



Archives and Records

Finding Aid

COLLECTION NUMBER: Coll.8
TITLE: Lavender Resistance and BLAGMAR Collection

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator(s): Kate Gyllensvard
Title: The Lavender Resistance and BLAGMAR Collection
Extent: 1 Linear Foot and 2 Oversize Containers
Date Span: 1970 – 1989
Repository: The History Project, Archives and Records Department

Finding aid prepared for The History Project, Archives and Records Department by Laura Pike, student in the History/Archives masters degree program at Simmons College, under the supervision of Andrea Still, Libby Bouvier, and Andrew Elder, Fall 2007.

SUBJECT TERMS

Subject Names:

Boston/Boise Committee
Boston Committee to End Sterilization Abuse
Boston Lesbian and Gays Against the Right (BLAGMAR)
Briggs Initiative-- California
Committee of Lesbian and Gay Male Socialists
Homophile Community Health Service
Lavender Resistance
New England Lesbian and Gay Conference
Preterm Women's Health Clinic

Subject Topics:

Feminism– Massachusetts – Boston
Gay Liberation Movement-- Massachusetts – Boston
Gays in Literature
New Right—Politics and Government
Socialism– Massachusetts – Boston

Document Types:

Articles
Cloth Banner
Flyers
Journals
Letters

Manila Posters
Media Notices
Meeting minutes
Newspaper Clippings
Pamphlets
Position Papers

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Terms of Use/Copyright: Unrestricted, though some items in the collection are copyrighted by individuals and/or organizations outside The History Project.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Boston Lesbian and Gays Against the Right (BLAGMAR) and its parent organization, Lavender Resistance, were groups formed in the last half of the 1970s to negotiate between issues relating to the LGBT community and the concerns of leftist politics. Lavender Resistance, active from 1976-1979, was primarily a discussion and study group that focused on defining this relationship, and because some members wanted a more action-oriented environment, BLAGMAR was formed to meet this need in 1978. BLAGMAR specifically was a reaction against the emergence of the New Right, a political movement of evangelical Christians, headed by people like Anita Bryant, that actively targeted the gay and lesbian community.

The records of the organizations reflect the political and activist LGBT community during one of the Gay Rights Movement's most active periods. Perhaps most importantly, these records, particularly the meeting minutes and discussion notes, are very relevant for any study of how gay and lesbian issues related to socialist and progressive politics, and how certain members of the community chose to approach this relationship. The group's records represent an intellectual and economically progressive approach to LGBT issues. Lavender Resistance, a socialist-feminist voice in the gay community, was particularly invested in the study of the historic interactions between race, class, gender, and homosexuality in a capitalist environment, while BLAGMAR focused on current political trends and activism.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of one box full of loose papers, newspaper and journal publications, eight sheets of manila paper, and a decorated fitted sheet used as a banner. The large sheets of manila paper, used like posters, feature the agenda for the 1979 BLAGMAR theatre piece written in colored marker. The cloth banner is also decorated with colored marker.

Lavender Resistance met on Thursday evenings, and the typed or handwritten meeting notes run unevenly from 01/06/1977 to 08/17/1979. Each week the group discussed assigned reading on topics such as separatist lesbianism, child sexuality, imperialism, racism, and the New Right, and these photocopied reading materials, including essays and articles, were collected with the meeting minutes from the corresponding week of discussion. The collection also includes the internal organizational documents, such as typed or handwritten member contact information and lists of goals, as well as materials authored by the group, such as flyers, letters, and position papers. Also present are materials collected on related organizations, including letters, position papers, flyers, and media notices, and materials that reflect the range of issues important to the members and interests of Lavender Resistance. These mostly photocopied materials relate to feminism, socialism, current events, and issues relevant to the LGBT community.

BLAGMAR also met on Thursday evenings, and the mostly handwritten meeting notes run from 03/25/1979 to 03/31/1980. Though assigned reading materials are present in the collection, there is much less than was present in the materials of Lavender Resistance. Most of these photocopied readings relate to the New Right and LGBT activism. Again, the collection includes the internal organizational documents, such as lists of members, descriptions of goals, and notes on planning done outside of regular meetings. BLAGMAR's organizational documents intended for dissemination largely relate to the group's active stance against the Briggs Initiative in California, and include letters, position papers, and flyers. Documents that are more general or focused on other issues are also present. Again, BLAGMAR collected the materials of related organizations, such as letters, position papers, and flyers. The materials that reflect the interests of members and the group are overwhelmingly related to LGBT activism and culture. A distinctive feature of the BLAGMAR papers is the large collection of materials related to LGBT literary culture. Photocopies of poems, plays, and literary essays were presumably collected as BLAGMAR prepared a theatre piece, "Up on the Roof," that was showcased Sunday, May 31, 1979 to mark the ten year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. The large cloth banner and eight manila sheets were used as posters to record the event's agenda.

An unusual part of the collection is a folder that binds materials from the 1981 New England Lesbian and Gay Conference. The folder contains letters, flyers, and informational materials presumably gathered at this conference. This will be included in the collection of BLAGMAR Organizational Materials.

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

- Series I:** Publications of leftist gay and lesbian journals (Gay Left, Liberation, Resist, Come Out!, Gay Community News, and the Lavender and Red Book)
- Series II:** Lavender Resistance Organizational Materials (meeting notes, organizational planning, member lists, and group-authored works such as position papers)
- Series III:** Materials of Related Organizations and Issues- Lavender Resistance (letters, flyers, pamphlets, etc.)
- Series IV:** BLAGMAR Organizational Materials (meeting notes, organizational planning, member lists, group-authored works such as position papers, folder from 1981 New England Lesbian and Gay Conference, notes and memorabilia from BLAGMAR Theater Piece)

Series V: Materials of Related LGBT Organizations and Issues- BLAGMAR (letters, flyers, pamphlets, etc.)

SERIES AND FOLDER LIST

Series 1: Publications of leftist gay and lesbian journals (1970-1979)

Folder 1: *Gay Left, Liberation, Resist* (1977-1979)

Folder 2: *Come Out!, Gay Community News, The Lavender & Red Book* (1970-1979)

Series 2: Organizational Materials- Lavender Resistance (1976-1979)

Folder 3: LR Meeting Minutes (01/06/1977-05/26/1977)

Folder 4: LR Meeting Minutes (07/27/1977-12/15/1977)

Folder 5: LR Meeting Minutes (01/19/1978-09/01/1978)

Folder 6: LR Meeting Minutes (09/14/1978-08/18/1978)

Folder 7: LR Organizational Materials (1976-1978)

Internal discussions

Member Lists

Group-Authored Materials

Series 3: Materials of Related Organizations and Issues- Lavender Resistance (1974-1989)

Folder 8: Materials of Related Organizations- Lavender Resistance (1974-1978)

Socialism

LGBT Activism

Women's Issues

Folder 9: Materials on Related Issues- Lavender Resistance (1974-1989)

Socialism

LGBT Activism

Women's Issues

Series 4: Organizational Materials- BLAGMAR (1979-1981)

Folder 10: BLAGMAR Meeting Minutes (3/25/1979-1/27/1980)

Folder 11: BLAGMAR Organizational Materials (1979-1981)

Internal discussions

Member Lists

Group-Authored Materials

Folder 12: 1981 New England Lesbian and Gay Conference Folder (1979-1981)

Folder 13: BLAGMAR Theater Piece Notes and LGBT Literary Culture Collection (1971-1979)

Folder 14 **Oversize 1:** BLAGMAR Theater Piece Agenda on eight 2 x 1.5 manila sheet posters (1979)

Folder 15 **Oversize 2:** BLAGMAR Theater Piece banner on fitted sheet (1979)

Series 5: Materials of Related LGBT Organizations and Issues-BLAGMAR

Folder 16: Materials of Related LGBT Organizations-BLAGMAR (1978-1988)

Folder 17: Materials on Related LGBT Issues- BLAGMAR (1970-1979)