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The Tretter Project: Queer History

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THE TRETTER PROJECT: Queer History

The Jean-Nikolaus Tretter Collection
in GLBT Studies at The University of Minnesota



LAURA MIGLIORINO



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THE TRETTER PROJECT: Queer History

Through the Lense of Minnesota &
The Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection
in GLBT Studies

LAURA MIGLIORINO

PHOTOGRAPHY

CHRISTOPHER BOHNET

GRAPHIC DESIGN

MINNESOTA

People of Color

Andrea Jenkins

Minneapolis made more electoral history in November of 2018 when two African American transgender candidates were elected to the Minneapolis City Council. Phillipe Cunningham representing the 4th Ward and identifying as black, queer and trans, was the first openly transgender man of color elected to office in the United States. Andrea Jenkins representing the 8th Ward, was the first openly transgender African American woman elected to office in the United States. She identifies as bisexual and queer. Andrea was re-elected in 2022 and now serves as the President of the Minneapolis City Council.

Andrea also played an important role at the Tretter Collection, serving as the first oral historian for the Tretter Transgender Oral History Project from 2015-2018. In that role she recorded almost 200 oral histories documenting the stories of trans and gender queer people in the Upper Midwest. Phase 2, led by Myrl Beam, recorded +60 more interviews with activists from across the country. And Phase 3 kicks off in 2023. The combined phases make the TTOHP the largest project of its kind anywhere in the world.



— Audre Lorde



Olaudah Equiano
OR
GUSTAVUS VASSA,

1789 – Olaudah Equiano, a formerly enslaved person, publishes the narrative, *The Interesting narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, The African*. It was one of the first widely read narratives of slave life at the time. In it, he describes same-sex relationships he had with other men and the existence of same-sex relationships within the slave culture since slaves were not allowed to marry.

A MINNESOTA FIRST - Michael McConnell & Jack Baker • Minneapolis 1970

Marriage Equality



MCCONNELL/BAKER

The roots of the fight for marriage equality are in Minnesota. In 1970, Jack Baker and Michael McConnell were the first couple to openly apply for a same-sex marriage license. Their application was denied and their case was the first same-sex marriage case to reach the Supreme Court, which refused to hear it.

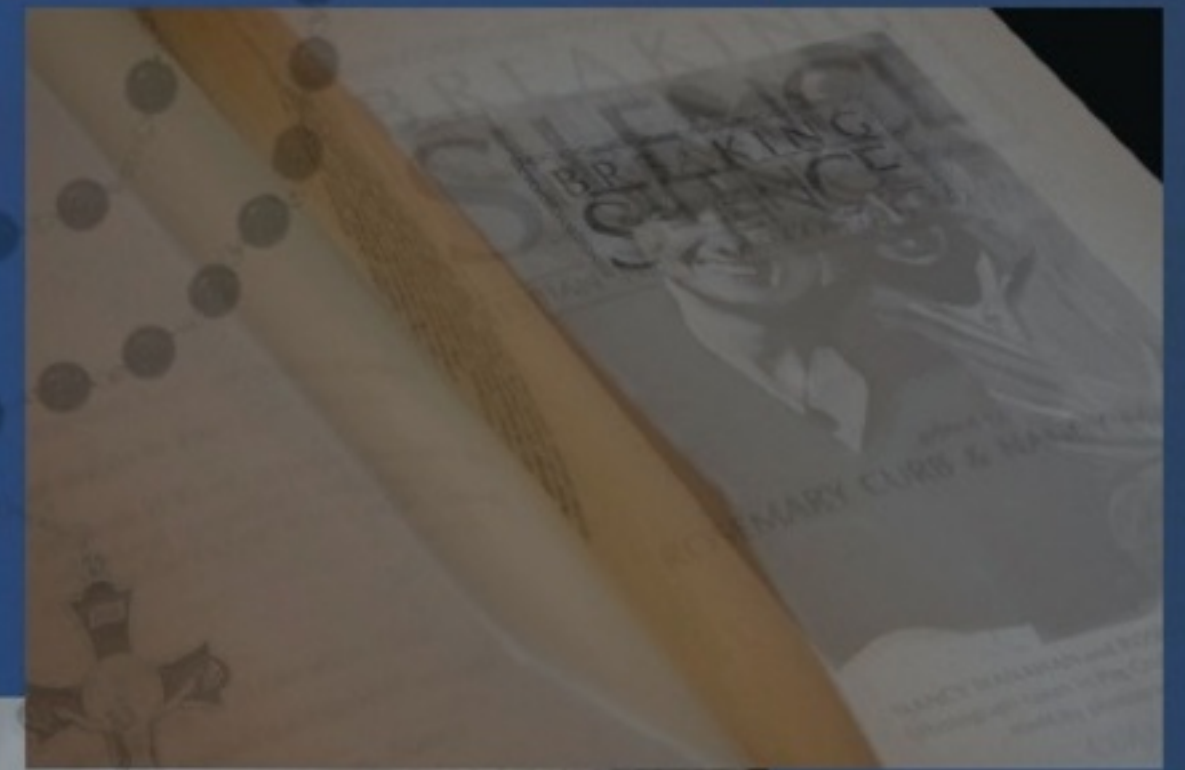
While the marriage case was working through the courts, Michael legally adopted Jack and they changed Jack's name to Pat Lyn McConnell. Michael went to Blue Earth County in Minnesota to apply for a marriage license using Jack's legal and gender ambiguous name. They were married in Minneapolis on September 3, 1971. When authorities in Blue Earth realized that Pat Lyn McConnell was male, they refused to record the marriage. In September of 2018 a court ordered Blue Earth County to acknowledge the marriage as legal. Jack Baker and Michael McConnell are the first known legally married same-sex couple, now celebrating over 50 years of marriage.

Jack and Michael were visible across the country at a time when few people were publicly out as LGBTQ+. The Michael McConnell Files in the Tretter Collection are a remarkable documentation of early LGBTQ+ organizing and the fight for marriage equality.



DRITTES GESCHLECHT = FEMINISTS = THIRD SEX

Lesbians

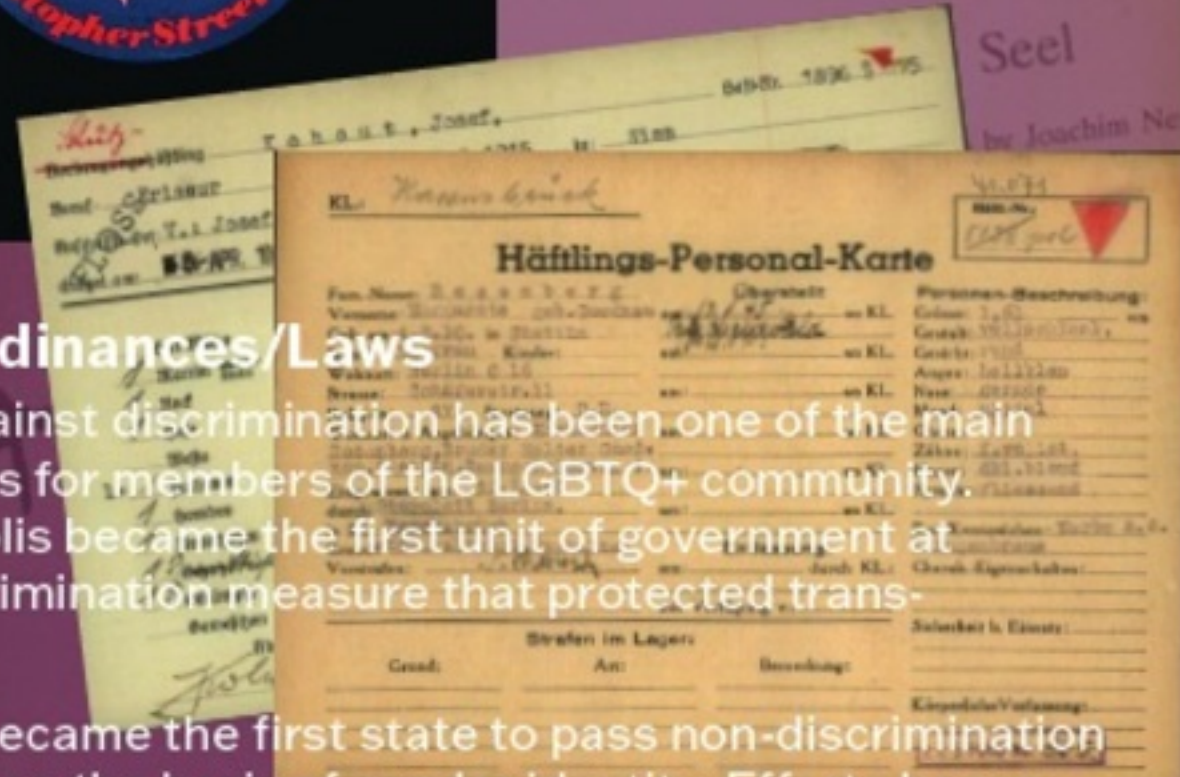


“You’re neither unnatural, nor abominable, nor mad; you’re as much a part of what people call nature as anyone else; only you’re unexplained as yet — you’ve not got your niche in creation.”

– Radclyffe Hall

HOMOSEXUALITÄT

Nazis



Non-discrimination Ordinances/Laws

The fight for laws against discrimination has been one of the main efforts to advance civil rights for members of the LGBTQ+ community. In 1975 the City of Minneapolis became the first unit of government at any level to pass a non-discrimination measure that protected transgender citizens.

In 1993, Minnesota became the first state to pass non-discrimination laws banning discrimination on the basis of gender identity. Efforts began in 1973 and did not initially include the trans/genderqueer community. In 1991 the Gay and Lesbian Community Action Council founded "It's Time, Minnesota" to lead the fight to pass state legislation. Because the bill had failed 7 times before, there was debate about whether to pass narrow protections and then seek to expand them or to demand broad protections for the entire community. The decision was made to seek comprehensive protections. When the bill passed in 1993 Minnesota became the eighth state to pass legislation banning discrimination against gays and lesbians. And the first state to ban discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Liberation Was for Others

MEMOIRS OF A GAY SURVIVOR OF THE NAZI HOLOCAUST

Seel

by Joachim Neugroschel



Kennzeichen für Schutzhäftlinge in den Konz. Lagern

Form und Farbe der Kennzeichen

	Politisch	Berufs-Verbrecher	Emigrant	Bibel-forscher	homo-sexuell	Allozial
Grund-farben	Red inverted triangle	Green inverted triangle	Blue inverted triangle	Black inverted triangle	Red inverted triangle	Black inverted triangle
Abzeichen für Rückfällige	Red inverted triangle with horizontal lines	Green inverted triangle with horizontal lines	Blue inverted triangle with horizontal lines	Black inverted triangle with horizontal lines	Red inverted triangle with horizontal lines	Black inverted triangle with horizontal lines
Häftlinge der Straf-kompanie	Red inverted triangle with a white circle	Green inverted triangle with a white circle	Blue inverted triangle with a white circle	Black inverted triangle with a white circle	Red inverted triangle with a white circle	Black inverted triangle with a white circle
Abzeichen für Juden	Red Star of David	Green Star of David	Blue Star of David	Black Star of David	Red Star of David	Black Star of David
Besondere Abzeichen	Yellow Star of David (Jüd. Rasse-schänder)	Orange Star of David (Rasse-schänderin)	Red circle (Flucht-verdächtig)	White box with number (Häftlings-Nummer)	Striped shirt (Beispiel)	
	Red inverted triangle with 'P' (Pole)					



LEADING THE NATION

MN Firsts

DSI

In 1967, the DSI legal case set a national precedent and fundamentally changed what kind of material could be sent through the mail. DSI was based in Minneapolis and produced early explicit material for gay men, like Butch and Greyhuff Review. They also produced books about how to draw or photography the nude male (including photos of nude men). The owners, Conrad Germain and Lloyd Spinar, were charged in Federal Court with 29 counts of sending obscenity through the mail. They faced fines of \$145,000 and jail time up to 145 years. In finding them not guilty, the judge wrote "The rights of minorities expressed individually in sexual groups or otherwise must be respected. With increasing research and study, we will in the future come to a better understanding of ourselves, sexual deviants, and others." The DSI case fundamentally changed what could be mailed and so opened up an enormous market for explicit material sold to gay men and other parts of the LGBTQ+ communities.



ISSUE 6
DSI

BLAZING A TRAIL AS EARLY AS 1972

Politics



Elected officials

Minnesota had one of the earliest out elected officials in the country. State Senator Allan Spear was first elected in 1972. He came out in 1974, inspired by the election of Elaine Noble to the Massachusetts House. Spear was re-elected as an out gay man in 1974 and was in office until 2001, the last 8 years serving as the President of the Senate. Representative Karen Clark was first elected in 1981 as an out lesbian and served until 2019. Her website called her the longest serving lesbian in a State Legislature, but we can't help but wonder if she isn't the longest serving LGBTQ+ person at any level - 38 years in office!!! (Minnesota's ground-breaking election streak continued - see the segment on Andrea Jenkins in this zine.)



“All young people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, deserve a safe and supportive environment in which to achieve their full potential.”

- Harvey Milk



TRANSVESTITISM

Trans

“If a transvestite doesn’t say I’m gay and I’m proud and I’m a transvestite, then nobody else is going to hop up there and say I’m gay and I’m proud and I’m a transvestite for them.”

– Marsha P. Johnson



“I think it’s important for parents to educate themselves, too, and be open, and realizing that your children are their own person and if they may or may not act the way you want them to in terms of gender expression that that’s OK.”

– Laverne Cox

PARADES AND A PIE IN THE FACE

Protests & Pride

“You have to go the way your blood beats. If you don't live the only life you have, you won't live some other life, you won't live any life at all.”

—James Baldwin



GAY PRIDE DAY.

"God, no...not ANOTHER one!"
TV-commercial actress

SATURDAY, JUNE 25. MINNEAPOLIS.

Don't be late!

More events throughout the Gay 80s Circuit, 614-444



“I'm proud of who I am. I am proud of my husband and our marriage.”

— Pete Buttigieg
United States Secretary of Transportation