# Table of Contents

Summary Information................................................................................................................................. 3
Biographical/Historical note......................................................................................................................... 4
Scope and Contents note.............................................................................................................................. 5
Administrative Information.......................................................................................................................... 5
Related Materials........................................................................................................................................ 6
Controlled Access Headings......................................................................................................................... 6
Collection Inventory.................................................................................................................................. 7
Summary Information

Repository  John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center

Creator  Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies (Philadelphia, Pa.).

Title  Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies records

Date [inclusive]  1984-1988

Extent  0.2 Linear feet 1 slim document box

Language  English

Abstract  The Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies was a grassroots organization made up of representatives from several of Philadelphia lesbian and gay organizations. Active from 1984-1986, their goal was "to examine the practices and policies of bars serving Philadelphia's gay/lesbian community as they relate to the treatment and employment of women and racial minorities, and to analyze the results of this examination in order to decide on appropriate actions to address problem areas." The records include correspondence to and from the Coalition, typed meeting minutes, press releases, bar study questionnaires and results, bar observation forms and tabulated data, as well as a final report of findings from the Coalition.

Preferred Citation note

Biographical/Historical note

In the final report of the Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies, the Coalition gives the following "History of the Project":

"The Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies began in June of 1984, when representatives from six area lesbian and gay organizations [Beth Ahavah, Black and White Men Together - Philadelphia, Dignity/Philadelphia, Integrity, Metropolitan Community Church - Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Lesbian and Gay Task Force] met to discuss ways 'to examine the practices and policies of bars serving Philadelphia's gay/lesbian community as they relate to the treatment and employment of women and racial minorities, and to analyze the results of this examination in order to decide on appropriate actions to address problem areas.' The group eventually included ten participating organizations [having added the Big Bear Club, Gay Fathers of Greater Philadelphia, the Mayor's Commission on Sexual Minorities, and Sisterspace of Philadelphia]. A survey was drafted to document the employment, promotion and admission policies of area bars. Coalition members conducted this survey in teams, visiting local bars and interviewing owners or managers at each bar. The survey process began in the fall of 1984; over the next six months, the Coalition attempted to survey every gay and lesbian bar and private club in the city.

To back up the information provided by the survey, the group conducted observations at various establishments over a period of eight months, beginning in the spring of 1985. Teams of volunteer observers made over 100 visits to collect first-hand information about the racial and sexual composition of bar employees and patrons, as well as admission policies. The observations were completed in February of [1986]."

The bars that were surveyed and/or observed during the course of the project include: Allegro 2 (2056 Sansom St.), The Bike Stop (206 S. Quince St.), The Black Banana (201 N. 3rd St.), The Cellblock and DCA Club (1219 St. James St.), CR Bar and Millbourne Social Association (MSA Club) (6405 Market St.), The Drury Lane and Cafe Lafitte (and temporarily called Justine's) (1302 Drury St.), Equus (252 S. 12th St.), Gatsby's (Route 70, Cherry Hill, NJ), JP's (1511 Spruce St.), Key West (207 S. Juniper St.), Kurt's (1229 Chestnut St.), Mamzelle's (204 S. Quince St.), Park's Place (also called Odyssey) (1526 Delancey St.), The Post (1705 Chancellor St.), Raffles (233 Camac St.), Season's Cabaret (1306-08 Drury St.), The Smart Place (922 Arch St.), Sneakers (7 N. 3rd St.), 2-4 Club (1221 St. James St.), 247 Club (247 S. 17th St.), Venture Inn (255 S. Camac St.), Westbury Bar (271 S. 15th St.), Woody's (202 S. 13th St.). Because some bars closed, changed ownership, or were renamed during the course of the project, not all establishments are included in the final report.

The final report also gives the following "Summary of Findings":

"Our surveys and observations confirm the existence of pervasive racial and sexual exclusivity in Greater Philadelphia's lesbian and gay bars. This pattern stems from two sources: a desire on the part of many bar owners to create an atmosphere that attracts a specific clientele, and the attitudes and assumptions of bar patrons, most of whom select themselves as customers of a particular bar or bars. These attitudes produce the above-mentioned pattern without the employment of systematic discrimination. Because of this, most of our recommendations ... focus on raising the lesbian and gay public's consciousness about
the issues of racism and sexism. Our surveys and observations also show the admission and employment policies vary greatly among establishments. This situation leaves room for arbitrary practices that could prove discriminatory; our recommendations also include uniform procedures to reduce the chances of such practices."

Individuals who participated in the Coalition included: Len Bost, Burt Fishman, Larry Frankel, Bill Kervin, David Lauer, Maureen M., Gary Mullen, Kenny Newman, Don Ransom, Sandy Smith.

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**Scope and Contents note**

The Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies records appear to be complete and include correspondence to and from the Coalition, typed meeting minutes, press releases, bar study questionnaires and results, bar observation forms and tabulated data, as well as a final report of findings from the Coalition.

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**Administrative Information**

**Publication Information**

John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center January 13, 2017

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**Conditions Governing Use note**

This collection is open for research use.

**Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note
At John J. Wilcox, Jr. Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center:
"Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies (Philadelphia)" file in William Way LGBT Community Center ephemera files, 1972-present, Ms. Coll. 35

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

• Coalition on Lesbian-Gay Bar Policies (Philadelphia, Pa.).

Geographic Name(s)

• Philadelphia (Pa.)

Subject(s)

• Gay bars
• Gay community
• Lesbian bars
• Lesbian community
• Race discrimination
• Sex discrimination
### Collection Inventory

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