, and brought organizations in the community together to determine what they were doing to protect and create safe space for LGBTQ+ people. Western Inland Empire Coalition Against Hate (WIECAH), one of the projects of the Human Relations Commission, met in City Hall and was among the groups that worked to bring together the human relations and police accountability commissions, law enforcement, community service groups, religious organizations, and the community in an effort to eradicate hate crimes.⁴²⁴

David St. Pierre played a significant role both within the Human Relations Commission and, more broadly, in the political landscape of LGBTQ+ rights in the city—behind the scenes and up front and center. As a supporter of the arts, he served on multiple boards and councils, co-founding Riverside Repertory Theater in 1997.⁴²⁵ After he purchased the Menagerie in 1999, he became more deeply involved in the local LGBTQ+ community. St. Pierre helped finance grassroots advocacy organizations; as a downtown businessman, he held sway in City Hall to the extent that he contemplated running for a council seat; and he helped leverage his position on the Commission, working with City staff and in mentoring others.⁴²⁶

The murder of Jeffery Owens had a lasting impact on the City of Riverside. The crime brought together residents to challenge hate directed at the LGBTQ+ community and led to the establishment of a strong local support network for members of the community. As commissioners, St. Pierre and Beeman surveyed community members about their experiences of bias-motivated harassment, specific areas of Riverside where they felt unsafe, and suggestions for improvements.

At hearings held at City Council Chambers in September 2002, the Commission called together major employers and social institutions in Riverside to review and present their programs that address prejudice, discrimination, and intolerance within their organization. They issued a “call to action for creating attitudes of inclusiveness in our community,” a predecessor to today’s DEI training and accountability.⁴²⁷ The Commission developed a complaint and referral system for people experiencing discrimination; a Human Relations Report Card; and marketing and education campaigns. In 2004, the Commission adopted a resolution on same sex marriage.⁴²⁸ The Jeffery Owens Community Center was established in the years following Owens’s death, to provide further support for the LGBTQ+ community.

⁴²³ Janet Wilson, “4 Held in Killing of Man Stabbed at Club,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 2002.

⁴²⁴ Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 24, 2023.

⁴²⁵ Pam Vieyra, “David Alan St. Pierre Obituary,” *Kern Valley Sun*, September 21, 2022.

⁴²⁶ Chani Beeman, interview by Catherine Gudis and Jill Surdzial, March 27, 2023.

⁴²⁷ Human Relations Commission Community Questionnaire, Community Meeting Invitation, and Hearing Summary, September 2002, collection of Chani Beeman.

⁴²⁸ Human Relations Commission Objectives and Program Initiatives and Resource Allocations and Deliverables, undated, collection of Chani Beeman.

CONCLUSION

The battle for civil rights for the LGBTQ+ community continues in the 21st century. Acknowledging the past, and the layers of history in a community such as Riverside, is an important step toward understanding and acceptance. Riverside LGBTQ+ activists continue to advocate for political and social rights at the national, State, and local levels. While there have been significant victories in recent years, including marriage equality, federal protection for LGBTQ+ workers, and nonbinary identification and expression, this work continues. The advancements and setbacks set the stage for future studies of the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside and throughout the country.

This historic context statement is intended as an introduction to LGBTQ+ history in Riverside, in the hopes that additional information from the community and through ongoing research efforts will come to light to enrich the story and identify additional places and spaces associated with the local LGBTQ+ community. It is meant to be a living document that can help guide local planning staff and the community, and to provide the framework for future study. Additional topics for future research include transgender, bisexual, and individual histories; and expanding the study to be more inclusive of significant individuals of color and events associated with LGBTQ+ people of color as additional information and scholarly research emerges over time.

In addition to this historic context statement, other tools exist for the identification and commemoration of LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. The City and UCR are planning to continue the oral history project to include more voices as part of the record of LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. The community is encouraged to identify important people and places associated with LGBTQ+ history to contribute to an upcoming story map.

Additionally, formal designation of eligible properties significant to LGBTQ+ history is an important step in acknowledging the struggles and contributions of the LGBTQ+ community. At this time, there are no designated properties in Riverside that have been nominated for their association with LGBTQ+ culture or history.

SECTION 2. DESIGNATION CRITERIA & ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

Introduction

This section is intended to assist with the identification and evaluation of properties that may be significant for their association with LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. Because scholarship is ongoing, there are relatively few known resources associated with LGBTQ+ history in Riverside, and there are properties that may become eligible when sufficient time has passed, the registration requirements are organized by property type and broadly defined in order to allow for the expansion of this context statement as research and resource evaluation proceeds in the future. Properties identified in the narrative have not been evaluated for eligibility as part of this study, and no properties will be formally designated as a result of this project. Identified properties are intended to link the stories of the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside with the built environment; provide information about LGBTQ+ history in the city; and identify properties that may qualify for historic designation. A Study List of the properties identified as part of the research for this study and through community outreach efforts is included in Appendix A.

Designation Criteria

A property may be designated as historic by Federal, State, and local authorities. In order for a building to qualify for listing in the National Register or the California Register, it must meet one or more identified criteria of significance. The property must also retain sufficient historic integrity to continue to evoke the sense of place and time with which it is historically associated.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES (NRHP)

The National Register is “an authoritative guide to be used by Federal, State, and local governments, private groups and citizens to identify the nation’s cultural resources. Listing of private property in the National Register does not prohibit under Federal law or regulation any actions which may otherwise be taken by the property owner with respect to the property.”⁴²⁹

To be eligible for listing and/or listed in the National Register, a resource must possess significance in American history and culture, architecture, or archaeology. Listing in the National Register is primarily honorary and does not in and of itself provide protection of a historic resource. The primary effect of listing in the National Register on private owners of historic buildings is the availability of financial and tax incentives. In addition, for projects that receive Federal funding, a clearance process must be completed in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. State and local regulations may also apply to properties listed in the National Register.

⁴²⁹ 36CFR60, Section 60.2.

The criteria for listing in the National Register follow established guidelines for determining the significance of properties. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.⁴³⁰

Integrity

In addition to meeting any or all of the designation criteria listed above, the National Park Service requires properties to possess historic integrity. Historic integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance and is defined as “the authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property’s historic period.”⁴³¹

The National Register recognizes seven aspects or qualities that comprise integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. These qualities are defined as follows:

- *Location* is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event took place.
- *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- *Setting* is the physical environment of a historic property.
- *Materials* are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
- *Workmanship* is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- *Feeling* is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

⁴³⁰ 36CFR60, Section 60.3.

⁴³¹ U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, “National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form,” Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1997.

- *Association* is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.⁴³²

In assessing a property's integrity, the National Park Service recognizes that properties change over time. National Register Bulletin 15 provides:

To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. It is not necessary for a property to retain all its historic physical features or characteristics. The property must retain, however, the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity.

A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style.⁴³³

A property that has sufficient integrity for listing at the national, state, or local level will typically retain a majority of the identified character-defining features and therefore will retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance. The required aspects of integrity are dependent on the reason for a property's significance. Increased age and rarity of the property type are also considered when assessing integrity thresholds. For properties that are significant for their association with important events or people (Criterion A or B), integrity of feeling and/or association may be more important:

A property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that made up its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event, historical pattern, or person(s).⁴³⁴

Criteria Consideration: Properties Achieving Significance in Last 50 Years

National Park Service guidelines identify 50 years as “the general estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance.” Those properties that have gained significance within the past 50 years are required to be of “exceptional importance” that may be applied to “the extraordinary importance of an event or to an entire category of resources so fragile that survivors of any age are unusual.”⁴³⁵

⁴³² U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, “National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1995.

⁴³³ National Register Bulletin 15.

⁴³⁴ National Register Bulletin 15.

⁴³⁵ National Register Bulletin 15.

The NPS clarifies that the phrase “exceptional importance does not require that the property be of national significance. It is a measure of a property’s importance within the appropriate historic context, whether the scale of that context is local, State, or national.”⁴³⁶

CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES (CRHR)

The California Register is an authoritative guide in California used by State and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the State's historic resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.⁴³⁷

The criteria for eligibility for listing in the California Register are based upon National Register criteria. These criteria are:

1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.
4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

CITY OF RIVERSIDE

The City of Riverside maintains an active program to designate historic resources. The Cultural Resources Ordinance (Title 20) recognizes four types of local designation, including Landmarks and Structures of Merit. The definitions and criteria for designation of these historic resources are included below.

Landmark

Landmark means any improvement or natural feature that is an exceptional example of a historical, archaeological, cultural, architectural, community, aesthetic or artistic heritage of the City, retains a high degree of integrity, and meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history;
2. Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history;
3. Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;

⁴³⁶ National Register Bulletin 15.

⁴³⁷ California PRC, Section 5023.1(a).

4. Represents the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect, or important creative individual;
5. Embodies elements that possess high artistic values or represents a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;
6. Reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning, or cultural landscape;
7. Is one of the last remaining examples in the City, region, State, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen; or
8. Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Structure of Merit

Structure or resource of merit means any improvement or natural feature which contributes to the broader understanding of the historical, archaeological, cultural, architectural, community, aesthetic or artistic heritage of the City, retains sufficient integrity, and:

1. Has a unique location or singular physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood community or of the City;
2. Is an example of a type of building which was once common but is now rare in its neighborhood, community or area;
3. Is connected with a business or use which was once common but is now rare;
4. A cultural resource that could be eligible under landmark criteria no longer exhibiting a high level of integrity, however, retaining sufficient integrity to convey significance under one or more of the landmark criteria;
5. Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory; or
6. An improvement or resource that no longer exhibits the high degree of integrity sufficient for landmark designation, yet still retains sufficient integrity under one or more of the landmark criteria to convey cultural resource significance as a structure or resource of merit.

Eligibility Standards

This context statement is intended to document the stories and places associated with LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. The period of study for this project begins with a discussion of gender fluidity in the Native American community, and concludes in 2003, reflecting significant events in LGBTQ+ history that took place in the first years of the 21st century. As discussed in the introductory section of this document, source material and known resources associated with LGBTQ+ history in Riverside are rare. In the development of a context statement, themes are typically developed based on the presence of extant properties with a known association with that theme. In order to provide a thorough overview of LGBTQ+ history in Riverside, and with the hope that additional scholarship and community engagement will identify additional properties over time, this study provides a chronological overview of LGBTQ+ history, including national or state trends, and an identification of events, people, organizations, and milestones in the fight for gay civil rights specific to Riverside over time. The eligibility standards included herein therefore include broadly defined themes based on the information in the narrative overview. Note that the periods of significance under each theme are approximate, based on what is known at this time. It is expected that properties that pre-date the identified periods may be discovered based on additional research and would also be eligible under these themes.

It is also anticipated that properties may be eligible under multiple themes. For example, communal spaces may be eligible as social institutions, the site of important events in LGBTQ+ history, or for an association with an important person. Properties significant for an association with LGBTQ+ history within the scope of this study will be eligible under NRHP Criterion A/CRHR Criterion 1/Local Criterion 1 (reflecting an association with an important event or pattern of development), or NRHP Criterion B/CRHR Criterion 2/Local Criterion 2 (reflecting an association with an important person).⁴³⁸

⁴³⁸ Properties identified as potentially significant under the themes in this context may also be eligible under other contexts or themes. For example, a property that represents an important gathering place for the gay community may also be eligible for its architectural merit.

THEME: GAY CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, SOCIAL & POLITICAL ACTIVISM

Criteria: NRHP A/CRHR 1/Local 1

Period of Significance: 1960-2003⁴³⁹

Property Type: Residential, Commercial, Institutional

Description: This theme is intended to capture those places that are significant specifically for their association with the fight for LGBTQ+ civil rights. Individual properties that may be eligible under this theme include residential, commercial, and institutional buildings that have a specific association with the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement, including raising awareness; engaging in political campaigns and advocacy efforts; and/or providing organized resistance to social, political, and legal discrimination. This may include residences that were used as de facto headquarters of important advocacy groups; commercial or institutional buildings that were owned or used by important local advocacy groups; or institutional buildings, such as churches or educational facilities, that were the home to important activist groups or hosted events pivotal to the fight for LGBTQ+ civil rights. Examples include the Menagerie, a site of numerous political fundraisers; the Confer and Berryhill-Smith Residence, which hosted meetings for PACE, RCAD, and IAP; and the YWCA, where meetings for the NAMES Project for the AIDS memorial quilt were held.

Eligibility Standards:

- Was constructed or achieved significance during the period of significance for this context; and
- Is directly associated with an event significant in the fight for LGBTQ+ civil rights; or
- Was the original or long-term home of an organization or institution that played an important role in the fight for LGBTQ+ civil rights; and
- Retains most of the essential physical features from the period of significance.
- In order to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, properties associated with events or organizations that gained significance within the past 50 years must meet the “exceptional importance” threshold as outlined in Criteria Consideration G.

Integrity Considerations:

- The evaluation of integrity is based on the period during which the property achieved significance for its association with an event or organization that made an important contribution to the fight for LGBTQ+ rights.
- An individual property should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association

⁴³⁹ Note that 1960 represents the beginning of the sexual revolution and the Civil Rights era in the United States; political activism appears to have begun in earnest in Riverside in the 1970s. It is anticipated that the period of significance may be updated or refined based on future research.

from the period of significance.

- The setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses).
- Some original materials may have been altered or removed and the property can still reflect its significance under Criterion A/1/1.
- Some alterations may be acceptable provided that the building still retains its general massing, size, and scale, and conveys its general appearance from the period of significance.
- For commercial buildings, the street-facing façade should retain most of the major design features from the period of significance. Some original materials may have been altered or removed; replacement or alteration of storefronts is a common alteration.

THEME: GATHERING PLACES, SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, ARTS & CULTURE

Criteria: NRHP A/CRHR 1/Local 1

Period of Significance: 1980-2003⁴⁴⁰

Property Type: Residential, Commercial, Institutional

Description: This theme is intended to capture those places that are significant communal spaces for the LGBTQ+ community. Individual properties that may be eligible under this theme include residential, commercial, and institutional buildings that were important community gathering places. This may include residences that were the site of significant, ongoing community events; or commercial enterprises including bars, restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, and theaters that have an important association with the LGBTQ+ social scene in Riverside. For example, Back to the Grind coffee shop and the Menagerie nightclub have a legacy of hosting LGBTQ+ friendly events, including inclusive poetry readings and drag shows, thereby serving as safe places for the LGBTQ+ community to gather and socialize. Religious and civic institutions, social halls, and libraries may also be significant under this theme. Properties will be eligible as early LGBTQ+ establishments, establishments with a long-term association with the LGBTQ+ community that has become a cornerstone of the community, or the site of important community events, including performing arts venues, that were significant within the context of LGBTQ+ history.

Eligibility Standards:

- Was constructed or achieved significance during the period of significance for this context; and
- Represents an early establishment catering specifically to the LGBTQ+ community; or
- Is the original or long-term home of an establishment that is widely recognized as an important gathering place for the LGBTQ+ community; or
- Is the original or long-term venue associated with arts and culture specific to the LGBTQ+ community; and
- Retains most of the essential physical features from the period of significance.
- In order to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, properties associated with events or organizations that gained significance within the past 50 years must meet the “exceptional importance” threshold as outlined in Criteria Consideration G.

Integrity Considerations:

- The evaluation of integrity is based on the period during which the property achieved significance for its association with the communal/social life of the LGBTQ+ community.

⁴⁴⁰ Note that 1980 represents the period during which a number of important gathering places were established in Riverside; it is anticipated that the period of significance may be updated based on future research.

- An individual property should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from the period of significance.
- The setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses).
- Some original materials may have been altered or removed and the property can still reflect its significance under Criterion A/1/1.
- Some alterations may be acceptable provided that the building still retains its general massing, size, and scale, and conveys its general appearance from the period of significance.
- For commercial buildings, the street-facing façade should retain most of the major design features from the period of significance. Some original materials may have been altered or removed; replacement or alteration of storefronts is a common alteration.

THEME: LGBTQ+ EDUCATIONAL, INSTITUTIONAL & SOCIAL SERVICES

Criteria: NRHP A/CRHR 1/Local 1

Period of Significance: 1970-2003⁴⁴¹

Property Type: Commercial, Institutional

Description: This theme is intended to capture those places that are significant for providing important services and support for the LGBTQ+ community. Individual properties that may be eligible under this theme include commercial and institutional buildings that were home to important community organizations that provided support services to the LGBTQ+ community. Some of these organizations may overlap with the political/activist arena; however, there are a number of groups that were established specifically to serve the gay community through social and support services, education, healthcare, and fundraising. This may include early community organizations, organizations that are significant for a specific association with an important service during a particular period in history (e.g., organizations that were founded in response to the AIDS/HIV epidemic), or organizations that have a long-term association with the gay community that have become cornerstones of the community.

Universities and other educational institutions play an important role for the LGBTQ+ community by providing health resources, support services, and community centers. In Riverside, student-led organizations established safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students and the wider community, often hosting programs and events aimed at fostering greater inclusion and belonging. For example, UCR has supported its LGBTQ+ community through the establishment of the Women's Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, and the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS. Student-led initiatives include, among others, the formation of the Gay student Union and its many lectures, events, and fundraisers.

Eligibility Standards:

- Was constructed or achieved significance during the period of significance for this context; and
- Represents an early community or educational institution or organization founded specifically to support the LGBTQ+ community; or
- Is the original or long-term home of an establishment that is widely recognized as a cornerstone of the LGBTQ+ community; or
- Represents an institution that provided critical support services to the LGBTQ+ community during a particular period in history; or

⁴⁴¹ Note that 1970 represents the period during which there was campus and other organizing efforts in Riverside; it is anticipated that the period of significance may be updated based on future research.

- Is associated with an important commemorative or fundraising event that played a significant role in LGBTQ+ history; and
- Retains most of the essential physical features from the period of significance.
- In order to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, properties associated with events or organizations that gained significance within the past 50 years must meet the “exceptional importance” threshold as outlined in Criteria Consideration G.

Integrity Considerations:

- The evaluation of integrity is based on the period during which the property achieved significance for its association with the LGBTQ+ community.
- An individual property should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from the period of significance.
- The setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses).
- Some original materials may have been altered or removed and the property can still reflect its significance under Criterion A/1/1.
- Some alterations may be acceptable provided that the building still retains its general massing, size, and scale, and conveys its general appearance from the period of significance.
- For commercial buildings, the street-facing façade should retain most of the major design features from the period of significance. Some original materials may have been altered or removed; replacement or alteration of storefronts is a common alteration.

THEME: IMPORTANT PERSONS IN LGBTQ+ HISTORY

Criteria: NRHP B/CRHR 2/Local 2

Period of Significance: 1920-2003⁴⁴²

Property Type: Residential, Commercial

Description: Individual properties that may be eligible under this theme would typically include residences that were home to important members of the LGBTQ+ community or who made an important contribution to LGBTQ+ history, or commercial or institutional buildings with a strong association with a significant person. Important persons in LGBTQ+ history may include early or important advocates for the LGBTQ+ community; people who have a direct and important association with the fight for gay civil rights; people who provided important services or otherwise advanced LGBTQ+ rights; members of the LGBTQ+ community who broke important barriers; or the founders or long-term operators of LGBTQ+ organizations, commercial enterprises, or social institutions that played a significant role in LGBTQ+ history and became important cornerstones within the community. Examples include Carolyn (Connie) Confer and her partner Kay Berryhill-Smith, who held municipal roles while also establishing numerous political and health-oriented community organizations aimed at bettering LGBTQ+ life in Riverside. Alongside Confer and Berryhill-Smith, many Riverside residents have dedicated their lives to support and fight for civil rights for the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside and beyond.

Eligibility Standards:

- Associated with a person who made a demonstrable contribution to LGBTQ+ history; and
- Is associated with the person during the period in which they achieved significance; and
- Is the property that best represents the person's life; and
- Retains most of the essential physical features from the period of significance.
- In order to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, properties associated with people who achieved significance within the past 50 years must meet the "exceptional importance" threshold as outlined in Criteria Consideration G.

Integrity Considerations:

- The evaluation of integrity is based on the period during which the property achieved significance for its association with a person who made important contributions to LGBTQ+ history.
- The property should retain sufficient integrity to convey significance from the period of time in which the significant person lived there or used the property. A basic integrity test

⁴⁴² Note that 1920 was selected to include early performers who may have influenced LGBTQ+ history in Riverside. It is anticipated that the period of significance may be updated based on future research.

for properties associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of the evaluation.

- An individual property should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from the period of significance.
- The setting may have changed (surrounding buildings and land uses).
- Some original materials may have been altered or removed and the property can still reflect its significance under Criterion B/2/2.
- Some alterations may be acceptable provided that the building still retains its general massing, size, and scale, and conveys its general appearance from the period of significance.

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Appendix A. Properties Associated With LGBTQ+ History in Riverside

| NAME | ADDRESS / LOCATION | PROPERTY TYPE | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---------------|---|
| Connie Confer and Kay Berryhill-Smith Residence | Current addresses are not provided for residences associated with living persons. | Residence | Connie Confer and Kay Berryhill Smith were a lesbian couple heavily involved in local LGBTQ+ political action groups, including Political Action Committee for Elections (PACE), Riverside Coalition Against Discrimination (RCAD), and Inland AIDS Project (IAP). They held dozens of meetings at their residence as well as annual events for the LGBTQ+ community, including a lesbian cookie potluck. |
| Carl H. Jonas Residence | 3650 Larchwood Place | Residence | Carl H. Jonas conducted psychological studies on 53 overtly homosexual servicemen at Camp Haan during World War II. Jonas has been described by historians as an early liberal psychiatrist, providing a humanist approach towards the homosexual soldier. |
| David Frater Residence | 4537 Jurupa Avenue | Residence | David Frater was the first openly gay man to be permitted to adopt his foster son in Riverside. |
| Earl Residence | 490 Alta Mesa Drive | Residence | Site of Political Action Committee for Elections (PACE) regular meetings. PACE was a political group designed to identify and fund pro-LGBTQ politicians, especially in local Riverside-area elections. |
| Harold (Mac) McCarthy Residence | 5238 Sierra Vista Avenue | Residence | Harold McCarthy, an openly gay man, filed suit with the U.S. District Court to challenge the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy in 1993. |
| Courtroom Bar, Old City Hall | 3612 Mission Inn Avenue | Bar | First LGBTQ+-friendly bar located on the second floor of Riverside’s historic City Hall, opened in the early 1980s. Site of Riverside’s first symbolic gay wedding, between Michael Bussee and Gary Cooper, in 1982. The Old City Hall is designated a City of Riverside Landmark. |
| Stage Door, Old City Hall | 3612 Mission Inn Avenue | Bar | Gay bar briefly operated by Madaline Lee in 1982. That same year the bar was shut down by the Riverside Police Department because of inadequate permits. |
| Menagerie | 3581 University Avenue | Bar | Opened by Madaline Lee in 1983. The bar became a cornerstone of the LGBTQ+ community in Riverside, a center of political activism and site of numerous fundraisers, and a place to grieve during the AIDS epidemic. The bar became a gender-blind club under the guidance of David St. Pierre and the site of drag shows organized by Philip Bailey. |

| NAME | ADDRESS / LOCATION | PROPERTY TYPE | COMMENTS |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Owens Memorial at the Menagerie | 3581 University Avenue | Memorial Site | The parking lot of the Menagerie was the location of the murder of gay resident and local AIDS advocate Jeffery Owens in 2002. The parking lot has become the site for community vigils. A memorial plaque on the site reads: "In loving memory, Jeffery Todd Owens, victim of hate (12/12/61-6/6/02). We will not be silenced." |
| V.I.P. Club | 3673 Merrill Avenue | Bar | LGBTQ+ bar and drag venue that opened in 1993. Site of the earliest drag shows that attracted drag queens from across Southern California. |
| Back to the Grind | 3575 University Avenue | Coffee Shop | LGBTQ+-friendly coffeehouse that has held queer open mic nights and fundraisers since the mid-1990s. The site of numerous PACE events. |
| Fairmount Park | 2601 Fairmount Boulevard | Public Park | Cruising area listed in Bob Damron Address Book from 1977-1980. A subject of a public policing campaign in 1993 to end public gay sex in the park. Fairmount Park is designated a City of Riverside Landmark. |
| Universalist Unitarian Church | 3525 Mission Inn Avenue | Religious Institution | Temporary site of the Trinity Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), a significant LGBTQ+-friendly religious institution, from 1972 to 1973. The Universalist-Unitarian Church is designated a City of Riverside Landmark. |
| Magnolia United Presbyterian Church | 7200 Magnolia Avenue | Religious Institution | Temporary site of the Good Shepherd Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), a significant LGBTQ+-friendly religious institution, in the mid-1980s. Site of a 50-hour AIDS vigil in 1986. The Magnolia United Presbyterian Church is designated a City of Riverside Landmark. |
| First Congregational Church of Riverside | 3504 Mission Inn Avenue | Religious Institution | Since 1995, the FCC has been an "open and affirming" congregation. Senior Minister Jane Quandt at the FCC performed the first gay marriage in Riverside County after the Supreme Court overturned the ban on gay marriage. |
| YWCA | 8172 Magnolia Riverside | Public Institution | Regular meetings for the NAMES Project were held at the YWCA. The NAMES Project was responsible for creating squares for the AIDS memorial quilt, memorializing those who have passed away from the disease. |

| NAME | ADDRESS / LOCATION | PROPERTY TYPE | COMMENTS |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| War Department Theater/ Building 467, March Field | 22550 Van Buren Boulevard | Theater | The War Department Theater/Building 467 at March Field was the site of the World War II-era soldier show <i>You Bet Your Life</i> . <i>You Bet Your Life</i> included both female actresses and female impersonators and served as a notable example of early drag in Riverside. |
| Library South, Rivera Library, UCR | 900 University Avenue | Library | Regular meetings and events for the Gay Student Union were held at the Library South at UCR from the 1970s onwards. |
| LGBT Resource Center, UCR | 900 University Avenue | Resource Center | Established in 1993, the LGBT Resource Center at UCR provides support, education, and advocacy regarding sexual orientation and gender identity/expression for the UCR community and beyond. |
| Superior Court of California, County of Riverside (Riverside County Courthouse) | 4050 Main Street | Courthouse | Site of numerous civil rights events, including <i>People v. Jordan</i> (1973); <i>David Frater Adoption case</i> (1982); and <i>Citizens for Responsible Behavior v. Superior Court</i> (1991). The Superior Court of California, County of Riverside is designated a City of Riverside Landmark |
| Riverside Municipal Auditorium | 3485 Mission Inn Avenue | Public Institution | Site of early drag shows established by Phillip Bailey "Fant-A-She" in the 1990s. The show ultimately moved to the Menagerie in 2002. The Riverside Municipal Auditorium is designated a City of Riverside Landmark. |
| Inland AIDS Project | 3638 University Avenue, Suite 223 | Health Center | Inland AIDS Project support group led by Dr. Charles Weis in 1987. Other potential locations may include 1240 Palmyrita Avenue #E; 6700 Indiana Avenue; and 6040 Magnolia Avenue; 3756 Elizabeth Street |

| NAME | ADDRESS / LOCATION | PROPERTY TYPE | COMMENTS |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| DEMOLISHED | | | |
| Loring Opera House | 7 th and Main Street | Theater | <p>Julian Eltinge, noted female impersonator in the early 20th century, repeatedly performed in Riverside and was lauded as “one of the greatest stars of the legitimate stage.” The Loring Opera House was the venue that Eltinge performed at most frequently.</p> <p>The Loring Opera House was designated a City of Riverside Landmark before it was destroyed by fire in 1990.</p> |
| Griffith & Tucker Sanatorium | Linden Street and Watkins Drive | Sanatorium | Griffith & Tucker worked with patients suffering from a variety of maladies in addition to those suffering from tuberculosis. They also advised the legal system on certain perceived medical cases, including gender nonconformance. |
| Camp Haan Hospital | 33.869075, -117.271649 | Military Hospital | Major Carl H. Jonas of the Army Medical Corps ran a military study on homosexuality amongst military personnel at the Camp Haan Hospital from 1943 to 1944. His studies concluded that there was “a remarkable lack of uniformity in the data obtained,” and that “overt homosexuality occurs in a heterogeneous group of individuals.” |
| Greyhound Bus Station | 3911 University Avenue | Bus Station; Parking Lot | Common site for cruising. In the autumn of 1960, Riverside police held several stakeouts at the Greyhound bus station and arrested at least six men on morals cases. |
| Gay Student Union Coffee House | 2243 University Avenue | Residence; Coffee House | A coffee house in a private residence that held events for the LGBTQ+ community, also associated with the Gay Student Union. |
| Commons Building, UCR | 900 University Avenue | Student Center | Site of numerous LGBTQ+ clubs on campus and associated events, including a presentation/forum titled “Gay Liberation and Socialist Reform” and the lecture “The Gay Experience.” |
| Highlander Hall 140, UCR | 900 University Avenue | Student Center | Regular meetings and events for PACE, SCWU, and Union for Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals were all held at Highlander Hall 140. |
| Highlander Hall 150, UCR | 900 University Avenue | Student Center | Regular meetings and events for the Gay Student Union and the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of San Bernardino were held at the Highlander Hall 150. |