

A CASE STUDY OF THE GAY OHIO HISTORY INITIATIVE

Master's Thesis

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By

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore how a State Historical Society might most productively work with gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) populations in collecting artifacts, narratives and interpreting history. The Gay Ohio History Initiative (GOHI) was analyzed as a case study within a methodological framework of Participatory Action Research. GOHI, as part of the Ohio Historical Society's (OHS) *New Face of Ohio* multicultural collecting program, is a collaborative project between Outlook Media Inc. and the Ohio Historical Society.

This investigation of GOHI has sought to accomplish four goals:

1. Consider GOHI in the context of museums and community-based collecting programs in the United States,
2. Use Participatory Action Research as a tool for refining practice,
3. Review literature on community based collection and cross-analyze it, along with the data collected, to construct a clear picture of GOHI's current state and,
4. Assess GOHI's successes and offer suggestions for its future development.

In addition to accomplishing these four goals, this thesis also identifies areas for further research.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Statement of Purpose

This research seeks to answer the question "How might a State Historical Society productively work with the gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) populations in collecting artifacts, narratives and interpreting history?" I will be analyzing the Gay Ohio History Initiative (GOHI) as a case study within the larger methodological context of Participatory Action Research. GOHI is part of the Ohio Historical Society's (OHS) *New Face of Ohio* multicultural collecting program and is a collaborative project between Outlook Media Inc. and the Ohio Historical Society.<sup>1</sup> I will use GLBTQ to refer to the whole of multiple communities. Although there is a wide variety in which these initials may be arranged, deleted or added to, GOHI uses this form, and for the sake of simplicity this form will be used throughout the thesis

I am looking at this problematic of historic collections and representations as both a museum professional and participant in the Gay Ohio History Initiative. I have been employed at the Ohio Historical Society since 2000 in a variety of capacities, including an archival processor, a content developer for Ohio Memory, an outreach curator and a

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<sup>1</sup> For the remainder of the thesis the Gay Ohio History Initiative will be referred to as "GOHI" and the Ohio Historical Society will be referred to as "OHS."

project director. While my recent work focuses on outreach to history educators, my foundation at OHS is in archival collections. From my experience working in both online and physical museum exhibits it has become apparent that our collections at OHS do not represent the broadest range of Ohioans. While working on “Moments in Time,” an exhibition of photography from the Ohio Historical Society audiovisual collection, I wanted to select images that had never been on display or may not have fit into another exhibit. I looked for images of those who were underrepresented or who were not represented in any of our other exhibits. Representations of Asians, immigrants, and African Americans were difficult to find, especially photographs that had any provenance. These omissions suggested we as an institution were neglecting part of our mission of “furthering knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the prehistory and history of Ohio and of the broader cultural and natural environments of which Ohio is a part” (Ohio Historical Society, 2005). Community collecting programs such as GOHI are in direct alignment with the mission of OHS. “Furthering knowledge” does not just mean “getting more stuff,” but rethinking how we engage communities in interpreting our collections, sites, exhibition and our vision of collecting and interpretation in general.

According to the 2007 OHS transition report prepared for Governor Strickland, outreach and education are what OHS does best. Collections received through GOHI can be rolled into both areas. Programs for both educators and students on issues of diversity and sensitivity can be created through the collections. In addition, distance learning programs for schools or after school programs could be inclusive of GLBTQ history. GOHI creates the possibility for (re)introducing OHS to largely ignored historic communities. Not only can this help the institution build collection donations and

financial support, but by forming partnerships with various community groups, it may also help foster advocates for OHS and its mission. Of course, there are individuals and groups that cringe at the idea of their tax dollars supporting GLBTQ collecting (or Latino, African-American or Appalachian history for that matter). However, GOHI has positioned its own funding through a specific endowment and GOHI-directed donations, helping alleviate tax dollar dependency. OHS's mission statement, "to help people connect with Ohio's past in order to understand the present and create a better future" (Ohio Historical Society, 2006), suggests it is not OHS's place to use race, color, class, creed or sexuality to bar the full spectrum of Ohioans from assuming their place in the collections.

## 1.2 What this Study Aims to Accomplish

Through my investigation of GOHI I hope to accomplish four things. Firstly, I would like to consider GOHI in the context of museums and community-based collecting programs in the United States. Secondly, I am interested in using Participatory Action Research as a tool for ongoing inquiry. Thirdly, I want to analyze the data I have collected on GOHI to create a clearer picture of its current state. Finally, I would like to use what I have learned through my research to determine GOHI's success and develop suggestions that might advance its future.

I propose that as more projects like GOHI are instituted, and institutions see their success, it may be easier to convince those in museums and archives of the benefit of such community-based programs. By developing models, handbooks, and putting contact information in place for those interested in forming community-based collecting

projects, more institutions will be able to follow through with these types of projects and perhaps broaden and increase audience involvement.

### 1.3 Products Constructed as a Result of this Study

Writers in the museum field have been discussing the issue of representation and relevance for some time now. In Stephen Weil's 2002 collection, *Making Museums Matter*, he states that in the new emerging relationship between museums and the public "... it will be the public, not the museum, that occupies the superior position" (p. 196). John H. Falk and Beverly K. Sheppard (2006) echo this sentiment in *Thriving in the Knowledge Age*. They state that most museums say they are there to serve the community, but the authors wonder how many of these museums have actually gone into the community and asked residents what they want or need out of the institution (135). If in order to be relevant museums need to accept the interests of the public they serve, then the public will need to be better represented within the museum. If not, the museum will most likely fail.

Programs such as GOHI have the ability to help museums be more representative and embrace this new paradigm. If institutions possess such GLBTQ collections, they may be more willing to use them in exhibitions. In doing so, they share the vibrant history of GLBTQ communities with museum-goers who might not otherwise actively seek out such histories. At a more basic level, once the documentation of GLBTQ history is gone, it's gone. Actively preserving the evidence of the past now can ensure its availability in the future, and GOHI can help OHS secure the GLBTQ collections it needs in order to do this.

In Hilde S. Hein's 2000 book, *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective*, she describes museums as a "community of communities" (p. 50), which includes the "collected." She argues that museums are not neutral and that they impart cultural values based on what they collect, what they exhibit, and how they exhibit it. If a museum fails to collect objects representative of the whole, what does that tell those that make up the unrepresented or underrepresented? Or worse, what does that say to the "majority" about that group's value? A failure to act can be just as offensive as acting inappropriately. In this sense, as more museums institute community collecting programs such as GOHI, they may become more representative of their constituents' diverse communities.

Weil also discusses whether or not these new, more representative museums will be merely celebratory, as were many of the history museums of old. I think that this celebratory model is one of the contributing factors behind the glacial pace at which many museums are adopting diversity initiatives. Beyond celebration, in the process of collecting and presenting underrepresented groups challenges the majority to come to terms with past injustices. Representing minority groups as victims who need saving by benevolent Euro-Americans, however is not going to cut it (nor should it) in today's society. Instead, it is necessary to fairly represent the multiple facets of all communities, in both their struggles and successes. The role of museums in sustaining the past and in birthing the future will be further discussed in section 2.1 where I fully explain the problem at hand.

Being more representative does have a tendency to raise tricky philosophical and political issues, such as who is counted as part of the public, and who gets the final say on

that decision. Patricia Nell Warren raises such questions in her article “How Real is Our Sense of History?” In which she argues that the greatest Achilles heel of history is that it gets re-written by the winners (1997), and this is no different for GLBTQ history. She urges the GLBTQ community to preserve its “real” history and not to rewrite or disavow certain historic events because a full picture needs to be constructed. For example, while noting her disapproval of the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), she would not help burn their library because they, along with their controversies, are part of history (Warren, 1997). According to Warren, everyone gets counted. Who gets counted in GOHI will be discussed in problems of collection in section 2.4.

The process of determining and contextualizing representations in museums should be multidimensional and done with as much complexity as possible. Museums should not begin randomly collecting items because they represent (according to the museum) the GLBTQ community, or simply sneak a GLBTQ piece on the exhibit floor. These acts are merely tiny bandages over a larger wound. Museums need to approach integrating GLBTQ collections as critically as possible, so they “get it right.” To do otherwise is to risk seeming to try to pacify or patronize, and not deeply integrate and educate. In short, the future of cultural institutions, according to Hein (2000) and Weil (2002), lay in their ability to foster new relationships with multiple communities through a collaborative re-searching process.

As noted in section 1.1, the collections at OHS are not representative of the broad range of Ohioans. GOHI, along with future initiatives in *The New Face of Ohio*, can help alleviate some of these omissions. In addition to issues of representation in collections,

there are other institutional problems that GOHI, and similar OHS programs must help address, including issues revolving around institutional relevancy.

#### 1.4 Structure of this Thesis

In Chapter 2 I will discuss the problem of historic representation as it applies to the GLBTQ community and examine some of the problems of collecting from underrepresented communities. Additionally, community collecting projects similar to GOHI will be discussed.

In Chapter 3 I will discuss my research setting. In this chapter I will briefly recount the history of GLBTQ collecting in the United States, and discuss both OHS's and GOHI's place within the museum field. I will present a history of GOHI including its institutional structure, fundraising and marketing scheme, and consider ways of assessing its success.

My thesis research methodology is presented in Chapter 4. In this chapter I will discuss Participatory Action Research and autoethnography. I will also discuss my entry into each of my four research sites: Columbus, Ohio Pride Festivals in 2006 and 2007, GOHI meetings, a May 9, 2007, GOHI fundraiser, and GOHI collections work. Data from these research sites will then be presented in Chapter 5 and formal documents presented in the appendices.

In Chapter 6 I will analyze my Chapter 5 data through Action Spiral Tables. These tables represent nine dimensions of my research. I will then reflect on this analysis and identify trends, and create a list of long term goals for GOHI.

In my Chapter 7 conclusion I will recapitulate all components of my thesis and offer suggestions for additional research.

## CHAPTER 2

### EXPLANATION OF THE PROBLEM

#### 2.1 Problems of Historic (mis)Representation, Invisibility and Construction

Ohio's gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) community's history has not been collected and preserved on a significant scale. History museums have had so few representations of GLBTQ communities that their main misrepresentation may be in their invisibility; in short, historically speaking there has been no GLBTQ community. Other underrepresented groups, such as women, African American and American Indians have also had to deal with multiple types of misrepresentation, those that may discourage potential donors from approaching the museum. Majority led institutions may simply not be able to see the absence of most things queer in their institutions. As with the actions of women and racial minorities, it may take open acts of GLBTQ community questioning or protest to see any change in service, inclusion, or representation.

As part of an effort to present a fair representation of sex and race in New York State history Robert Sullivan (1994) discusses the process by which the New York State Museum assessed their education materials and exhibits. In 1976, while the museum was in the midst of planning 120,000 square feet of permanent exhibitions, a sex equity committee was formed to examine exhibit themes, linguistics and design. Their draft

report identified five forms of gender bias: 1) invisibility, 2) stereotyping, 3) imbalance/selectivity, 4) fragmentation/isolation, and 5) linguistic bias (see Table 2.1).

Invisibility	The omission of women and minorities is damaging because it implies that these groups are of less significance.
Stereotyping	By assigning rigid roles or attributes to a group it limits the potential of that group and denies the visitor a deeper knowledge of the complexity of that group.
Imbalance/Selectivity	Exhibits and material perpetuate bias by presenting one interpretation of an issue, situation or group of people. Controversial topics are glossed over, and unrealistic coverage denies visitors information needed to recognize and understand the problems that still plague society
Fragmentation/Isolation	Separating discussions of women and minorities from the main narrative implies it is less important and not part of the mainstream.
Linguistic Bias	Masculine terms and pronouns such as “forefathers” and the generic “he” subtly ignore the participation of women in society.

Table 2.1: Five Forms of Gender Bias, New York State Museum

This list seems fairly complete and could be used to identify misrepresentation of women, racial minorities, and the disabled as well as the GLBTQ communities in both exhibits and educational materials. Although this list was developed in the late 1970s, there are still many exhibits today in museums all around the country that unintentionally perform one or more of these forms of bias.

A push for museums to represent more than the Euro-American history of their founders stems from the external pressures of the Civil Rights, Women’s, Chicano and American Indian movements of the 1950s to the 1970s. This institutional change coincided with development of greater representation on college campuses in the 1970s

for minorities through the advent of ethnic studies departments. Although these groups were beginning to be represented in museums, they were not truly integrated into the larger scheme of general museums outside of the occasional side bar or single text panel. As a result, many minority groups founded their own representative museums and organizations during this era.

The first association of African American museums (the African American Museums Association, now the Association of African American Museums) began in 1978 (Association of African American Museums, 2006); the Association of Hispanic Arts was founded in 1975 (Association of Hispanic Arts, 2005); and the National Museum of Women in the Arts based on the personal collection of Wilhelmina and Wallace Holladay was incorporated in 1981 (National Museum of Women in the Arts, 2007). In 1996, somewhat later than the previous organizations, the National Women's History Museum was incorporated (National Women's History Museum, 2007). Current trends in museum diversity include not only women and racial minorities, but also underrepresented groups, such as those with disabilities, and the gay and lesbian communities; each seeking full integration as opposed to being classified as "special projects."

The Ohio Historical Society (OHS) has responded to this call for diversity in step with other museums and archives. In 1966 the OHS Archives-Library division expanded its programs for the collecting and research of African American materials. According to Research Archivist, Tom Rieder (who has been employed at OHS since 1970), in the late 1960s and early 1970s OHS acquired the Urban League's records, and the records of the Columbus chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

(NAACP) (Rieder, 2005). In addition to its expanded programs of collecting African American history, OHS encouraged research in African American history, conducting oral history interviews, and microfilming Ohio African American newspapers (Ohio Historical Society, 1975). In 1970 OHS started a comprehensive bibliography of all African American collections available at approximately 15 Ohio institutions, resulting in *The Ohio Black History Guide* which was published in 1975 (Ohio Historical Society, 1975). In the same time period there was also a push to acquire collections related to women. Both the Ohio and the Columbus League of Women Voters' papers were donated, as well as collections relating to prominent women in the state. A position was created in the Archives-Library for a person to actively collect additional African American records and collections, as well as collections dealing with women's organizations. These positions were eliminated during the budget cuts in the 1980s and were unfortunately never refilled (Reider, 2005).

In general, museums diversity issues are viewed as strategies for reaching ancillary audiences; not a way to integrally serve the core audience. As long as diversity is viewed as a fringe concern "... staff (and diverse audiences) is given the message that they are important for special programs or heritage month celebration ..." (Brunch, 2002, paragraph 4) but not much else. The question then becomes how does one reach communities that have been disenfranchised by benign neglect? I believe that this hurdle in particular can be cleared with community-based collecting. It is necessary, however, to reach out to these communities and recruit them as team members in the collecting process before sprinting off the blocks.

The next question one might ask would be “why?” Why, 30 years after the New York State Museum, and presumably many other institutions, began to grapple with issues of diversity and bias, do we find museum professionals still dealing with the same issues? In 2002 Lonnie Bunch, then serving as the President of the Chicago Historical Society, delivered a presentation on the challenges of diversity. Bunch outlined five challenges cultural institutions face in addressing diversity: 1) centralizing the outsider; 2) overcoming traditions; 3) rugged individualism; 4) sustainability; and 5) finding new models and new paradigms. Table 2.2 develops each of these ideas in detail, illustrating why it has been so difficult for museums to keep pace with ever increasing notions of diversity.

Centralizing the Outsider	Few institutions embrace diversity as central to their institutional success; they see it as reaching out to an ancillary audience through special determinate programming. They need to integrate the outsider into their institutional mission.
Overcoming Traditions	Museums are trapped by tradition and assumptions that limit their ability to change. Diversity is not something that can automatically happen regardless of culture; the institution must often change in fundamental ways
Rugged Individualism	Museums tend to forget that corporations and universities have been struggling with diversity, and fail to look toward already established models.
Sustainability	Many diversity initiatives are on soft money and do not receive proper time to incubate or to be integrated into the core of the institution.
Finding New Models and New Paradigms	Many diversity programs follow a 1950s and 1960s model of diversity, meaning they hint at diversity. However, this model fails to embrace long-term partnerships that ensure museums become different entities which hold diversity at the core.

Table 2.2: Lonnie Bunch’s Five Challenges of Diversity

## 2.2 Explanation of the Problem

Eight organizations/institutions have been identified in Ohio as collecting GLBTQ history. Those which are not associated with large urban areas are affiliated with colleges and universities.

The Archives of Gay and Lesbian Artists, located in the Department of Art at Oberlin College, was established as a non-profit voluntary endeavor in 1989. Essentially a documentary archive, it accepts slides or other forms of documentation such as videotapes and compact discs. Artists are usually represented by twenty slides and retain the copyright to all submitted material. The slides are cataloged and available to students for research. Artist statements, curricula vitae, exhibition schedules and other ephemera may also be included.

While the Cincinnati Gay/Lesbian Archives is listed on GLBT archives lists, no further information has been found, and contact attempts have been seemingly futile.

The Joan Ruth Rose Library in Yellow Springs, Ohio contains approximately 300 bound volumes, fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, related to gay, lesbian and women's issues. The library also includes materials related to women's health.

The Popular Culture Collection, at the William T. Jerome Library at Bowling Green State University houses materials including westerns, erotic stories, science fiction, underground comics, alternative press publications and other publications.

The Northeast Ohio Lesbian/Gay Archives was developed in 1991 in collaboration with Western Reserve Historical Society and what is now the LGBT

Community Center of Greater Cleveland. The collection consists of items from organizations and individuals in the Cleveland/Northeastern Ohio area. Records in the collection include those from the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland, Chevrei Tikva (a Jewish congregation), the Lesbian/Gay Community Service Center of Greater Cleveland, and Stonewall, Cleveland.

*The Oberlin College LGBT Community History Project* is a web-based project which collects information on gay life at Oberlin, including oral histories and corresponding photographs and transcripts.

The Ohio Lesbian Archives (OLA) in Cincinnati contains books by or about lesbians as well as lesbian periodicals, flyers from lesbian events, photographs, posters, CDs, LPs, videocassettes (movies and interviews), audiocassettes (music, interviews and poetry), T-shirts, buttons, etc. The OLA also collects lesbian/gay movement flyers and periodicals from the tri-state area. A large lesbian/gay history collection is also part of OLA.

*Our Stories: A Developing Record of Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, and Alliance* at The Ohio State University is a collaborative program with the mission to develop a record of the LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transexual, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Allies) community at Ohio State. Participating members of *Our Stories* include faculty, staff, alumni, graduate and undergraduate students, and community members. In the Spring of 2006 *Our Stories* presented its inaugural exhibition of items relating to the GLBTQ campus community at the Younkin Success Center.

These eight Ohio organizations/institutions each have a very specific collecting focus. For example, *Our Stories* only collects history associated with The Ohio State University while Bowling Green's Popular Culture Library's focus is mainly on publications as opposed to personal collections. There is not one institution among the eight with a general Ohio GLBTQ focus. Second, many of these are rather small collections, with the majority of them being associated with another institution (such as an educational or community organization).

There are pros and cons of being associated with a larger institution. On one hand, capital is not needed to start up a specific GLBTQ archive since library and museum professionals already on staff can deal with new collections and (theoretically) each already has a budget. However, if funding becomes tight (as was the case with earlier OHS budget cutbacks), GLBTQ collecting and collections promotion run the risk of falling by the wayside. If such projects are an employee's pet there is an even higher probability of it fizzling when that employee leaves. In an email from the manuscript curator of the Western Reserve Historical Society, he asserts that this was the case with their collection for the Northeast Ohio Lesbian/Gay Archives; for a while the previous curator was very interested in collecting GLBTQ materials, after he left, the program stalled (Doell, 2006). In recent months this collection has, however, been reinvigorated (see the earlier discussion on page 13 for more information)

### 2.3 Problems of Collecting

Myriad problems exist in establishing collecting policies and planning in general. These issues seem to grow exponentially when one collects from diverse audiences. In this section I will discuss five issues that surrounded attempts to reach previously

excluded groups and diverse communities. The first three issues focus on problems faced by the underrepresented communities. These are 1) discomfort and mistrust with institutions, 2) problems of (in)visibility and 3) misrepresentation. The final two focus on institutional issues: 4) defining minority material culture and 5) grappling with identity. By recognizing the challenges both individuals and institutions face in collecting and being collected, practitioners are better able to work toward solutions to these issues and create community-based collecting programs that are sensitive to the concerns of both communities and institutions.

### 2.3.1 Discomfort and Mistrust of Institutions

John E. Fleming, past-president of the African American Museums Association and past director of the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center (Wilberforce, Ohio), notes several difficulties in collecting 20<sup>th</sup> century African American objects for the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center. First, many African Americans have never been asked to donate to a museum before, so educating potential donors had to be undertaken to clarify what the museum does, and how it preserves material culture. Second, many of the potential donors are still using the items that the museum was collecting. Third, it was difficult to convince people that what they viewed as everyday objects were also important historic artifacts that needed to be preserved (Fleming, 1994).

I would contend that this might be true of most disenfranchised groups in the United States -- not only those in the African American community. Some, among these groups, such as American Indians, have been fighting museum and collecting/researching communities for decades: seeking to have their ancestors' remains and appropriated

properties respected, returned, and having their cultures accepted as multi-dimensional. Rebuilding bridges burned between those communities and the cultural institutions may be difficult to accomplish.

### 2.3.2 The Problematic of Visibility

With GLBTQ communities' current interest in increasing their own visibility, this hurdle may not be as intimidating. African Americans and American Indians have had to deal with particularly offensive representations of their cultures in museums. Typically, the "gayness" of collections or an individuals' sexuality is not mentioned at all. While invisibility of GLBTQ population has produced a yearning for any visibility the overt offenses leveled against other underrepresented groups have been inescapable.

James W. Loewen states in *Lies Across America* (1999) that to the best of his knowledge the only two places in the landscape of historic America that mention the words "gay" or "lesbian" is the historic marker to the Stonewall Riots in Greenwich Village, and the plaque and park dedicated to Harvey Milk in San Francisco. He states that "... our public history keeps every gay or lesbian person and event locked in the closet [, but] if Americans knew that some of the historical figures the landscape celebrates were lesbian or gay, public discourse might be improved" (129). He adds that absence from the landscape gives the impression that members of the GLBTQ community have never done anything (370). Although invisibility in the museum and landscape may not foster much faith in the museum from the GLBTQ community, there may nevertheless be less needed fence mending.

### 2.3.3 Misrepresentation

A variety of prejudices can result when attempting to document diverse communities. Some citizens and institutions may not be ready to accept collecting items from Hispanic migrant workers, or may feel that their tax dollars would be better spent on something other than collecting the history of GLBTQ communities. Conservative boards in cultural agencies may squelch the idea because the heat from politicians or newspapers--either real or assumed--may be too fierce. As a public institution, I would argue that historical societies and museums have a duty to record everyone's history. If an institution relies heavily on public support one might ask, how does an institution move beyond the status quo without alienating those who provide that financial support? Counter distinctly, might those excluded (who are also tax payers) need to create equal and opposite pressures to counteract the often louder voices of intolerance? The approach GOHI is taking, to focus on endowments, grants, and monies donated specifically for GOHI purposes, will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Fears of misrepresentation can be harrowing when one is dealing with underrepresented communities. Strategies for removing real barriers to collecting meaningful materials are thus greatly needed. Angela Vanegas discussed this fear in constructing an exhibition at the Croydon Museum in the United Kingdom called *Lifetimes*. This exhibit chronicled the lives of many different people who lived in Croydon, including gays and lesbians, through material culture and oral histories. She stated that, while the interviewees "... were pleased to have a voice in the exhibition ... they were concerned that they might be stereotyped" (Vangegas, 101). One way the museum attempted to calm their fears was by having the gay men interviewed by a gay

man and the lesbians interviewed by a lesbian. The interviewees also had to approve the excerpt selected for the exhibition and were able to make changes. These member checks can reassure the community that they are understood by the institution and would not be misrepresented.

#### 2.3.4 Defining GLBTQ material culture

Another issue when collecting from minority groups is determining what actually should be collected. Does an institution collect only items that are representative of a minority, that are marked by their “otherness,” or does it also collect popularly held items that may have been owned by a minority and the majority alike? Should we actively collect benign, mass produced objects just because a minority owned them? It is obvious that these are the types of questions that each institution will have to answer in their collection plan. However, I think a model of community-based collecting might best answer these questions, as the process of enlisting the help of the represented community itself can help the museum ensure that items important to the community are identified, collected and represented.

What should museums collect under the rubric of a GLBTQ collection? One argument might be to consider “homosexuals” as defined by their sexuality, resulting in a collection of items based on that one characteristic (e.g. inversion of heterosexual roles, items relating to HIV/AIDS, erotica, or drag costuming). I would argue, however, that members of the GLBTQ community are also brothers, aunts, mothers, fathers, union members, clergy, entertainers, and artists. These are experiences that are just as, if not more, important to document. By focusing on one aspect of GLBTQ humanity the

museum might quickly alienate that community and possibly violate any trust that it may have built.

GOHI's collecting plan priorities privilege "... material from Central Ohio that documents Pride celebrations. In addition, GOHI will focus on collecting oral and video histories of the older generation of the GLBTQ community with a special emphasis on documenting early trailblazers, discrimination and personal lives" (Gay Ohio History Initiative, 2007). Starting with a focused priority allows GOHI to start small, gauge interest in the project, and then assess workflow before branching out to the entire state. It also allows dialogue with the community and opportunities to hear both concerns and needs that may have to be addressed.

GOHI's collecting plan defines its aim to "seek a variety of audiovisuals, personal papers and artifacts, including but not limited to: photographs, film and video, diaries, letters, journals, postcards, flyers, newsletters, posters, buttons, and T-shirts. Conditions that will help guide the acquisition process include the relevance to Ohio, provenance (history of material), uniqueness, preservation needs and storage requirements. This is a fairly broad statement that is intended to encompass a wide range of GLBTQ items -- items we may know we want now, as well as those items discovered later in the collecting process.

#### 2.3.5 Grappling with Identity

Hand in hand with identifying gay collections is the problem of defining identity and identification. The principle question for GOHI, however, has to do with naming the target audience for the project and who is represented by the project. Outlook Media, Inc. which owns *Outlook Weekly*, a GLBTQ weekly newspaper in Columbus, is currently

partnering with OHS on GOHI. Although the audience for GOHI considers the entire GLBTQ community in Ohio, the majority of people who will know about the project are those among *Outlook Weekly's* readership. Currently this media vehicle is the main avenue for GOHI's publicity. *Outlook Weekly's* media audit, which was published in 2004, states their weekly circulation was 20,000, with papers delivered to 500 sites around Ohio. Based on questions answered by their readership, *Outlook Weekly* boasts a highly educated and fairly prosperous group of readers. This demographic is likely to have been to cultural institutions and feel comfortable with them. *Outlook's* media guide lists a number of statistics. When considering other media outlets, *Outlook* readers are:

- 61% more likely to have an income of over \$100,000
- Have a combined annual household income of the readership is \$71,040
- 93% of readers either have attended college and/or hold a college degree
- 58% have purchased tickets for a live performance in the past year

Based on the demographic statistics, *Outlook* readership is

- 59% male,
- 40% female
- 1% transgender
- 84% identify as Caucasian
- 9% identify as straight.

Of course, these statistics only represent those who responded to *Outlook's* survey. It would then be best to view these statistics with a skeptical eye, acknowledging that the survey itself was designed to persuade advertisers that there would be big pay offs from advertising to the "economic powerhouse" of a GLBTQ community. A more

complete picture of the GLBTQ community in Central Ohio will be available with the completion of the 2007 GLBT Census, administered by United Way of Central Ohio (United Way), but this data was not yet available at the time of my study.

This issue of identity and identification for GOHI emerged early in the development process. While at a GOHI meeting in April, 2006, I had one of those experiences that straight, white women in the museum field rarely encounter; that of being a minority in an assembly of people. In discussing the naming of GOHI, the group considered whether the title should stay “Gay” Ohio History Initiative, or should it begin with “Gay and Lesbian?” What about “Lesbian and Gay?” Should it just be changed to “Queer?” It was decided that for brevity’s sake it would stay “Gay” while being sure to include all facets of GLBTQ communities so everyone would know that their history would be preserved. That led to the discussion of how far should we go with our use of acronyms. Only GLBT? Should it instead be LGBT? Should “Q” be added to the end? At this point everyone turned to me and asked, “As a straight person, what do you think?” My honest opinion, in answering on behalf of billions of straight people, was that straight people would think “queer” was derogatory and that most would have no idea what the “Q” meant. However, who is this project for? Is GOHI only for the gay community? If so, is my opinion really of any consequence? However, if this project is seen as a way to not only preserve the history of the gay community in Ohio but also to educate the straight people of Ohio to this rich heritage, then something that is somewhat “straight-friendly” but not compromising to the community (if that is truly possible) is probably in order. As Amalia Mesa-Bains stated, “the ability to self-define . . . is at the heart of the struggle [of cultural patrimony]” (2004, p. 101).

Another identity issue involves who is representing the GLBTQ community at community collecting meetings. Are all facets of the community represented? In Kathleen D. Roe's paper at the *Choices and Challenges Conference* (2002), she stated that as "outsiders" in the underrepresented community, museum professionals need to be validated by respected community "insiders" if they are to facilitate community-based initiatives. Not only is it necessary to find these community members, but also it is imperative that multiple voices within the community are represented. Often times those in the mainstream are quick to lump people in neat groups. The idea that a gay white male or an Asian American transsexual could adequately represent the whole GLBTQ community is absurd. Thinking of a specific minority community as homogeneous is a deadly mistake, and one that shows that an institution has not done its homework and calling into question its investment in the project.

If there are so many issues surrounding collecting from diverse communities, what is the point of actively seeking donations from these groups? Although this is a difficult mine field to navigate, it is important to welcome diverse communities into museums and archives. These groups are a vital part of the larger community, and the experiences of "the majority" and underrepresented groups are not independent of each other but inform each others' histories.

#### 2.4 Similar Community-based Collecting Projects

Basic models for community-based collecting do exist in some professional literature. Below I will discuss the American Association of Museum's Model for Diversity (2004), and Rowena Stewart's Model (1994).

In 2003 the American Association of Museums (AAM) Board of Directors named diversity as one of the eight strategic issues that were to guide the organization over the following year and a half. One of its creations was a fact sheet called “Developing a Diversity Plan.” This model is designed to help museums see how to develop a diversity plan. It does not, however, specifically address issues of collecting (American Association of Museums, 2004). This document also includes a Diversity Plan Checklist that offers organizations a starting point for evaluating their current practices as well as an idea of how to move forward. This checklist reflects shifts from a 1950s view of diversity (separate but equal) to a 21<sup>st</sup> century one focused on integration.

One of the ways AAM considers diversity to be reflected in a museum is through its diverse staff and volunteers at all levels of the organization. Museums need a plan for diverse staff recruitment, one which may now need to include new approaches for publicizing open positions and internship programs. Although the AAM Diversity Plan Checklist does not explicitly say what a diverse staff will add to an organization’s strength, the assumption seems to suggest that a diverse staff may be able to add different perspectives on all operations of the museum, thereby making it more attractive to a variety of people. In institutions that may not be able to afford additional staff, or have slow turnover, they can often partner with members of an underrepresented community as one way to gain insight into their perspectives. One section of AAM’s Diversity Plan focuses on building partnerships with communities, establishing institutional goals for diversity, and assuring diversity is an ongoing effort (American Association of Museums, 2004).

Another model for developing inclusive museum practice has been created by Rowena Stewart. Stewart, currently an independent museum consultant, has served as the executive director of many African American museums throughout the country, including the Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum in Philadelphia and the Motown Historical Museum in Detroit (Iverem, 2005). She, along with her colleagues, have developed a five-step model for collecting African American documents and artifacts that would be applicable to general museums interested in developing ties with diverse communities. The steps of this model are outlined below in figure 2.1



Figure 2.1: Rowena Stewart's Model for Developing Inclusive Museum Practices

Not only is the Stewart model useful for enriching the museum's collection, it also creates additional bonds with the community and creates advocates for the museum. This model is similar to that employed by GOHI, although GOHI's model is a more macro version because GOHI will be working on a scale beyond one keeper and one family. Funding needs, which are not addressed in this model, will also need to be an integral part of the project.

In the United States many community-based collecting initiatives are completed with students. The Oakland Museum of California's Latino History Project enlists high school students to help collect the East Bay Latinos' 20<sup>th</sup> century history. Their website states that the project ". . . is based on the acknowledgment that the preservation of primary sources of Latino history has been sporadic and fragmentary, and that there is an urgent need to preserve the sources of this history before it is too late" (<http://www.museumca.org/LHP/>). Students work with historians to conduct research of primary and secondary sources as well as conducting oral history interviews with community elders. The Ohio Historical Society has completed smaller scale versions of these types of intergenerational projects. Both the Hanford Village and Near East Side Community History Projects had students completing research, learning how to conduct oral history interviews and then conducting interviews with residents of the community. In both cases at OHS, the students were focused on African American communities. A project similar to this could be replicated in the GLBTQ community through working with youth-oriented GLBTQ organizations such as Kaleidoscope in Columbus, Ohio.

In this chapter I have presented background information that helps frame the problem this thesis explores. Hopefully this discussion has shed light on OHS's failure to

collect and preserve the history of Ohio's GLBTQ community. I have discussed issues regarding (mis)representation, invisibility and identity construction. My discussion of how institutions have historically addressed inclusiveness in museums on the larger scale sets this case study of OHS and GOHI in a national context. I have also established some of the problems with collecting from diverse communities, both from a community standpoint and an institutional standpoint. This discussion is a necessary first step in presenting the world in which GOHI is developing.

In the next chapter I will discuss my research setting. First I will describe that setting by presenting a brief history of the Ohio Historical Society, its mandates, and operations. Second, I will describe the history of GOHI examining its collection, fundraising, and marketing structures as part of my setting the stage for the data described and analysis spiraling preformed in Chapters 5 and 6.

## CHAPTER 3

### DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH SETTING

#### 3.1 Background and Duties of the Ohio Historical Society

Chapter 3 presents a brief history of the Ohio Historical Society (OHS), its mandates and operations. This chapter constructs a history of the Gay Ohio History Initiative (GOHI) and provides a discussion of its collecting, fundraising, and marketing schemes in order to set the stage for the data and analysis, found in Chapters 5 and 6.

The Ohio Historical Society (OHS), founded as the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society in 1885, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of the history, natural history, and archaeology of Ohio. Since its founding, OHS has had a close working relationship with the state of Ohio. As a unique public/private partnership, OHS serves as the state's agent in historical matters in return for state financial subsidy (Welcome to OHS, 2005). The state contracts with OHS for a variety of history-related services, as found in Section 149.30 of the Ohio Revised Code.

These include OHS's obligation to:

1. operate a public system of state memorials;
2. protect and restore structures and monuments in its care;
3. serve as the state archives;
4. administer a state historical museum;
5. identify all historic and archaeological sites;
6. produce publications about history, archaeology and natural science;
7. engage in research and provide historical information to state agencies;
8. collect, preserve and make available all manuscripts, print or near-print library

- collections and all historical objects, specimens and artifacts that pertain to Ohio and its people;
9. encourage organization and development of county and local historical societies;
  10. provide educational materials for teaching Ohio history;
  11. provide advisory and technical assistance for the preservation and restoration of sites;
  12. devise uniform criteria for the designation of historic and archaeological sites
  13. take inventory of archaeological sites;
  14. contract with owners to restore or preserve the historical or archaeological significance or educational value of designated sites;
  15. maintain a registry of archaeological landmarks;
  16. preserve archaeological and historic sites through survey and salvage work relating to improvements on state lands;
  17. establish a program to locate, identify and evaluate abandoned historical property and other resources in Lake Erie;
  18. protect archaeological sites by accepting articles of dedication that establish preserves;
  19. construct a monument honoring Governor James Rhodes;
  20. commission a portrait of each departing governor;
  21. coordinate visitor education activities at the State Capitol;
  22. submit an annual report to the governor;
  23. establish an Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board;
  24. establish and operate the National Museum of Afro-American History and Culture;
  25. maintain inventory of historic homesteads;
  26. house the African-American Hall of Fame at the Ohio Historical Center;
  27. encourage and promote the celebration of "Ohio Statehood Day;"
  28. facilitate and review state historic rehabilitation tax credit projects (Laidlaw testimony, 2007).

These mandates confirm that OHS is the single entity coordinating and providing state-level, history-related services to the citizens of Ohio. These services include the State Archives, Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO), administering a statewide network sites, education and outreach efforts, as well as those curatorial services and collections of natural history, history and archeology and archives housed at the Ohio Historical Center and the various sites across the state.

### 3.1.1 State Archives

The OHS Archives/Library is, by the law, the State Archives of Ohio. OHS collects, preserves, and creates access to those documents dealing with state and local governments. In addition, the State Archives also offers assistance to local government agencies in dealing with records management, electronic records and archival issues (State Archives, 2004). The Archives/Library at OHS also contains photographs, books, manuscript materials and ephemera related to Ohio people places and events. The library, located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Ohio Historical Center in Columbus, Ohio, is open to the public every Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday (OHS Annual Report, 2006).

### 3.1.2 Ohio Historic Preservation Office

The Ohio Historic Preservation Office is the official historic preservation agency of the state of Ohio. It was created in 1967 when the Ohio Historical Society was designated to manage those responsibilities delegated to all states by Congress in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (OHS Annual Report, 2006).

### 3.1.3 Statewide Network of Sites

OHS administers over 60 sites, including those in every region of the state. These range from such diverse properties as United States Presidents' homes (Warren G. Harding, Rutherford B. Hayes) to ancient earthworks (Serpent Mound, Fort Ancient) to nature preserves (Cedar Bog) (OHS Annual Report, 2006).

### 3.1.4 Education and Outreach

Education and Outreach at OHS consists of many activities, including administering the state National History Day program and coordinating teacher professional development programs that reach K-12 social studies educators in 43 Ohio

counties. OHS offers a variety of educational resources to teachers including field trips to sites around the state, distance learning programs, case histories (which are sent to interested teachers), History-to-Go Van, an Education Resource Center, and the Online Social Studies Resource Center. OHS also has a Local History Office that largely focuses on two areas: the Ohio Historical Markers Program, and providing services to the State's hundreds of historical societies, in part, through an ongoing partnership with the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums (OAHSM) (OHS Annual Report, 2006).

### 3.1.5 Curatorial Services and Collections

The collections of OHS can be divided into Archives/Library collections and Museum collections. The Archives/Library collections include audiovisual, manuscript and newspaper collections. The collections deal with Ohioans and their lives both in and outside the state.

The museum collections consist of approximately 1,600,000 objects divided into three broad categories: History, Natural History and Archaeology. The history collection documents the people, events, and activities of Ohio's post-contact historic period from 1650 to the present. The collection numbers approximately 300,000 individual objects. Large collections include domestic implements (22,430), textiles (10,200), furniture (2,500) and military accouterments (1,700). The natural history collection contains animal, plant and geological specimens that relate directly to the history of Ohio. The natural history collection holds 25,350 cataloged records (one or several specimens each) in groups such as fossils, rocks and minerals, plants and their parts, insects and other invertebrates and vertebrates (Museum Collections, 2006). The archaeology collection

contains over one million significant artifacts, representing all ancient cultures within the current political boundaries of the state of Ohio, including the Adena, Hopewell and Fort Ancient cultures (Ohio Archaeology, 2006). In order to make these collections more accessible to the public, OHS also has digitized a variety of items within the collections and have made them available online.

Although there are many repositories around the state for local history, the Ohio Historical Society is *the* place in Ohio for a comprehensive look at the natural history, pre-history and history of the state. Therefore, it appears only appropriate that OHS has taken a leading role in preserving Ohio's GLBTQ history.

### 3.2 History of GOHI

GOHI may seem (and very well may be) too progressive for the majority of Ohioans. A rationale for establishing a GLBTQ history initiative in a conservative state is, however, called for in the literature. Referencing J. Weeks in his article "Modern gay and lesbian libraries and archives in North America," Bill Lukenbill states that for political and social action to occur, a sense of community identity needed to be present. Five conditions are necessary for this community identity to happen: 1) the existence of large populations in similar situations; 2) geographical concentration; 3) identifiable targets of opposition; 4) sudden events or changes in social positions; and 5) an intellectual leadership with readily understood goals. Lukenbill argues that gay and lesbian libraries have developed where many of these characteristics exist (Lukenbill, 2002).

Given the Defense of Marriage legislation and the constitutional amendment in Ohio prohibiting same sex couples equal treatment under the law, Lukenbill's five

conditions for political and social action, as suggested in section 3.1, would make Columbus, Ohio, an appropriate place for a GLBTQ history collection. Although Ohio is often painted as a “red state,” leading non-Ohioans to believe that the entire state is homogenous, Columbus has a national reputation for being a liberal and gay-friendly city. *The Advocate*, a nationally circulated GLBTQ publication, identified Columbus as one of the “Best Places for Gays and Lesbians to Live” in the March 27, 2007 issue. As one of the ten cities listed, Columbus was cited for its several “gayborhoods,” including Victorian Village, its good jobs, and affordable housing. Columbus seems to fit the mold of a city ready for a GLBTQ history initiative. The city has an identifiable target of opposition in the form of one of the worst anti-gay marriage laws (Caldwell, 2007). While the prospect of the State’s Historical Society undertaking a GLBTQ collecting initiative may seem uncharacteristic to non-Ohioans, those living in Columbus may consider it a long time coming.

In January 2005 Kathy Hoke (then director of Communications at OHS) published an article in *Outlook Weekly* about the OHS Archives and Library, a short essay that included information about those collections housed at the Ohio Historical Society that were related to Ohio’s gay community. Noticing that his own paper was not represented in the collection, then owner/publisher of *Outlook Weekly*, Malcolm Riggle, donated an entire run of *Outlook* to the OHS archives, and has sent all subsequent copies to the archives, so that they could be added to the collection. This donation put Riggle in contact with Cynthia Ghering, head of Collections and Curatorial Services at OHS. Ghering had been interested in jump-starting OHS’s new multicultural initiative, *The*

*New Face of Ohio.* Riggle and Ghering decided that the GLBTQ community would be an appropriate inaugural group for this initiative.

In the winter of 2006 the first Gay Ohio History Initiative meeting was held. Eventually a GOHI board, and three committees were formed; including curatorial, development, and marketing. A more in depth look at the GOHI meetings is provided in section 5.1.

### 3.3 GOHI Collecting

GOHI leaders determined that the first phase of collecting should be in Central Ohio, and then, after assessing its success, the project could then be expanded state-wide. Since a collection plan still needed to be created, it was decided that the initial collecting would focus on PRIDE events, with special consideration given to non-PRIDE items relating to those persons who might be elderly or ill. A more complete discussion of the collection history of GOHI is later presented in section 5.4.

### 3.4 GOHI Funding

The partnership between Outlook Media and OHS appears equitable to all parties. OHS has acted as the fiscal agent for the project, and has set up a special GOHI foundation fund, so all donations could be utilized strictly for GOHI purposes. Then an endowment was created for the project. The hope is that the endowment's earnings will eventually fund an OHS staff member who can focus on GLBTQ collections (at least part time).

Fundraising efforts are now underway, after an original goal of raising \$15,000 for an endowment to fund a part-time curator dedicated to GOHI and its GLBTQ collection. The first major fundraising push was to have 15 donors donate over \$1,000.

By May 9, 2007, when OHS hosted its GOHI endowment kick off event, \$27,500 had been raised (see section 5.2 for more information).

In addition to donations to the endowment, GOHI is now looking toward grant opportunities that could potentially fund efforts associated with collection, preservation and dissemination of the collection in the form of traveling exhibitions.

### 3.5 GOHI Marketing

Currently GOHI uses two main sources of marketing: Outlook Media, Inc. and the GOHI marketing subcommittee. GOHI's relationship with Outlook Media has proved invaluable as a marketing venue. *Outlook Weekly* runs advertisements free of charge. Additionally, a regular "Gay History" column highlighting new donations to GOHI and GLBTQ history in Columbus is being created. GOHI's marketing subcommittee developed a brochure for PRIDE 2006 and 2007, each giving a brief introduction to the project. In winter 2007 the GOHI website was retooled and now includes an online form for those interested in donating items to the GOHI collection.

### 3.6 Assessing GOHI's Success

GOHI's success may be evaluated in a number of ways. Success in collecting is confirmed by the state of the GLBTQ collections at OHS. If significant gaps in the GLBTQ collections have been filled thanks to GOHI, then this collection may be considered a success. Success in fundraising was initially to reach a \$15,000 goal for establishing an endowment, as expanded to eventually raising a total \$50,000--the minimum amount need to support a part-time position. Success of the project as a whole may be measured by the visibility of the project and its reputation as the place for preserving Ohio GLBTQ history.

In this chapter I have outlined 1) the history, mandates, and operations of the Ohio Historical Society, 2) the history of GOHI from its beginning in January 2005, to date, and 3) discussed the collecting, funding, and marketing of GOHI. This information provides a background for readers' understanding of the data presented in Chapter 5. Before embarking on a description of that data, Chapter 4 describes my research methodology (Participatory Action Research) and those methods (autoethnography and literature review) used in this thesis. Additionally, the next chapter explores the various research settings at which I gathered data and my entry into each research setting.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Participatory Action Research

In this chapter I discuss my research methodology and those methods used in this thesis. Firstly, I will generally discuss Participatory Action Research (PAR), and identify with my reasons for choosing this methodology. Secondly, I will discuss my use of autoethnography as my primary research method. Finally I will describe my various research settings and my entry into each setting. Data gathered through these research settings will be described in more detail in Chapter 5.

I will apply Participatory Action Research in exploring how a State Historical Society might most productively work with the gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) populations in collecting artifacts, narratives and interpreting history. PAR is an approach to improving social practice by changing it and learning from the consequences of change (McTaggart, 1989). I have an interest in using this methodology as I am professionally and personally invested in the research. This research topic is also a part of my professional obligations as an employee of the Ohio Historical Society. Given that I am embedded in the research setting, I will be taking extraordinary measures to ensure I do not (un)intentionally shape, skew, alter, or misread the data I collect.

The driving aim of Participatory Action Research is to achieve positive social change. Through Participatory Action Research people consider their practices in the material, social and historical context in which they were produced, and then work to transform those practices (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000). These attributes are well aligned to the approach I am taking with my Master's thesis; as they support my professional interest as a member of the GOHI curatorial committee and help refine my role in acquiring and processing the collections received as a result of GOHI.

Participatory Action Research then is usually used in situations where people look at their current situation critically, and then try to discern how they got there, and what can be done in practice to make changes (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000). I believe that this methodology is a good fit, given that my research question explores the ways a state historical society works with the GLBTQ population in collecting and interpreting GLBTQ history—a thesis concerned with achieving practical solutions. The PAR methodology allows me to act on my belief that reflexive practitioners can more effectively refine and improve their own practices.

Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) discuss the Action Research Spiral as a key tool in Participatory Action Research. The spiral requires participants to record their self-reflective cycle of 1) planning for change, 2) acting on those plans, 3) observing the process and consequences of the change, 4) reflecting on these processes and consequences, and 5) then replanning, acting and observing. The research does not always occur in a neat spiral, as some of the cycles may overlap or be abbreviated. Hughes and Seymour-Rolls (2000) take the Action Research Spiral and turn it into an

explanatory table (See Table 4.1). In Chapter 6 I will use such a table, and insert data I collected on what was occurring in GOHI during each cycle.

CYCLE	MOMENT	WHAT'S HAPPENING
Cycle One	1. Reflection	The group and thematic concern are identified through discourse.
	2. Plan	The group Plan to undertake an examination of the thematic concern and the social situation, in order to define and describe both accurately. As well as getting ALL stakeholders together and deciding how much participation constitutes collaboration
	3. Action	The plan is put into Action
	4. Observation	The group collect their Observations to reconvene
Cycle Two	1. Reflection	The group will now Reflect on their findings to more accurately define their thematic concern. This reflection would also include self-reflection by the participants.
	2. Plan	The group can now plan a change in practice to improve the social situation. It should include the methods of critical examination to be utilized. Potential problems need to be dealt with and approval sort from the Ethics Committee, where applicable
	3. Action	A change in practice is affected and the research is commenced
	4. Observation	The group observes the consequences of the change in practice and use the research method outlined in the plan to examine the results.
Cycle Three	1. Reflection	It would be unusual for the project to only go through 2 PAR cycles. The cycles would continue until the group was satisfied with the outcomes. The possibility of the project not reaching an end is realistic. This does not mean the original problem remains same or that the group never finds any social justice in their situation

Table 4.1: Hughes and Seymour-Rolls (2000) Action Research Spiral Table

#### 4.1.1 Autoethnography

I have chosen autoethnography as my main research method. At its core autoethnography is a study of the self: that subject which shapes all research and which benefits from critical reflection on our research practices, readings of the world (analyses) and proposed remedies and actions (Ellis and Bochner, 2000). The method calls for a constant questioning of one's own practice and narrative construction not just as a concern for the self but toward the ends of improving and refining our methods and approaches to understanding the other (Sanders, 1999).

In autoethnography, an author analyzes their own experiences in a cultural setting, reflexively looking deeply at self-other interactions (Sanders, 2005). By writing themselves into their own work as major characters, autoethnographers have challenged accepted views about silent authorship--those where the researcher's voice is not included in the presentation of findings (Holt, 2003). In Chapter 1 I outlined my research question's focus on how a State Historical Society might productively work with the GLBTQ community in collecting artifacts, narratives and interpreting history. As an employee of the sponsoring society, I am always both within one and excluded from the other community, therefore talking candidly about my experiences is risky business (Sanders, 2003). It is necessary to look at my own experience within this project, and understand my evolving approach to the collection and the development of GOHI. Why did I feel the need to become involved in GOHI in the first place? Have I been truly happy or impressed with the way GOHI has taken form, or do I see the need for something different? What issues have arose that I was not expecting? These are

questions within my own internal discourses that will hopefully be helpful to other practitioners who are interested in starting a similar project at their institutions.

Candidly discussing the highs and lows of GOHI presents readers with insights into those interpersonal development processes otherwise unattainable through other methods. As Carolyn Ellis and Arthur P. Bochner (2000) describe it, “Autoethnography provides an avenue for doing something meaningful for yourself and the world . . .” (p. 738). My vision for GOHI is that it be meaningful, not only for the GLBTQ community in Ohio, but for all Ohioans. While a rather lofty goal, I consider the very process of building GOHI as part of OHS’s multicultural collections and historical data gathering initiatives as potentially transforming both historic constructions and the culture of the institution itself.

#### 4.1.2 Data Reliability and Validity

PAR as a methodology is not concerned with presenting context-free knowledge. Within PAR, credibility, validity and reliability are measured by the performance of actions taken by stakeholders. The validity of PAR is witnessed in research subjects’ development of social change action, their enactments and assessment of whether or not the intended solution actually solved the problem. Action researchers are not as concerned with generalizable knowledge as they are in solving the issue at hand (Greenwood and Levin, 2000). In the case of my thesis, the validity of my research is confirmed through GOHI’s growth and my use of data interpretation in implementing workable solutions.

The research presented in Chapter 5 and analyzed in Chapter 6 is based on my own interpretation of observations, field notes, and official GOHI minutes and agendas. I

am aware of my own voice throughout this research, and have attempted to remain open to others' alternate readings, and have continually reflected on my place within this research. My notes were taken either during each event discussed, or shortly thereafter. I have had my colleagues triangulate my textual constructions to ensure my data was as reliable as possible.

## 4.2 Research Site Descriptions

In this section I will describe the four research sites utilized for this thesis, 1) Pride festivals in Columbus, Ohio, 2) GOHI meetings, 3) a May GOHI fundraising event and, 4) OHS sited general collections work relating to GOHI. The technical entry into these four sites will be discussed below in detail, while data collected at each of these sites will be described in Chapter 5.

### 4.2.1 Columbus Pride Festivals (2006 and 2007)

During the Columbus, Ohio, Pride festivals of both 2006 and 2007 GOHI maintained an exhibit booth alongside the *Outlook Weekly* booth. The GOHI booth served to 1) introduce the project, 2) solicit volunteers and 3) encourage collection donations. There were also Ohio Historical Society (OHS) materials at the booth. Some of these materials advertised the organization's current traveling exhibition, while others provided general OHS information. I staffed the booth for the early shifts during both years, and describe those experiences in Chapter 5. While I helped set up the booth and worked from 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM each year, and reflected on those experiences, I did not ask other booth volunteers to document their own experiences, or discuss their reading of GOHI's information sharing objectives and perceived reception. In hindsight, this could have served as another source of data, and an opportunity to triangulate my

own reading of the Pride booth's effectiveness. During the GOHI meetings directly following Pride, however, the participants' impression of the booth were discussed.

#### 4.2.2 GOHI Meetings

The first GOHI meetings were held in the evening at the former Outlook office location on Wilson Bridge Road, just south of I-270. *Outlook Weekly* was the only vehicle use for advertising the meeting. Later meetings were held at OHS, so tours of the Archives/Library could be conducted after the end of the meeting. Malcolm Riggle and Chris Hayes (*Outlook Weekly*'s owner and editor) then decided to keep the meetings at OHS, as it was a closer location for the majority of meeting attendees. After Outlook Media moved their office to the Short North, meetings continued at OHS, since the latter had more meeting space and ample parking. As an interested OHS employee, and later, as a member of the curatorial committee, I attended almost all GOHI meetings. In Chapters 5 and 6 I will discuss my meeting attendance and its impact on the growth of GOHI.

#### 4.2.3 GOHI Fundraiser

The kick-off for the GOHI endowment on May 9, 2007 also served as an official "coming out" party for the project. This event was held at the Ohio Historical Center in conjunction with the May "Network Columbus" event. Network Columbus is a chamber of commerce for gay-owned and allied business professionals (Outlook Media, 2007). The goal for this fundraiser was to have recognized the "Founding Fifteen" donors whose \$1,000 contributions would kick-off the GOHI endowment fundraising campaign. The strategic goal of this first event was to begin building the base of foundation support--

expecting that when non-contributors saw the commitment of these founders, others would be more willing to make pledges or donations.

The May 9, 2007, event featured donated entertainment, catered food, and an open bar. Dr. William K. Laidlaw, executive director of OHS, addressed the crowd, as did Chris Hayes, co-owner and co-publisher of Outlook Media Inc., and Rob Berger, a member of both GOHI and OHS's development board. The program included a "sneak peek" of the First Ladies exhibit that was on loan from the Smithsonian and due to open a few later. A small exhibit of GLBTQ items were also on display. Largely from the OHS collection, the installation also included new acquisitions to the GOHI collection and items currently on loan. I not only attended the event, but helped create the GOHI display. In Chapters 5 and 6 I will discuss my reading of the event.

#### 4.2.4 GOHI Collections Work

OHS does not have a curator on staff who is solely devoted to GOHI. I have been the main OHS staff member involved in donor solicitation and the GOHI collections donation processing. During my research I became actively involved in writing the GOHI collection plan, and developed the donation form used by potential donors. I have been the main point-person for all donations queries, and have presented potential items that would be considered for acquisition to the Collections Management Team (CMT) at OHS. I will examine the process developed for collection donations and CMT's review, as well as discuss those specific articles donated to GOHI in Chapters 5 and 6.

#### 4.3 Closing Methodological Concerns

Because museums play an important role in validating human experiences, the omission of communities, such as the GLBTQ community, can make that group's

experiences seem inconsequential and not worthy of preservation or study (Sanders, 2007). Initiatives such as GOHI have the ability to address this situation and foster change and community empowerment, both within the slighted community itself, and between minority and majority communities. By partnering in such a way that the GLBTQ community has the ability to interpret its own history, the museum surrenders some of its authority to that community (Falk and Sheppard, 2006). It is this shift in power that may make museums more relevant to the communities they serve in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, since museums have traditionally been in the business of imparting knowledge upon communities, as opposed to acting as a host for community-based contributions to knowledge, projects like GOHI will continue to need museum expertise to ensure the initiative takes stock of the community's contribution.

GOHI must to reflect on what the initiative needs to be for both the community and the museum as an institution. This has to date entailed my critical and self-reflexive process employing PAR and autoethnography. Such a process has helped ensure that GOHI was not stifled under the weight of the community, or offended by museum professionals' hollow gestures of slapping each other on the back, saying what a "great job" we are doing in both making the museum more diverse and the GLBTQ community more accepted.

My research is only the beginning for work that needs to be done to determine how best communities and museums can work together in fostering a meaningful and sustainable change. In this Chapter I have presented my research methodology, research methods and described my research sites. Participatory Action Research will be useful to me in critically examining the current problem of OHS's lack of GLBTQ collections, and

my involvement in efforts to change current (mis)representations by history museums. In using authethnography as my main method of research, I demonstrate a critical awareness of my own voice within the research, identify my ongoing revisions to development efforts, and sustain my reflections on the importance of GOHI's place not only at OHS, but in Ohio's GLBTQ community and for all Ohio citizens. My discussion of research sites has set the stage for my next chapter's descriptions of the data collected. In my closing chapters I will then reflect on my changes in approach, my conduct of business and outcomes from this re-searching process.

## CHAPTER 5

### DATA

In this chapter I will explore the data collected from the four main research sites of this thesis, 1) Gay Ohio History Initiative (GOHI) meetings, 2) the May 9, 2007 GOHI fundraiser, 3) Columbus, Ohio, Pride festivals and, 4) general collections work. Across all of the research sites I have recorded my observations, and will consider this data, as well as my notes, email correspondence and the official GOHI meeting minutes and agenda. I have also added two representational features that I hope will aid in the reading of this chapter; a cast of characters which is provided in Appendix A, and by presenting my personal observations in block quotation format. I will refer to all those people who are participating in GOHI meetings and events as “participants.”

#### 5.1 GOHI Meetings

Throughout the development of GOHI I have systematically recorded my reflections on each meeting, event, or policy as it unfolded. In this section I will explore the GOHI meetings and my reactions to them through the representation of personal observations, notes, email correspondence and the official GOHI meeting minutes.

The first GOHI Meeting was held on January 25, 2006. Initially I attended the meeting as an Ohio Historical Society (OHS) employee and an interested citizen. On March 24, 2006 however, I was “nominated” as the OHS curatorial representative to GOHI by Cynthia Ghering. Ghering, who was spearheading this OHS project, did not

have time to devote to GOHI, given she was going to be on maternity leave for the summer of 2006 (Ghering, 3/23/06), and needed my assistance. After her return from maternity leave I continued in this capacity.

5.1.1 January 25, 2006: Outlook Offices, Worthington, 6:00-8:00 pm

This kick-off meeting for GOHI was advertised in *Outlook Weekly*, the local free weekly tabloid serving GLBTQ communities. The meeting was held at the Outlook Offices in Worthington. Outlook staff in attendance included Malcolm Riggle (Outlook Media owner and publisher of *Outlook Weekly*) and Chris Hayes (*Outlook Weekly* editor). OHS staff in attendance included Scott Mueller (Director of Institutional Advancement), Kathy Hoke (Communications), Cynthia Ghering (Assistant Director of Collections and Curatorial Services) and me. OHS and Outlook staff sat in the front of the room, while other meeting attendees (including me) sat facing them. Future meetings were set up in a block O format. Since this was the first public meeting for GOHI, it followed less of a discussion format and served more as a forum for the transfer of information. Some of the information given included a brief history of GOHI, and its partnership between Outlook Media and OHS (see Chapter 3 for a history and discussion of this relationship). There was also a discussion of the goals set by Ghering and Hayes during a July 22, 2005 meeting, including the need to 1) create a comprehensive, permanent and evolving collection of Ohio GLBTQ history, 2) raise funds to hire a staff member at OHS specifically for GOHI, 3) create/fund a permanent gallery space for exhibits, and 4) create traveling exhibits for statewide dissemination (Ghering, 2005).

Highlighted as issues, but not really discussed in this open meeting forum were; 1) the sustainability of the initiative, 2) assessing existing and needed volunteer talent

pool needed to realize the initiative, 3) defining needed committees, 4) the creation of a GOHI advisory board and 5) potential collections items (See Appendix B for a complete agenda).

Out of the five issues listed above, only the committee needs and collections items were discussed in depth. According to the agenda, Outlook Media saw the need for three committees: 1) marketing, 2) development and 3) curatorial. There were no objections to these committees, although I did not get the impression this was up for discussion, since these committee names had already been listed on the agenda. Participants in attendance were then asked to sign up at the end of the meeting for those committees in which they felt their talents could be best utilized.

People in attendance discussed some of the items that they had and thought might be good for the collection. One person suggested contacting the Centurions of Columbus, a gay leather club which also has chapters in Cleveland, Dayton and Cincinnati, for items. The owner of Summit Station (located in the University District) was in attendance and suggested videos of the drag king shows that had been performed at the club. He mentioned that it is one of the oldest bar and restaurants in the city catering to a GLBTQ clientele.

Although I did not bring this up at the meeting, mostly because I wanted to listen and see what ideas other people had, I thought that it would be cool to apply for a state historic marker for Summit Station, given its installation might serve as kind of a kick off for GOHI. What better way to say “we’re here!” than with a big state historic marker.

Another man in the audience told a story about how he was from small town Ohio and was institutionalized by his parents for being gay. He has his journals from the time he spent in that institution.

I was really excited to hear about this particular piece. I think something like those journals would be great to have in the collection because it speaks to the century-long history of homosexuality being declared a mental illness, which I'd imagine the average person on the street may have never realized. There were some other good ideas bantered about, like recording oral histories and showing them at the Drexel Theater (it was not mentioned which particular theater location). I thought it would be cool to do something a little more creative with the oral histories rather than just showing them on screen in a talking head fashion, like interpretive dance or acting out the oral histories. Someone said something that I thought was really interesting. He said that "as a GLBTQ person you are not raised with your history so you have to go back and discover it." I think that sums up the main purpose of this entire initiative. GOHI is trying to make this history more accessible to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities by highlighting its existence (personal notes, 1/25/2007).

#### 5.1.2 April 26, 2006, Outlook Offices, Worthington, 6:30-8:00pm

This next meeting was sprung on those of us at OHS. There was not a set time for meetings, for example, the third Wednesday of every month, and we received an email on Monday for a meeting that was to take place in 48 hours. I was the only OHS employee who was able to attend the meeting. Discussed at this Wednesday meeting were committee reports from the curatorial, development and marketing committees. As the representative of the curatorial committee I discussed what a collection plan is and explained why it is important. The development committee reported their compiling a list of potential funders for GOHI. Malcolm Riggle asked all in attendance to assist by compiling a list of fifteen people they thought would be willing to give around \$1,000 who could then be recognized as part of the "Founding Fifteen."

I felt a little awkward given I don't really know anyone who would be financially able to donate that kind of money.

The development committee asked if OHS was capable of processing online donations, and/or if they could debit credit cards to spread contribution payments over prolonged periods. Most of the development committee agreed that monthly billing of

credit or debit cards would be a good way to complete GOHI donations since there are many GLBTQ organizations that accommodate similar forms of online giving. I asked a member of OHS's Institutional Advancement division if this was possible and was told that it was in fact "in the works" at OHS.

The marketing committee then passed around the draft GOHI tri-fold brochure that they were working on for Columbus Pride. I mentioned that OHS would want to look over the text, and everyone in attendance agreed that OHS should have final say over the text of the brochure.

The text of the brochure seemed pretty tame, although it was folksier than what OHS usually produces. We also discussed naming of the initiative and the "alphabet soup" that can sometimes be served-up when trying to include all possible populations within GLBTQ communities. I wrote in depth about this discussion in Chapter 2 (personal notes, 4/26/2007).

#### 5.1.3 May 10, 2006, Internal OHS meeting

Since OHS's Cynthia Ghering would be on maternity leave, and I was taking over as the GOHI representative, she thought it would be a good idea to pull together the OHS marketing and institutional advancement staff and divide any GOHI work according to our areas of expertise. Her fear was that I would get stuck doing everything related to GOHI. This meeting was pretty productive, and we separated the workload. I was identified as the point person for curatorial matters, Erin Wingfield in institutional advancement was to serve as the point person for fundraising issues and Mark Holbrook in the marketing department was appointed the point person for marketing matters. We then discussed funding opportunities.

GOHI, and the staff at Outlook Media, specifically Malcolm Riggle and Chris Hayes, discussed interest in submitting grant applications. I noted that it would also be

necessary for OHS to remain involved in that process. I specifically noted that there were two reasons for this; 1) OHS has staff who are familiar with the grant writing process and know of those grants available that GOHI would be most likely to receive, and 2) to have some sort of control over how the partnership between Outlook Media and OHS is described within the grant applications. Marketing was also discussed. The GOHI brochure draft that had been shown at the April GOHI meeting was again passed out and was interpreted by Riggle and Hayes, who recognized that it needed more work and, specifically, would need OHS approval.

5.1.4 May 24, 2006, Ohio Historical Society, 6:00-7:30pm

This meeting was held at the Ohio Historical Center so meeting attendees could get a behind-the-scenes tour of the organization's Archives and Library. The three lead OHS staff identified as contact people (myself, Wingfield and Holbrook) were introduced to the group as, respectively, the point persons for curatorial, fundraising and marketing needs. Heather Mitchell from The Ohio State University's *Our Stories* initiative was also on hand to discuss her project. *Our Stories* is a GLBTQ history initiative that OSU is undertaking to preserve the university's GLBTQ history. Rob Berger, a first time GOHI meeting attendee, told the group about the Stonewall GLBT History Panel discussions he organized for Pride in June 2006. Berger also mentioned that through his work organizing the panels he came across video tapes of early Pride parades he would like to donate to GOHI. The booth at Pride was also discussed. Hayes stated that Outlook Media was going to secure three tables; one, done in full color that would be for GOHI, a second done in pastels that would be Outlook's "giveaway" table, and the third, done in sepia, would have information about current events affecting the GLBTQ community.

Two GOHI participants offered to talk about GOHI with some of the other GLBTQ groups in which they are involved. Meeting participants also discussed ways of promoting GOHI through Equality Ohio and the GLBTQ arm of AARP (personal notes, 5/24/2006).

I'm not sure what ever happened with approaching GLBTQ groups in central Ohio. The two men who were going to discuss GOHI with these groups did not attend another GOHI meeting after this one. I suppose this is one of the issues with new volunteer-based programs. People may be very excited and willing to help at the beginning, but other commitments take precedence. My hope is that we establish a more formal organizational structure which may help combat this.

5.1.5 June 7, 2006, GOHI Curatorial Committee, Mojo Lounge, Columbus, 5:30-6:30pm

At this meeting the curatorial committee reviewed the American Association of Museums collection planning book and discussed which areas would be applicable to GOHI. We also discussed types of items to be collected. Nothing too groundbreaking was discussed, although one person mentioned that he knew someone who had old Pride floats and wondered if we could take them. Since OHS does not have much space in the collections facility, we decided that in cases like this we would document the oversized object (float) through photographs and then accession the images, and in this case, perhaps part of the float. This was also a recommendation that would need to be added to the collection plan.

Oral histories were then discussed. A curatorial committee member employed by Capital University said that he would be able to do oral history interviews at Capital, and had all the necessary equipment.

I enjoy oral histories, and like the idea of doing them and having them in a collection, but sometimes it feels like the only thing people ever want to do in regards to multicultural collecting. I have four ideas for why this may be. 1) Oral histories seem more accessible because people are used to hearing what amounts

to an oral history interview in documentaries. 2) Groups that are often part of these types of community projects (African American and Latino/a ethnic minorities, and GLBTQ populations) tend to have an oral tradition of storytelling and less physical collections. 3) Physical collections pieces may highlight the “minority’s” otherness to a “majority” audience, and 4) with the current proliferation of different oral history projects, oral histories now seem somewhat in vogue (personal notes, 6/4/2006).

#### 5.1.6 September 22, 2006, Collection Plan Meeting, Columbus Museum of Art, Palette Café

Numerous attempts to contact Chris Hayes, co-owner of Outlook Media, regarding the collection plan were futile from June through early September. I think the main reason this happened is because Outlook moved its offices from a Worthington location to one in the Short North. I learned later that this move was ongoing for most of the summer, and engaged most of the staffs’ time. I finally picked a time and called a meeting with Cynthia Ghering (OHS assistance director of Collections and Curatorial Services), Chris Hayes and Joe Florenski (curatorial committee member) so we could hammer out some collection policy specifics so Florenski and I could write up the plan.

After the group was assembled we went through the collection plan outline discussed in the American Association of Museums handbook, and we discussed how we would word each section of the plan. After the meeting Florenski wrote up a version of the collection plan and sent it to me for comments. When we were satisfied with the draft, we sent it to Cynthia Ghering for revisions. We finished writing and received approval of the collection plan a week and a half after this meeting--just in time for *Outlook Weekly’s* October 19, 2006 issue dedicated to GOHI. The full text of the collection plan was printed in that issue.

I had hoped that this article would cause somewhat of a resurrection in GOHI, since it had stalled, rather than blossomed, after Pride. It did not seem to generate much energy behind the project. One reason may be that a suitable organizational structure for setting and promoting GOHI meetings had not yet been established. The onus was then on either OHS or Outlook Media to set meeting dates, create an agenda and publicize the meeting. There was a great issue of *Outlook Weekly* dedicated to GOHI and GLBTQ history, but other “real job” concerns of Outlook and OHS employees got in the way of following-up on any interest that may have been piqued.

At this meeting I suggested that Chris (who was now preoccupied as a co-owner of Outlook Media) perhaps give his position as chair of the curatorial committee to Joe.

Chris completely agreed, and seemed somewhat thankful for the suggestions.

Chris really had so much going on with Outlook that he could not devote the time needed to lead the work of the curatorial committee which, by this time, really needed someone who could focus on the collection planning process. Joe was well-qualified for the position as he has a Masters of Library and Information Science, had published a biography on Paul Lynde, and had great interest in the curatorial aspects of GOHI. I was very pleased when he agreed to take over as head of the curatorial committee. I think that getting other GOHI participants involved in leadership positions within the committees will help alleviate some of the pressure on Outlook Media and OHS staff and help make this project seen as less of a partnership between Outlook Media and OHS and more a project of, for and with the GLBTQ community (personal notes, 9/22/2006)

5.1.7 January 17, 2007, OHS, 6:00-7:30pm

As mentioned above, GOHI had stalled a bit after Pride and neither momentum from Pride nor the *Outlook Weekly* article had jump started the project. I was very concerned that GOHI would simply fade away. Rob Berger, who had attended the May GOHI meeting, applied in July for an OHS board member position. In September he was elected to the OHS Development Board. Berger acted as a catalyst for GOHI after it had stalled in the Fall. Through his tireless work GOHI was resurrected in January with more of a sense of purpose.

Rob Berger spear-headed the reinstatement of regular monthly GOHI meetings, and helped ensure the meetings were a bit more organized and professional. This is the first meeting where minutes were actually taken and distributed to the GOHI email list.

(See appendix C for agenda and minutes.) The key highlight of this meeting was the

curatorial committee's agreement to have a donation review process and donor forms created by the March meeting at which time the rest of the group could review and suggest needed changes. The committee hoped that having this form in place by March would allow enough time for GOHI to accept a few collections donations before the May 9 fundraising event. A copy of the collection plan was distributed at the meeting. Since there had been no movement on the "Founding Fifteen" donor front, the development committee revived its search with gusto—seeking to get some donors in place by the May 9 event.

The May 9, 2007 fundraising event concept grew from a meeting of Rob Berger and Rebecca Asmo (OHS institutional advancement employee). I will discuss this event in greater detail in section 5.2 that follows. The marketing committee discussed some ideas they had, including creating podcasts of oral histories for the website, and creating a monthly "Donor Spotlight" in *Outlook Weekly* that could profile donors of both funds and collections. Andrea Wood, a marketing committee member who works for Equality Ohio, suggested using their email list for promotional purposes. The GOHI website (which also falls under the marketing committee domain and had not been updated since it "went live" in mid-2006) was raised as a problem that needed to be addressed. Website issues were, however, tabled to the next meeting. In order to keep the momentum of GOHI going, meeting dates were subsequently set for February, March, and April, and those dates were distributed to everyone on the GOHI email list (personal notes, 1/17/2007).

#### 5.1.8 February 21, 2007, OHS, 6:00-7:30pm

Things continued to roll along smoothly for the curatorial committee. We wanted to get some collections donors as soon as possible, to test out the new donation forms, and Rob mentioned that he had some leads for items that could be accessioned into the collection. The development committee having completed its list of potential “Founding Fifteen” member names, had also created a list of donor benefits that recognized those who gave \$1,000 or more. Talking points were also created for development committee members to refer to when asking for donations.

The marketing committee, of their own initiative, developed a new logo, which was reviewed at the meeting. After the minutes of this meeting were sent out, Chris Hayes, who had left the meeting before the logo change was discussed, emailed the entire GOHI participant list-serve, questioning why the logo needed to be changed. He stated that he was concerned that it would be confusing, since a “brand” identity for GOHI had already been established (Hayes, email 3/1/2007). Andrea Wood, a marketing committee member, responded that she did not feel that enough of a brand had been established. She stated that her concern regarded the legality of GOHI’s using a version of the Ohio flag in its logo. She mentioned that perhaps if GOHI developed a decision-making structure, and clearly established who has final decision making authority, then perhaps business could run more smoothly when changes were proposed in the future (Wood, email 3/1/2007).

I liked the old logo because I felt it was fun, but the new logo seems more professional and classy. The email discussion regarding the logo was, however, tabled for discussion by the group at its next regularly scheduled meeting (see Appendices X and Y for examples of the two logos).

Rob Berger, who was organizing the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Stonewall History Panels for June, asked if GOHI would be willing to act as a sponsor for the event. Sponsorship included helping promote the events. All in attendance agreed that would be a good idea, however, it was never discussed again (personal notes, 2/21/2007). Please see Appendix D for a copy of the agenda and minutes from this meeting.

5.1.9 March 21, 2007, OHS, 6:00-7:30pm

At this meeting the group continued discussion on a variety of topics. The new GOHI logo was accepted, with everyone in agreement that the marketing committee did a nice job with the new version. John Herman, marketing committee member and webmaster, said that he could develop an online donation form, so potential collection donors could complete the form that the curatorial committee had created. He suggested that potential collection donation information generated online could then be emailed to Chris Hayes. The group discussed the May 9 fundraising event, and learned that Spinelli's Deli would be donating food for the event. The group then discussed "give away" plans for Pride.

One idea that I really liked was to take the Ohio flag that was part of the old logo and make temporary tattoos to give out. No one was put in charge of finding out more about this, despite its being thrown on the table and everyone agreeing that it was a cool idea. Instead, we simply moved on to the next topic. This was never discussed again, but I still hold out hope that we will have tattoos for Pride 2008.

Those assembled also briefly discussed the structure, mission and bylaws of GOHI—a discussion stemming from the decision of the marketing committee to change the logo. We decided to table that discussion until after the May 9 event, so everyone could focus on the fundraising effort (personal notes, 3/21/2007). The agenda from this

meeting can be found in Appendix E. There were no minutes distributed for this meeting.

5.1.10 April 18, 2007, OHS, 5:00-6:00pm

The main purpose of this meeting was to finalize the May 9 event plans. The marketing committee discussed its various promotion efforts, including emailing a notice to members of both Stonewall and Equality Ohio's list serves. After the group discussed set-up needs, Joe Florenski and I were placed in charge of an exhibit of GLBTQ items. These items would be things that were already in the OHS collection. In addition, given the few things that had been donated thus far due to GOHI, Rob Berger volunteered to loan some additional items for the event. All aspects of the event were in order, and we were ready! (personal notes, 4/18/2007). Please see Appendix F for the agenda from this meeting. No meeting minutes were distributed

5.1.11 May 16, 2007, OHS, 6:00-7:30pm

I did not attend this meeting as I had a conflict that evening. According to the official minutes, Jeri Kozobarich, the new Director of Institutional Advancement at OHS, stated that GOHI would be a priority project for OHS in 2007. It is not explained in the meeting minutes what exactly being "a priority" entailed, but I tended to think that it meant from a fundraising perspective. The development committee reported that GOHI had raised \$23,500 prior to the May 9 and an additional \$4,000 was raised at the May 9 event. A new grant committee was established to look for grant funding. The charge of this committee was to find money to support 1) a traveling exhibit, 2) GLBTQ history symposium and 3) curatorial interns.

Chris Hayes and Rob Berger had been working on a draft document that would include information on GOHI's endowment, officers and by-laws. These documents, especially the by-laws, would define GOHI board member roles and pinpoint decision making authority. Once the endowment description and by-laws were completed and approved by the group they were then given to Rebecca Asmo for OHS comments. The entire group also discussed making contact with other institutions around the state that held GLBTQ collections.

The marketing committee discussed the new logo and website that went live after the May 9 event. Everyone at the meeting agreed that the new website looked great, especially the online form for collections donations. The marketing committee suggested and the group agreed to create new brochures that showcase the new GOHI logo in time for Pride 2007. The stock of old brochures were then to be distributed to out-of-town GLBTQ organizations, bars, and universities, until the supply on hand was diminished. Pride was also discussed. The group noted that they wanted items to display. Kozobarich explained how it is difficult to take OHS collections items out of the building for display in such an unregulated condition (exposure to light, the elements, etc.) She did, however, agree that reproductions could be displayed at the fundraising event (May GOHI meeting agenda and minutes, Appendix G).

5.1.12 June 20, 2007, OHS, 5:30 – 7:00pm

At this meeting the first order of business had to do with the flow of information. The curatorial committee had been trying to determine who was actually getting the emails when someone fills out a donation request form on the GOHI website. Chris confirmed that he was getting the emails, but in the future copies would also be sent to

Joe Florenski and me. The development committee presented the GOHI endowment description to the group and asked for comments. I used this opportunity to voice my concern that if all the donated money was going to the endowment, there would be none directed toward supporting the processing of GOHI collection donations. I was told that the initial push was for the endowment, because the endowment entry price would soon be changing from \$15,000 to \$50,000.

While I understand the need to establish the endowment quickly, I feel that some people at OHS forget GOHI began as a collections initiative. We do need the endowment to ensure GOHI continues regardless of which GOHI members come or go, but in order to show the GLBTQ community that both OHS and GOHI value their contribution we need to actually show them some sort of outcome. This would be especially important for those people that have donated collections items. It costs money to refer, process and catalog collections, and the collections staff at OHS wants to get the GOHI donations through this process as quickly as possible to show a tangible result to the community. Nevertheless the prioritizing of development efforts over collections seems like putting the cart before the horse.

The marketing committee then passed out the new brochure design featuring the new logo. This design had been sent to the member list for approval and had also been approved by OHS prior to the meeting. Staffing of the Pride booth was discussed, and those in attendance were asked to sign up for slots of time at the table. A draft version of GOHI's Code of Regulations was passed out for review. The Code of Regulations would then be discussed in more depth at the next meeting, so people would have more time to think about it. Rob Berger created this based on other codes of regulations. See Appendix H for the meeting agenda and minutes.

5.1.13 July 18, 2007, OHS, 6:00-7:30pm

The curatorial committee did not have much to discuss at this meeting. I had made contact with potential collections donors but had not received a reply from any of

them. The group discussed raising money for collections assistance, mainly OHS staff time to work with potential donors, and to refer, process and catalog the collections. I suggested one alternative is that when people donate a collection they be made aware of the costs associated with caring for it, and be asked to donate money for that collection's upkeep, which is what OHS does for its Business Heritage Collection. Andrea Wood suggested we ask potential contributors to authorize a percentage of their endowment donations to go toward collection expenses. The group thought 20% seemed like a reasonable percent. However, the group did not want to make a decision until they knew how much each cubic foot of collection cost. I was asked to find this information and report back to the group by the next meeting.

Final notes on the May 9 fundraising event were then discussed. At that event Lynn Greer offered to put a one week stay at her vacation home in Lake Tahoe on an eBay auction, with half of the proceeds going to GOHI and the other half going to the Legacy Fund (established at the Columbus Foundation in 2000). The winning bid was \$1,775.

The development committee again discussed visiting other institutions with GLBTQ holdings in Ohio and perhaps adjacent states. The reasons for such visits would be to 1) see other Ohio collections, 2) initiate one-on-one contact with someone at each institution, and 3) hopefully lay the groundwork for future collaborations between GOHI and other institutions. Rob Berger stated that this would also be a good way for GOHI participants to bond and interact outside of the meeting format. A sign up sheet was passed around and participants indicated which institutions in Ohio they would be interested in visiting.

The development committee also discussed finding grant funding for a traveling exhibit. I really like the idea of creating a traveling exhibit. Unfortunately, I don't feel we have enough collections pieces to create a really great exhibit just yet. It's vital that there is some kind of theme to the exhibit so it isn't just "hey, look at this stuff!" Another issue is loaning OHS collections items. If we were to create large exhibit panels with text and images of collections items those could easily travel around the state to community organizations, after-school programs or religious institutions. If actual collections items are to travel I think that would limit the types of institutions that would be able to house it—i.e.: willing to provide necessary legal, insurance, and climate controls required in housing of such an exhibit.

John Herman reconfirmed which GOHI leaders were now receiving website-based requests for information. After the meeting Rob Berger, Chris Hayes, Joe Florenski, John Herman and I decided that Chris and Joe and I should receive and follow-up on all e-inquires about collections donations, while Rob and Chris would get and handle general interest queries.

The group also reviewed the organizational structure recommendations and by-laws. Most edits were purely grammatical, and no one had any serious problems with the organizational structure. The group decided that Rob should make corrections and then send the documents and structural map out via email for the entire GOHI group to again review. Please see Appendix I for the meeting agenda and minutes.

#### 5.2 May 9, 2007 GOHI Fundraising Event

GOHI's May 9 fundraising event was the brainchild of Rob Berger, Chris Hayes and Rebecca Asmo. The idea was to host a kick-off event for the GOHI endowment that could simultaneously help raise awareness about GOHI. GOHI decided to hold the event in conjunction with the May Network Columbus meeting. Network Columbus "... is a chamber of commerce for gay-owned and allied companies and gay and allied business professionals offering networking events, educational programs, business advocacy and

linkages with other business and professional organizations to lead and support economic growth within the central Ohio gay community” (Network Columbus). We decided to partner with Network Columbus so we would have a sure audience. Network Columbus meetings attract 60 attendees or more, so at least we’d have that many!

The 6:00 p.m. event featured free food from Spinelli’s Deli, an open bar and a sneak peek of the *First Ladies* exhibit, which was set to open at OHS on May 12. Speakers included Dr. William K. Laidlaw, Executive Director of OHS, Chris Hayes, co-publisher of *Outlook Weekly*, and Rob Berger, GOHI Chair. All three spoke briefly to the importance of preserving history and the strength of the GOHI/Outlook partnership. (See Appendix J for a reproduction of the event program.)

Joe Florenski, Bill Mahon and I designed an exhibit of GLBTQ items from the OHS collections, items donated to GOHI, and artifacts on loan for the event. The exhibit was well-received. Many people seemed excited to see things they remembered being represented as having historic significance by inclusion in the exhibit. The fundraising event seemed a great success, with approximately 125 attendees, and a collection contribution from the Stonewall Democrats (who donated their past newsletters).

### 5.3 GOHI Booths at Columbus, Ohio, Pride Festivals of 2006 and 2007

In this section I will consider the GOHI Gay Pride booths from 2006 and 2007; describing the goals of the booth, literature distributed, and my personal reflections. I later analyze this data in an analytical spiral found in section 6.8.

#### 5.3.1 June 24, 2006

I signed up to work the first shift, which was from 11:00am to 1:30pm. I worked my shift with Barb Gingras, an OHS employee, who had almost everything set up by the

time I arrived. Barb is incredibly outgoing, and she and her partner are active in the GLBTQ community in Columbus. She seemed to know everyone who stopped by the booth! The booth included GOHI brochures and a sign up sheet for people to be added to the GOHI email list. Additionally, our display included OHS literature, membership information, and brochures about *Kids Stuff*, the current traveling exhibit. Outlook Media had also brought beads for us to give away at our table, and those were a big hit!

There was a steady stream of traffic at the booth the whole time I was present, but since it was the first shift, the crowds were thin, since most people were still watching the parade. I would characterize those people that did stop by the booth as falling into one of three categories, 1) those who had heard about GOHI and thought it was a great idea, 2) those who had not heard about GOHI but thought it was a great idea, and 3) those who wanted beads. The majority of people expressed gratitude towards Outlook and OHS for taking the initiative to collect central Ohio's GLBTQ history, but only ten people signed up to be on the email list during my shift.

#### 5.3.2 June 23, 2007

This year I again signed up for the early shift at the Pride festival. I worked with Becki Trivison, an OHS employee. We carpooled to the event, bringing a small GOHI sign and all the necessary OHS literature, which included membership information and a variety of brochures on our traveling exhibit, *First Ladies*. We had hoped to get a banner with the new logo, but time ran short so we only had a sign that was approximately 15" x 15". Rob Berger dropped off some collections items from his personal collection for the GOHI booth so we also set up those. Chris Hayes was supposed to pick up the GOHI brochures featuring the new logo from the printer and bring them to the booth. The two

men working the Outlook Media booth did not know anything about the brochures, and neither Becki nor myself could find them anywhere. Luckily we did have some of the brochures with the old logo, so we distributed those. Overall there was less traffic than the previous year, and the majority of the visitors to our booth had not heard of GOHI. Those who worked the later shifts said they had many more visitors.

I was a bit disappointed with our GOHI booth this year. At a previous GOHI meeting the group had discussed having giveaways. My personal favorite was a temporary tattoo of the Ohio flag with the rainbow as the bars. That was mentioned once and then never heard from again. I would have really liked for the new brochures to have been there. Chris forgot to pick them up the day before so we kept using the old ones. The large banner would have been nice because no one noticed the tiny sign, and it kept falling over. The small display was pretty nice; although it was so windy we had to keep our eye on the items. People working the later shifts said booth visitors kept trying to take things because they thought they were giveaways! If we do a similar display next year we will need to bring plexiglass covers from OHS to help protect the items and have it look more like an exhibit.

It seems like we should have been more organized in our approach to Pride. You can't just throw some brochures on a table and call it a day. We will need to form a Pride committee for next year so the smaller tasks do not "fall through the cracks," and we get the most out of our participation in Pride.

#### 5.4 GOHI Collections Work

To date I have moved two separate donors through the entire collection donation accession process. The first collection was ephemera related to a H.I.S. Kings (an all lesbian drag king troupe based in Columbus) and the International Drag King Extravaganza. H.I.S. stands for Helen, Ivett, and Sue, the three original kings (HIS Kings, 1999). The collection included programs, advertisements and news clippings. The donor had contacted Rob Berger, who then forwarded the information to me. The donor dropped off the items, the manuscript curator and I completed the referral form, and I referred the collection for acquisition at the Collections Management Team (CMT)

meeting. The CMT meetings are attended by all the OHS curators, the registrar and the assistant registrars. The CMT makes recommendations for what collections OHS should accept.

I was a bit nervous about presenting this collection to the CMT. While I do not claim to know the feelings and beliefs of all my coworkers, I do know that some of the people who attend that meeting are quite conservative in their personal beliefs, and quite a bit removed from contemporary pop culture. I did not think anyone would be nasty, but I was afraid that they would question the historical merit of such a collection. While some of the meeting attendees were confused by the entire premise of “drag kings,” none showed any signs of ill will toward the collection, and the CMT recommended it for accession.

The second collection is related to the Flaggots. The Flaggots are a color guard composed of GLBTQ and straight people, mainly gay men from Columbus, but also involving members across the state. They are fixtures in the Pride parade and attend other Columbus events such as the Short North Gallery Hop. Mike Eisert, the president of the Flaggots, was very happy to be a part of GOHI. In almost every email I received from him he thanked me for the opportunity to not only donate items to GOHI, but to have the Flaggots items on display at the May 9 fundraising event. The donor and I worked very quickly to get the items to OHS in time for the May 9 fundraising event. Since we hadn’t collected much through GOHI at this point we were relying on OHS collections which were mainly newsletters. The Flaggots’ items added another dimension and color to the exhibit. Included in the Flaggots collection were four flags that were used in their performances, photographs of the performances, a performance t-shirt and DVDs of the 2004 through 2006 performances.

After the May 9 event my primary job responsibilities at OHS demanded 40 plus hours a week so I was unable to work on GOHI acquisitions. I reconnected with Mike

Eisert and requested some more detailed information on individual items the Flaggots donated. Mike responded and I completed the referral form in cooperation with the audiovisual curator, Lisa Wood, and the history curator, Cheryl Straker. Matt mentioned he had some additional items to donate, including trophies that the group had won. I explained that we can add any items they would like in later as addendums to the collection.

I really enjoy the Flaggots collection because it contains a mix of archival material and objects. Based on my communication with Mike, I think the Flaggots will be a constant collections contributor to GOHI. He has new ideas for items the group can donate and seems genuinely touched that GOHI has accepted the group's items. Talking with him is the sort of reinforcement I need when I am feeling overworked and overwhelmed.

Overall, I am disappointed with the overall collections donations that we have received thus far. I contact potential donors who have been forwarded to me but have not gotten responses. I think I may have had unrealistic expectations for the volume of collections we would receive.

### 5.5 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I have described the data I collected at my four research sites. These included; 1) Gay Ohio History Initiative (GOHI) meetings, 2) the May 9, 2007 GOHI fundraiser, 3) Columbus, Ohio, Pride festivals and, 4) general collections work. My data was collected through personal observations, notes, email correspondence, and includes all the official GOHI meeting minutes and agenda (see appendices B through I), as well as those autoethnographic reflections I have represented as block comments across my experiences in all of the research sites.

In the chapter that follows I will analyze this data and represent the thematic issues I have identified, employing Hughes and Seymour-Rolls (2000) participatory action research spiral table. Through this format I aim to more clearly articulate those

critical issues, problems, and patterns of GOHI progress to date. Beyond simply recognizing refinements needed to current structural and fiscal development, collection and promotion plans, I will also identify those personal performance challenges, and commitments that I can identify as being needed to move the Gay Ohio History Initiative forward.

## CHAPTER 6

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 6.1 Action Spiral Table

Toward the end of refining my own practice of historic research, collections and program development, this thesis has explored the Gay Ohio History Initiative (GOHI) through the two years since its inception (see Chapter 3 for GOHI history and Chapter 4 for a delineation of Participatory Action Research). In this chapter I will reexamine my case study data findings described in Chapter 5 using Kemmis and McTaggart's Action Research spiral. In my initial analytic review of my findings, I identified nine areas that I will represent in spiral tables:

1. GOHI Organizational Structure
2. OHS Engagement and Support
3. Outlook Engagement and Support
4. GOHI Collections Acquisition
5. GOHI Development/Fundraising
6. GOHI Marketing/PR Visibility
7. Pride Events
8. Outreach and Data Gathering from other GLBTQ Organizations in the State
9. Personal Impact

In separately exploring these nine topics I follow Kemmis and McTaggart's Action Research Spirals, in re-presenting my self-reflective cycles of 1) planning for change, 2) acting on these plans, 3) observing the processes and consequences of the envisioned change, and 4) reflecting on those processes in one through three, and their consequences. Then re-planning, acting and observing again as the spiraling continues.

This research does not always occur in a neat spiral; some of my cycles overlap or are abbreviated. Hughes and Seymour-Rolls (2000) take the Action Research Spiral and turn it into an explanative table (see Table 4.1). Through my discussion of these various dimensions of GOHI's development, I will explore what has (not) worked and how GOHI's plans for the future might be further modified to achieve the greatest possible success.

## 6.2 GOHI Organizational Structure

While completing this table it became increasingly apparent that one of the reasons for GOHI's lack of "get up and go" in the early part of the project was a lack of a clear organizational structure.

CYCLE	MOMENT	GOHI ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
Cycle One	1. Reflection	At the first GOHI meeting the creation of an advisory board was briefly discussed. The agenda had a more detailed list of the objectives of an advisory board (see Appendix B).
	2. Plan	There was no plan initially because there had never been a discussion of how one becomes an advisory board member or for that matter how one becomes a “member” of GOHI.
	3. Action	A core group of participants continued to attend meetings. These people joined those committees where their talents were best utilized.
	4. Observation	No advisory board was ever created, nor was any decision making process or governance of the group ever established. GOHI did not accomplish as much as I thought it would in the first year.
Cycle Two	1. Reflection	GOHI’s loose organizational structure made it difficult to make decisions and make things happen – unless, that is, there is a strong personality willing to take charge. I think that the lack of a set advisory board or any form of instructions for becoming a GOHI member has been part of the problem in attempting to recruit additional participants to GOHI. The lack of structure also stifles the project, and made it difficult to actually do anything because no one has known who is “in charge.”
	2. Plan	GOHI decided to create a “Code of Regulations” to aid in the emerging group’s decision making processes. The catalyst for this action was the confusion that resulted when the marketing committee decided to create a new logo. Rob Berger, a GOHI participant and member of OHS’s development board, agreed to write a draft of the plan to present to GOHI for comments.

Continued

Table 6.1: GOHI Organizational Structure Cycle

Table 6.1 continued

	3. Action	Berger presented the GOHI Code of Regulations to the group of regular GOHI meeting attendees (see Appendix K). The group discussed the code and made minor grammatical changes. After Berger made these changes he then sent it to the email list for further recommendations.
	4. Observation	The GOHI group is a very civil group of people who seem to “go with the flow.” No one had any major objections to the code itself. For the section on membership of the curatorial committee I added that I felt an OHS collections employee should be on the committee at all times, and for the development
Cycle Three	1. Reflection	<p>committee I said I felt an OHS institutional advancement employee should be on that committee. At the meeting this was agreed upon, but after further deliberations via email, GOHI decided to just specify an OHS employee on each committee, regardless of their role in the organization.</p> <p>I think the Code of Regulations will help GOHI with its decision making process. I do not know how this will be implemented after it is adopted, however, I do not think it will be an ugly situation since all the GOHI members have fallen into their own role and are active in forwarding the project. My concern is if we only have about ten people who actively attend meetings now, what are we going to do when the term limits for those board members are up? We still need to work on how one becomes a GOHI member and not just a board member.</p> <p>Recommending an OHS collections employee serve on the curatorial committee all the time stems from my fear that it will be incredibly difficult to refer any donations unless it is done internally. The OHS collections staff simply does not have the time or the staff to devote unless it is part of someone’s job description.</p>

Continued

Table 6.1 continued

		<p>The same holds true for the institutional advancement employee. In the future these may be amended, but I hesitate to have little OHS staff involvement because I am not sure that the institution is 100% committed to supporting this project and making it a priority for staff members. For example, if a collection comes through I (or another staff member) have a better chance of getting the collection referred and to the CMT than a non-employee. While I wish that there could be a GOHI member that would be in charge of this instead of relying on OHS employees, I do not think that at this point that is feasible.</p> <p>Although I had suggested that the OHS employees on the curatorial and development committees be from compatible departments within OHS, I do think that having an enthusiastic OHS staff member, regardless of their position within OHS, is just as good.</p>
	2. Plan	GOHI will officially adopt the Code of Regulations and implement them successfully.

Table 6.1: GOHI Organizational Structure Cycle

It is clear from Table 6.1 that GOHI is moving in the right direction; it has just taken a while to get there. I can see the attraction of not having an organizational structure in place at the very beginning of an initiative, as it lets an organization grow somewhat organically, and allows community members to have a say in the organization's structural design. Conversely, since there was no organizational structure at the beginning, participants were not sure of their duties or, the decision making process, and growth at times was stalled by disorganization. This has been GOHI's predicament and a challenge which now appears largely remedied.

### 6.3 OHS Organizational Support

In this cycle I tackle the somewhat delicate subject of the Ohio Historical Society's (OHS) institutional support for GOHI. As an employee I do not like to speak ill of my place of employment, but I do feel that I would be doing a disservice to both GOHI and my research if I did not critically examine OHS's role in GOHI.

CYCLE	MOMENT	OHS ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT
Cycle One	1. Reflection	When I heard that OHS agreed to work in partnership with Outlook Media to collect from the GLBTQ community I have to say I was a bit surprised. While OHS does some things very well, trying something that they have not benchmarked does not happen very often. Some of us joked that the GLBTQ community is one of the only multicultural groups left we have not pissed off! I was proud of my organization for having the guts to take on this initiative.

Continued

Table 6.2: OHS Organizational Support Cycle

Table 6.2 continued

	2. Plan	OHS partners with Outlook Media on GOHI, which is to be part of the <i>New Face of Ohio</i> , OHS's multicultural initiative. As the first project within this initiative, GOHI is to serve as a guide for future projects.
	3. Action	Staff members at OHS and Outlook Media held a series of planning meetings before holding the first official GOHI meeting at the Outlook Media offices.
	4. Observation	OHS was well-represented at the first meeting. The head of Institutional Advancement was there, as well as the Director of Communications and the Collections and Curatorial Services department head. They spoke excitedly about GOHI and working with the GLBTQ community.
Cycle Two	1. Reflection	OHS put their best foot forward at this meeting. Judging from the reactions in the room, people were excited about the initiative and applauded OHS's participation in this initiative.
	2. Plan	The GOHI marketing committee was to create a tri-fold brochure to distribute at Pride 2006. OHS was the review the text and make any corrections.
	3. Action	OHS changed some of the brochure text to sound more polished. OHS requested that the language regarding the partnership be softened. Erin Wingfield, of OHS's Institutional Advancement department, also added some text about donating to the GOHI fund at OHS.
	4. Observation	OHS did not get the changes back to the GOHI marketing committee in time for the tri-fold to be printed for Pride. There was a breakdown in communications, and somehow the OHS contact person regarding marketing (as outlined by Cynthia Ghering before her maternity leave) thought I was working on the brochure.
Cycle Three	1. Reflection	Much of the "softening" of language acted to somewhat distance OHS from the initiative. We are a major part of this initiative, and it seemed like we did not want to admit it publicly. Somehow I became in charge of the

Continued

Table 6.2 continued

		tri-fold on the OHS end as opposed to Mark Holbrook, the marketing contact for GOHI at OHS. I offered to hand deliver edits to Chris Hayes and all of the sudden the marketing director is asking me to make edits and to have a completed version of the tri-fold to her to review. Even the best intentions for not having the bulk of OHS's role in GOHI fall on me still did not save me from this tri-fold fiasco. I felt that the whole situation made me look bad to my colleagues in GOHI and showed little OHS institutional support for the initiative.
	2. Plan	GOHI decided to have a fundraising event on May 9 to kick off its OHS endowment. OHS would host the event.
	3. Action	OHS did not charge GOHI for facility rentals for the event, and the Institutional Advancement office paid for linens and set up. Dr. William K. Laidlaw, the Executive Director at OHS, made a few remarks at the program as well as a donation to the GOHI endowment fund. Senior staff mingled easily with the GOHI guests.
	4. Observation	GOHI guests seemed impressed that Dr. Laidlaw attended the event, and I overheard people saying they thought it was great he made a contribution to the endowment fund. Everyone in attendance had a great time, OHS seemed the perfect host, and fundraising goals were exceeded.
Cycle Four	1. Reflection	If I had attended this event without an insider's knowledge of GOHI I would have gotten the impression that OHS was behind the project 100%. While I do not think they want the project to fail, support of the initiative seems to come and go in waves, and with this May event there was a wave of support. However, in the following <i>Echoes</i> (the OHS membership newsletter) there was no mention of the May 9 event, nor of any of the money that it generated for the initiative. Not only do OHS members receive <i>Echoes</i> , but anyone who has donated money to OHS in the past year. This includes those people at the May 9 event who donated to the

Continued

Table 6.2 continued

		<p>GOHI endowment. I emailed the marketing staff and suggested that if they would like, I could keep them informed of GOHI happenings for <i>Echoes</i>, but I did not receive a response.</p> <p>I understand that OHS is stretched in many directions, but I fear that if it continues to be scared to show support of GOHI because conservative senators might further cut our funding, we would then also run the risk of alienating the GLBTQ community.</p>
	2. Plan	OHS needs to show support for GOHI when applicable, for example, promoting events and recognizing donors.

Table 6.2: OHS Organizational Support Cycle

While I do have anxieties about questioning the (in)action of OHS, perhaps this is one reason that difficult or challenging initiatives at large organizations are rarely undertaken or quickly fade away. While reflecting on the positive attributes of OHS's involvement in GOHI can be a "feel-good" activity, it alone does not help move GOHI forward in its development. Through critical examination of all pertinent issues and by acknowledging the areas where OHS's relationship with GOHI needs improving workable solutions can be developed.

#### 6.4 Outlook Engagement and Support

Outlook has been very supportive of GOHI. They do not have a very large staff to devote to the project and it is hard to get in contact with Outlook staff when needed, which results in some tasks slipping through the cracks. I do not think this stems from a

lack of support for GOHI, rather simply a lack of human resources to share with the initiative.

CYCLE	MOMENT	OUTLOOK ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT
Cycle One	1. Reflection	Outlook Media contacted the Ohio Historical Society about establishing GOHI. Because of my interest in both contemporary collection and collecting from underrepresented audiences I was very excited that OHS has to have a great partner from the GLBTQ community.
	2. Plan	From the first meeting Outlook “took charge.”
	3. Action	Outlook Media established dates for meetings, sent out reminders and created the agendas.
	4. Observation	Malcolm Riggie and Chris Hayes of Outlook Media were very involved in the beginnings of GOHI and extremely enthusiastic about what OHS and Outlook could accomplish through this collaboration.
Cycle Two	1. Reflection	Cynthia Ghering and I were both very excited about working with Outlook because they had enthusiasm for the project as well as the drive and resources to make it happen.
Cycle Three	1. Reflection	By engaging in the action spiral tables I think the lack of organization in GOHI was OHS’s deferral of leadership to Outlook Media. The idea was devised by then-owner/publisher Malcolm Riggie, and the first meetings were held at the Outlook Media offices. After Malcolm sold Outlook Media, GOHI was at first left without any active or well connected leader.

Table 6.3: Outlook Engagement and Support Cycle

This particular cycle is somewhat difficult to complete because the Outlook's engagement and support flowed throughout many of the other cycles, including development and fundraising (Table 6.5), marketing and visibility (Table 6.6) and Pride events (Table 6.7). Overall I feel that by developing a Code of Regulations GOHI as an initiative of OHS can begin to share control of the initiative, and not rely so heavily on Outlook for day-to-day issues.

#### 6.5 GOHI Collections Acquisition

The collection acquisition aspect of GOHI is the area most familiar to me, given I am the point person at OHS for GOHI acquisitions. In my role as point person I contact (or am contacted by) persons and organizations interested in donating items to the collection. I then answer any questions they may have about the donation information sheet, and accept the potential donations at OHS. I complete the referral form for each collection with assistance from another OHS curator and present the collection to the OHS Collections Management Team. In some cases a GOHI member may know of a person or organization who wants to donate items, so that GOHI member brings in the collections to OHS on behalf of their friend and I continue from there.

CYCLE	MOMENT	GOHI COLLECTION ACQUISITION
Cycle One	1. Reflection	GOHI needed to identify what types of collections items it wanted to acquire and then create a collection plan for the project. This plan (see Appendix L) was to serve as a guide and tool for potential donors and confirm to GOHI participants what collections items OHS and GOHI were looking for.
	2. Plan	The curatorial committee met to discuss the types of items to be collected and wrote their plan based on the American Association of Museums <i>Guide to Collection Planning</i> . After the collection plan was drafted it was then sent to Cynthia Ghering for her approval, and then back to the larger GOHI group for their approval.
	3. Action	Curatorial committee meetings were held in early spring of 2006, to discuss the collection plan. Not much work could be completed since Chris Hayes, who served as chair of the committee, was unable to attend most of the meetings. After attempts to contact Chris Hayes following Pride 2006 failed, I called a meeting with Cynthia, Chris and Joe Florenski to discuss the plan. Joe and I wrote the plan which Cynthia and Chris subsequently approved. We then presented the plan to GOHI participants.
	4. Observation	Since I was the only person on the curatorial committee that had any museum background (Joe does have a library science background), the bulk of collection planning was left to me. However, not being an expert on the process, I needed to consult with Cynthia Ghering to make sure what was written would be up to museum standards, and took into account the process by which the collections would be acquired.

Continued

Table 6.4: GOHI Collections Acquisition Cycle

Table 6.4 continued

Cycle Two	1. Reflection	<p>After the collection plan was in place we did not do anything with it given no one was donating artifacts or archival materials. With the impending May 9 fundraising event I pushed to acquire a few collections as examples to put on display. We still needed some sort of process in place for how the donations would filter through the initiative and eventually land at OHS, but that would come in a later spiral cycle.</p>
	2. Plan	<p>After GOHI participants had approved the collection plan, the curatorial committee needed to develop a form for potential donors to complete, so that pertinent information about the collection could be secured. In addition to the form, a work flow for processing collections donations also needed to be established.</p> <p>The work flow for collections donations was being discussed. Originally, Chris said the Outlook offices could serve as the drop off point for collections. A computer would be available with the collection donation form in a Word document for the potential donor to complete. They would then leave the donation at the Outlook office and OHS would pick up the donated collections every month. Because the bulk of the donation process would occur at Outlook, Joe and I strove to make the collection donation form as simple as possible. We also included examples for each of the questions.</p>
	3. Action	<p>After Joe called a curatorial committee meeting, the committee decided that Joe and I should work on the donation form and email it to the collections committee for comments. The document was created and then presented to Cynthia Ghering who approved the language and ensured that all the necessary legal information was included on the form. It was then presented to GOHI leaders and approved.</p>

Continued

Table 6.4 continued

	4. Observation	<p>After the form was completed, Cynthia and I discussed whether or not we should have the form online so people could complete it from home. They could then print the form and bring it with them when they dropped off their donation. She decided that it would be easier to have everything completed at the Outlook offices.</p> <p>After the form was submitted to GOHI for approval, Andrea Wood suggested having the form online. Being more tech-savvy than Cynthia or I, she and John Herman suggested converting the form to fill-in boxes on the website. Potential donors could complete the form online, hit send, and the information would be emailed to Chris Hayes. GOHI participants agreed that the online form would be a fine compliment to the computer terminal at Outlook at which forms could be completed for any donations.</p> <p>Once it got going, the development of the collection plan and use of the donation forms went smoothly and nicely incorporated GOHI members and Outlook and OHS staff. GOHI members who were not on the curatorial committee had a chance to comment on both documents, and changes were made based on their comments. The comments included making parts of the documents clearer and jargon-free.</p> <p>The collection donation process has not yet been perfected, but it is working, even if it is not working exactly as planned. The donation form has been clear for the few potential donors who have used it thus far, which is good. No one has used the online form to date, and the collections we have acquired have been dropped off at OHS as opposed to Outlook. Not a big deal, but differently from the plan.</p>
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Continued

Table 6.4 continued

Cycle Three	1. Reflection	<p>Thus far I have been in charge of all the donations for GOHI. If there were more donations that could have presented a bit of a problem, because I do not have much work time to devote to GOHI. However, since we have not had many collections donations this has worked out well.</p> <p>The hardest part of the whole donation process has been finding a curator at OHS to refer the collections. Most of the curators are overworked, so it is hard for them to find time to refer the collections. I have been trying to do as much of the work as I can (background research, explaining the process to the donors) so the curators can just look at the collections and sign off it they find items should be added to the collections.</p> <p>I am surprised at the lack of collections we have received. Though from an OHS standpoint, we have been very passive in collecting for this initiative and have relied on people to come to us, or for GOHI participants to suggest possible donors. I do not necessarily think that this is a problem as it is a community initiative, nor do I feel it is OHS's role to solicit donations, however, I do think that GOHI should some how do a better job of actively collecting. If and when we start getting more collections, we will need to rethink the donation process and assign GOHI participants with specific roles in the process.</p> <p>Through reflecting on this process it seems that actively soliciting donations should be part of the curatorial committee's charge. Since formal charges for each committee were not established from the start, however, I did not realize that it would be our (the curatorial committee) responsibility. In reviewing the history of GOHI thus far, I think the curatorial committee still needs to meet to discuss how best to solicit donations.</p>
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Continued

Table 6.4 continued

	2. Plan	<p>The curatorial committee needs to reconvene to rethink the collections process. We need to revisit where potential donors should be dropping off their collections, since most people insist on dropping off items at OHS instead of Outlook. If OHS should be the main drop off point, instead of having one person as the sole contact, I would recommend potential collections come to a member of the curatorial subcommittee with a different member assigned to each collection. In this way one person will not get burdened with writing referrals and dealing with every collection that comes in (which is what is currently happening to me). The curatorial committee has had a chance to work within a system we have established and as a result there have been opportunities to make adjustments and find those areas that need to be fixed and have subsequently increased OHS's capacity to better support potential large scale donation.</p> <p>There needs to be a way of establishing methods of active collecting either by the curatorial committee or with GOHI in general. This could help in getting the word out to both individuals and groups. For example, the president of the Flaggots, is now also going to donate items relating to the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus.</p>
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Table 6.4: GOHI Collections Acquisition Cycle

This particular cycle has been extremely useful and I feel embodies the Participatory Action Research methodology. Through critical reflection on the various spirals within this cycle I have been able to pinpoint the issues within GOHI's collections acquisition, including patterns of passive collecting and a failure to adequately delegate duties. Now that these issues have been identified, the GOHI curatorial committee should be better able to plan the next cycle spiral.

#### 6.6 GOHI Development/Fundraising

Fundraising for GOHI has been at the forefront of the initiative for 2007. As made apparent in the table below, the bulk of fundraising efforts have been toward the endowment. My hope is that in the coming months we will shift focus toward raising money to support collections acquisitions and processing.

CYCLE	MOMENT	GOHI DEVELOPMENT/FUNDRAISING
Cycle One	1. Reflection	At the April 26, 2006 GOHI meeting fundraising was first discussed in depth.
	2. Plan	Malcolm Riggle suggested that each GOHI participant find fifteen people who would be capable of donating \$1,000 or more to help kick start the fundraising process. These donors would then be part of the "Founding Fifteen."
	3. Action	Each GOHI participant was to create a list of people they thought would be able to donate \$1,000 or more, and email their list to Malcolm.

Continued

Table 6.5: GOHI Development/Fundraising Cycle

Table 6.5 continued

		At the next meeting Malcolm commented that he still had not gotten many people's lists. Shortly thereafter, Malcolm sold Outlook, had a family emergency and basically dropped out of all GOHI planning. He has, however, continued to help with fundraising efforts for GOHI and made a matching pledge of \$5,000 for the next three years.
	4. Observation	After Malcolm ceased to be a presence at GOHI meetings, and within the development committee in specific, all fundraising initiatives stalled.
Cycle Two	1. Reflection	I felt intimidated not knowing anyone who would be able to give \$1,000. I wanted to support fundraising efforts as much as I could, but I do not have the contacts, nor am I as skilled at asking for monetary donations as some of the other people affiliated with GOHI.
	2. Plan	When Rob Berger and Rebecca Asmo became active in GOHI, fundraising efforts were reexamined. A fundraising event was set for May 9, 2007 to raise funds for the GOHI endowment. The "Founding Fifteen" was also revisited.
	3. Action	Rob Berger and Chris Hayes contacted many of the people on the "Founding Fifteen" list they had developed. Rebecca Asmo worked with OHS's Institutional Advancement office to secure benefits for these donors. Hayes also secured food and bar donations for the May 9 event.
	4. Observation	The "Founding Fifteen" ended up morphing into the "Founding Funders" and included those donating between \$1,000 and \$1,500. Also added were "Generous Benefactors" who donated \$100 to \$999. The given amount raised prior to and at the May 9 event went to the endowment. Donors were recognized in the May 9 program.

Continued

Table 6.5 continued

Cycle Three	1. Reflection	<p>The May 9 event was very successful and I enjoyed it. I was very happy we were able to raise enough money to open the endowment, although I was concerned that with the focus on raising funds for the endowment people were forgetting that it takes working capital to produce a product, eg. to refer, process and catalog the collections we received and will receive in the future, which was the original goal of the initiative.</p> <p>Perhaps because of my keen interest in the collecting aspect of this initiative I am hyper-sensitive to the particular collecting concerns, but by not focusing on raising funds for the collections I feel that people have forgotten that the initiative began as a way to expand the collections of OHS to reflect Ohio's diversity.</p> <p>While I understand and agree with the need for the endowment, without proper budgeting to make the collections accessible, I fear that it will look like GOHI is not doing anything with the money it raises. Being able to say we have made so many cubic feet of GLBTQ collections accessible due to GOHI presents a tangible result. This product could then be used to support further fundraising initiatives.</p>
	2. Plan	<p>GOHI decided that it should earmark a percentage of money donated to the endowment go to support the collections. This would be clearly explained to donors up front. For example, if someone donated \$100 to the endowment, \$15 of that would go to collections support. GOHI is still decided what percentage to use.</p> <p>GOHI has been looking into grant opportunities for collections management and traveling exhibits.</p>
	3. Action	<p>Currently the endowment/operating support packaging is being discussed in OHS's Institutional Advancement office, which will decide what may be an appropriate percentage mix of endowment and operating support requests.</p>

Table 6.5: GOHI Development/Fundraising Cycle

I am hopeful that by openly setting aside a portion of all donations made to the endowment for support of the GOHI collections, the collections acquisitions process could be better funded. I think we may be getting ahead of ourselves by focusing on raising money for a traveling exhibit when we do not have a sufficient volume of collections items to use in such an exhibit. Maybe collections management is not as sexy as raising money for an endowment, or a traveling exhibit, and this is why it has been somewhat difficult to shift focus to those more pragmatic concerns in the collections acquisitions process.

#### 6.7 GOHI Marketing/PR Visibility

Outlook Media has done a pretty good job of marketing GOHI, but the initiative has at times failed to capitalize on the interest generated by this marketing.

CYCLE	MOMENT	GOHI MARKETING/PR VISIBILITY
Cycle One	1. Reflection	We needed a way to get the word out about GOHI. The first meeting was in January 2006, and the second meeting was not until April of that year. By the time we had the second meeting Pride was on everyone's mind as a great way to market and promote GOHI.
	2. Plan	Chris Hayes said GOHI and OHS could have a booth next to Outlook Media at the 2006 Pride festival. The marketing committee decided to create a tri-fold brochure to distribute at the booth with information about GOHI as well as information on donating both money and collections to OHS
	3. Action	John Herman created the tri-fold brochure, which was then sent to Mark Holbrook in the OHS Marketing Department for its approval. Erin Wingfield in

Continued

Table 6.6: GOHI Marketing/PR Visibility Cycle

Table 6.6 continued

		Institutional Advancement also proofed the tri-fold, focusing on matters relating to monetary gifts. I proofed the section on the types of items GOHI was interested in securing for the collection.
	4. Observation	Communication broke down and the tri-fold was not completed. Wingfield and I made our changes and sent them back to Herman. OHS senior managers felt the text of the tri-fold needed to be altered, but Holbrook did not get the changes back to Herman in time for changes to be made. Because of the time crunch Herman created a simple flier to be distributed instead of the tri-fold (see Appendix M for a first draft of the tri-fold and Appendix N for the flier).
Cycle Two	1. Reflection	Herman did a nice job on both the tri-fold and the flier that was completed in time for Pride 2006. I was embarrassed that OHS was not able to get its corrections to Herman in time, and even more embarrassed by some of the corrections they did make, such as removing the OHS logo from the tri-fold (see more on this topic in Table 6.1). I was happy that Herman was able to act quickly and get a flier finished in time for Pride, but OHS's invisibility in that publication spoke volumes.
	2. Plan	<i>Outlook Weekly</i> decided to devote the October 19, 2006 issue to GOHI as a way to publicize the initiative and hopefully solicit collections donations.
	3. Action	Ghering, Hayes, Florenski and I worked hard to complete the collection plan in time so that it could be included in the issue.
	4. Observation	The issue looked awesome, although there was not quite as much info on GOHI as I thought there would be. Of course, we had not done much work yet! I thought that we would have a flood of volunteers and collections donations after all the publicity in <i>Outlook Weekly</i> , but it did not have much of an immediate effect.
Cycle Three	1. Reflection	As mentioned in Chapter 5, one reason GOHI may not have blossom after the <i>Outlook Weekly</i> article is because a proper organizational structure was not in place to take

Continued

Table 6.6 continued

		<p>advantage of the publicity. GOHI stalled after the article and, unfortunately, did not get going again until January 2007.</p>
	2. Plan	<p>Pride 2007 offered another opportunity to promote GOHI. Once again, Outlook Media supplied a booth for both GOHI and OHS.</p>
	3. Action	<p>In preparation for the booth at Pride the marketing committee decided to create yet another a new flier (see Appendix O) to distribute that featured the new GOHI logo. OHS approved the text in time for the new brochures to be printed. Hayes was to pick up the brochures prior to Pride and drop them off at the booth. Rebecca Asmo was to create a sign with the new logo on it for the booth as well, and I was to coordinate the display of loaned items for the booth.</p>
	4. Observation	<p>Both Hayes and Asmo did not complete their tasks. We used the old fliers and had a very small sign for the booth (see Table 6.7).</p>
Cycle 4	1. Reflection	<p>I am not sure how well the 2007 Pride booth did in marketing GOHI. We did not have the new fliers, which, in the grand scheme of things, may not have been that big of a deal; although I am sure it was disappointing for the marketing committee who had worked very hard on the design. The sign would have been nice as well, since it was difficult to identify the booth as GOHI. I think the biggest mistake was not capturing names of interested people via a sign up sheet at the table. For a complete description of Pride please see the Pride Cycle that follows.</p>
	2. Plan	<p>GOHI is now in contacting other GLBTQ archives in the state as both a gesture of goodwill and to visit their collections. Visits to other institutions are slated to begin in September.</p> <p>For the 2008 Pride booth a committee should be formed to focus on planning for Pride. Please see Table 6.7 for a discussion of plans for Pride.</p>

Table 6.6: GOHI Marketing/PR Visibility Cycle

GOHI needs to begin to plan what they will do *after* the marketing blitz to capitalize on the attention. *Outlook Weekly* provides a great vehicle for marketing and visibility, but without capturing names of people who interact with GOHI and keeping them in the loop we lose out on engaging more participants in GOHI.

#### 6.8 Pride Events

GOHI presented a booth at both the 2006 and 2007 Pride event. While the 2006 booth seemed fairly successful, the 2007 seemed the victim of poor planning. This is something that can be easily fixed for future Pride events.

CYCLE	MOMENT	PRIDE EVENTS
Cycle One	1. Reflection	Having a booth at the Columbus 2006 Pride festival made sense for GOHI as it was a way to promote the project, solicit volunteers, and fish for collections donations from the core audience.
	2. Plan	The idea for the booth was to promote both GOHI and OHS, and to also solicit GOHI volunteers and collection donations. Since a collection plan was not in place yet, GOHI's first focus was on collecting Pride related items. OHS would also have literature at the booth to promote their activities.
	3. Action	On June 24, 2006, GOHI participants staffed the GOHI booth at the Pride festival. Participants distributed the GOHI brochure, solicited names for the email list, and discussed how GOHI was collecting items concerning Pride events. The booth also had beads as "giveaways."
	4. Observation	<p>The booth was fairly well visited during my early shift (11:00am-1:30pm), and later staffers also reported a good turn out. Visitors to the booth had either heard about GOHI before and liked the idea, or had not heard of GOHI. Those who were not familiar with the project thought it sounded interesting, and most people seemed grateful that a project existed to collect the history of the GLBTQ community in central Ohio.</p> <p>Based on the response I received at Pride, I thought that there would be a great interest in GOHI, and many people would be interested in donating items to the GOHI collection. However, this was not the case, as seen in the lack of interest in GOHI from July to November 2006.</p>

Continued

Table 6.7: Pride Events Cycle

Table 6.7 continued

Cycle Two	1. Reflection	While people were interested in GOHI, we did not see an increase in participant numbers. I think this was because GOHI did not “strike while the iron was hot” and immediately bring new contacts that were made at the Pride festival into the fold. I do not know if someone ever added the contact information that was captured at the event to a master GOHI list.
	2. Plan	GOHI has again planned to have a booth to promote both GOHI and OHS at 2007 Pride. The GOHI marketing committee’s new brochures with the new logo, which are to be passed out at Pride. GOHI was also to have a large sign with the new logo hanging at the booth. Items on loan are to be on display to show visitors the type of items GOHI was collecting.
	3. Action	On June 23, 2007 GOHI participants staffed the GOHI booth at the Pride festival. The person charged with picking up the new brochures did not set aside time to do so, and the person charged with purchasing the sign for the tent did not follow through. The exhibit was on display, but high winds made it somewhat precarious. Many people thought the items on display were booth “giveaways.” Booth participants distributed the old GOHI brochure, OHS literature, and talked in general about GOHI.
	4. Observation	The booth was not as well visited as in 2006, at least during my shift. Later staffers reported a good turn out. As with the 2006 Pride booth, visitors who knew about GOHI were split about 50/50. While people still thought the project was a good idea, there did not seem to be the outpouring of gratitude communicated in 2006.

Continued

Table 6.7 continued

		Reflecting on this activity I think it was a mess. Not only were the brochures not picked up, nor the sign made, but the wind made the exhibit of loaned items more of a hassle than anything else. We also did not capture names for GOHI's email list.
Cycle Three	1. Reflection	Part of the reason for the lackluster booth is that there was no "go to" person for the Pride booth. Outlook reserved the booth space, so I guess we all assumed Outlook would be taking care of all booth related needs.
		I like the idea of having items on loan on display, but next year I will bring a plexiglass case to put over the items to keep them from blowing around and to dissuade people from picking them up.
	2. Plan	Next year plans are needed for a Pride committee which would be responsible for 1) creating a checklist of all items needed for the booth, 2) having all items packed prior to the event, 3) having a sign-up sheet ready on a clipboard, 4) having a real-time sample of the collections donation paperwork so visitors can see how easy it is to donate items, 5) having an contribution pledge form and envelopes, and 6) to have giveaways, like tattoos.

Table 6.7: Pride Events Cycle

Much like the GOHI Collections Acquisitions Cycle (Table 6.4), I felt that this particular topic (Pride events) benefited greatly from the critical examination afforded by the Participatory Action Research spiral. I am confident that I have identified the main issues surrounding GOHI's Pride participation (lack of meaningful co-ordination), and because of this, next year's booth should be a greater success. By having this kind of organization in place GOHI can ensure that important aspects of its booth (proper brochures, capturing contact information) do not slip through the cracks and we take full advantage of this great opportunity to promote GOHI.

#### 6.9 Outreach and Data Gathering from other GLBTQ Organizations in the State

GOHI has begun to reach out to other organizations around the state that have GLBTQ collections. Our hope is to work with these other institutions to foster a state-wide network of Ohio GLBTQ history.

CYCLE	MOMENT	OUTREACH AND DATA GATHERING FROM OTHER GLBTQ ORGANIZATIONS IN THE STATE
Cycle One	1. Reflection	I was not aware of any other organizations in Ohio that had been actively seeking GLBTQ collections, nor was I aware of any organizations committed strictly to collection GLBTQ history before beginning this study.
	2. Plan	As part of the collection planning process I researched the organizations in the state that held GLBTQ collections.
	3. Action	I did a web search for such organizations and contacted all of them regarding their collection specialties. For those I did not hear from I pieced together data from their website (if it existed). I also sent letters to each institution introducing them to GOHI.

Continued

Table 6.8: Outreach and Data Gathering from GLBTQ Organizations in the State Cycle

Table 6.8 continued

	4. Observation	<p>Four colleges and universities in the state had publicized their GLBTQ collections. There were two GLBTQ-specific collections which I had not expected. One had very little information readily available, but the other, the Ohio Lesbian Archive in Cincinnati, has a nice website</p> <p>The only collections that responded to my letter of introduction were <i>Our Stories</i> at The Ohio State University, and the <i>Oberlin College LGBT Community History Project</i>.</p>
Cycle Two	1. Reflection	Our first attempt to make contact with other GLBTQ collection institutions around the state was somewhat unproductive. Perhaps some of the other collections are understaffed or voluntary in nature and did not have time to respond. Two of the letters were returned to me as undeliverable.
	2. Plan	Rob Berger decided that GOHI should set up visits to these other institutions around the state to see their collections and to begin to network statewide.
	3. Action	At the July 2007 meeting GOHI participants signed up for collections they would like to visit. No further action was taken to this point.

Table 6.8: Outreach and Data Gathering from GLBTQ Organizations in the State Cycle

This cycle is still relatively new. I am excited about the possibility of working with other GLBTQ organizations around the state, and hope that we are able to work productively together to promote Ohio's GLBTQ history.

#### 6.10 Personal Impact

This table represents the evolution of my personal feelings about GOHI. In the table below some of the cycles are not complete. I have done this because in many cases my personal feelings toward activities in GOHI have shifted, and a complete cycle has never been attained. As I will be continuing to work on GOHI such incompleteness is part of the process.

CYCLE	MOMENT	PERSONAL IMPACT
Cycle One	1. Reflection	Through curating an OHS photography exhibit in 2004 I became aware of the lack of diversity within our collections. It was at this point that I became interested in collecting from underrepresented communities as well as contemporary collecting.
	2. Plan	I did not have a particular plan for becoming involved in collecting from underrepresented communities or contemporary collecting. However, I did read extensively on the subject and used much of my graduate work to investigate it further.
	3. Action	When GOHI presented itself Cynthia Ghering knew of my interest in collecting from diverse communities and invited me to participate. I attended meetings and became active in the initiative through joining the curatorial committee.

Continued

Table 6.9: Personal Impact Cycle

Table 6.9 continued

Cycle Two	1. Reflection	While I wanted to be active in GOHI I was afraid of being “too active.” I really wanted this to be a community initiative and found it difficult to take myself out of my role as OHS employee. At times I was acting as an OHS representative, but at other times I acted as an interested party.
	2. Plan	I decided to use GOHI as my topic for my thesis anticipating that this would sustain with my participation while collecting data for my research.
	3. Action	I attended every meeting with the exception of one and lent my time to events and additional meetings. I also found that completing my thesis and literature review was also valuable in my work with GOHI.
	4. Observation	Due to my activity in GOHI I started to become the “go to” person at OHS for all things gay-related. When LOGO came to OHS to do a short piece on GOHI I was the person who was interviewed as I was the person most familiar with the initiative.
Cycle Three	1. Reflection	It is nice to be the “expert” in something, although I do not know who would take my place if I were to leave OHS or GOHI. Now that GOHI is moving toward a more formal organizational structure my leaving would not be as big of a concern as it would have been eight months ago.
	2. Plan	I do feel that it is necessary for the curatorial committee to become more active in soliciting donations and processing them. Please see Table 6.5 for a complete outline of this plan.
Cycle Four	1. Reflection	I was extremely excited that OHS decided to participate in GOHI. I was proud to be affiliated with an organization that was willing to take a risk in representing a marginalized group in this collections initiative. Since OHS relies heavily on state funding and has undergone budget cuts in the past, I am sure the last thing administrators would want is to get flak from state senators for a collections initiative focused on the GLBTQ community. The bravery of the initiative is therefore even more impressive.

Continued

Table 6.9 continued

Cycle Five	1. Reflection	Through a variety of cycles (see Tables 6.2 and 6.6) I became somewhat disillusioned with the support that OHS was giving GOHI. It seemed that increasingly the emphasis was on monetary donations and not related to our core mission which is collecting and preserving the history of the State. I know that money is necessary to support collections, but that has never been how the GOHI discussion has been framed.
	2. Plan	I have met with the other members of the curatorial committee and we are currently discussing new ways to delegate the collections acquisitions work. By focusing on collections acquisitions, which is what I really enjoy, and working with some of the donors (who are always extremely grateful for the project), I can shift my focus to something from which I will gain more personal satisfaction.

Table 6.9: Personal Impact Cycle

I feel that I have gained much through the process of researching and writing this thesis. Reflecting on the Participatory Action Research spirals I have been an effective way to analyze the different aspects of my work at OHS. I have become more willing to focus on a broader range of issues, and I now strive for workable solutions as oppose to being content with just any “average” product.

#### 6.11 GOHI Planning (Strategic and Long Range)

Through examining the data in these tables it is apparent that GOHI lacks both strategic and long range plans. The next item on the agenda for GOHI should be to establish short and long term goals. After evaluating the data I collected over the past few years I have developed the following goals for GOHI.

In the next 6 months GOHI might benefit from:

1. Evaluate the collection donation process. Encourage the curatorial committee to meet and draft their own set of responsibilities to present at a GOHI meeting for full member approval. The committee's plans should include its active solicitation of collections donations.
2. Approve GOHI's organizational Code of Regulations and investigate membership responsibilities and benefits.
3. Develop a position description for a curatorial internship. Advertise the internship to Library, Museum Studies and Public History programs around the state.
4. Investigate fundraising opportunities and grants for collections maintenance.
5. Submit a proposal to the GLBT Archives, Libraries, Museums, and Special Collections Conference.

In the next year GOHI might benefit from:

1. Investigate the logistics of developing a traveling exhibit. This would include development costs, human resource needs, collection needs, preferred locations for the exhibit, shipping, packing, insurance and a marketing plan.
2. Complete visits to other GLBTQ collections around the state, and coordinate these as a leadership nurturance, bonding and potential for team building.
3. Develop a Pride committee to plan the booth at the Pride event and distribute action plans, assigned duties and oversight responsibilities.
4. Partner fully with Stonewall's History Panels which are annually presented every June.

5. Begin an electronic newsletter and distribute to those on the Outlook and GOHI email lists, detailing new acquisitions to the collections and other GOHI accomplishments and activities.

In the next five years GOHI might benefit from:

1. Curating, schedule and coordinating an historic exhibition for a State of Ohio tour--partnering with local GLBTQ groups to help building interest in GOHI.
2. Expand discussions with GLBTQ archives and libraries around the state and develop a GLBTQ History Network.
3. Develop an online space where one can find all things related to Ohio GLBTQ history, including digital images of collections items from around the state, online exhibitions and educational resources.
4. Establish a permanent internship opportunity for students to work with the GOHI collection: perhaps by intersecting with The Ohio State University's sexuality studies program and the Multicultural Center, Kent State University's Information and Library Science program, and history programs around the state.

#### 6.12 Concluding Thoughts

In this chapter I have analyzed and represented the data I presented in Chapter 5, applying Action Research Spiral table (Hughes and Seymour-Rolls, 2000) to nine dimensions of GOHI;

1. GOHI Organizational Structure
2. OHS Engagement and Support
3. Outlook Engagement and Support
4. GOHI Collections Acquisition
5. GOHI Development/Fundraising
6. GOHI Marketing/PR Visibility
7. Pride Events

8. Outreach and Data Gathering from other GLBTQ Organizations in the State
9. Personal Impact

Through this exercise patterns were identified that confirmed:

1. GOHI needs an organizational structure that clearly establishes the initiative's relationships between Outlook Media and OHS, and defines its structure, and individual participants' roles. In having these interests more clearly defined, GOHI may be able to act more autonomously. Through a more clearly defined organizational structure GOHI committees might better understand of their duties and opportunities, and not have to rely so much on one person for decision making.
2. By creating a long range plan GOHI might better clarify what it wants to do in the future and be able to define the sequence of events enabling those plans.
3. The Ohio Historical Society needs to publicly demonstrate its enthusiasm and support for GOHI. While non GOHI participants may not realize it, OHS has yet to demonstrate its full and energetic support of this initiative. Sooner, rather than later, this inadequate support may become apparent to the GLBTQ community. Such realization could pose a serious threat and could jeopardize all the hard work scores of people have put into GOHI.

In this chapter I have presented my analysis of the data I collected and shared in Chapter 5. I have identified nine cycling developmental threads within my research, examining these in more depth by using Hughes and Seymour-Rolls' Action Research Spiral table. I have also included trends that presented themselves through the act of completing these tables, as well as establishing some long and short term goals for GOHI. In my concluding chapter I will (re)examine my thesis research, identifying that which

still needs to be completed to ensure that GOHI adequately collects and preserves the Ohio GLBTQ community's history.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

#### 7.1 Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have sought to answer the question "How might a State Historical Society productively work with the gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) populations in collecting artifacts, narratives and interpreting history?" I have presented the reader with an overview of how the Ohio Historical Society (OHS) has worked with Ohio's GLBTQ population, and have analyzed the development of the Gay Ohio History Initiative (GOHI) as a case study within a methodological framework of Participatory Action Research.

In this chapter I will briefly review how each preceding chapter in this thesis helped shape my understanding of the problem and my work at OHS. This final chapter revisits those concerns discussed in the first chapter, and further identifies research openings within the field of collecting and preserving the history of Ohio's GLBTQ community. In addition, I will suggest uses for the GOHI collection, from exhibits and research to outreach.

In Chapter 2 I discussed the problem of historic representation as it applied to the GLBTQ community, and I generally examined some of the problems of collecting from underrepresented communities. My discussion has included a review of New York State Museum's examination of bias and representation in their own exhibits and materials,

Lonnie Bunch's Five Challenges of Diversity, and background data on OHS's own brushes with diversity to establish the world in which GOHI is developing.

In Chapter 3 I provided an overview of my research subject, beginning by briefly recounting the history of GLBTQ collecting in the United States, and then discussing both OHS's and GOHI's history. I presented a GOHI history and discussed its institutional structure, collection vision, fundraising initiatives and marketing scheme as well as suggesting ways it might assess its success.

I presented my methodology in Chapter 4, discussing Participatory Action Research (PAR) and autoethnography. Through using this particular methodology I have found a new tool I will use in my work at OHS in the future. PAR's focus on critically examining current situations (whatever those are), developing processes for defining how to go about refining practice and implementation before re-reflecting, and repeating the spiraling cycle is something that I will be able to use throughout my career. In Chapter 4 I also described entry into my four research sites: 2006 and 2007 Pride Festivals, GOHI meetings, May 9, 2007 GOHI fundraiser, and GOHI collections work.

In Chapter 5 I explored the data I collected from my four research sites. I presented the facts as I interpreted them based on my observations, notes, email correspondence and the official GOHI meeting minutes and agenda. Embracing autoethnography, I have added single spaced personal reflections sections throughout this chapter for fronting my own insights into the research and my immediate response to findings.

In Chapter 6 I represented my data analysis by using Hughes and Seymour-Rolls (2000) Action Research Spiral table. Having identified nine data themes after my initial

analysis of findings, I then represented each thematic thread's development in separate spiral tables. I found that in critically (re)examining each of the nine themes I was able to identify and present trends, and establish long term goals for GOHI.

## 7.2 Research Openings

This thesis only begins to touch on those issues surrounding the collecting and preserving of the GLBTQ community history. As more work is undertaken, more work will be uncovered that still needs to be done. Research that might be of benefit to the field includes;

- A feasibility study for an online source/network of GLBTQ collections, as discussed in Chapter 1, beginning with identifying funding that might make this a reality.
- A survey of major GLBTQ archives and libraries assessing what each considers the largest obstacles and threats facing their institutions.
- A detailed look at issues of identity and the challenges that arise when attempting to categorize subjects as “gay.”

Additional research that could be done with an eye towards Ohio include;

- A complete survey of archives and museums in the state and an assessment of their GLBTQ holdings.
- The feasibility of organizing a statewide consortium of institutions with GLBTQ holdings.
- A survey of GLBTQ materials already held by Ohio institutions.

## 7.3 Ideas for GOHI Collection at OHS

As discussed in Chapter 1, not only is equal representation a matter of moral, political and ethical responsibility, but it also helps OHS stay relevant by serving the needs of its multiple communities. GLBTQ communities are underserved in Ohio and invisible in most regional historical narratives. But even after OHS has amassed a collection of GLBTQ materials, for what can it be used? Three main areas that come immediately to mind are exhibitions (both physical and online); research; and outreach.

### 7.3.1 Exhibit (physical and online)

GOHI could create exhibits to be shown at OHS, as well as touring site locations around Columbus (such as Stonewall, The Ohio State University Multicultural Center, Kaleidoscope Youth Center). In addition, traveling exhibitions could be created to tour various parts of the state; particularly installed in those institutions that have some GLBTQ collections. Touring exhibits could prompt more interest in GLBTQ collecting, and encourage donations to GOHI's collections program and endowment. A special touring exhibit for high school gay-straight alliances could also be developed. The exhibit opening could include a speaker who could help students contextualize and interpret the exhibited materials, thereby fostering students' interest in history and research, and build bridges across generations.

Online exhibitions, such as the one created at Oberlin College, seem more accessible given many residents formerly denied access can now get on the internet via public libraries. Online exhibitions can also offer a bit of privacy (at least if viewing from one's own home or a safe-space) for those individuals who may be interested or curious about the subject, but who may not be comfortable going into a physical GLBTQ history exhibition.

### 7.3.2 Research

The collection of items amassed by GOHI should eventually serve as an invaluable resource and tool for those researchers interested in Ohio's GLBTQ communities, organizations and individuals. The collection will enable the GLBTQ communities' contributions to the state to be more visible, and hopefully that visibility will eventually begin to be woven into Ohio's historical narrative. The collection could

serve as a spring-board for nurturing young researchers—serving as a site for GLBTQ students to explore that which has historically been erased from history.

### 7.3.3 Outreach and Education

Besides the collection's more obvious usefulness in research and exhibition, it would also be extremely valuable to a variety of outreach programs. The most obvious area of outreach would be to public K-12 schools. According to Yolanda Retter, these sorts of collections serve as a positive source of self-esteem and pride for the GLBTQ community, especially those "younger people struggling with their sexual identities" (Retter, 1993). OHS already has a variety of programs that reach teachers and students. These include History Day, distance learning programs, history boxes, teacher professional development programs as well as programs in both the museum and archives which can be modified to fit teacher or student needs. A wonderful use for the GOHI collections would be its integration into all of these services and programs.

History programs about the contributions of the GLBTQ community could be part of school anti-bullying initiatives. By creating on-line access and/or touring exhibits to schools and community centers, students could then study these collections and possibly do their History Day projects focused on GLBTQ history and historical figures. Groups like Kaleidoscope Youth Center<sup>2</sup> could participate in a distance learning programs involving Central Ohio GLBTQ history. Not only could these be valuable to the education community, GOHI's outreach efforts could also be valuable to business and government leaders' in diversity sensitivity training. The collection could also be used

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<sup>2</sup> Kaleidoscope Youth Center is dedicated to meeting the needs of youths 12 to 20 who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer, as well as those questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity (Kaleidoscope Youth Center).

for education and advocacy publications for groups like Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

#### 7.4 Collaboration Between Institutions

As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, GOHI has begun to contact other GLBTQ repositories around the state. Further exhibit and promotion collaborations with other Ohio institutions would also benefit all parties. There is need for an Ohio (or Midwestern) GLBTQ History conference and/or speakers' program. This could be a way to highlight the collections of each participating institution, share valuable information with each other, and promote the study and appreciation of Ohio's GLBTQ heritage. A speaker's bureau could also be developed that highlights the work of staff from all the collections in the state.

#### 7.5 Concluding Thoughts

Through the process of writing this thesis I have been able to critically reflect on both the history and future of GOHI. Since GOHI is the first project within OHS's *New Face of Ohio* initiative, it is serving as a prototype for future work with underrepresented communities. By my identifying the strengths and opportunities in GOHI's initial years of development, OHS may now apply lessons learned to better develop future projects, and avoid some of the pitfalls GOHI experienced; from lack of organizational structure, to unclear volunteer and staff roles.

I plan on continuing to apply what I have learned throughout this thesis for the betterment of GOHI--specifically in my work on the curatorial committee. By examining the Collections Acquisitions Cycle in Chapter 6, I have come to the realization that active collecting is rightfully the role of the curatorial committee, and the committee itself needs

to meet to further to define its roles and responsibilities. Such definitions should be beneficial to GOHI. I look forward to using the data and conclusions outlined in this thesis for both GOHI and other community-based projects in the future at OHS. It is time we, as practitioners, citizens of Ohio, and human beings, make room in the chronicle of Ohio history for the contributions of all Ohioans. To do anything less perpetuates the myths and misunderstandings about GLBTQ communities so widely held in Ohio today.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### GOHI Cast of Characters

Name	GOHI Affiliation	Other Affiliation
Rebecca Asmo	OHS contact person for development needs since fall of 2006	OHS department of institutional advancement
Rob Berger	Development committee member, de facto leader of GOHI	OHS development board member
Sharon Croft	Secretary	
Joe Florenski	Curatorial committee chair, member of grants committee	
Cynthia Ghering	Early developer of GOHI at OHS	OHS assistant director of Collections and Curatorial Services
Chris Hayes	Curatorial committee member, de facto leader of GOHI	Co-publisher/owner of <i>Outlook Weekly</i>
John Herman	Marketing committee member	
Kathy Hoke		OHS director of communications (through spring 2006)
Mark Holbrook	OHS contact person for marketing needs during the summer of 2006	OHS marketing and communications department
Jeri Kozobarich		OHS director of institutional advancement (since winter 2007)
Stacia Kuceyeski	Curatorial committee member, contact person for collections donations	OHS department of Outreach Projects
Bill Mahon	Marketing committee member	OHS assistant director of interpretation and design
Scott Mueller		OHS director of institutional advancement (through December 2006)
Malcolm Riggle	Founder of GOHI	Past publisher/owner of <i>Outlook Weekly</i>
Erin Wingfield	OHS contact person for development needs through fall of 2006	OHS department of institutional advancement
Andrea Wood	Member of marketing committee	Equality Ohio employee

## APPENDIX B



### GOHI Preliminary Meeting Agenda January 25, 2006

1. Introductions
2. Discussion on the formation of the Gay Ohio History Initiative and goals
  - a. Create an comprehensive, permanent and evolving collection of Ohio gay history/the Ohio gay experience
  - b. Raise funds to hire staff member at OHS specifically for GOHI
  - c. Create/fund a permanent gallery space for exhibits
  - d. Travel exhibits across the State/create experiences
3. Receive public opinions and suggestions
4. Assessment of sustainability;
5. Assessment of potential artifacts for collection;
6. Assessment of volunteer talent pool, skill sets and commitment;
7. Creation of Advisory Board
  - a. Advisory Board Objectives
    - i. How to make sustainable
      1. fundraisers
      2. donors
      3. grants
    - ii. Timeline
    - iii. Themes for collecting
      1. Collecting will be done in specific phases for manageability
      2. Find a starting point: local gay politics, businesses, etc
      3. Start with central Ohio then expand to other cities
    - iv. Expansion plan for Ohio
    - v. How to continue to collect
    - vi. Policies and procedures
    - vii. Collective Statements
    - viii. Creation of written materials
      1. how we operate
      2. marketing
      3. collecting
      4. receipts
      5. donor forms
    - ix. Creation of permanent board and board tenures
    - x. Tangibles and training
      1. Donor form/receipts
      2. Create tracking system that will integrate into OHS
      3. Educate on how to collect and give back
      4. Training on handling of goods: intake, storage, presenting
      5. Written policy and procedures and marketing materials

## APPENDIX C

Gay Ohio Historical Initiative  
January 17, 2007 at 6 p.m.  
Ohio Historical Society

### MEETING AGENDA

#### Welcome

#### Committee Reports

##### Curatorial Committee

- Duties and Membership
- Collection Plan
- Future Plans

##### Development Committee

- Duties and Membership
- Future Plans

##### Marketing Committee

- Duties and Membership
- Future Plans

#### Other Reports

#### Old Business

#### New Business

- May 9, 2007 event at OHS
  - Develop plan
  - Assign tasks

## GOHI Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2007 – 6:00 p.m.

Ohio Historical Center

Comments or questions about the meeting minutes can be directed to Rebecca Asmo at [rasmo@ohiohistory.org](mailto:rasmo@ohiohistory.org)

In attendance:

Rob Berger – OHS Development Board

Joe Florenski

Liz Hornikel – Equality Ohio

Andrea Wood – Equality Ohio

Chris Hayes – Outlook Media

Stacia Kuceyeski - OHS

Bill Mahon – OHS

Rebecca Asmo – OHS

Committee Reports:

Curatorial Committee report given by Joe Florenski

- A draft of the GOHI collection plan was developed and published in *Outlook*
- To date, there is no “official” list of the members of the Curatorial Committee.
- The GOHI collection plan was developed using the American Association of Museums “Best Practices Guide.”
- Questions were asked about information in the Collection Plan document. Stacia mentioned that the plan was a “living document” and that some information still needed to be added or altered.
- It was suggested that “Our Stories” be added to the Collection Plan as a complimentary source/collection.

Future Plans/Actions for the Curatorial Committee

- Develop donor plans and a review process for items that are donated to GOHI by the March Committee meeting.
  - Outlook’s offices will serve as the drop-off point for collection items
- Finalize donation forms by the end of March so that GOHI can have items to display at the May 9<sup>th</sup> event
- Determine who will be the e-mail and telephone contacts for GOHI.
  - Do we need to have different contacts for the various subject areas? Fundraising, Curatorial, events, etc.?
- The Curatorial Committee needs to determine long term vs. short term goals.
- Identify object donors who can be highlighted in an article in *Outlook*

#### Development Committee

- In the past, a goal was established of developing a “Founding 15.” A group of founding members who would donate \$1,000 each. This would start the GOHI Endowment.

#### Future Plans/Actions for the Development Committee

- Compile a list of individual and corporate prospects to become founding members of GOHI
- Develop talking points that can be distributed to anyone involved with GOHI so that they can talk about all aspects of the initiative if asked.
- Rob is going to develop a list of prospects and ask members of the listserv to provide additional suggestions by February 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Develop a draft list of donor benefits by February 17<sup>th</sup> (Rebecca)

#### Marketing and Communication Committee

- Palm cards were developed
- Andrea will help with all press releases
- Marketing ideas include:
  - Creating podcasts of the oral histories gathered that can be downloaded by the public.
  - Create a monthly “Donor Spotlight” in *Outlook* that profiles donors of objects and money.
  - Market to the Equality Ohio e-mail list, which has over 11,000 names
- Website issues will be addressed at the next meeting. *Outlook* recently moved their offices and the web information needs to be transferred to the new server.
- An event will be held at OHS on May 9, 2007 as a public kickoff for the GOHI initiative
  - The event will be held in conjunction with the Network Ohio event
  - Attendees will get a “sneak peak” tour of the exhibit *First Ladies: Political Role and Public Image*, which will be at the Historical Society on loan from the Smithsonian.

#### New Business

- Actions/Plans to be taken for the May 9<sup>th</sup> event
  - Bill Mahon will notify the Smithsonian of our event plans so that they can approve early viewing of the exhibit
  - Bill Laidlaw should give a welcome – Rebecca will get the event on his calendar and on Rachel Tooker’s calendar.
  - Identify a “champion” who can deliver the keynote address at the event
  - Find out information about setting up online registration through the Historical Society’s website (Rebecca)
  - Create donor cards that can be distributed at the event (similar to what is done at the HRC event)
  - Contact caterers about donating food for the event (Chris)

- Get cost estimates for the bar

#### Next Meeting

In order to keep the momentum going, we set dates for the next three meetings:

February 21, 2007

March 21, 2007

April 18, 2007

All meetings will be held at Ohio Historical Society and will begin at 6 p.m.

## APPENDIX D

Gay Ohio Historical Initiative  
February 21, 2007 at 6 p.m.  
Ohio Historical Society

### MEETING AGENDA

#### Welcome

#### Committee Reports

##### Curatorial Committee

- Donor plans and review process
- Donation forms
- Outlook article
- Long term versus short term goals

##### Development Committee

- Donor prospects
- Donor talking points
- Donor benefits

##### Marketing Committee

- Website status

#### Other Reports

#### Old Business

##### May 9, 2007 event at OHS

- Smithsonian approval
- Online event registration
- Donor cards
- Caterers
- Bar cost estimates

#### New Business

- Stonewall History Panels

## **GOHI Meeting Minutes**

**February 21, 2007 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Ohio Historical Center**

**Comments or questions about the meeting minutes can be directed to Rebecca Asmo at [rasmo@ohiohistory.org](mailto:rasmo@ohiohistory.org)**

In attendance:

Rob Berger – OHS Development Board

Joe Florenski

Chris Hayes – Outlook Media

Stacia Kuceyeski - OHS

Rebecca Asmo – OHS

Sharon Croft

John Herman

Committee Reports:

### **Curatorial Committee**

- Donor submission form has been created
- Every 1-2 months (no more than 3 months) an OHS curator will review donated items and process all of the donor information (necessary forms, copyright information, etc.)
- GOHI will provide an example of a correctly filled out donation form at all donation locations
- Chris mentioned that a few items have been dropped off at Outlook's offices, but that nothing has been "officially" donated.
- Stacia is going to add OHS contact information to the donation sheet
- We want to begin testing the donation form ASAP so we have items for the event on May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Chris mentioned that he has some items and Bill Mahon also knows people who have items they would like to donate.
- It was also suggested that we add some information about donating to the Endowment on the form. Rebecca will send that language to Stacia.

### **Development Committee**

- Donor prospect list for the "Founding Funders" has been created
- We are still trying to think of a "catchy" name for this category of donors
- Donor Benefits
  - Membership to OHS
  - Recognition on OHS donor board, Echoes, Website
  - A plaque can be created that will travel with the exhibit
  - Outlook can provide donor recognition
  - Recognition at the May 9<sup>th</sup> event

- Talking points
  - GOHI is important because it will set a standard for multi-cultural collecting for OHS
  - It is important for the state historical society to collect *all* history
  - Gay history has been and continues to be susceptible to being lost because it is often denied, disposed of, hidden, etc.
- Sharon asked if we are contacting local bar owners for monetary support and for collection items
- Andrea will send all GOHI information to the Equality Ohio email list.

#### **Marketing and Communication Committee**

- The Marketing Committee developed a new logo, which was reviewed at the meeting
- We need to establish if GOHI stands for the (Gay Ohio HISTORICAL Initiative) or the (Gay Ohio HISTORY Initiative)
- GOHI would like to create a brochure that includes donation information (items or money)
- Once the logo is approved, Rebecca is going to get approval for the brochure from OHS. Previously, the brochure got stuck in the OHS Graphics Committee. This will not be the case this time.
- Stonewall and Equality Ohio have agreed to send email blasts to their membership about the May 9<sup>th</sup> event.

#### **Old Business**

##### **May 9, 2007 Network Columbus**

- We have received preliminary approval from the Smithsonian to allow attendees at the May 9 event to have a sneak peak at the First Ladies exhibit.
- Chris announced that Trader Joes has agreed to provide food for the event.

#### **New Business**

##### **Stonewall History Panels**

- It was agreed that GOHI would sign on as a sponsor for the GLBT history panels that Rob is organizing for Stonewall Columbus for Pride month. As a sponsor, GOHI will help promote the four events that will be held on consecutive Wednesdays in June 2007.  
GOHI can also send a representative to say a few words and/or distribute literature.

## APPENDIX E

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
March 21, 2007 at 6 p.m.  
Ohio Historical Society

### MEETING AGENDA

#### Welcome

#### Committee Reports

##### Curatorial Committee

- Donation plan/review process/donation forms
- Outlook article to announce/promote donations

##### Development Committee

- Donor talking points and benefits
- Status of fundraising asks

##### Marketing Committee

- GOHI name
- Updated logo proposal
- Proposed web site changes

#### Other Reports

#### Old Business

##### May 9, 2007 event at OHS

- Program
- Online event registration
- Donor cards
- Hot cards

#### New Business

##### Organizational Structure

- Leadership style and roles
- Committee roles and responsibilities

## APPENDIX F

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
April 18, 2007 at 6 p.m.  
Ohio Historical Society

### MEETING AGENDA

#### Welcome

#### May 9, 2007 event at OHS

##### Promotion

List serv's  
    Stonewall  
    Equality Ohio

GOHI e-mail

Outlook

News release

Contacts with other publications

VIP/donor invitations

Hot cards

Online registration

##### Set up

Sign In table  
    staffing  
    materials

GOHI table  
    staffing  
    materials

OHS table  
    staffing

materials

Memorabilia display

tables

items

protection

DVD/Videos

equipment

DVD's and videos

Podium

Audio visual equipment

Piano/equipment for musical entertainment

Signage

Program

Speakers

Welcome

Chris Hayes

OHS remarks

Bill Laidlaw, OHS Executive Director

GOHI remarks

Rob Berger and others??

Topics to be covered by speakers

What is GOHI

Recognition of GOHI donors

How to donate funds/artifacts

New logo

Musical entertainment

Paper program

Information about evenings program OHS, GOHI, donors

Giveaway

Drawing

## Exhibits

GOHI artifacts  
objects  
explanatory signage  
attendant to ensure items protected

First Ladies  
how will tour[s] be conducted  
who will conduct  
when will tours occur

## Food and Beverage

Beverages  
beer/wine/liquor  
mixers/ice  
bars/bartenders  
signage  
bank  
costs and profits  
glasses/napkins

Food  
food  
plates and napkins  
costs

Tables and chairs  
linens  
costs

Start time/End time

## **Other Reports**

Marketing Committee  
Review of website, digital collection form, final logo

## **Old Business**

## **New Business**

Set meeting dates for remainder of year

## APPENDIX G

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
May 16, 2007 at 6 p.m.  
Ohio Historical Society

### MEETING AGENDA

#### Welcome

#### Committee Reports

##### Curatorial Committee

- New donations

- Outlook article to announce/promote donations

##### Development Committee

- Report on 5/9 event

- Future endowment fundraising efforts

- Grants

  - Traveling Exhibit

  - Symposium

  - Curatorial interns

- OHS-GOHI endowment description

- Partnership opportunities with Legacy Fund

##### Marketing Committee

- New web site

  - Current content

  - Additional content

  - Incoming e-mails and telephone calls

  - E-mail listserv

#### Other Reports

#### Old Business

#### Organizational Structure

#### New Business

- Stonewall Pride Celebration

## GAY OHIO HISTORICAL INITIATIVE

Minutes\*—Steering Committee

Wednesday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007, 6:00 pm, Ohio Historical Society, Classroom #1

In attendance: GOHI members: Rob Berger, Sharon Croft, Joe Florenski, Chris Hayes, John Herman, and Cory Skurdal; OHS Representative: Jeri Kozobarich

- I. Welcome
- II. Committee Reports
  - A. Curatorial Committee
    1. New donations: Florenski reminded us that the donation form is on-line. At the 5/9 event, Florenski gave the donation form to interested attendees and told them to send the form and materials to Stacia Kuceyeski of OHS. Florenski hasn't heard from Kuceyeski to see if any new materials have been donated.
    2. *Outlook Weekly* article to announce/promote donations. The group wondered if *Outlook Weekly*, the *Dispatch*, or some other publication might be interested in doing a piece on someone who has donated to the GOHI collection.
    3. HRC: Group would like to ask HRC to send out an email about GOHI.
    4. OSH: Kozobarich assured the group that the GOHI would be a priority project for OHS in 2007.
  - B. Development Committee
    1. Report on 5/9 event: Berger projected (and Kozobarich later confirmed) that we raised an additional \$4K at the event. We had raised \$23.5K prior to the 5/9 event. It's possible that there's at least another \$1K still to come as not all pledged donations have arrived.
    2. Future endowment fundraising efforts: The group discussed the need to raise awareness and to increase fundraising efforts outside of the Columbus area. The group talked about the possibility of using a traveling exhibit (see IVC1) to accomplish these two goals. Kozobarich informed the group that OHS does not have the resources to help us with event planning.
    3. Grants: The group discussed the need in the near future to pursue grant money. Florenski agreed to serve on this subcommittee. In particular, the group hoped to find grant money to support the following projects/needs:
      - a. Traveling exhibit
      - b. Symposium
      - c. Curatorial interns

4. OHS-GOHI endowment description and organizational structure: Hayes and Berger are working on draft document which will include info about the endowment, officers, and by-laws. They will share first draft with others, specifically Rebecca Asmo of OHS to get feedback for a second draft.
  5. Partnership opportunities with Legacy Fund. The Legacy Fund of the Columbus Foundation is not currently awarding grants. However, in perhaps 6 months to a year, the Legacy Fund would likely look favorably upon grant proposals that foster leadership training within the GLBT community. A sense of the community's history would be an important element of such training. It was also suggested that the Legacy Fund will establish an endowment fund specifically for GOHI.
  6. Connections with others: The group talked about the process by which GOHI could make contact with similarly aligned groups. The group talked about identifying a key stakeholder in specific geographic regions and about pairing with others that have existing archives (the Western Reserve Historical Society, the one in Yellow Springs, and the Ohio Lesbian Archives in Cincinnati.) Kuceyeski is likely to have contacts within these organizations.
- C. Marketing Committee
1. New Web site
    - a. Current content: the group expressed its pleasure with the current website and thanked Herman for his work.
    - b. Additional content: Herman suggested that we post newsletter on website and to give those in need log-in permission to check website database. Herman would also like to post videos from the 1982 or 1983 Pride march, Stonewall 1983, Documentary of the city council's policy reversal, and the 2006 history panels. Herman thought it would be a good idea to post the names of the GOHI committee members and majors contributors on the web site. The group liked the idea of creating a message board for the website and a hit tracker.
    - c. Incoming e-mails and telephone calls: At the moment, the web directs/routes such contacts to Hayes and others at *Outlook Weekly*.
    - d. E-mail listserve: Herman explained current set-up.
  2. Hot cards: The group decided to design and distribute a new GOHI hot card. Estimated cost = \$200. Old hot cards might be sent to out-of-town GLBT organizations and bars. Croft offered to send old hot cards to GLBT organizations in colleges/universities. Hayes needed to be consulted on this matter.
- D. Other Reports: none.
- E. Old Business: none.
- F. New Business: Stonewall Pride Celebration
1. Booth: The GOHI booth will be located next to *Outlook Weekly* booth. Hayes mentioned that *Outlook Weekly* might purchase a large balloon to draw attention to the location. Booth will include information about GOHI and might also include display items. In previous years, GOHI used a tri-fold poster display. It was suggested that we display items in a glass case. We need to check with Asmo to see if the two large GOHI banners are available for use at the Pride Celebration. We also need to

see if Asmo can print out new pledge cards that we can distribute at the booth.

2. Items on Display: Kozobarich informed the group that, because of curatorial regulations, it would be difficult for us to display items that were officially a part of the GOHI-OHS collection. She did agree that we could display photocopies of such items.
3. Volunteers for booth: We need volunteers to staff the booth. Berger suggested 1 ½ hour shifts, beginning at 1pm and ending at 8:30ish. We need a set-up (start time = 9am) and tear down crew.

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, 2007 at 6pm at OHS.

Minutes submitted by Sharon Croft on June 13, 2007.

## APPENDIX H

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
June 20, 2007 at 6 p.m.  
Ohio Historical Society

### MEETING AGENDA

#### Welcome

#### Committee Reports

##### Curatorial Committee

##### Development Committee

- Final report on 5/9 event
- Update on endowment fundraising efforts
- Update on grants
- OHS-GOHI endowment description
- Tahoe Auction

##### Marketing Committee

- New web site
- Incoming e-mails and telephone calls
- E-mail listserv
- New hot card

#### Other Reports

#### Old Business

##### Stonewall Pride Celebration

- Marching in parade?
- Booth
  - Workers – set up, tear down, 90 minute shifts from 1-8 p.m.
  - Handouts
  - Banner
  - Name collection
  - Historical display

##### Organizational Structure

#### New Business

## GAY OHIO HISTORICAL INITIATIVE

### Minutes—Steering Committee

Wednesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007, 5:30 p.m., Ohio Historical Society, Classroom #1

In attendance: GOHI members: Sharon Croft, Joe Florenski, Cory Skurdal, Andrea Wood; OHS Representatives: Rebecca Asmo (Acting Chair), Stacia Kuceyeski, Becki Trivison

#### I. Welcome

#### II. Committee Reports

##### A. Curatorial Committee

1. Recently donated items: Kuceyeski reported that she'd received donated items from Flaggots and Stonewall Dems.
2. Curatorial fund
  - a. Size of curatorial fund: Kuceyeski reminded the group that we need to solicit more money for the curatorial fund. At the moment, there is only a few hundred dollars in the curatorial fund which pays to process and preserve items.
  - b. Possible sources of funding:
    - I. Party: Committee discussed the possibility of hosting another fund-raising event.
    - II. Divided funds: Wood suggested that, for all future monetary contributions, 5% go to the curatorial fund. If the group adopted this policy, appropriate language would have to be included in all soliciting materials but not in the GOHI Endowment Description. Asmo will talk to Rob Berger & OHS Director of Institutional Advancement about this..
    - III. Maintenance fee: Asmo mentioned that we could ask from those who donate items to the collection that they also contribute a small maintenance fee.
3. Contact with other GLBT collections within Ohio: Kuceyeski send out inquiries to other collections, specifically the Antioch University's Joan Ruth Rose library, the Cincinnati Gay and Lesbian Archives, and the Oberlin.

##### B. Development Committee

1. Final report on 5/9 event: The committee reaffirmed the success of the event. At present, there is \$6,260 in the endowment with \$21,250 in yet to be received pledges.
2. Update on endowment fundraising efforts/Tahoe Auction: Individual donated vacation home, proceeds to split between the Legacy Fund and GOHI.
3. Update on grants:
  - a. Grant denied: The Greater Columbus Arts Council declined support for Rob Berger's GLBT history presentations.
  - b. List of possible GOHI Grant Opportunities. Florenski provided the committee with a 13-page listing of possible

grant sources. Wood also mentioned Aestrea, the Gill Foundation, the Limited, and Kellogg as possible grant funding sources. Asmo suggested that we work on one or two grant applications at a time.

4. OHS-GOHI endowment description: We may approve draft via email as OHS has its development meeting in July.
5. OHS and GOHI endowment fund:
  - a. Approval process: The GOHI endowment fund description needs to be approved and submitted to the OHS development committee before their July 2007 meeting. Once approved by the OHS development committee, the fund description will be reviewed and approved by the OHS Board of Trustees at their September 2007 meeting. Assuming Board approval, endowment funds will not be available for use until July 1, 2009.
  - b. Returns: Asmo will talk to OHS CFO about how he estimates average investment returns.
5. Other gifts: We discussed pre-tax gifts, sustaining (charged monthly to credit card) gifts, and corporate matching gifts as possible revenue streams.

C. Marketing Committee

1. OHS Branding Guide: Wood asked if we could receive a copy of the OHS branding guide. Asmo said that she would investigate and follow up at next GOHI meeting.
2. New web site: Incoming e-mails and telephone calls: At present, incoming emails are going to Chris Hayes. Committee agreed that more individuals should receive copies of incoming email, specifically Berger, John Herman, and Kuceyeski
3. New hot cards: available in 4"x 9"

III. Other Reports: LOGO: Individuals from the LOGO cable channel did a short piece on GOHI. LOGO interviewed Kuceyeski and Heather Mitchell of the OSU "Our Stories" history project. LOGO said that GOHI may be the only statewide and state-affiliated GLBT historical initiative. Also, if we have our local CBS affiliate do a 3-5 minute piece on GOHI, LOGO can pull it.

IV. Old Business

- A. Stonewall Pride Celebration: The committee solidified plans for the march and booth at Bicentennial park. Committee hoped that Rob Berger could bring items from his collection for display. Wood offered to take photos of the GOHI booth.
- B. News coverage of GOHI: Skurdal contacted Cindy Decker at the *Columbus Dispatch* about GOHI. She then contacted Rob Berger.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm. Next meeting scheduled for Wed., July 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

## APPENDIX I

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
July 18, 2007 at 6 p.m.  
Ohio Historical Society

### MEETING AGENDA

#### Welcome and Introductions

#### Committee Reports

##### Curatorial Committee

- Update on artifact donations
- Fundraising ideas
  - Party
  - 5 percent of all donations to curatorial
  - Artifact maintenance fee

##### Development Committee

- Final report on 5/9 event
- Update on grants/fundraising
  - Grant for traveling exhibit
  - Funding for curatorial interns
- Visits to other collections
  - See collection
  - Initiate one-on-one contact
  - Lay ground work for future collaborations
  - Gauge interest in local joint event
- Update on OHS-GOHI endowment description
- Final report on Tahoe Auction

##### Marketing Committee

- New web site
  - Distribution of incoming e-mails and telephone calls
  - Responsibility for replies
  - E-mail listserv
- Status of new hot card

#### Other Reports

### Old Business

Final report on Stonewall Pride Celebration  
Organizational Structure recommendations

### New Business

## GAY OHIO HISTORY INITIATIVE

### Minutes—Steering Committee

Wednesday, July 18, 2007, 6:00 pm, Ohio Historical Society, Classrooms 1 and 2

In attendance: Rebecca Asmo (OHS), Rob Berger (Chair), Sharon Croft, Chris Hayes, John Herman, Stacia Kuceyeski (OHS), Andy Miller, Cory Skurdal, Andrea Wood

- I. Welcome and Introduction
- II. Minutes of June 20, 2007 approved.
- III. Committee Reports
  - A. Curatorial Committee
    1. Update on artifact donations
      - a. Kuceyeski reported that she is currently processing 3 collections.
      - b. Asmo suggested that we might collect something “major” and then run a publicity piece about the donation.
    2. Curatorial fund
      - a. Status: Currently has about \$1500.
      - b. Fundraising ideas: The committee discussed fund-raising party, % of donations to curatorial fund, and artifact maintenance fee.
        - I. IRS rules specify that up to 25% of monetary donations can be allocated for processing. Committee liked the idea of allocating a specific % but wanted to wait until it received information about cubic cost before determining percentage.
        - II. Committee agreed to post info about donation (“What you should know about donating”) and the artifact maintenance fee on web site. Kuceyeski will see such info to Herman to post.
  - B. Development Committee
    1. Final Update on 5/9 event: Asmo distributed a confidential list of contributors. Present total in endowment fund is about \$36K in received and promised contributions. Asmo has sent out thank you cards and pledge reminders.
    2. Update on grants/fundraising (grant for traveling exhibit & funding for curatorial interns):
      - a. Grant subcommittee: Skurdal and Wood agreed to help with grants. They will talk to folks at OHS to learn more.
      - b. Curatorial interns: Miller is on listserv (Kent State University MILS branch at OSU) that could help us solicit curatorial interns.
      - c. Youth: Wood reminded the committee that we need to solicit the involvement of young adults in our efforts. Specifically, she mentioned making use of established

campus connections and planned events (GLBT Leaders; Spring 2008).

- d. Traveling exhibit: Berger talked about taking exhibit to campuses in April/May and Pride events in June. Miller suggested a Columbus Metropolitan Library exhibit.
  - e. Visits to other collections: Berger suggested that we see others' collections, lay the groundwork for future collaborations, and gauge interest in future collaborations. Berger solicited names of those interested in making site visits. Berger hopes to start next month and finish up by end of year. Asmo noted that such relationship might lead to grant collaboration.
- 3. Update on OHS-GOHI endowment description: Committee reviewed language and suggested changes. Description approved by acclamation. Berger will revise and submit to OHS development committee for their review and approval.
  - 4. Final report on Tahoe auction: generated about \$860.

#### C. Marketing Committee

- 1. New web site
  - a. Voicemail: Herman can convert voicemail to email and send such text to appropriate individuals.
  - b. Responsibility for email replies: Hayes is main contact; Kuceyeski and Floreski receive emails about donations.
  - c. Email listserv: We're currently using *Outlook's* listserv. Hayes will bring list to next meeting.
  - d. Founding Funders: Agreed to list names on website.
  - e. Web site story/image ideas: Berger agreed to write about 5/9 event, and Kuceyeski agreed to write about current donations. Herman will connect GOHI website to *Outlook's* flicker site for party images. Herman also wants to post video from Berger's recent history panels.
  - f. Mini-Newsletter: Berger suggested sending out a newsletter about GOHI efforts to donors.
  - g. Collecting video: Herman is supervising a promotional video in August for Stonewall. GOHI could "piggyback" off these efforts. Miller suggested that we collected video from HRC Awards, particularly the biographical videos.
- 2. Status of new hot card: finished but need to be picked up

#### IV. Other Reports: none.

#### V. Old Business

- A. Final report on Stonewall Pride Celebration: For next year, committee wants bigger signage, better way to capture names, and covers for items.
- B. Organizational Structure recs: Berger will revise and distribute via email.
  - 1. Member of OHS collections should serve on GOHI.
  - 2. Quorum (for meeting and email)

- VI. New Business: Committee expressed interest in submitting a proposal for a panel at the ALMS Conference.

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Minutes provided by Sharon Croft

APPENDIX J



Network Columbus  
at the Ohio Historical Society

Wednesday, May 9, 2007  
6 - 8 p.m.

Program

Welcome_____	Chris Hayes Outlook Weekly
Remarks_____	Dr. William K. Laidlaw, Jr. Executive Director, OHS
Recognition of Founding Funders_____	Rob Berger OHS Development Board

*At this time guests are invited to take part in guided tours of  
"First Ladies: Political Role and Public Image"*

Closing Remarks_____	Chris Hayes
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Front

*A special thanks to the following donors for their generous contributions to the GOHI Endowment:*

**Leadership Matching Gift - \$5,000**

Malcom Riggle – GOHI Founder

**Founding Funders - \$1,000 - \$1,500**

Kate Anderson and Beth Hingsbergen  
Randy Arndt and Jeff Baker  
Deb Ballam  
Rob Berger and Glenn Rondo  
Anne Casto and Susan White  
Michael Council  
Sheila Clark and Elizabeth Boster  
Equality Ohio Education Fund  
Lynn Greer and Stevie Walton  
Robert J. Haverkamp and B. Scott Sanchez  
Chris Hayes  
Fred and Howard Holdridge  
Kelly J. Jaeger and Stonewall Columbus  
Karla Rothan and Linda Schuler  
Steven Shellabarger  
Jeff Smith

**Generous Benefactors - \$100 - \$999**

James E. Daley  
Theresa L. Carter  
Meral Crane  
Tim Gardner and Norman Anderson  
Mary Ann Horton  
Orn Huntington  
Douglas Whaley

GOHI would like to thank the following individuals, organizations and businesses for their contributions to the success of this event:

CMR, Inc. – Beverage Sponsor

Outlook Weekly	Succeeding Steps
Network Columbus	Equality Ohio
Ohio Historical Society	Spinelli's Deli
Stonewall Columbus	Team Nilsson, HER Realty
Debé Wenig and Bobby Hamlin	Columbus Distributing /
David Cunningham, Edward Jones	Bud Light

Back

## APPENDIX K

# Code of Regulations of The Gay Ohio History Initiative

## ARTICLE I PURPOSE

Section 1. The purpose of the Gay Ohio History Initiative is to collect, archive and curate the history and culture of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender [GLBT] community in Ohio.

## ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General. Board membership shall be open to all individuals and entities subscribing to and supporting the purposes of this organization, regardless of age, sex, gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, culture, color, income, lifestyle, occupation, veteran status, condition of health, HIV status, disability or gender identity. Non-board members and honorary members may attend board meetings to observe proceedings, offer comments during the new business portion of the agenda at the end of the meeting and serve on committees of Gay Ohio History Initiative.

Section 2. Board Members. Board members shall be those individual or organizational members who have been named to the Gay Ohio History Initiative Board of Trustees. Only board members shall have the right to vote, nominate trustees and serve on the board of trustees. The Gay Ohio History Initiative Board of Trustees shall have no less than seven and no more than 15 members.

Section 3. Board Member Nomination Process. The Gay Ohio History Initiative Board shall appoint board members as needed in a number as determined necessary by the Board. Each member shall serve a three year term with the ability to have that term renewed two times. Parties interested in serving on the Board may submit a letter of interest to the Vice President at any time.

Section 4. Board Member Duties. All board members are required to serve as an officer and/or committee chair and/or be a member of at least one board committee. Further, all board members are required to assist the Gay Ohio History Initiative in annual fundraising efforts and to make an individual personal financial pledge. All board members are required to also be members of the Ohio Historical Society.

Section 5. Honorary Members. Honorary membership may be awarded by a two-thirds vote of the board of trustees to any person in recognition of notable or valuable

contributions to the Gay Ohio History Initiative or to the furtherance of its stated purposes.

Section 6. Transfer. Membership in the Gay Ohio History Initiative is not transferable.

### ARTICLE III OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers. Election, Term. All officers shall be members of the board of trustees. The officers of the Gay Ohio History Initiative are: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

The officers are selected by a board election process. The President and Vice President will serve two-year terms, while all other officers serve one-year terms. Voting for elected positions will take place at a full board meeting in September each year. In the event that the elected individual is unable to complete the term of office, a replacement will be elected to complete the unfinished term by a majority vote at any meeting of the board of trustees.

Section 2. Removal, Resignation. Any officer elected by the board of trustees may be removed with or without cause by a majority vote of the trustees. In the event of the death, resignation, or removal of an officer, the board shall elect a successor to fill the unexpired term.

Section 3. President. The President shall serve as the chief executive officer of the organization, and shall, under the general direction of the board of trustees, oversee that the organization complies with the mission of the Gay Ohio History Initiative as embodied in the Code of Regulations and policies. The President serves a two-year term and shall be elected during odd numbered years.

During the temporary absence or disability of the President, the Vice President shall have the powers, duties, and functions of President.

Section 4. Vice President. The Vice President shall have such powers, duties, and functions as assigned from time to time by the President and/or the board of trustees. Additionally, the Vice President will coordinate board elections and appointments. The Vice President serves a two-year term and shall be elected during even numbered years.

During the temporary absence or disability of the Vice President, the President shall appoint an interim Vice President, who shall have the powers, duties, and functions of Vice President.

Section 5. Treasurer. The Treasurer of the Gay Ohio History Initiative shall be responsible for providing regular reports on the status of all GOHI funds being held for

GOHI by the Ohio Historical Society. This position shall be filled by an employee of the Ohio Historical Society.

During the temporary absence or disability of the Treasurer, the President shall appoint an interim Treasurer, who shall have the powers, duties, and functions of Treasurer.

Section 6. Secretary. The Secretary of the Gay Ohio History Initiative shall be the keeper of the official record of the organization. The Secretary shall act as the organization's parliamentarian at all meetings.

During the temporary absence or disability of the Secretary, the President shall appoint an interim Clerk who shall have the powers, duties, and functions of Clerk.

#### ARTICLE IV COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committees. The Gay Ohio History Initiative shall have three permanent committees – the Development Committee, the Marketing Committee and the Curatorial Committee. Only a board member may chair these committees, but a non-board member may serve on any of these committees.

Section 2. Development Committee. The Board shall appoint, from among the trustees, the Chair of the Development Committee and the other members of the Committee. The Chair of the Development Committee will oversee the operation of the committee.

Under the general direction of the President and the board, the Development Committee shall be responsible for all fundraising for the Gay Ohio History Initiative.

Section 3. Marketing Committee. The Board shall appoint, from among the trustees, the Chair of the Marketing Committee and the other members of the Committee. The Chair of the Marketing Committee will oversee operation of the Committee.

Under the general direction of the President and the Board, the Marketing Committee shall be responsible for general oversight of marketing, public relations and media relations affairs of the Gay Ohio History Initiative.

Section 4. Curatorial Committee. The Board shall appoint, from among the trustees, the Chair of the Curatorial Committee and the other members of the Committee. The Chair of the Curatorial Committee will oversee operation of the Committee.

Under the general direction of the President and the Board, the Curatorial Committee shall be responsible for general oversight of the curatorial and collections

affairs of the Gay Ohio History Initiative. At least one member of the Curatorial Committee must be an employee of the Ohio Historical Society.

Section 5. Other Committees. The board of trustees shall create such other committees as it deems necessary. Members of these ad hoc committees need not be trustees. Each such committee and the members thereof shall serve at the pleasure of the board.

## ARTICLE V MEETINGS

Section 1. General Meetings. Board meetings may be held at such times and places as shall be determined by the board of trustees. Except as governed by these Code of Regulations, all meetings of the board of trustees shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 2. Quorum. Four GOHI members, including at least two officers, present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum. A quorum being present, all matters brought to a vote shall be determined by a majority of the board members voting.

Section 3. Voting by E-mail. Board member voting by e-mail is permissible when designated by a majority of the officers. In such circumstances, the same quorum requirements as in Article V, Section 2 above shall apply. In order to be valid, e-mail votes must be received within 72 hours of the initial e-mail requesting a vote. A quorum being present, all matters brought to an e-mail vote shall be determined by a majority of the board members voting.

## ARTICLE VI AMENDMENTS

This Code of Regulations may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the trustees at any meeting of the board.

Any amendments to this Code of Regulations will not be in effect until signed by the President and the Secretary and noted in the official record of the organization.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, representing a two-thirds vote of the trustees as stated in Article V, do hereby assent to the adoption of the following Code of Regulations for Gay Ohio History Initiative on this day, the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2007 at Columbus, OH.

## APPENDIX L

# GAY OHIO HISTORY INITIATIVE (GOHI) COLLECTING PLAN

*March 2007*

Twenty-five years ago, the status of the gay and lesbian community in Central Ohio was described in "The Invisible Minority," a four-part series published by the *Columbus Citizen-Journal*. Many of the people who were interviewed about what life was like for gays and lesbians in 1981 remained anonymous. Today, that same community is highly visible. Its history, however, can be hard to find. The Gay Ohio Historical Initiative, or GOHI, would like to change that. Donations will be monitored by GOHI and items corresponding to the parameters outlined in this collection plan will go to the Ohio Historical Society for review to be added to the permanent OHS collection.

**PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTING PLAN:** This collecting plan will guide GOHI and the Ohio Historical Society (OHS) in the acquisition and preservation of Ohio's gay history.

**AUTHORSHIP:** This plan was written by members of the GOHI Subcommittee on Collection Development, with input from the GOHI Advisory Board and guidance by staff members of OHS.

**INTELLECTUAL FRAMEWORK:** The mission of OHS, according to its 2006 strategic plan, is to "help people connect with the Ohio's past in order to understand the present and create a better future." The Society values the authenticity of the "real stuff" of history, partnership and collaboration, and accessibility to programs and services. OHS also values diversity in the people and organizations the Society serves, in the programs it offers, and in the ideas and perspectives it represents.

The GOHI Collection will support OHS's multi-cultural, historical initiative by helping to educate people about Ohio's gay history with material that documents the significant contributions the gay and lesbian community has made to the historical, cultural, and business heritage of the state.

Collections, according to OHS, "are essential to our ability to provide powerful learning situations and programs for our audiences. Current research indicates that organizations like ours are trusted and valued portals to the past largely because we enable people to be in close proximity to authentic evidence of the past" (*VISION 2000*).

**DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING COLLECTION:** OHS has a number of collections that illustrate a variety of contributions made by gay and lesbian Ohioans, including material provided by such diverse organizations as the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus; the Ohio State University's Gay and Lesbian Alliance; Outlook Media; and Stonewall Union (Columbus). Scores of print titles have also been acquired.

**HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION:** OHS has been collecting and preserving GLBT Ohio history since the early 1980s.

## **STRENGTHS & WEAKNESS OF THE EXISTING COLLECTION: GAP ANALYSIS:**

**Strengths:** The Ohio Historical Society currently has a small archival collection concerning the GLBTQ community in Ohio. Included are printed material and approximately four manuscript and audiovisual collections, including materials from Stonewall Union, and photographs in the *Columbus Free Press* collection.

**Gaps:** The majority of the collection materials are from organizations, so there is a lack of personal GLBTQ collections at OHS. This would include letters and diaries, as well as scrapbooks and family photographs. Although organizational collections and newsletters are most prominent in the existing collection, there is still a need for more GLBTQ organizational records and publications. There is also a lack of artifacts that document the GLBTQ community.

**Complimentary Collections in Ohio Institutions:** There are a handful of institutions in Ohio that have publicized GLBTQ collections. Those are:

**Archives of Gay and Lesbian Artists, Department of Art, Oberlin College:** Established as a non-profit voluntary endeavor at Oberlin College in 1989. Essentially a documentary archive, it accepted slides or other forums of documentation such as videotapes and photographic compact discs. Artists are usually represented by twenty slides and retain the copyright to all submitted material. The slides are cataloged and available to students for research. Artist statements, curricula vitae, exhibition schedules and other ephemera may also be included.

### **Cincinnati Gay/Lesbian Archives**

**Joan Ruth Rose Library, Yellow Springs:** Library contains approximately 300 bound volumes, fiction, non-fiction and poetry, related to gay, lesbian and women's issues. Also included are materials related to women's health.

### **Popular Culture Collection, William T. Jerome Library, Bowling Green State University**

Materials include westerns, erotic stories, science fiction, underground comics, alternative press publications and other publications.

<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/pcl/>

### **Northeast Ohio Lesbian/Gay Archives, Western Reserve Historical Society:**

The collection consists of organizations and individuals in the Cleveland/Northeastern Ohio area. Included are the records from the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland, Chevrei Tikva, a Jewish congregation, the Lesbian/Gay Community Service Center of Greater Cleveland and Stonewall: Cleveland. <http://www.lgcsc.org/archives.html>

**Oberlin College LGBT Community History Project:** This web-based project has information on gay life at Oberlin including oral histories with corresponding photographs and transcripts. <http://www.oberlinlgbt.org/>

**Ohio Lesbian Archives in Cincinnati:** Collection contains books by or about lesbians as well as lesbian periodicals, flyers from lesbian events, photographs,

posters, CDs, LPs, videocassettes (movies and interviews), audiocassettes (music, interviews and poetry), T-shirts, buttons, etc. The OLA also collects lesbian/gay movement flyers and periodicals from the tri-state area. A large lesbian/gay history collection is also part of OLA.

<http://www.geocities.com/ohiolesbianarchives/>

**Our Stories: A Developing Record of Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, and Alliance at The Ohio State University:** This is a collaborative program with the mission to develop a record of the LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transexual, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Allies) community at Ohio State. Participating members of *Our Stories* include faculty, staff, alumni, graduate and undergraduate students, and community members.  
<http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/page.asp?id=82>;  
<http://ftad.osu.edu/OurStories.html>

**PRIORITIES:** GOHI will focus its initial efforts on the acquisition of material from Central Ohio that documents Pride celebrations. In addition, GOHI will focus on collecting oral and video histories of the older generation of the GLBTQ community with a special emphasis on documenting early trailblazers, discrimination and personal lives.

**CRITERIA FOR ACQUISITIONS OR DEACCESSIONING:** GOHI will actively seek a variety of audiovisuals, personal papers and artifacts, including but not limited to: photographs, film and video, diaries, letters, journals, postcards, flyers, newsletters, posters, buttons, and T-shirts. Conditions that will help guide the acquisition process include the relevance to Central Ohio, provenance (history of material), uniqueness, preservation needs and storage requirements.

Material that falls outside the scope of the GOHI Collection will be returned to the donor with a list of institutions that may be interested in the items.

**SPECIFICS OF IMPLEMENTATION:** October 2006 will mark the official launch of the GOHI collecting plan. Items will be stored at the *Outlook* office for up to one year until a collection is amassed to be donated to OHS. GOHI committee members will document each potential donation and recommend material that meets the stated criteria to the Ohio Historical Society's Collection Management Team (CMT). The CMT will make the final decision on the material to be accessioned as part of the Society's permanent collections.

**EVALUATION:** Success of this plan will be measured by the collection acquired. If there are still significant gaps in the collection a new marketing plan will be devised.

**REVISION AND RENEWAL OF THE PLAN:** This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## APPENDIX M

### Who Are We?

**Know who we are,  
so they know who  
we are not.**

#### Who is the Gay Ohio History Initiative?

GOHI is a partnership with the Ohio Historical Society's multi-cultural historical initiative. GOHI is made up of GLBTQ and Straight Ally community members and leaders.

We will act as a conduit for the Historical Society's effort to interpret, preserve, collect, and make available evidence of the past, and to provide leadership on furthering knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the prehistory and history of Ohio and of the broader cultural and natural environments of which Ohio is a part as related to the gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender, and questioning community.

#### Why are you doing this?

What does it mean to be gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender, or questioning in Ohio and around the world? In our heads, it can mean something as simple or complex as love. It can mean a million things, or it can be a non-issue. But one thing for certain is that for non-GLBTQ folks, it usually just means something negative, curious or unknown.

The single most significant factor in discrimination against gay folks is fear – fear of the unknown. By and large, too many straight folks just don't know enough gay folks and know even less about the ones they are acquainted with. They don't know how we live, what we do, or who we are. They don't know how we play, how we pray, or how we define our values and morals. So, in order for folks to know us better, they need to know our past. They need to know we have a culture, and they need to know we have a history. They can better understand where we're going, if they have an idea where we've been.

### How to Contact Us

#### Write to us:

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
406 East Wilson Bridge Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43085-6397

#### Call us:

Call 866-GLB-NEWS and  
ask for the Gay Ohio History Initiative.

#### Visit us online:

<http://www.gohi.org>

#### Fax:

(614) 261-8200

Please make checks payable to the Ohio Historical Society and denote GOHI on the memo line.

**Box with  
Sample Item**



### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What kind of items are you looking for?

We are looking for any kind of item, document or story that gives a clue to Ohio and the World's GLBTQ history.

#### Are my donations tax deductible?

Yes. Your donation will be made out to the Ohio Historical Society designated to the fund for the Gay Ohio History Initiative. This donation is tax-exempt and your donation is fully deductible to the full amount allowed by law. (Please check with your personal tax preparer regarding how this applies to you)

#### Where can I drop off my items?

At this time we have limited storage facilities and may ask you to keep your item until we are able to arrange for it to be picked up. Contact us through our website or by calling (866) GLB-NEWS to let us know about your items. If the need for preservation is necessary immediately we may be able to find storage.

**Box with  
Sample Item**

### Ohio Historical Society Partnership

GOHI is a partnership with the Ohio Historical Society's multi-cultural historical initiative. We were the first group to contact the Ohio Historical Society regarding spearheading this project and are pleased to say that we have 100% board approval and support from them for this project. OHS is the perfect partner in that they are historians and are in the archival and curatorial business every day. Most would be surprised to learn that the Ohio Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization. It does receive state funding but also receives funding from many other sources including memberships. Additional funding comes from partners like GOHI. It is GOHI's goal to raise significant funding for our part of the initiative so as not to tax the budget or staff of the Ohio Historical Society.

Donations for GOHI will be made payable to the Ohio Historical Society and will be tax deductible. (Please check with your personal tax preparer regarding how this applies to you). Donations earmarked for GOHI will be put into a special fund and used only for the purposes of GOHI. Those purposes would include the following but would not be limited to:

- Marketing
- Public relations
- Multi-cultural staffing
- Fundraising
- Item collection
- Curatorial & archival
- Traveling collections
- Endowment
- Statewide outreach



Membership in the Ohio Historical Society is not required in order to support GOHI and membership funds are not considered part of the GOHI fund. However, in order to show support for the STRONG support shown by the Ohio Historical Society in this project membership in OHS is strongly recommended.

### Donate Your Items

- Letters
- Pictures
- Documents
- One Dimensional Items
- Two Dimensional Items
- Three Dimensional Items
- Oral Histories
- Local Entertainers
- Celebrity Memorabilia
- Rural History
- Urban History
- Estates
- Videos

At this time we have limited storage facilities and may ask you to keep your item until we are able to arrange for it to be picked up.

### Donate Your Time

We are looking for volunteers to help us raise funds, assisting the Ohio Historical Society in curating the items, and getting the word out.

### Donate Funds

#### Send donations to:

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
406 East Wilson Bridge Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43085-6397

For donations, please make your check payable to the Ohio Historical Society and denote GOHI on the memo line.

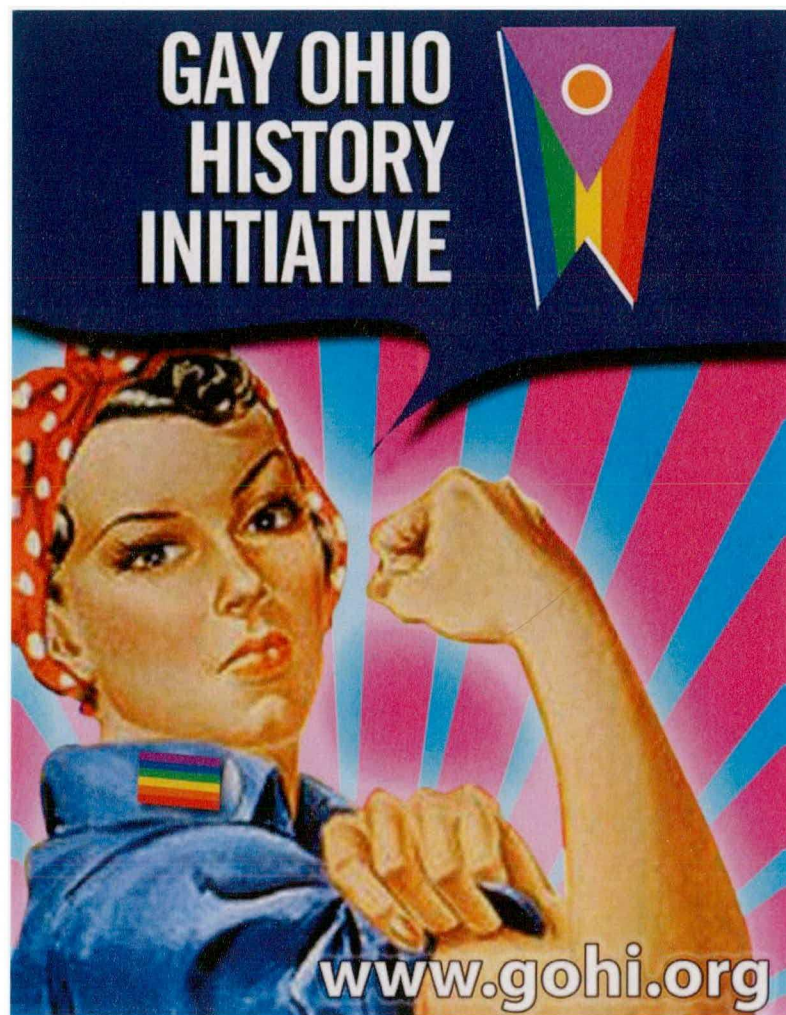
If you have any questions about a donation of items, time, or funds:

Call Us: (866) GLB-NEWS and ask for the Gay Ohio History Initiative

Fax Us: (614) 261-8200

Visit Us Online: <http://www.gohi.org>

APPENDIX N



Front

# GAY OHIO HISTORY INITIATIVE



in partnership with the  
Ohio Historical Society's  
Multi-cultural Project

## DONATE YOUR ITEMS

**GOHI is currently focusing on donations  
relating to Ohio Pride events.**

Items such as programs and brochures, letters, buttons,  
T-shirts, photographs and film would be a welcome  
addition to the collection.

We will also be collecting oral histories dealing with events  
prior to 1980. Things you might find insignificant, could be  
historical treasures. Ask us, we'll let you know.

**If you have any questions please call (614) 265-3535.  
Visit us online at <http://www.gohi.org>.**

## DONATE FUNDS

Send your donations to:  
GOHI

c/o OHS Development Office  
1982 Velma Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 43211-2453

*Your donation may be tax deductible*

***Know who  
we are,  
so they know  
who we are  
not.***

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## APPENDIX O



### FIND OUT MORE

Visit our website  
[www.gohi.org](http://www.gohi.org)

### DONATE ONLINE

[www.gohi.org/donate/](http://www.gohi.org/donate/)

### MAIL A DONATION

Gay Ohio History Initiative  
c/o OHS Development Office  
1982 Velma Avenue

Columbus, Ohio 43211-2453

*Your donation may be tax deductible*

**For lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Ohioans, it is vital that the past be protected - not only for those who lived it, but also for future generations who will make history. The artifacts of our past are worthy of preservation.**



A part of the Gay Ohio History Initiative Collection at the Ohio Historical Society

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## **DONATE YOUR ITEMS**

GOHI is seeking donations relating to past Ohio Pride events.

Items such as programs and brochures, letters, buttons, T-shirts, photographs and film would be a welcome addition to the collection.

We also are seeking oral histories dealing with events prior to 1980.

You may think an item is insignificant but it could be a historical treasure. Ask us, we'll let you know.

If you have any questions please call (614) 265-3535.

## **DONATE YOUR TIME**

We are looking for volunteers to help us raise funds, assisting the Ohio Historical Society in curating the items, and getting the word out.

## **FIND OUT MORE**

Visit our website  
[www.gohi.org](http://www.gohi.org)

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