THE LGBT COMMUNITY RESPONDS: THE LAVENDER SCARE AND THE CREATION OF MIDWESTERN GAY AND LESBIAN PUBLICATIONS

Heather Hines

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

August 2017

Committee:

Benjamin Greene, Advisor

Michael Brooks
This thesis’s objective is to shed light on understudied and unprecedented developments in LGBT history. Unlike the traditional narrative of the beginning of the gay rights movement, it begins with the aftermath of World War II and the emergence of the Lavender Scare. The Lavender Scare set the stage for the modern gay rights movement and helped spread the movement across the United States. Following the Lavender Scare, gay and lesbian societies were created to help combat societally engrained homophobia. These societies also established their own publications, most notably newspapers, to inform the gay and lesbian community about police entrapment tactics, provide legal advice and news of interest to the community that was not covered in the popular press. Previously unstudied Midwestern gay and lesbian societies and newsletters are also studied, therefore widening the scope of the movement from major coastal cities to rural areas across the nation. Using the existing scholarly literature on LGBT history, this thesis reanalyzes prior developments; uses newly found primary sources such as FBI documents, congressional records, and newsletters, to complicate and expand the history of gay rights in the United States.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank all of the professors and advisors that helped guide me through the completion of this thesis. To my family and friends for putting up with the numerous tribulations that occurred on this journey and most of all I wish to thank them dearly for all of their unwavering love and support.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I. GOVERNMENTAL PERSECUTION: THE LAVENDER SCARE AND EXECUTIVE ORDER 10450</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II. THE RESPONSE: EMERGENCE OF THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III. FROM THE COAST TO THE MIDWEST: A REGIONAL RESPONSE</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT)\(^1\) civil rights movement is mostly known to be a modern phenomenon that combats distinctive homophobia worldwide. LGBT history, even within the United States, is lacking in importance and prominence within academia.\(^2\) This relative lack of historical scholarship is due to being overshadowed by the parallel social movements that occurred within American history during the same time as the emergence of the gay rights movement. Recent scholarship has only begun to integrate the LGBT movement within the broader context of the social unrest, political activism, and struggles for equality of the 1960s and 1970s.\(^3\)

While this thesis will focus primarily on twentieth century discrimination against gays and lesbians, the origins of proscribing homosexuality in the United States begins centuries earlier. Significantly, anti-sodomy laws emerged both before and after the establishment of religious-based legal statutes against homosexual behavior that date back to Puritan New England. In seventeenth century New England immigrants established English law as the standard governmental regulations for the colonists. The legal statutes of the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay were heavily influenced by religious discourse and sexuality laws were created and enforced by the correlating biblical passages that explain certain sexual acts and their coinciding punishments. With religion as the legal backbone and establisher of

---

\(^1\) The use of LGBT is the most commonly used form of abbreviation in academia. It should be noted that other abbreviations, such as, LGBTQ, LGBTQIA, are just as valid and exist within other disciplines.

\(^2\) For more about the dearth and effort to integrate LGBT history into academia see the Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender History website [http://www.clgbthistory.org/](http://www.clgbthistory.org/).

\(^3\) See, for example, Robert Divine and others, *The American Story, Volume 2: Since 1865*, 5\(^{th}\) ed (Boston: Pearson, 2013), 1029-1033.
societal norms, sodomy and bestiality were treated as the same offense because prosecution was determined by evidence of penetration, an idea drawn by the Bible.\textsuperscript{4}

With the creation of the United States, the separation of church and state, and the growing visibility of homosexuality medicalization began to increasingly replace the religious proscriptions on homosexual laws. By the eighteenth century scientists and physicians alike began to establish their own medical views of homosexuality. Most claimed homosexuality was a disease that spurred from moral deprivation. The medicalization theory was barely distinguishable from previous religious arguments and almost always included moralistic tones. However, this interpretive change eventually led to the possibility of new and liberating perceptions of homosexuality.\textsuperscript{5} It took centuries to happen, but eventually medicalization led to the monumental Alfred Kinsey study that revealed the prevalence of homosexuality.\textsuperscript{6}

Although many mainstream narratives simplistically identify the Stonewall Riots of 1969 as a starting point of the modern LGBT rights movement, more specialized scholarship places its origins much earlier as the nation mobilized for World War II.\textsuperscript{7} This emerging scholarship credits the war and its aftermath with establishing the conditions that fostered the emergence of the movement to achieve civil rights for those in the LGBT communities. This mass wartime

\textsuperscript{4} For more information on early sodomy laws see Lisa Lamson’s Master’s Thesis, Bowling Green State University, 2014 “‘Strange Flesh’” in the City on the Hill: Early Massachusetts Sodomy Laws and Puritan Spiritual Anxiety, 1629-1699,” \url{https://etd.ohiolink.edu/rws_etd/document/get/bgsu1395605424/inline}.
\textsuperscript{5} John D’Emilio, \textit{Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities}, 18.
\textsuperscript{6} Alfred Kinsey’s 1948 publication of \textit{Sexual Behavior in the Human Male} was based on over 10,000 interviews with white American men. It concluded that 37\% percent of males had experienced same-sex relations in their lifetime.\textsuperscript{6} The Kinsey Report rocked the nation and became a best seller. Initially, it created an instant backlash against homosexuality and was used as propaganda to instill fear in the American public about the growing number of homosexuals.\textsuperscript{6} An excellent work specifically on the LGBT history and WWII is Allan Bérubé’s, \textit{Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II}, (University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
mobilization created unprecedented same-sex living conditions and heavily impacted the course of American sexuality. Men and women who would normally have never had left their hometown flocked to large cities such as San Francisco and New York City. These cities also were where many individuals experienced gay bars and other aspects of gay culture for the first time. Soon after the mobilization began, government began to increasingly persecute the LGBT community with social and legal discrimination. Ironically during the Second World War, the American government attacked the horrendous homophobia of the Axis powers, specifically the Nazis, who targeted gay men and identified them with pink triangles in concentration camps.\footnote{Richard Plant wrote the first comprehensive book on the fate of homosexuals in Nazi Germany in \textit{The Pink Triangle: The Nazi War Against Homosexuals}. Plant was a gay Jewish émigré from Nazi Germany who eventually settled in the United States.}

In addition to cultural factors, strong economic incentives also existed to discriminate against those who did not fit the heterosexual norm. After the Second World War, US industry began to be the world’s largest consumer, which necessitated higher birth rates and the idealization of the nuclear family. Homosexuals were not the only ones driven out of employment, many women were also forced out of the industrial jobs that they had previously held during the war. Women were expected to leave the workforce and return to their household duties, which included, included having babies.

The launching of the Cold War spurred the anticommunist witch-hunt led by Senator Joseph McCarthy. McCarthy also headed the simultaneous persecution of homosexuals that became known as the Lavender Scare. The Lavender Scare was the legally sanctioned effort to purge homosexuals from government. Initiated by the federal government in the 1950s, the Lavender Scare spread to state and local governments, and eventually the private sector. The national government began to blur the lines between homosexuality and communism.
Stereotypes emerged that homosexuals were a security risk who were potential communists themselves or easily coerced into extracting governmental secrets through blackmail.

During this period homosexuality was deemed especially immoral, a mental illness, and even a form of sexual psychopathy. The fear of these so-called deviants was ingrained in society mostly through the deliberate falsification of the numbers of traitorous homosexuals in the government. This along with other studies on sexuality, such as the Kinsey Reports, demonstrated homosexuality to be more common than once believed, initiating a sense of moral panic. The Lavender Scare did not solely exist in governmental institutions. Homosexuals were portrayed as a moral threat to the mainstream American family norm and societal structure. Gays and lesbians were portrayed as social menaces that preyed on the vulnerable, notably children, and were able to convert others to their supposed mental illness. Not only were gay sexual acts illegal, but were also considered to be lewd, utmost taboo, and unspeakable.

Following the Lavender Scare the gay rights movement began to flourish nationally and at local levels. Discrimination and harassment were still rampant throughout the United States in the following decades but gays and lesbians began to organize and fight back. Grass roots organizational newsletters were extremely influential in the success of the movement. After the foundation of the first two gay and lesbian societies in the 1950s, the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, newsletters and newspapers began to circulate discussing gay culture and the horrendous acts of violence that took place against those within the community by so-called authority figures. While sexual historians have previously examined the national organizations
that emerged in large coastal cities such as San Francisco and New York, the local level, especially in locations such as the Midwest and the South have been mostly overlooked.\(^9\)

This thesis engages this above scholarly literature to reanalyze prior developments, challenging the traditional historical narrative that the Stonewall Riots began the gay rights movement. Not only does this thesis complicate the narrative but it also adds emphasis to the importance of earlier historical events such as the Lavender Scare and the materialization of the homophile movement. This study brings together these two developments that have been treated as distinct and separate in much of the scholarly literature.

Furthermore, this study uses a plethora of primary sources to strengthen its contribution to LGBT history by analyzing numerous FBI documents, congressional records, and newsletters to expand and challenge the history of the modern gay rights movement in previously unexamined communities of the Midwest. This examination begins by contributing more insight and archival material into the historical narrative of the Lavender Scare and the emergence of the first gay and lesbian societies. The following sections add an entirely new contribution to LGBT history by focusing exclusively on how media has influenced the gay rights movement particularly in unstudied areas of the United States, such as the Midwest. These Midwestern publications not only helped the movement grow but also were active sources that combatted police harassment and other local discrimination that flourished throughout Midwestern America. The Lavender Scare and these communities were intertwined and reinforced through local prejudice that mirrored the federal investigations that happened years prior. Each

development within the gay rights movement is unique but can still be brought back to historical events that occurred previously.

Parallel organizations and newsletters arose especially during the 1960s and 1970s with the rise of the New Left and Civil Rights Movements throughout different parts of the American continent. These local and regional reform movements’ counterparts were both similar and held unique characteristics compared to the larger national movement. However, both the national and local level organizations shared one important facet; discrimination at the hands of the United States government. This thesis examines the origins of the gay rights movement, beginning with the Lavender Scare, and concluding with the development of local Midwestern newsletters and organizations that reveal how they combatted harassment and societal stigma. It is essential to situate the more visible aspects of the movement in the context of the growing consciousness that emerged during the Second World War and the massive discrimination that followed during the Lavender Scare. As a result, this thesis begins with an analysis of the national FBI campaign and local police harassment of homosexual communities. The first chapter focuses on how the Lavender Scare helped create the need for gay and lesbian organizations, which will thoroughly be examined in chapter two. Chapter three then reanalyzes the prior developments and provides a new insight into Midwestern gay and lesbian communities and how media helped spread the gay rights movement across the nation.

This thesis intersects with many of the strands of the growing literature on LGBT history, especially those that examine the emergence of gay liberation in the United States as well as monographs that reveal the medical and legal targeting of homosexuals after the Second World War. Most historiographical reviews begin with John D’Emilio’s *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*. Published
in 1983, it is known to be the first historical monograph written about the gay rights movement. D’Emilio argues that pre-twentieth century sexuality, especially homosexuality, was not a regular matter of public discourse before the turn of the century because of the societal focus on procreation.

D’Emilio’s argument is similar to historian Margot Canaday’s later comparison to the role bureaucracy plays with regulating homosexual behavior. Canaday’s *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* argues that the United States was one of the world’s most actively homophobic countries during the twentieth century. She argues this by suggesting that the state-building bureaucrats made homosexuality a legal category in relation to immigration, military, and welfare. Homosexuality began to be viewed as the “anti-citizen.” The military became associated with homosexual behavior and in 1917 those identified as psychopaths, which included homosexuals, were officially prohibited from entering the service.¹⁰

While D’Emilio recognizes the importance of the homophile organizations of the 1950s and 1960s, he focuses only on the broader movement that occurred in places such as San Francisco, Washington DC, and New York. This thesis delves deeper into secluded LGBT communities that were smaller in number but held the same passion as those on the national level. This thesis moves beyond D’Emilio’s focus on large coastal cities to analyze the emergence of the LGBT movement in Midwestern cities. It both confirms and complicates D’Emilio’s arguments, concluding that the local response was just as important to the success of

the LGBT movement in combatting discrimination and establishing the precedence for later generations to live out of the shadows and continue the movement into the modern day.11

Another subfield of LGBT history focuses on governmental repression. Douglas M. Charles’s, *Hoover’s War on Gays: Exposing the FBI’s “Sex Deviates” Program*, was the first case study that focused specifically on the first Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J Edgar Hoover, his targeting of the homosexual community and the FBI Sex Deviates Program that has only recently come to light with the release of critical documents. He argues that during the early 1920s and 1930s the terms “deviation” and perversion” became common terms for same-sex attraction.12 Building upon Charles’ examination of the national-level persecution of the homosexual community, this thesis analyzes previously unexamined local newspapers and archives to reveal how local law enforcement conducted similar harassment techniques to and parallel with the FBI’s national campaign by examining LGBT publications from newly-formed organizations in the Midwest, it then reveals how local communities organized to counter local repression.

Another prominent in the field of LGBT history is David Johnson. His most notable work *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* is a governmental and legal study of the Lavender Scare and the moral panic that ensued during the 1950s. Johnson argues that homosexual governmental employees in DC were not initially secretive or fearful of losing their jobs if their homosexuality was revealed, until the rise of McCarthyism and the Second Red Scare during the early Cold War. Washington DC

11 There are now numerous LGBT syntheses arising but they are still relatively small compared to the history of other movements such as *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle* by Lillian Faderman. John D’Emilio and Estelle Freedman wrote the first LGBT synopses, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*.

became an urban hub of homosexual culture because of its number of jobs and its relatively accepting attitude of feminization and homosexuality. Clerical jobs quickly arose and demanded a lot of office workers that were given and stereotyped to gay men.\textsuperscript{13} Johnson’s important study establishes the national context in which the local organizations examined in this study emerged and operated. Although Johnson limited his analysis to the 1950s, this study extends its analysis into the 1970s/1980s, revealing the evolution of the responses to state-sponsored discrimination that Johnson only touched upon in his sharply focused account of the 1950s. In doing so, this thesis draws an important link between the national-level Lavender Scare and the emergence of the first homophile organizations that fostered the rise of the modern gay rights movement.\textsuperscript{14}


CHAPTER I. GOVERNMENTAL PERSECUTION: THE LAVENDER SCARE AND EXECUTIVE ORDER 10450

President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10450 on April 27, 1953, which expanded President Harry Truman’s Federal Loyalty Program to include the category of homosexuality as a security threat to the nation. Eisenhower’s changes extended the ground for the federal agencies, notably, the Federal Bureau of Investigation to investigate and dismiss government employees based on their sexual orientation. Section Eight of the executive order added the following euphemisms, “immoral” behavior and “sexual perversion,” as acceptable legal grounds for firing any employee of the federal government. Immorality and sexual perversion were known synonyms for homosexuality. This chapter will argue that the creation of Executive Order 10450 was due to the congressional obsession with homosexuality that arose during the 1950s in correlation with the Red Scare. Therefore, homosexuality was not only viewed as immoral, but was also deemed a criminal activity. Medical professionals and Congress used medicalization as justification to persecute thousands of American citizens.

This chapter builds upon Johnson’s earlier examination of the Lavender Scare in two important ways. First, it uses the framework of policy analysis to reveal the various stages of the government’s persecution. The policy cycle of initiation, estimation, selection, implementation, evaluation, and termination as presented by Garry Brewer and Peter deLeon allow for a previously unexamined analysis into the process of the governmental and societal labeling of homosexuals as a potential threat to the nation’s security and a menace to its society. Second, using recently declassified documents from the FBI’s Program, this chapter expands upon
Johnson’s study of the Lavender Scare by adding greater depth into how the FBI’s Sex Deviates Program trickled down to the local government, especially in law enforcement.

The Brewer and deLeon model is an effective analytical system to use for numerous fields of study from science to history. The cycle begins with the initiation phase or when the issue is discovered and defined. The estimation phase begins with data gathering and includes a compilation of the positive and negative consequences of the issue. The selection stage occurs before implementation and includes the decision maker of the specific policy. Implementation is quite literal, it includes the execution of the policy and how that occurs. Evaluation is also literal; it includes the review process of the previous policy stages and acts as a scale of effectiveness. The last stage is termination, or the ending of the policy and what that ensues.15

The initiation stage of Executive Order 10450 begins with Congress’s establishment of homosexuality as a threat to United States national security. A main argument that critics in Congress and the medical field argued was that homosexuals were prone to blackmail because of their closeted lifestyle. They also argued that communists would take advantage of this susceptibility of putting the country in danger and this is how the conflation of homosexuality and communism emerged. An official Senate report stated, “One homosexual can pollute a Government office.”16 In another congressional hearing, Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska asked, “Can you think of a person who could be more dangerous to the United States of America than a pervert?”17 Public political discourse began to pair communists and homosexuals as indistinguishable. Perverts, sexual deviants, and even pedophiles were used as euphemisms for

homosexuality for centuries. However, with urbanization and the conjunction of the Lavender Scare the terms became more regularly used and synonymous to gays and lesbians.

The Communist International, or Comintern, was a world organization that fought for global communism. Members of Congress began to speak of a “Homintern” or “homosexual international” and compared it to the worldwide network of communism. The idea of a Homintern was first popularized by writer Harold Norse and poet W.H Auden in 1940. By the 1950s and development of the Lavender Scare the term had appeared in many publications.

This idea was soon advocated by Congress, and rampantly helped spark the moral panic that flourished during the Cold War and beyond. In a 1952 Congressional Record Countess R.G Waldeck argued, “Homosexuals and their sympathizers would lead to a gradual corrosion of all aspects of American culture.” Many prominent Americans were encouraged to share their opinions on homosexuality and the wellbeing of the country. In a speech to the Senate, Senator Joseph McCarthy explained the connection between Communists and homosexuals by claiming that they were both “mentally twisted.” McCarthy’s rhetoric became influential not only in Congress but also in society. He mustered all of the negative sentiment on homosexuality that was common in the 1950s and unleashed it to Congress while discussing the correlating Communist threat to the nation. In his infamous speech to Congress, and stated within the

---

19 David Johnson, The Lavender Scare, 35.
20 Ibid. Countess Waldeck was born a German Jew and later converted to Catholicism and became an American citizen.
21 Ibid.
February 1950 *Congressional Record*, McCarthy also declared that homosexuality was the “psychological maladjustment that led people toward communism.”

The Homintern argument was even used in a 1952 congressional hearing. New York’s Republican Congresswoman Katharine St. George of the House of Representatives brought up the topic of homosexuality and included an article by the Countess Waldeck of Germany titled, the “Homosexual International” as evidence. The hearing begins with St. George’s plea to Congress. The record of her testimony states, “The dangers to our own country and our whole political structure from this kind of an international ring is dangerous in the extreme and not to be dismissed lightly.” Members of Congress briefly discuss the positive effect of completely eliminating the disease of homosexuality. In theory, Representative St. George and others agreed that America would be safer if homosexuals no longer existed. Ironically, it is never thoroughly discussed how this could be plausible because Congress simply assumes that homosexuality can be cured and be rid of with the help of medical treatment. Congresswoman St. George argued that, “Many cases of homosexuality can be cured when treated by a skilled psychologist at an early stage.” Different topics were also discussed throughout the hearing such as, “Political Corrosion,” “Boon to the Comintern,” and “A Political Problem for Psychologists.” A section within the *Congressional Record* titled, “Natural Secret Agents” stated, “There is another even more sinister aspect of homosexuality in high places. It is that homosexuals make natural secret agents and natural traitors.”

---


23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 22.
University of Michigan sociologist Karin Martin concludes that there are two waves of medical opinion on homosexuality, one from 1903 to 1925 and the second from 1934 and 1950.\(^{27}\) In the first wave, Martin discusses lesbianism and how medical professionals associated it with masturbation and nymphomania. Martin specifically focuses on lesbians during this period because of the relative lack of discussion on the topic in medical literature. She claims that the *American Journal of Urology* used the word lesbian for the first time in a scholarly publication in 1914.

Martin also claims that the medical field began to be increasingly interested in homosexuality in 1934 when the urbanization of America was almost complete. \(^{28}\) Doctors began to diagnose homosexuality in males and females based on physical appearance. If a man had feminine characteristics such as narrow hips, a high-pitched voice, and a noticeable lack of body hair he was often categorized as a homosexual. It was the opposite for women; if women had excessive hair, a low-pitched voice, and masculine tendencies they were often regarded as lesbians. Martin concludes by stating that, “With these descriptions of deviance, the medical researchers were simultaneously able to determine and prescribe what was normal. By giving such detailed descriptions of how homosexuals supposedly differed from the normal population, they contributed to defining who was allowed to be a part of that normal population.”\(^{29}\)

In the 1950s and in later decades, American society viewed homosexuality as a psychological illness and it was sometimes even argued to be a literal and contagious disease. Most often it was considered to be the result of a problematic adolescence, especially during the developmental stages. This theory was made famous by American psychiatrist and physician,

\(^{28}\) Ibid., 252.
\(^{29}\) Ibid., 253.
Charles Socarides. He became one of the most well-known opponents of homosexuality and believed it could be cured entirely. He argued that the development of male homosexuality occurs during the pre-Oedipal stage of life and is caused by an overbearing mother and a father who is not a proper role model for the child.\textsuperscript{30} Socarides was one of the key founders of conversion therapy and in 1968 he published \textit{The Overt Homosexual}, which initially was used by many psychiatrists who purported to cure homosexuality.\textsuperscript{31}

Communism and homosexuality both were attributed to psychological causes, such as parental overdependence, isolation, being outside the societal norm, and other relating traumas. Psychiatrist Edmund Bergler stated, after learning about the thousands of accused homosexuals in government, “if these figures are only approximately correct then ‘the homosexual outlet’ is the \textit{predominant national disease}, overshadowing in number cancer, tuberculosis, heart failure, and infantile paralysis.”\textsuperscript{32} Psychiatrists began to be sought out by parents nationwide. These parents sought advice on how to ensure that their children would be healthy and maybe more importantly, heterosexuals.

The creation of the \textit{Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders} also medically targeted homosexuality. The American Psychiatric Association first created the DSM in 1952. The DSM classifies symptoms of mental disorders and is organized categorically. DSM I, or the first edition published in 1952, places homosexuality under the category of sociopathic personality disturbance. Individuals in this category also fell under severe personality disorders

\textsuperscript{30} Charles Socarides, \textit{The Overt Homosexual} (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1968), 60.  
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{32} David Johnson, \textit{The Lavender Scare}, 54. The italics are present in Johnson’s book and emphasize the overlooked discrimination that the gay community went through.
or even psychosis. Homosexuality is specifically referenced under section 000-x63 titled

“Sexual deviation.” Sexual deviation is defined as follows:

This diagnosis is reserved for deviant sexuality which is not symptomatic of more extensive syndromes, such as schizophrenic and obsessional reactions. The term includes most of the cases formerly classed as ‘psychopathic personality with pathologic sexuality.’ The diagnosis will specify the type of the pathologic behavior, such as homosexuality, transvestism, pedophilia, fetishism, and sexual sadism (including rape, sexual assault, mutilation).

There are currently five published editions of the DSM. Homosexuality was not removed until 1973. By 1973, social norms were slowly beginning to change. Pressure from the politically active gay rights movement with the help of empirical data that disproved homosexuality as an illness, finally led the Board of Directors of the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from the DSM. However, even then it was a controversial decision and the issue was not entirely agreed upon in the psychiatric community. While the vote still passed, there were some psychiatrists who were outraged and opposed the decision.

Before the DSM removed homosexuality as a classification of mental illness, President Truman’s Executive Order 9835, better known as the “Loyalty Order” or “Loyalty Program” issued in 1947 was created to eradicate communism and other security risks within US federal government, this order introduced the first mandated references to homosexuality. The order stated that, “it is of vital importance that persons employed in the Federal service be of complete and unswerving loyalty to the United States…the presence within the Government service of any

34 Ibid.
35 David Johnson, The Lavender Scare, 123.
disloyal or subversive person constitutes a threat to our democratic processes.” The term subversive was the reference to homosexuality. In 1947, even government officials or presidents, such as Truman, refused to publicly say the word homosexual because it was taboo. Not much explanation was needed to describe what or whom subversive referred to because it was such a common euphemism.

Executive Order 9835 began the security clearance process for prospective federal employees. These clearances looked into past and present activities, including sexual practices. Those accused of homosexuality were not allowed to confront their accusers and evidence was not needed to implicate them. 1947 was a pivotal year in the persecution of gays and lesbians as the State Department began to remove suspected homosexuals due to congressional Republican pressure on the Democratic presidency. Republicans not only accused Democrats of being soft on communism, but also soft on sexual perversion. Republicans accused the Democrats of “coddling homosexuals.” This implied that politicians who were accused of “coddling” gays struggled with their own masculinity. Such implications were enough for Democrats to sit back and let the Lavender Scare happen. To be accused of lacking masculinity in Cold War society was enough to ruin careers. It was not until Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10450 that sexual perversion was added officially to clearance denial. However, Truman’s order is what jumpstarted the unofficial questioning and barring of homosexuals from passing government security clearances.

The following year, 1948, initiated even more of an anti-homosexual strong hold. Truman signed the Miller Sexual Psychopath Law, which was named for its sponsor, Republican

---


37 David Johnson, The Lavender Scare, 29.
Congressman Arthur Miller of Nebraska. Months before two different congressional reports were created proposing a bill to criminalize sodomy titled, *Providing for the Treatment of Sexual Psychopaths in the District of Columbia*. Within this report two main objectives were sought to be accomplished; the second one aimed to strengthen “the laws as they deal with sodomy and perverted practices.” The bill passed and significantly increased the penalty of sexual crimes. If convicted of sodomy, the punishment was to be a fine of one thousand dollars and a prison sentence of up to twenty years.

One of the most interesting components of the Miller Law was its reliance on psychiatrist testimony. Section 204 of the bill was titled “Examination by Psychiatrists.” After individuals were convicted of sodomy, they were to be hospitalized and two qualified psychiatrists were then required to perform an examination to determine whether the convicted was a sexual psychopath. Without the psychiatrists’ diagnosis the conviction could not be upheld. However, during this time most psychiatrists agreed with the medical diagnosis of homosexuality. Therefore, another section of the bill states, “If the patient is determined to be a sexual psychopath, it is provided that the court shall commit him to St. Elizabeth’s Hospital.” The stay in St. Elizabeth’s Hospital was indefinite until the convicted was deemed no longer a threat to society. The first reported case under the sodomy law was *Tonker v. United States* in 1949. The defendant was indicted under a unanimous decision. Therefore, the case determined that the new law was

---

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., 8.
thoroughly constitutional if the accused committed a “certain unnatural and perverted sexual practice.”  

In 1949, the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* published the article “The Sexual Psychopath and the Law.” Sociologist James Reinhardt and lawyer Edward Fisher wrote the article, which was used in numerous congressional hearings. Within the article sodomy is categorized with other sexual crimes such as rape. The article argues for stronger laws against homosexuality statewide and its immediate urgency. The last paragraph of the article argues the necessity of controlling sexual deviants by stating:

> The sexual psychopath suffers from a form of mental deviation not now generally recognized in our laws, although it may be far more insidious in its potentialities than many forms of insanity. Medical science knows and classifies him. The layman recognizes him and his dangerous possibilities. It is time for the law to make provision for him, too.  

The estimation stage of the science policy approach regarding the creation of Executive Order 10450 emerges with the congressional estimation of supposed homosexuals working in the government. In February 1950 Senator Joseph McCarthy stated that he had discovered two security risks within the State Department that were “flagrantly homosexual.” Once again conflating communism with homosexuality, McCarthy stated that they were “not only homosexual but active members of Communist-front organizations.”

In her analysis of sexualization of Cold War politics, Andrea Friedman blames McCarthy’s obsession with masculinity and self-image for his correlating obsession with homosexuality. McCarthy’s aide Roy Cohn was also obsessed with outing homosexuals in

---

43 David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 16.  
44 Ibid.
government. Ironically, Friedman discusses McCarthy and Cohn’s own closeted sexual orientation as it is later revealed that Cohn was a secret homosexual who later succumbed to AIDS. McCarthy’s sexuality is still questioned to this day but no direct evidence has ever been produced, only circumstantial. However, it is undeniable that McCarthy suffered from an immense homophobia that fueled his congressional actions. Overall, Friedman argues that McCarthy used the Lavender Scare as a tool for his own empowerment. Friedman states, “The terms of the sexual attack upon McCarthy responded to his own self-representation as a Washington outsider, a self-made, autonomous and aggressive representative of the common man. This gendered persona was destabilized by portrayals of the senator as dependent upon, dominated by, or beholden to men without a legitimate claim to political authority.”

Shortly after Senator McCarthy’s outing of two homosexuals, Deputy Undersecretary John Peurifoy announced that ninety-one homosexuals had been deemed security risks and dismissed from the State Department. This testimony evoked a large governmental response and it became rumored that the entire government was “infiltrated with sexual perverts.” By November an estimated six hundred federal employees were dismissed on charges of homosexuality. Congress made homosexuality a national political issue and became obsessed with finding as many homosexuals within government as possible. Numbers became increasingly important as time passed. The issue was brought up so often in Congress that a congressman complained, “I do not know what homosexuals are, but I never saw anybody get as much free advertising in the Congress of the United States in all my life.”

---

46 Ibid., 1105.
47 David Johnson, The Lavender Scare, 43.
48 Ibid., 6.
Also, in 1950, the United States Senate created a subcommittee and issued a thirty-page report titled, “Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government.” The subcommittee became known as the Hoey Subcommittee named after its chair, Democrat Senator Clyde Hoey of North Carolina. The report began by stating that various government agencies already had lists of suspected homosexuals to use to their advantage. The Navy alone had a file of 8,000 names. In total, 16,500 names were given out of only five lists.49

The Hoey Subcommittee brought in Robert Felix, the chief psychiatrist at the National Institute of Mental Health to run expert seminars in the government titled, “Perversion among Government Workers.”50 Felix believed that homosexuals should not be allowed jobs that require security clearance since they are security risks. The final report issued in December 1950 stated, “Those charged with the responsibility of operating the agencies of Government must insist that Government employees meet acceptable standards of personal conduct. In the opinion of this subcommittee homosexuals and other sex perverts are not proper persons to be employed in Government for two reasons; first they are generally unsuitable, and second, they constitute security risks.”51

An entire section in the subcommittee report, “Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government,” is dedicated to the “Extent of Sex Perversion in Government.” This multiple-paged section asserted that the true number of homosexuals in government can never be fully known; therefore they are even more dangerous. It states, “It is not possible to determine accurately the number of homosexuals and other sex perverts in the Government service. The only known perverts are those whose activities have been brought to the attention to

50 David Johnson, The Lavender Scare, 105-107.
51 Ibid., 3.
the authorities as the result of an arrest or where some other specific information has resulted in the disclosure of their perversion."\textsuperscript{52} This assertion is significant because the number of sting operations and arrests only knew the scope of homosexual activity. Therefore, there was a call for increased police surveillance and activities that led to more police entrapment measures that will be thoroughly analyzed in the pages ahead.

The estimation process became conflated with implementation when the FBI created the FBI Sex Deviates Program. The purpose initially was to keep track of how many homosexuals there were within government and elsewhere, but under the reign of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI began to actively search out and keep files of gay and lesbian federal employees and civilians. As early as 1937, J. Edgar Hoover had already created a Sex Offenders File, Sex Perverts in Government Service File, and the Obscene File.\textsuperscript{53} All of these files targeted homosexuals and served as predecessors to the FBI Sex Deviates Program. Obsessed with tracking down and investigating supposed homosexuals, Hoover blamed homosexuality for the increased number of sex crimes that flourished throughout the early twentieth century.

The only available documents of the persecution on homosexuals are the files from the FBI Sex Deviates Program beginning in 1950 and ending in 1966. The earlier files and other programs were thrown away or are still yet to be released to the public. Relatively large portions of the files within the program are still redacted making it difficult to sort through. However, what has been opened to the public is an incredibly important primary source on the Lavender Scare. Although the program specifically targeted homosexuals, the term “homosexuality” is not used in any of the files. However, euphemisms for homosexuality such as “perverts” and “sex

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 6.
\textsuperscript{53} Douglas Charles, \textit{Hoover’s War on Gays: Exposing the FBI’s Sex Deviates Program} (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 2015), 71.
deviates” are used throughout. For example, a 1951 memorandum J Edgar Hoover himself exemplifies the prevailing attitudes and hesitancy to use the term homosexual. Hoover states, “Any letter or blind memorandum reporting such information should state: The date and place that the alleged act of sexual perversion occurred; the identity of the individual’s Government employment; any other pertinent facts, including the disposition, if known; whether or not the allegation of sex deviation has been verified through a Bureau investigation.”

The FBI directed each branch of government to effectively investigate potential employees to determine whether they were homosexual. The files are incredibly specific and detailed. For example, there is a specific form of procedure, created by Hoover, for the Botanical Gardens. This is extremely significant and proves that the persecution extended beyond national security clearances. In September 1951, Hoover released a confidential FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin that officially changed the procedure of handling homosexuality. The last paragraph exhibits the peril behind such legislation:

With specific reference to Loyalty of Government Employees cases, it has been the Bureau policy to accept information of a derogatory nature relating to the character and personal habits of an employee if volunteered. This policy is now changed to the following extent: when information is received during the course of a full field loyalty investigation or a preliminary inquiry indicating the person under investigation is a sex deviate, this allegation should be completely and fully developed and the facts reported. This procedure must be placed in effect immediately and followed closely.

The emphasis on immediately and followed closely proves how important the FBI and government felt identifying homosexuals were.

---

55 Ibid., 19.
56 Ibid., 29.
Hoover and the FBI were not the only legal force backing the Lavender Scare. Police departments were also on the hunt for suspected homosexuals in government and elsewhere. In 1950, the Washington DC chief of the Metropolitan Police Department’s Moral Division, Lieutenant Roy Blick, became Hoover’s right-hand man in investigating homosexuals. The officers who worked for the Moral Division, according to Blick, “give their full time to detecting and arresting homosexuals.” Blick and other officers gave numerous testimonies to different congressional committees and became leaders of the crusade against homosexuals.

One of Lieutenant Blick’s estimates of the number of homosexuals in government serves as a primary example of the panic that was encompassing Washington, DC. In one of Blick’s testimonies he stated that there were 300 to 400 gays in the State Department alone. Blick is known for this fabricated testimony he gave to the FBI and Congress. Blick, similar to McCarthy before him, stated that there were “5,000 homosexuals in the District of Columbia and that three-fourths of them, 3,750, work for the government.” Later when asked to explain to the State Department personnel how he came up with his estimation, Blick admitted his figures were “not based upon factual knowledge.”

The selection phase of Executive Order 10450 is relatively simple. President Eisenhower was the decision maker of the executive order. However, he was increasingly pressured by the numerous congressional hearings and moral panic that was quickly spreading through Congress and society. Eisenhower took office in January, 1953 and issued the order shortly thereafter on April 27, 1953. It did not go into effect until May of that year, but it effectively lumped together

---

58 Ibid., 85.
59 Ibid.
homosexuals and political subversives in government. Not only did the order ban gays and lesbians from working for any branch of government but Eisenhower also ordered private contractors who worked for the government to immediately fire all known homosexual employees. He also recommended that the same initiative be taken in occupied countries overseas. Section eight of the order stated that, “Any criminal infamous, dishonest, immoral or notoriously disgraceful conduct, habitual use of intoxicants to excess, drug addiction, and sexual perversion” were all threats to national security and anyone falling under any of the stated categories would be barred from government employment. In addition, Eisenhower especially put pressure on the British government. Numerous countries including Canada and Australia copied Executive Order 10450. Each country developed its own antigay policies and investigation methods.

Implementation of Executive Order 10450 was primarily assured through special security clearance processes that included skilled investigators and polygraph tests. The federal government strengthened its security system against homosexuals first by creating a master list of alleged homosexuals. This list included any person who had been interrogated or questioned about homosexuality. Government applicants were given personal interviews and questioned about their sexual behaviors. If any red flags arose the applicants were put under a polygraph test. Investigators also investigated friends of the applicant to see if any of them had homosexual tendencies.

---

60 Nicholas Edsall, Toward Stonewall: Homosexuality and Society in the Modern West World (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 278.
61 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
Governmental surveillance was also a tool of implementing Executive Order 10450. In *The Lavender Scare* David Johnson states, “If suspicions were high but evidence lacking, those suspected might be placed under surveillance to determine whether they frequented ‘known homosexuals places or associated with other known homosexuals.’”\(^{64}\) The Department of State’s Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs began to crackdown on homosexuals. An investigative branch known as “Miscellaneous M Unit” became responsible for ferreting out homosexuals. In 1954, all but one of the unit’s dismissals were cases of homosexuality.\(^ {65}\)

The evaluation stage of Executive Order 10450 begins when the security programs began to fall under intense scrutiny and criticism from the public because it also affected heterosexuals. It began to get so out of hand that nongovernmental workers were also constantly affected by the intensive nature of the investigations. In a 1958 study it was estimated that one in every five employed adults in the United States had gone under some sort of security screening.\(^ {66}\) From the year 1947 to the year 1961, over 5,000 homosexuals lost their jobs.\(^ {67}\)

The 1956 US Supreme Court Case *Cole v. Young* was one of the first cases that began to restrict the federal government’s grip on dismissing governmental employees. It ruled that a “clear connection had to be shown between a particular federal job and national security for someone to be fired for security reasons.”\(^ {68}\) One of the most pivotal moments of evaluation happened decades later in 1973 when homosexuality was officially taken off the DSM. The American Psychiatric Association held a symposium titled, “Should Homosexuality be in the

---

\(^{64}\) David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 74.
\(^{65}\) Ibid., 127-129.
\(^{66}\) Ibid., 137.
\(^{67}\) Ibid., 166-167.
APA Nomenclature?" and created a committee to address the question.\textsuperscript{69} The committee concluded that homosexuality was not a mental disorder because it did not cause subjective distress or impairment in “social effectiveness of functioning.”\textsuperscript{70} However, there was an immediate backlash from some psychiatrists and the medical field. In response to the vast amount of psychiatric complaint, the new DSM included a new diagnosis titled “Sexual Orientation Disturbance (SOD).” Homosexuality was now only viewed as an illness if individuals were in distress and wanted to change their same-sex attractions.\textsuperscript{71} It was only in 1990 that the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from the International Classification of Diseases.\textsuperscript{72}

Evaluation officially concluded in 1995 with the GAO Report given by the United States General Accounting Office titled, “Security Clearances: Consideration of Sexual Orientation in the Clearance Process.” This report directly challenged Executive Order 10450 and was headed by House of Representatives Congressman George E. Brown. The report was given three specific areas of review, “(1) whether clearances are currently being denied or revoked based on individuals’ sexual orientation, (2) whether sexual orientation is being used as criterion in granting or revoking security clearances, and (3) how concealment of sexual orientation affects the granting or revoking of security clearances.”\textsuperscript{73} The committee worked with gay activists and civil rights lawyers to configure its findings.

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., 571.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
The GAO Report found no clear linkage between sexual orientation and espionage.

Executive Order 10450 is specifically referenced as follows:

Federal agencies used the sexual perversion criteria in the early 1950s to categorize homosexuals as security risks and separate them from government service. Agencies could deny homosexual men and women employment because of their sexual orientation until 1975, when the Civil Service Commission issued guidelines prohibiting the government from denying employment on the basis of sexual orientation. The guidelines, which further define the provisions of Executive Order 10450, resulted from court decisions requiring that persons not be disqualified from the federal employment solely on the basis of homosexual conduct.74

The report then recommended that all governmental agencies limit or completely throw out their discriminatory policies on homosexuality since it was no longer viewed as a security risk.

President Bill Clinton’s 1995 Executive Order 12968 officially terminated Eisenhower’s Executive Order 10450. Clinton’s order ended governmental discrimination based on sexual orientation. It also ended the security clearance procedures instituted Eisenhower’s security programs. Even with the termination of Executive Order 10450 discrimination to this day still prevails through American society. Executive Order 10450 remained policy for four decades and illustrates the slow moving progress those in the LGBT community have endured. The science policy approach of initiation, estimation, selection, implementation, evaluation, and termination efficiently and effectively investigate the details of the Lavender Scare and LGBT history. This science policy process effectively shows how the congressional obsession with homosexuality helped propel the Lavender Scare and bring havoc upon the LGBT community nationwide.

The FBI and congressional preoccupation also led to the foundation of gay and lesbian societies and the creation of the modern gay rights movement. However, decades prior, gays and lesbians organized themselves to combat the harassment that had spread throughout the nation because of the Lavender Scare. The first gay and lesbian societies emerged and with them

74 Ibid., 2.
growing visibility. This visibility and direct action mostly occurred because of the spreading of gay publications that originated in the coastal cities. However, the coastal cities are only a fraction of the nation. In an entirely different location, the Midwest developed their own gay societies and most importantly newsletters and other forms of publications that effectively spread the gay rights movement where it otherwise would have not potentially occurred at all.
CHAPTER II. THE RESPONSE: EMERGENCE OF THE HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT

The beginning of the homophile movement occurred simultaneously with the Second World War and the Lavender Scare. The idea of a homophile movement began to emerge with the ending of the Second World War. It began with homosexuals who gathered together and began to self-identify. The movement eventually demanded equal rights and became a strong political force. The Second World War was critical in the development of the homophile movement. There was unprecedented mass mobilization of gays and lesbians during the war.

The 1950s and 1960s were a pivotal time in American history politically and socially. While homosexuals were still fighting for freedom, the Civil Rights Movement began making tidal waves throughout the nation. The landmark Supreme Court case Brown v. Board of Education finally ruled that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional in 1954. However, a year later fourteen-year-old Emmett Till was kidnapped, brutally beaten, and shot for allegedly whistling at a white woman. The New Left began to mobilize, along with women’s rights advocates and second wave feminism. In 1964, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act, which was meant to correct racial discrimination but also gender-based discrimination. The emergence of gay organizations tends to get overlooked with this influx of history. Beginning in 1950 and taking off at the end of the decade, the first gay and lesbian organizations were created and began the fight back against institutionalized homophobia. While black Americans in the 1950s and feminists in the 1960s took to the streets, gay rights activists largely remained in the shadows. Nevertheless, they formed organizations that laid the groundwork for their rise in political activism that emerged in the late-1960s.

The first homophile organization, the Mattachine Society originated in 1950 the same year Senator Joseph McCarthy announced the infiltration of homosexuals in government. The
homophile movement begun to flourish shortly after as a direct response to the sexual panic that McCarthy helped unleash. The movement was crucial in combating the malicious accusations and negative stigma against homosexuals. The term homophile was established meaning homo (same) and phile (love). Tired of ceaseless persecution homosexuals grouped together and decided to take action into their own hands. The organizations within the movement developed strategies for countering the ongoing persecution from society and surveillance from the law enforcement and the government. Not only did the movement combat discrimination but it also aimed to educate the public on the normalcy of homosexuality through group meetings and public speaking events. The first two homophile organizations that embraced these goals were the Mattachine Society in 1950 and the Daughters of Bilitis in 1955.

The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis were associated with communism by their opponents, targeted by the FBI, and deemed morally dangerous. This chapter evaluates the formation of these two societies, the creation of homophile media, how both societies helped change psychiatric testimony on homosexuality, and eventually help spread gay liberation across the country. This chapter also complicates upon the existing literature, which deems that the first homophile organizations and the following gay rights movement have few similarities and are mutually exclusive. Connecting recently released FBI files to the records of homophile organizations; this chapter reveals a parallel process of surveillance, persecution, organization, and resistance. It argues that the increased government surveillance served to galvanize emerging homophile movements, providing an inspiration and a mission for them to focus upon that would provide the foundation for the successes that lay ahead in the gay rights movement and the civil rights agenda in the United States.

---

75 This movement was studied thoroughly in Allan Bérubé’s *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two.*
Harry Hay, the key founder of the Mattachine Society, was born in England in 1912 but spent most of his childhood in California. Hay studied at Stanford University and became deeply interested in drama. His life in theater led him to his political awakening. Most of his friends at the time were Communists and Hay immediately felt drawn to their cause.\textsuperscript{76} Hay was always aware of his same-sex attractions but was encouraged to ignore his feelings because the Communist Party did not accept homosexuality. Like many gay men, Hay married a woman, had children, and eventually filed for divorce.

Hay’s homophobic experiences within the Communist Party were not unique. It was ironic that homosexuals were not only cast out of government for being affiliated with Communist subversives but were also rejected from the Communist Party for being homosexuals. Gay men and lesbians were regularly told to leave the Party if their sexual orientation was discovered. Part of this discrimination was because the Communist Party feared the FBI would threaten homosexuals with exposure to become secret informants.\textsuperscript{77} Sociologist Ellen Kay Trimberger has exclusively studied the relationship between homosexuals and the Communist Party. She interviewed a former Communist Party organizer who stated:

> The Party leadership made a decision to drop all homosexuals from the Party because of their presumed openness to blackmail as state repression increased. A local organizer was asked to speak to several known lesbians to request their resignations. These lesbians were friends of the organizer, although she never discussed their sexual Looking back on this incident this activist says that neither she nor the lesbians, although some may have questioned the assumption, ever considered opposing the Party decision.\textsuperscript{78}

The Communist Party also often used the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels as evidence that communism was not meant as a party to end the oppression of homosexuals. Karl

\textsuperscript{76} John D’Emilio, \textit{Sexual Politics}, 58-59.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
Heinrich Ulrich had written Marx asking him to bring homosexual rights into the socialist party agenda. Ulrich is now known as the first theorist of homosexuality. He argued that homosexuality was inborn, or biological, and not a mental illness. Marx immediately wrote to Engels to ask for his opinion on the subject. Engels responded hastily and his letter contained many homophobic innuendos. He referred to homosexuals as simply being “pederasts” or homosexual pedophiles. He also refers to “the Urning” the title of Ulrich’s work and his term for a female psyche in a male body, which was synonymous with same-sex attraction. However, Engels recognizes the potential of homosexuals gathering into a political force. He expresses this possibility with a sense of fear and societal devastation. This is not surprising it seems that Marx and Engels were politically radical but still a product of their time when it came to other social issues.

Rejected by the Communist Party and enamored with the idea of creating a gay society, Hay met with fellow homosexuals who were also ostracized from politics in 1950 and decided to create the Mattachine Society. The society originated as a local organization with the intent of eventually spreading across the nation. The courage to create such a society was stimulated by the Kinsey Reports. Hay had participated in the study himself. Encouraged by the estimated percentage of homosexuals in the United States, Hay wanted to find a way to mobilize the gay population. The society was named after the Societe Mattachine a fraternal, secret organization of young bachelors in France. The Mattachine Society’s mission was, “to unite gays both

---

80 Ibid.
among themselves and with heterosexual society, to educate the public about homosexuality, and to engage in activist politics." 82 The preamble of the Mattachine Society constitution stated:

We the members of the MATTACHINE SOCIETY in full awareness of social obligation as members of the human community hold it necessary that highly ethical homosexual culture be integrated in society; and, whereas, the present laws of many lands are discriminatory and limit the best expression of the culture; and, whereas we are resolved that those people shall find equality; and, whereas we desire to spread knowledge of the aims and aspirations of this through mutual education of its members and of society, we, therefore, hereby resolve. 83

The creation of the Mattachine Society and the beginning of organizational newspapers began the process for uniting gays among themselves and with the heterosexual community. Something as simple as writing a constitution allowed gays to educate the public and initiate political action.

The development of the Mattachine Society perfectly overlapped with the rise of McCarthyism and the Lavender Scare. It was the same year that Senator Joseph McCarthy announced that there were “205 known Communists” in the State Department and his fabrication of knowing two cases of homosexuality thereby conflating homosexuality with communism.

Just as federal officials targeted gays in the government, local officials targeted the Mattachine Society. By February 1952, members of the Mattachine Society became victims of police entrapment, resulting in the organization’s efforts to caution its members of such perils and educate them on ways to prevent entrapment and avoid violent attacks. One of the founding members, Dale Jennings, was charged with lewd behavior after being harassed by an undercover cop at a Los Angeles park. Mattachine decided to support Jennings’ appeal of the charges and subsequent trial. Jennings came out as a homosexual but denied the charges against him. The charges were eventually dropped and historians later identified the trial as “a great victory for the

82 Douglas Charles, Hoover’s War on Gays, 156.
homosexual minority.”

The Jennings trial gave the Mattachine Society publicity and immensely boosted their membership.

The publicity of the Mattachine Society, however, came with a cost. Soon after its creation Mattachine fell under public scrutiny and FBI investigations, as director J Edgar Hoover steadily increased the surveillance of Harry Hay and other members. In March 1953 the Mattachine Society fell under the public eye after a *Los Angeles Mirror* reporter wrote an exposé on the group. The reporter, Paul Coates, argued that Mattachine was dangerous because the State Department had already concluded that gays were “bad security risks.”

Coates also stated, a “well-trained subversive could move in and forge that power into a dangerous political weapon” asserting that homosexuals were prone to blackmail.

After Coates’ exposé, the FBI increased surveillance of the Mattachine Society. Mattachine set up another organization that eventually separated and became more radical called *ONE*. In January 1953 *ONE* began publishing a newsletter titled *ONE, Incorporated*. By May 1953 the FBI had confidential informants that brought publications of *ONE, Inc.* and other Mattachine information straight to Hoover. A memo sent to the FBI Director in May 1953 included the copy of *ONE* titled, “ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A HOMOSEXUAL? An analysis of today’s most versatile word, loyalty.” Within the memo, it is stated, “Further review of the Publication indicates it is written for Sex Deviates.”

The article claimed that the FBI had been illegally questioning alleged homosexuals leading many to be

---

86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
fired from their jobs. Hoover immediately ordered FBI field offices to thoroughly investigate and report all activates of ONE and Mattachine in a program code-named COMINFIL.  

The FBI was so interested in the Mattachine Society that they had a list of members and the clothes they wore on specific days. For example in a confidential security information report each member would have their name, age, hair color, and other personal information taken down and placed on permanent file. Another report describes members at the meeting as, “a uniformed Coast Guardsman from Government Island, Alameda, California and a Marine Corps Korean veteran (civilian clothes).” This was significant because of the masculine ideals that soldiers were supposed to exhibit and homosexuality was strictly prohibited in the military. The FBI took special notice in deviance that occurred in accordance with those in the military because it feared for the nation’s security. Once again, the FBI continued to target homosexuality and use security investigations and the issuance, review, and revocation of security clearances to investigate and eliminate from federal employment those whose loyalty came under question.

With the widespread growth of the Mattachine Society, ONE, Inc. began to be mailed to other states creating a backlash of angry citizens. J. Edgar Hoover also became increasingly active. Paranoid letters comprise a significant part of the FBI files on the Mattachine Society. One such letter is from an anonymous statesman who saw a magazine called ONE on the newsstand in New York. The letter states that he was “dumbfounded by such a magazine out for public sale” and that he was “quite shocked by it.” Another such letter stated, “Attached is a magazine to which I referred in my phone conversation with you today. Also attached is a letter which Senator Wiley is sending to the Postmaster General, protesting against this sort of trash

---

88 Ibid., 162.
89 Ibid.
90 Ibid., 3.
moving through the mail.” The archives contain extensive correspondence to and from Hoover, demonstrating his personal interest in the matter and how his influence trickled down to other important statesmen, such as Senator Alexander Wiley, a Republican from Wisconsin.

Despite the government surveillance, newspapers and magazines proved vital to the formation of a broader community that advocated for gay liberation across the United States. As stated in the above paragraph, homophile magazines were targeted by the FBI and the American government but also provided an outlet for the homosexual community and was vital in the growth of gay communities in different regions. \textit{ONE} was not the only gay media that existed; the Mattachine Society created its own publication in 1955, the \textit{Mattachine Review}. Similar to \textit{ONE, Inc.} the \textit{Mattachine Review} was immediately forwarded to Hoover.

These magazines were a way for the homosexual community to communicate anonymously or otherwise. They helped spread the number of societies around the country but more importantly gave homosexuals a platform to stand on. Homosexuals were no longer remaining quiet but began emerging publicly as a vocal and oppressed minority.

The Mattachine Society secured a victory through the Supreme Court case \textit{ONE, Inc. v Olesen} in 1958. In response to the many complaints compiled by the FBI the Los Angeles Postmaster finally declared the magazine to be “obscene, lewd, lascivious and filthy” in 1954. The Supreme Court had never dealt with homosexuality directly before. The prosecuting attorney Eric Lulber petitioned directly to the Supreme Court and the judges accepted his case. Four years later in 1958 the five justices overruled the lower courts and decided the publication

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \footnotesize{91 Ibid.}
\item \footnotesize{92 John D’Emilio, \textit{Sexual Politics}, 89.}
\end{itemize}
\end{flushright}
was not obscene. Finally, homosexuality was brought to the forefront and no longer unspeakable.\textsuperscript{94} This case was critical to allowing these publications to continue in circulation especially for the local organizations who began creating their own organizations shortly after. Just eight years after the beginning of the Lavender Scare, this court ruling marked a significant victory for the growing acceptance of homosexuality and the first victory in the Supreme Court.

The next decade was vital for the growth of homophile organizations and consciousness raising. It lead the quiet organization that developed into direct public action ten years later. The organizational growth of homosexuals because of the Mattachine Society was mostly clearly illustrated in the sip-in of 1966. The group took inspiration from the coinciding civil rights sit-ins that occurred during the same period at lunch counters across the country. Instead, the Mattachine Society decided to go to a tavern, declare their sexual orientation and wait to be denied service. The sip-in was covered immediately by the \textit{New York Times} and was titled in a story under the headline, “3 Deviates Invite Exclusion by Bars.”\textsuperscript{95} A bar called Julius’s in Greenwich Village denied them service when they told the bartender they were homosexuals. The manager of Julius’s justified the refusal simply by stating, “I think it’s in the law.”\textsuperscript{96}

The sip-in was significant for its lasting effect on the gay community. It not only brought gays together but also established a sense of cohesion and the ability to fight back. Dick Leitsch, former chairman of the Mattachine Society in New York, helped organize the sip-in. He argued that the significance of the sip-in for the gay rights movement was, “And the importance of this, I think, was that until this time gay people had never really fought back. We just sort of take in

\textsuperscript{94} Lillian Faderman, \textit{The Gay Revolution}, 94-97.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.
everything passively, didn’t do anything about it. And this time we did it, and we won.”97 In a 2008 interview Leitsch was asked whether the Mattachine Society still existed today. His answer portrays the significance of both the Mattachine Society and the sip-in:

Oh, no, not after Stonewall. I kept saying, what's the goal of Mattachine? And I always said the goal of Mattachine is put ourselves out of business. When the cops walked into Stonewall, they tried to close it. People said, no, you're not going to close our bar. We have a right to have our bars and it's been established we have the right to have our bars. And Mattachine had nothing to do with Stonewall. That was something where the people rose up and did it. And that's the beginning of the gay movement.98

Without the sip-in, later watershed events such as Stonewall may not have occurred. As stated before, in the typical US history texts the gay rights movement begins with Stonewall. Participants viewed Stonewall not as the beginning, but as the culmination of a lengthy process of organization, persecution, and struggle.

Another organization emerged after the creation of the Mattachine Society that was specific to lesbians, the Daughters of Bilitis. The Daughters of Bilitis was formed in 1955 in California in response to the patriarchal nature of the Mattachine Society. The main founders of the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) were lesbian couple Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon.

Del Martin was born in San Francisco in 1921 and similar to Harry Hay she had always been aware of her homosexuality. She married at a young age, immediately got pregnant, and filed for a divorce shortly after. Phyllis Lyon was one of her co-workers and they eventually started dating. Unlike the Mattachine Society, which was immediately more political, the DOB arose out of the desire for lesbians to socialize with other gay women. The Daughters of Bilitis

98 Ibid.
was named after the “Songs of Bilitis” an erotic poem. The DOB eventually collaborated with *ONE* and the Mattachine Society and became the first wave of the homophile movement.

The Daughters of Bilitis, the Mattachine Society, and *ONE* worked together throughout the late 1950s to become more politically active and strive for societal change rather than just simply act as social organization. Similar to the goals of the Mattachine Society the DOB aimed for the “education of the public, the adjustment of the ‘variant’ to society, participation in research projects by professionals, and the modification of the penal code.” However, the DOB also addressed different situations and was specifically unique to lesbians. A member stated, “It was a home for the Lesbian. She can come here to find help, friendship acceptance and support. She can help others understand themselves, and can go out into the world to help the public understand her better.”

The Daughters of Bilitis also began to publish its own magazine, *The Ladder*. *The Ladder* focused on the difficulties of being a lesbian, motherhood, childrearing, and other social issues such as police entrapment. A unique facet of *The Ladder* was its “Lesbiana” column that focuses exclusively on lesbian literature. Both the *Mattachine Review* and *The Ladder* were crucial in the lives of homosexuals for their stories. People came out as gay or lesbian through the magazines, told personal stories, discussed relationships, and served as a source of communal embrace.

*The Ladder* and the Daughters of Bilitis were also immediately put under FBI investigations. However, compared to the Mattachine Society the DOB received a considerably less amount of scrutiny. The FBI reports stated, “The Daughters of Bilitis is a companion

---

100 Ibid., 103.
101 Ibid., 104.
organization of the Mattachine Society (MS), and would also operate in San Francisco.”\textsuperscript{103} The FBI has only released thirty-four pages on the DOB, leaving the full scope and conclusions of its investigations unclear. However, if the FBI considered the DOB to be a “companion organization” to Mattachine it is obvious that it was still considered at least somewhat of a threat to society in Hoover’s eyes.\textsuperscript{104}

The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis also regularly brought in psychiatrists who believed homosexuality was not a disease to discuss at conferences and meetings. One of the most prominent psychiatrists whose work was especially important in decriminalizing homosexuality was Evelyn Hooker, who published “The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual.” The essay grew from a paper first delivered at the American Psychological Association Convention on August 30 1956 in Chicago.\textsuperscript{105} Hooker used her own psychological tests and findings as proof for her conclusions. She studied thirty heterosexual and thirty homosexual males. To assure the most accurate results each group was matched by IQ scores, age, and level of education. Hooker then gave three tests, the Rorschach, the Thematic Apperception Test, and the Make-A-Picture Story Test. Two Rorschach experts, who were unaware of the men’s sexual orientation, evaluated and scored all the tests.\textsuperscript{106}

The Rorschach experts were then asked to identify which subjects and test scores were homosexuals. The significance of experts not being able to distinguish the sexuality of the subjects was ground-breaking since homosexuals were supposed to be psychologically different than heterosexuals. None of the test scores varied significantly and Hooker concluded that

\textsuperscript{104} Douglas Charles, \textit{Hoover’s War on Gays}, 195.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
homosexuals were as psychologically sound as heterosexuals. For instance one of the researchers could not believe that one of the subjects was homosexual. The researcher stated:

As being so ordinary that it's hard to say anything specific about him. His impulse control is very smooth. He uses channelization rather than repression. He must be a heterosexual. I would really have to force myself, to think of him as not heterosexual.\textsuperscript{107}

The second researcher also believed the same subject to be heterosexual by saying, “He must be a very interesting guy. He must convey comfort to people. He takes essentials and doesn't get lost in details. A solid citizen, neatly and solidly integrated, no specific defenses. Neither aggression nor dependency is a problem. I think that this man is heterosexual.”\textsuperscript{108} Overall, Hooker’s main conclusion was that homosexuality should not be considered a form of sexual psychopathy. She argued, “Homosexuality as a clinical entity does not exist. Its forms are as varied as are those of heterosexuality.”\textsuperscript{109} These psychological findings helped make the case for many gays and lesbians to move from the shadows to the streets.

Another example of homosexuals taking on psychiatry is in a New York Times article titled, “Homosexual Women Hear Psychologists.” It discusses a Daughters of Bilitis conference that invited different psychiatrists or psychologists to discuss their views on homosexuality in 1964. One of the psychiatrists was Wardell B. Pomeroy who co-authored the Kinsey Reports. Similar to Hooker, Wardell countered the prevailing attitude of the time that homosexuality was a disease. Other professionals had different opinions on the subject. Regarding lesbianism, a Dr. Pomeroy stated, “Western culture, in contrast with the majority of world cultures, was more lenient toward female homosexuality than male deviation.”\textsuperscript{110} A Dr. Van den Haag had a

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{107} Ibid., 26.
\bibitem{108} Ibid., 27.
\bibitem{109} Ibid., 30.
\end{thebibliography}
moderate opinion on the subject of sexuality and argued that, “to some extent, homosexuality was a matter of choice, conditioned by early emotional experiences.”

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the Daughters of Bilitis gained momentum. In 1969 the *New York Times* published an important article, “The Woman Homosexual: More Assertive, Less Willing to Hide.” The article also discusses how it was not illegal to be a lesbian in New York but is illegal to “perform a Lesbian act.”

Once again the testimony of different psychiatrists was a part of the commentary. Socarides characterized homosexuality as a “severe illness” and compares them to a drug addict. He states that homosexuals feel obliged to commit homosexual acts and “feels restored, the way a narcotics addict takes a shot.” However, the opposing view is not left out. Lawrence Le Shan, a research psychologist, believes that not only is homosexuality not a disease but should also be a choice for everyone on the sexuality spectrum.

Similar to the Lavender Scare and the obsession with national security, the FBI continued to focus on homosexual behavior throughout the late 1950s and 1960s. Gay liberation emerged in the midst of the Lavender Scare. Although the Lavender Scare ended, the national and local surveillance of organizations continued. Despite this, groups formed that proved fundamental to the establishment of homosexuals as equal members of society and a coherent political force. These groups also helped the progress and removal of homosexuality from the APA’s list of mental disorders. The Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis both began in California and spread eastward through time. They both were fundamental to the establishment of other homosexual groups that began to form throughout the nation. They set the foundation for

---

111 Ibid.
112 Ibid.
113 Ibid.
regional brother and sister societies that aimed to advance the acceptance and eliminate the discrimination of homosexuality while simultaneously breaking societal norms. These two founding groups accelerated the process of using psychiatric testimony to reverse legal statues and the legal status of homosexuality and also served as the predecessors of other gay communities that began to surface in the Midwest.
CHAPTER III. FROM THE COAST TO THE MIDWEST: A REGIONAL RESPONSE

The Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis originated the homophile movement that first emerged in large cities such as San Francisco, New York City, and eventually Washington D.C. These two societies inspired the formation of homosexual communities in other parts of the United States, such as the Midwest. The most important and influential part of the emergence of these Midwestern communities was the creation of their own media outlets, whether it be newspapers or magazines. While the gay societies on the large coastal cities and their correlating media have been studied before, the Midwest has been relatively overlooked because of its location and smaller size.\textsuperscript{114}

However, if anything these Midwestern LGBT populations deserve even more scholarly analysis because they reveal the obstacles these organizations overcame to combat discrimination and build a community amidst an even more hostile environment. This chapter examines Midwestern cities such as Detroit, Cleveland, Ann Arbor, and Kalamazoo using recently available archival collections to evaluate the formation and influence of the first gay newspapers in these communities. This examination of selected Midwestern LGBT populations reveals that they encountered even more discrimination than the coastal communities, yet were able to form powerful organizations despite being in an even more hostile environment.

While previous scholars have examined the national level, the focus on the Midwestern LGBT population contributes a broader understanding of the grassroots approach to combatting discrimination. These organizations and newsletters gave gays and lesbians for the first time a sense of unified culture, even if there were constant disagreements on how to access situations

\textsuperscript{114} For example, see Susan Freeman’s “From the Lesbian Nation to the Cincinnati Lesbian Community: Moving Toward a Politics of Location” in the \textit{Journal of the History of Sexuality} for an inside look on a specific Midwestern city.
they encountered. Discrimination and acts of violence were recorded and circulated within their community along with advice on handling different situations and public education services. Police entrapment was one of the main topics within these publications. While nationally the FBI was the bigger, local threat to the larger homophile organizations law enforcement was a larger threat in many Midwestern cities. The FBI and the police had been keeping track of homosexuals and their “crimes” for years and finally the gay community was able to use similar tactics that the government had previously used against them to their own advantage. This chapter argues how crucial these publications were to the gay rights movement in the Midwest. The newsletters functioned to instill confidence and pride throughout the gay community, simultaneously provide news about police brutality and police entrapment tactics and locations, dispense legal advice on matters such as child custody and visitation, establish legal defense funds and telephone hotlines, and lastly to supply news of interest to the community that would not be covered in the popular press.

The Michigan gay rights movement emerged as a political force in 1970. Although a chapter of the Mattachine Society briefly existed in Detroit from 1958 to 1960, “queer organizing remained virtually non-existent in Detroit” until the Gay Liberation Front of Wayne State University was established in 1970.\footnote{Tim Retzloff, “Detroit,” (2004), http://www.glbtqarchive.com/ssh/detroit_S.pdf.} Detroit’s Gay Liberation Front created the \textit{Gay Liberator}, which eventually became one of the most prominent gay publications in the nation. Michigan’s LGBT community and homophile organizations almost always had a common denominator, James Toy.

James “Jim” Toy, a LGBT activist, became one of the leading gay pioneers in Michigan. Born in New York City in 1930, Toy received his BA in French and Music from Denison
University in Ohio. His life brought him to Michigan in 1957 when he married, served as a choirmaster at a Detroit Episcopal Church, and attended the University of Michigan’s graduate program in musicology.¹¹⁶ Still living in Michigan, Toy came out as a gay man in 1970 and simultaneously founded the Detroit Gay Liberation Movement, (which became known as the Detroit Gay Liberation Front) and also the Ann Arbor Gay Liberation Front.¹¹⁷

Most significantly, Toy was also a founder of the Gay Liberator, a news publication that focused on national and regional LGBT issues, editorials, police reports, and other developments in the gay rights movement. It served as Michigan’s first newspaper that catered to the gay community. Numerous articles sought to inspire homosexuals and combat homophobia. In its first year in print, the Gay Liberator published a self-help article entitled, “BE AWARE-DON’T PUT DOWN YOURSELF!!!” The article attempted to reach out to homosexuals to help fight the stigmatization of being gay and the societal shame by emphasizing the following: “Your sexual proclivity doesn’t change the fact that you’re biologically what you are. It’s beautiful, be proud.”¹¹⁸ These types of articles were vital for Midwestern homosexuals who had gone so long without any type of community or information on their sexual orientation. The article concluded by stating,

The longer homosexuals act (and some believe) that they are less than whole, the longer the oppression lasts. Stand up for humanity, don’t degrade yourself and others by a lack of thinking. Everyone knows what “nigger” means—it’s time we start realizing what terms like dyke, faggot, fairy and Mary mean, really mean. All oppression isn’t blatant. Wake up to the subtle kinds, brothers and sisters—GAY POWER comes from GAY AWARENESS.¹¹⁹

The homosexual movement was inspired by this kind of rhetoric.

¹¹⁶ Biography, James Toy Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan http://quod.lib.umich.edu/b/bhlead/umich-bhl-9744?view=text.
¹¹⁷ Ibid.
¹¹⁹ Ibid.
However, this kind of motivation also came with more societal repercussions and criticism from opponents. *The Gay Liberator* had its fair share of backlash and discrimination like most other gay publications. As early as March 1971, an anonymous editorial was published that attacked the *Gay Liberator*. The unsigned writer stated, “You may have some men of God who sympathize with you but they sure don’t read the Bible. In the Book of Leviticus 20, verse 13, it says if a man also lie with mankind as he with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. That is your answer, and why people who are normal get sick to their stomach to look at you.”¹²⁰ The editorial then accuses homosexuals of pedophilia and perversion: “Is it the fact that most of you can’t keep your hands off young boys or the fact that most of you are cowards and liars and definitely perverted and you know it, and any church that would welcome you as homosexuals is no church of God.”¹²¹ This quote was published within a gay newsletter as a way to illuminate the hatred that was being directed towards the gay community because of their visible growth in society.

*The Gay Liberator* was not exclusively written for homosexual males but also catered to the lesbian community. Different news articles reported physical attacks on gays and lesbians alike. A specific article titled “Lesbian Oppression” is a noteworthy example of how the *Liberator* served as a source for news and a helpline for the gay community. In December 1972 a lesbian was attacked behind a popular gay bar in Detroit. She was so severely beaten she lost an eye, had crushed facial bones, and several neck injuries. The assailant was never charged. The article includes testimonies from other women who have gone through similar experiences. The newspaper warned:

¹²¹ Ibid.
Women, especially gay women, have always been the victims of violence and harassment. Detroit is no different, and reported incidents of this kind seem to be increasing. It can happen to you! Among oppressed people, individual rights do not exist, nor are there any individual solutions to oppression. Our only defense is the strength that comes from unity. We must fight for our rights, and we can only do that together.\textsuperscript{122}

The end of the article provides a phone number to a created LGBT hotline to report any “incidents of harassment or discrimination” and an address for legal advice and “good attorneys.”\textsuperscript{123}

\textit{The Gay Liberator} was known for dispensing legal advice to the homosexual community as well as acting as a source of comfort. A section of the paper was called, “The Vice Report: Cruise with Care.”\textsuperscript{124} Its purpose is to warn the gay community about areas of police entrapment and how to legally fight back. This kind of defense against discrimination was borrowed from the first homophile organizational newsletters that arose previously in the coastal cities and exemplifies the importance the first organizations had on growth of a national gay movement that included the Midwest. A 1972 advice column begins humorously by stating, “If you are arrested for a ‘gay offense’ in the City of Detroit, you can plan on participating in a real three-ring circus. It’s called Traffic Court, and if you aren’t prepared for it, you’ll end up being found guilty so fast you won’t even know what happened.”\textsuperscript{125} Legal tips were also given within the newspaper to help win jury trials such as locating witnesses and gaining access to gay-friendly attorneys. At the end of each report a questionnaire is given to fill out and send in to participate in a large legal suit against the Detroit Police Department. The questionnaire was unique and important for many reasons. First, it allowed the victim to remain anonymous if they desired. Second, it was an effort within the local community to finally stand up to legal injustice and

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{124} “Cruise with Care,” \textit{Gay Liberator}, May 1972, 1.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
discrimination that created fear and havoc within the gay population. Finally, it also provided a source of group support that was immensely lacking in Midwestern cities.

By 1976, activists in Kalamazoo, Michigan created a gay newsletter for its community with political notes, different editorials, and once again, legal advice. In comparison as of 2000, Detroit was the largest city in Michigan and Kalamazoo was ranked sixteenth. This was the same as early as 1990. In 1974 the lambda symbol, the point at which a certain element undergoes significant changes without altering its basic structure, was adopted as the worldwide symbol for the gay movement at the International Gay Rights Congress that was held in Edinburgh, Scotland. Lambda represents how gay people were trying to undergo significant changes in a heterosexual oriented society. The Lambda Newsletter of Kalamazoo printed articles that the creators found as ridiculous examples of this heterosexual imbalance. An article from March 1976 titled “What Price Homosexuality” discusses how a man in Detroit filed a civil suit that awarded him over two hundred thousand dollars in damages because he claimed a “rear-end auto collision turned him into a homosexual.” The man claimed that he was unable to work for six months and that he was “robbed of his masculinity” since he could not take care of his wife and family. The car accident had somehow forced homosexuality onto the man and he began reading homosexual literature and going to gay bars. The article even says that psychologists and psychiatrists testified at the trial on behalf of the man and stated he would “continue to have homosexual tendencies for another four years.” This court case is an example of the slow moving progress the gay community fought especially in the Midwest. Even though most

---

127 “LAMBDA- What is the Meaning?” Lambda of Kalamazoo, March 1976.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
medical testimony and opinion was beginning to change, the roots of discrimination and societal stigma ran deep in the Midwest.

However, the most practical section of the Lambda newsletter was the sections on legal advice. Similar to the other Midwestern newsletters, Lambda featured articles on what gay individuals should do if they were to be arrested. Each month the newsletter stated that if an individual was arrested for an offense related to gay activity, they “should not resist arrest, but also not volunteer any information or admit to any conduct to the arresting officer or other police officers who may question him about what he was doing.” Gay men and women were only required to give their name and address and were often persuaded by law enforcement to release more information than necessary. These newsletters helped combat this harassment by informing the gay community about their legal rights and the importance of contacting lawyers who were LGBT friendly. Often contact information were given in the legal advice section of the pamphlets by lawyers and other local or state gay organizations that assisted with legal aid.

As the years went on Midwestern newsletters began to also give legal advice to gay parents and how to combat prejudice in the courtroom that was similar to the more notable discrimination by law enforcement. In 1977, Lambda of Kalamazoo released a newsletter that was dedicated specifically to gay parents who were fighting for custody of their children. The first section of legal advice focused on recent research that had been conducted on gay parents and stated:

The state always presumes natural parents to be fit parents unless proved otherwise. A psychiatrist can testify in your behalf that the ‘parent is a stable and good parent and that the children will not be adversely affected.’ Research has shown children of gays are no more likely to be gay than children of straights. Research has shown that it is

less likely for gay men to molest children than heterosexuals and even less likely for lesbian women to do so.\textsuperscript{131}

This type of information was mostly only readily available through gay newsletters and exemplifies the importance of the Midwestern gay societies on different facets of life such as family matters and legal aid. Custody and visitation rights were also discussed and \textit{Lambda} found it increasingly important to try to be an influential factor in upholding the rights of gays to have custody of their children.

The city of Cleveland, Ohio also had a unique LGBT community similar to the other Midwestern cities. The history of the gay rights movement in Cleveland has been relatively overlooked in gay history. Similar to Detroit, a local Mattachine Society chapter was created sometime in the 1960s but was short-lived. A permanent period of gay activism began in the 1970s with the formation of another short-lived society, the Gay Activists Alliance, at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. However, another group soon followed, the Gay Educational and Awareness Resources Foundation (GEAR) at Cleveland State University, which later turned into the Gay and Lesbian Service Center of Greater Cleveland, an institution that still exists today.\textsuperscript{132} The Gay and Lesbian Service Center of Greater Cleveland was officially created in May 1975. The center’s mission originally was “to conduct research and educational activities in the area of human sexuality, to provide facilities and rehabilitative services for the homophile community in the areas of mental and physical health and social alternatives, and to provide

\textsuperscript{131} “Legal Advice.” \textit{Lambda of Kalamazoo}, February 1977.
\textsuperscript{132} “Gay Community- Encyclopedia of Cleveland History,” 1997, \url{http://ech.case.edu/cgi/article.pl?id=GC1}. 
endowment funding for qualifying homophile organizations, persons, and events.” Finally, Cleveland had an organization that not only helped socially but also politically and financially.

In 1975, the GEAR Foundation created *High Gear* the first newspaper in Cleveland for the gay community. The newspaper circulated until 1982 and was replaced by the *Gay People’s Chronicle* in 1984. *High Gear* served a similar purpose to Detroit’s *Gay Liberator*. It was a source of news for the LGBT community, coordinated educational programs; it also had its own telephone hotline, and attempted to give legal and counseling advice to those without. Another important civil duty *High Gear* had was organizing and distributing the Cleveland Gay Community Center calendar. The community center was known for having routine picnics, and hikes as well as providing counseling for men and women. The newspaper was also used for entertainment purposes such as local bar advertisements.

*High Gear* was Ohio’s inside source for police entrapment. In a section called “State Patrol” a routinely produced article listed different areas within the state that were notorious for harassing gays and lesbians. An article in 1977 specifically instructed the gay community to complain openly to State High Patrol Headquarters for unjust harassment and discrimination. In some cases, the collective resistance to police entrapment had worked and specific officers were relieved of their posts. While this was obviously not the norm for most states or instances of police entrapment it shows the important role *High Gear* played in the gay community and the development it had on creating a cohesive gay community.

*High Gear* was also responsible for bringing gay pride marches to Cleveland in 1977. This was unprecedented for the state of Ohio. *High Gear* covered the marches in its article,

---

“Cleveland Hosts Two Gay Pride Marches.” The first parade brought in over 2250 people and was covered by all of the local television channels. There was fear that the marches might bring harassment and violence but it was surprisingly non-confrontational and peaceful. The article stated that a lesbian activist was ceaselessly verbally confronted by a preacher and she reacted by saying, “I respect your right to believe the way you feel; but I don’t feel you have the right to impose your beliefs on others.” This response exemplified the subtle nature of the fight back against those who were prejudiced against homosexuals within the Midwest. These newsletters vocalized the efforts of gays and lesbians and how they often respectfully combatted overt discrimination to gradually increase their acceptance.

*High Gear* began the coverage of news that had been previously ignored through other media outlets. For example, *High Gear* brought to light gay legislation issues within different areas in the state of Ohio. One particular article, “Gay Rights Legislation in Barberton” covered the ongoing debate of protecting gay people against housing and employment discrimination in Barberton-Akron, Ohio. The article even quoted the Barberton mayor on whether he would support a bill on gay rights. Mayor Lawrence Maurer responded with, “I would veto such an ordinance so long as psychiatric help for homosexuals is available.”

Another article of *High Gear* focused on Dayton, Ohio’s attempt to pass an ordinance in 1977 that would ban discrimination against homosexuals in the workplace. Similar to the Barberton mayor, Mayor James McGee of Dayton said, “there is no need for the clause” to include the words “sexual preference” in the protection clause. The push for the passage of such a law created an immediate backlash that was covered extensively in the article. It stated,

---

136 Ibid.
“Several days after the Dade County vote, a belligerent group of straight toughs smashed car windows and slashed tires of automobiles parked outside one local gay bar. Gays were also subject to ridicule on local radio stations and lambasted by letter writers in both the Dayton Daily News and the Journal Herald.”¹³⁸ One gay man claimed, “You just can’t believe the people’s reaction here. They’re down right hostile. If we were to hold a Gay Pride march in Dayton today, I’d be afraid one of us would be shot.”¹³⁹

In the same year, a student at Bowling Green University in Ohio wrote about her experience as an intern for the Journal Herald in Dayton. One of the main things she noticed was the traditional nature of Dayton and the immense homophobia. She noted that half of the county commissioners called homosexuals “queers and fags” and that the city seemed extremely hostile to even discussing homosexuality. A gay activist who was known for speaking out against homophobia and an advocate of the gay rights movement had his throat slit a day after publicly speaking against the newspapers.

Dayton was not the only socially conservative city in Ohio or the Midwest. Cincinnati was also known for its “cultural conservatism.”¹⁴⁰ Susan Freeman presented one of the only case studies on the Midwest with her examination of the lesbian feminist community in Cincinnati, Ohio. While her study focuses on different aspects of lesbian feminist lifestyle, she also frequently cites Dinah; one of the first lesbian publications that began in Toledo, Ohio and eventually was based out of Cincinnati.¹⁴¹ These articles help emphasize the importance of publications within the local gay communities. The mainstream press was unreliable at providing

¹³⁸ Ibid.
¹³⁹ Ibid.
¹⁴¹ Ibid., 137.
any type of news for the gay community, whether it was positive or negative. Therefore, the gay community had to organize themselves and create their own local newsletters and media to effectively unite and discuss problems within the gay population.

Cincinnati followed a similar timeline as the other Midwestern cities examined. The 1970s were essential to the establishment of local gay communities. Cincinnati’s first local group that had the word “gay” in it was created in 1972, the Cincinnati Gay Community (CGC). The CGC also established a hotline for those in need and even a speaker’s bureau. Violence against homosexuals was rampant in Cincinnati just like the other Midwestern cities and was finally being publicized within gay publications such as Dinah. With most of the mainstream press ignoring the frequent terrorizing of the gay community, gay publications became even more necessary. In 1978, a lesbian in Cincinnati spoke to a crowd on such brutality:

Two weeks ago a woman was stabbed several times in the heart of Burnet Woods. The suspect was a white male with a bloody T-shirt. No headline warned “Heterosexual maniac loose in Burnet Woods.” No crackdown on heterosexual activity in the park followed. No female officers in plain clothes roamed Burnet Woods trying to entice heterosexual men into compromising behavior.

This speech was published in Dinah and spread around the lesbian community. It also evoked a response from police and city council. Both were hesitant in giving overt support to homosexuals but police brutality was finally brought to the forefront. In 1979, there were a number of assaults of gay men and a gay bar was attacked. The local gay society took immediate action and filed a complaint with the city “claiming inadequate police protection.” Some police officers responded by stating that “gays were not afforded due protection.” However, because of the press coverage, the police department was forced into a corner and some officers were punished.

---

142 Ibid., 145.
143 Ibid., 148.
144 Ibid., 151.
145 Ibid.
and one was even fired. A pledge was even sent to the local gay community promising that the community “would be represented on future political, community-relations panels, and that gay speakers would be included in police training.”\(^\text{146}\)

The gay movement was arguably even more accepting than the correlating women’s movement. Freeman’s analysis of the feminist movement inadvertently gives examples of the importance of the gay movement through her compilation of oral interviews and archival analysis of *Dinah*. The lesbian feminists who were interviewed “traced their activist roots back more to the gay movement than to the women’s movement” and “the oral history narratives made fewer references to the local feminist movement than they did to the local gay movement.”\(^\text{147}\) Therefore, local publications were not only but also essential to unifying the gay movement in helping to bring the lesbian feminists into the fold and establish their own unique community.

The gay publications used empowering rhetoric to help unite and mobilize the intended audience. *Dinah* especially urged lesbians to embrace their sexuality and essentially come out of the closet. In 1977, articles within *Dinah* explicitly stated:

> We must bond together and we must do it now. We must build our community, our strengths, and focus our energies to fight for our own rights, ourselves as lesbians. We have problem our commitments on these other causes in the past but we can no longer afford to become a subcommittee or committee or task force of another organization or group. We must join together in our own communities and groups with our own priorities before we are used up and cast aside in all these other causes.\(^\text{148}\)

Such passion and pressure were unprecedented for the gay community at that time.

\(^\text{146}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{147}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{148}\) Ibid., 160-161.
in Cincinnati. *Dinah* wanted the local lesbian community to create an institution that would be “a collective and entrepreneurial process with political significance.”

In 1975, the FBI had driven some founding members of a lesbian group called Labyris out of town. However, by that time the local community had grown so large and cohesive it did not stop most of the population from organizing. Moreover, J. Edgar Hoover had died in 1972 and the anti-gay fervor of the FBI was beginning to die down. The gay population of Midwestern communities may have been smaller than their bicoastal counterparts but still remained a vital asset for the national gay rights movement. Freeman even states, “the paper *(Dinah)* became more of a collective enterprise and it reflected increased lesbian activity in the city.”

*The Leaping Lesbian*, a lesbian-oriented publication, stated it was created for “several reasons” such as to better unify Ann Arbor’s lesbian community and that there was a need for “the original writings of local lesbians to be made generally available to the lesbian community.” The newsletter was originally free to all lesbians and consisted of lesbian-focused editorials, especially on lesbian motherhood and legal assistance.

Personal editorials were a large part of *Leaping Lesbian*. For example, an April 1977 article titled “Lesbian Mothers tell their Story” is an interview between the Lesbian Mothers’ Defense Fund (LMDF) and different lesbian mothers. The mothers discuss the hardships that arise with coming out of the closet and the constant battles they face in the court system. The LMDF asked the mothers how they were affected by the court experience, a mother responded as follows:

---

149 Ibid., 160
150 Ibid., 158.
First of all we were not prepared to be called the names and to be treated as if you’re just nothing. A lesbian mother walks into court and she is nothing, absolutely positively the lowest thing there ever was. No matter how many experiences you’ve had in heterosexuality, the lesbianism has just covered over everything.¹⁵²

These lesbian mothers in Ann Arbor were put under constant scrutiny and even surveillance. Psychiatrists were sent to determine the stability of the household and often gave off impressions of homophobia. One of the mother’s questioned stated the psychiatrists asked “very personal” questions and were all older men. Crying was also frowned upon in interviews, if a mother being interrogated showed any sign of slippage they were labeled emotionally unstable. At the end of every article on lesbian motherhood there was a section where Leaping Lesbian recommended sending checks and contributions to the Lesbian Mothers’ Defense Fund in Ann Arbor to help the cases.¹⁵³

Similar to the other gay newsletters and organizations, one of the main focuses of the Leaping Lesbian was to fight societal and legal oppression. An October 1977 article titled “Suburban Gays: Fighting Oppression” discusses local and federal legislation that had been affecting the gay community in Michigan. Michigan gays and lesbians gathered together at different conferences throughout the state and pushed for the passage of a revised criminal code that would eliminate the oppressive sex laws that harassed gays. In 1977 there were forty-one cities with gay rights ordinances and eighteen states that had passed adult consensual sex laws.¹⁵⁴ Pennsylvania was the only state to have an entire statewide gay rights ordinance that was enacted through an executive order from the governor.¹⁵⁵ The article continues on and encourages gay and lesbians to come out and be visible in society otherwise full civil rights will not be possible.

¹⁵² Ibid.
¹⁵³ Ibid.
¹⁵⁵ Ibid.
It goes on to state the need for gays and lesbians to document discrimination, “both civil and legal discrimination and the more subtle instances of heterosexism which oppress us continually.” This demonstrates how important these newsletters were for the Midwestern community. Not only was overt discrimination combatted but also the community found it necessary to begin combatting the subtle and reoccurring instances of harassment.

*The Leaping Lesbian*, like the other gay newsletters, kept track of the local lesbians who were arrested or who encountered law enforcement. “Local Women Arrested” is an article from 1977 and describes an incident of eleven lesbians being arrested in Ann Arbor for “accosting and soliciting.” Not only is the event of the arrest thoroughly explained but information is also given to help combat the arrests and prevent further ones from ensuing. The creators of the *Leaping Lesbian* responded by working with the Women’s Legal Defense Committee to work on fundraising and other supportive defensive work. The newsletter was vital in spreading the word of unfair treatment and arrest at the hands of local law enforcement. Without such coverage the truth of such news regarding the LGBT community would have potentially not been told.

By 1978, the *Leaping Lesbian* was a bi-monthly magazine and cost one dollar per edition. It became more aggressive at combatting homophobia and acting out against persecution by the government. Many issues focused on government spying, a specific article “Organizing Against Gov’t Spying” discusses the problem and how to effectively respond. The National Organizing Conference to Stop Government Spying took place at the University of Michigan in September 1978. *Leaping Lesbian* worked with other minority groups and organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the Black Panther Party, and the Commission on Societal Action for Reform Judaism to create the event. A special workshop that focused on “Gays and

---

156 Ibid.
Surveillance” was held during the conference. During a luncheon two representatives of the workshop addressed the audience and pointed out the homophobia that was present at the conference and the struggle of gay people throughout the nation and the need for societal transformation. The end of the article gives information on the coalition “The Campaign to Stop Government Spying” that was located out of Washington DC. This is an example of how much of an impact and persistence the Lavender Scare had decades after it ended and after J Edgar Hoover died.

The influence of the first gay organizations and the following newsletters in the Midwest is most notable with the creation of the Midwestern community newsletters of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The work of the previous local newsletters led to the creations of an entirely Midwestern focused publications based out of different cities. In 1977, the first volume of the *Midwest Gay Academic Journal* was published that encompassed the entire Midwest not just specific cities. It contained editorials, local and national news, reviews, LGBT resources, and gay caucuses. The journal was published because of the creation of the Gay Academic Union Midwest Conference and Gay Academic Union. Individuals in academia learned from the nonacademic newsletters that appeared sporadically throughout the Midwest. The academic world responded with its own contribution to combatting harassment and spreading the visibility of gay communities. The mission statement of the *Midwest Gay Academic Journal* was, “building a stronger Gay Academic Union both on the national and local level, and most importantly, helping us to better resist the forces of sexism and homophobia that oppress women and gay people.”157

---

Also in 1981, the *Lesbian-Gay Male Community Services Newsletter* was sold throughout the Midwest and focused on local and national events. It was a monthly publication that focused on community events and political and social issues of concern. For example, an article titled the “Registration of Sex Offenders” discusses how in certain Midwestern states, most specifically Michigan, sodomy, gross indecency, adultery, cohabitation and repeated convictions for indecent exposure were all considered sexual offenses.\(^{158}\) Other articles within the publication focus on the hypocrisy of heteronormativity. While gay men and women fought for basic civil rights a federal judge in Chicago ruled, “homosexual passes in the workplace can qualify as sexual harassment under the Civil Rights Act of 1964” when a man claimed he had been fired because he rejected “overt homosexual advances of a male supervisor.”\(^{159}\)

*The Lesbian-Gay Male Community Services Newsletter* brought together more of the Midwest by publishing an article about conversion therapy in Ohio. “Cincinnati Woman Raped at Parents Request” sheds the truth on a rape case that took place in 1981. The mother of a twenty-year-old lesbian hired cult “deprogrammers” to kidnap her daughter and hold her in captivity to cast out her lesbianism. After the daughter escaped she filed charges against the four men but was confronted by a prosecutor who was known for his opposition to gay rights and sympathy for the religious right. Therefore, the men were charged only with sexual battery instead of rape. A later volume of the newsletter published an article that stated the results of the case, the “deprogrammers” were found not guilty of alleged kidnapping and rape. The importance of covering such articles was immense for the Midwestern gay community. It brought attention to a story that could have potentially remained hidden and inaccurately construed.

\(^{158}\) *Lesbian-Gay Male Community Services Newsletter*, 1981.

\(^{159}\) Ibid.
The slow but steady progress of the gay community and civil rights were also covered throughout the *Lesbian-Gay Male Community Services Newsletter* as well as the other Midwestern publications. It was just as essential for the newsletters to showcase the successes of the gay rights movement. These Midwestern cities were microcosms of the national gay rights movement that began to emerge with the creation of the homophile societies. Without the gay publications that arose with the foundation of gay liberation groups, gay news would have remained deliberately ignored for an even longer duration. Midwestern gays and lesbians relied on these groups and publications for a sense of comfort and cohesion that had been previously denied to homosexuals in the United States.
CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSION

Unlike the traditional historical narrative that identifies Stonewall as the beginning of the gay rights movement, in reality, World War II is what accelerated the drive for gay liberation. Beginning with the unprecedented mass mobilization of gay people after World War II, the Lavender Scare emerged and created an even larger need for gay communities to come together. Regardless of the speed of development, it is essential to understand how the Lavender Scare played a crucial role in the development of the homophile movement that eventually advanced the goals of future gay and lesbian societies.

The outrage of ceaseless persecution at the hands of the American government sparked a fire in people like Harry Hay, Del Martin, and Phyllis Lyon. These individuals helped gather and grow a visible gay community with the establishment of homophile societies such as the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis. The federal government’s systematic exclusion of gays and lesbians spurred these organizations into action. Because the exclusion of homosexuals included men and women, it unified a minority that had been previously hidden and rejected from society. The irony of the Lavender Scare is that the fear that homosexuals represented a large and even powerful threat to the nation ended up creating the organized opposition that that followed; this occurred through the development of gay communities and the emergence of activist media.

Even with the dwindling of the Lavender Scare and restrictive federal employment policies there was not a definitive end to the persecution of homosexuals in the 1950s or 1960s. The formation of gay and lesbian publications became combatants and provided a voice for the emerging gay rights movement. They became the most effective weapon for social and political change, initially emerging only in large coastal cities but eventually spreading across much of
the nation. Before the creation of the gay press, journalism had been one of the main tools of homophobia. Terms such as “homosexual,” “gay,” and “lesbian,” were rarely spoken of. Instead terms such as “perverts,” “pederasts,” and “degenerates” were used to represent same-sex attraction. The first homophile organizations responded to this discrimination by creating their own publications such as the *Mattachine Review*, *The Ladder*, and *ONE*. This began the gradual trickle down to other communities across the nation that were in dire need of forming a community and providing assistance.

Midwestern gay societies have rarely been studied and, in some cases, have even been described as nonexistent. However, like their coastal counterparts the Midwest responded to the local and federal harassment through the creation of grass-roots activist media press. Cities in states such as Ohio and Michigan developed their own LGBT press in the 1970s. The publications of these gay and lesbian organizations multiplied quickly and became an active force against the constant harassment of law enforcement and the homophobic laws it continued to uphold. In the Midwest, there were exceptionally few LGBT businesses of any kind. Even bars were more cautious of being publicly known as a place that caters to the gay community because of police harassment.

As this thesis has argued, these community-based newspapers in the Midwest and nationwide played a pivotal role in the creation of the gay rights movement and advancing political mobilization. These newsletters were published before the creation of the Internet and were a news source that quite literally could not be found elsewhere.

The establishment of these communities, networks, and forms of media would become critical into the 1980s and beyond as the LGBT community encountered new hardships and issues such as the AIDS epidemic. As this thesis has shown, newsletters in Midwestern cities
reveal the grass roots response to the Lavender Scare and the following discrimination through
the federal and local government paving the way for more visible progress toward greater rights.
In doing so, this study complicates the traditional narrative by arguing that the gay rights
movement began decades before Stonewall and existed beyond the major coastal cities that have
been solely the primary focus of the initial scholarship on LGBT history. This thesis reveals
the emergence of thriving gay and lesbian communities in the Midwest, paving the way for
additional analysis.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES


*Conductor Generalis: or the Office, Duty and Authority of Justice of the Peace, High-Sheriffs, Under-Sheriffs, Goalers, Corners, Constables, Jury-Men, and Overseers of the Poor* (Philadelphia: B. Franklin and D. Hall) 1722.


Danforth, Samuel. *The Cry of Sodom Enquired Into; Upon Occasion of the Arraignment and Condemnation of Benhamin Goad, for his Prodigious Villany.* (1674) Edited by Paul Royster for Digital Commons.


Federal Bureau of Investigation. “Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) records regarding Sex Offenders Foreign Intelligence; Sex Degenerates and Sex Offenders; Sex Perverts in


“LAMBDA- What is the Meaning?” Lambda of Kalamazoo, March 1976.


Lesbian-Gay Male Community Services Newsletter 1, no.5 (August 1981).

Lesbian-Gay Male Community Services Newsletter 1, no.8 (December 1981).

Lesbian-Gay Male Community Services Newsletter 2, no.3 (May/June 1982).


“Lesbian Mothers tell their Story.” Leaping Lesbian, April 1977.


SECONDARY SOURCES


