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## Unmasking Gay Liberation Before Stonewall: Alfred C. Kinsey's Enduring Influence on The Mattachine Society, 1940-1970

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UNMASKING GAY LIBERATION BEFORE STONEWALL: ALFRED C. KINSEY'S  
ENDURING INFLUENCE ON THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY, 1940-1970

Marian Phillips

May 2020

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Women's History  
Sarah Lawrence College

## ABSTRACT

In 1948, Professor Alfred C. Kinsey, a zoologist at Indiana University, published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. His research for the controversial book consisted of interviews of more than 12,000 boys and men who responded to multiple questions about their sexual behavior over the course of their lives. Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, based on similar research, appeared five years later. When Kinsey published the first of his two reports, he exposed the frequency of homosexual behavior among men across the United States. The product of the first extensive sexology research conducted in the twentieth century, Kinsey's statistics on homosexuality contributed to the growing moral panic that would seize American society in the era of Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-Wisconsin).

During this contentious moment, the Mattachine Society formed, and a growing number of newsletters and magazines marketed to homosexual men appeared. The Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections in Bloomington, Indiana, holds a collection of correspondence between Kinsey and the Mattachine Society and many of the newsletters and pamphlets they distributed. This paper investigates the integral, yet largely neglected, relationship between Kinsey and members of the Mattachine Society as friends, confidants, and pioneers of the sexual revolution and gay liberation movement. Furthermore, by analyzing Kinsey's letters to and from various Mattachine chapters, I unearth pre-Stonewall Riot efforts at gay liberation that demand revisions in ways historians periodize the movement.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis began in the Fall of 2018 in Dr. Priscilla Murolo's office. It was only a few weeks into the semester when she suggested that I read Alfred C. Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. To which, I responded with a disdainful look and for that I apologize. In January 2019, I took a trip out to the Kinsey Institute at the University of Indiana at Bloomington. When I began flipping through correspondence, I noticed mentions of the Mattachine Society. At this time, I would like to thank Shay Bose Breen as well as the archivists at the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco, the LGBT Center of Central Pennsylvania, and the ONE Archives Foundation.

Special thanks to Dr. Lyde Sizer who nurtured my interests and findings. I am grateful that I had the privilege of having Dr. Sizer as my thesis advisor throughout this entire process. To Dr. Mary Dillard and Dr. Nadeen Thomas who deserve an abundance of thanks for their unwavering support and dedication to bringing my academic and professional goals to life. My endless gratitude goes to Dr. Priscilla Murolo for pointing me in the direction I needed to go to find my place in the world of academia. Without their continual push, I would not be where I am with this thesis and in my writing career. Thank you for looking over countless drafts and offering your time and support. To Tara James and the entire department, I will always be indebted to you for making the Women's History program feel like home.

Most of all, I owe special thanks for every single person mentioned in this thesis, for every single activist that put their life on the line to better their lives and the lives of others. This thesis is for them. It is for Henry "Harry" Hay, Harold "Hal" Call, Chuck Rowland, Rudi Gernreich, Carl B. Harding (Elver Barker), Donald S. Lucas, Bois Burk, Henry Gerber, Dale

Jennings, Jim Kepner, Del Martin, Phyllis Lyon, Bob Basker, Franklin E. Kameny, Barbara Gittings, Alfred C. Kinsey, and the countless others that fought for gay emancipation. This thesis is for the activists that came before me, influenced me, and made me who I am today.

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My grandparents, Dr. Charles Ream and Dr. Marian Ream deserve special recognition for the support they gave me throughout my life up until their final days. Without their love and encouragement, I would not be where I am today. To my mother Cynthia Ream and my siblings Joseph, John, Ashley, and Victoria, I would be lost without you. Thank you for everything you have done to nurture interests. A big thank you to my father Joseph G. Phillips for always being there and cheering me on throughout this process. Finally, thank you to my cat Hero for being a source of comfort and joy during the dark days of editing.

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## Introduction

Starting a gay rights organization will ruin your life and make you an outlaw.<sup>1</sup> This was the message Henry Gerber, born Henry Joseph Dittmar, related to a young man by the name of Henry “Harry” Hay when he learned of the homosexual association, the Society for Human Rights (SHR), in February of 1930. “He told me how dangerous it was, how I must never have anything to do with anything like that...In every state of the Union, that it would ruin your life.”<sup>2</sup> Historians often identify Gerber, born in Germany in 1892, as the man who brought the homophile movement to the United States.<sup>3</sup> Early in his activism, he lived in the Kingdom of Bavaria under the German Empire.<sup>4</sup> Germany was at the forefront when the intermingling of sex and sexuality with scientific analysis began, and Gerber grew up navigating this controversial intellectual environment. As a gay man, he was inspired by German sexologist and physician Magnus Hirschfeld for his efforts to reform anti-homosexual law in Germany.<sup>5</sup> As a result, Gerber became involved in the homophile movement that was beginning to thrive in Berlin.

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<sup>1</sup> This conversation between Harry Hay and Henry Gerber was told to Eric Marcus on August 24, 1989 as an oral history. Marcus features his interview with Hay, along with a multitude of LGBT activists, on his podcast titled “Making Gay History.” Harry Hay, “Making Gay History Podcast,” Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 1, 2018, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/harry-hay/>

<sup>2</sup> Harry Hay, “Making Gay History Podcast,” Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 1, 2018, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/harry-hay/>

<sup>3</sup> The homophile movement began in the 1950s when gay men and lesbians started to organize. The groups that existed during this movement set aims and goals towards forming a national sense of community through publications, spreading a wealth of knowledge on locations that were friendly towards gay men and lesbians, and fighting to change legislature and psychiatric definitions that demonized them across the United States. This will be discussed in length later in the thesis.

<sup>4</sup>The Kingdom of Bavaria and the German Empire ended in 1918.

<sup>5</sup> Magnus Hirschfeld worked specifically with repealing Paragraph 175 of the German penal code, which criminalized homosexuals since 1871. Ralf Dose and Edward H. Willis, "Introduction to the U. S. Edition," In *Magnus Hirschfeld: The Origins of the Gay Liberation Movement* (New York: NYU Press, 2014), 41. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qg6t2.3>.



When he emigrated to the United States and settled in Chicago, Illinois, he noticed a lack of gay emancipation activism and organizations, so he set out to start a revolution in the States.<sup>6</sup>

In 1924, the Society for Human Rights officially became a non-profit organization in Illinois. Gerber started the organization with the purpose of “promote[ing] and protect[ing] the interests of people who by reasons of mental and physical abnormalities are abused and hindered in the legal pursuit of happiness.”<sup>7</sup> His association reached a swift and unexpected demise less than a year later in the summer of 1925.<sup>8</sup> Five years later, Hay’s first lover introduced him to Gerber. The two discussed the possibility of starting a new homophile organization, but Gerber warned him against it. There was too much risk and not enough reward. It seemed, to Gerber, that homosexuals in America did not have the fervor or urgency to start a movement like that in Germany. In 1950, activists proved Gerber wrong.

In 1948, the first extensive sexology report of the twentieth century was published with support from the Institute of Sex Research, Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey’s *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male (SBHM)*.<sup>9</sup> It prepared the ground for the homophile movement to grow. The research contained within the text pertained to any and all sexual behaviors of men during the first half of the twentieth century. It consisted of interviews of 12,000 boys and men who responded to an array of questions about their sexual behaviors over the course of their lives.

When Kinsey published his report, he exposed the high incidence of homosexual behaviors

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<sup>6</sup> Jim Kepner and Stephen O. Murray, “Henry Gerber (1895-1972): Grandfather of the American Gay Movement,” in *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (Harrington Park Press: New York, 2002), 25-26.

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.: A Documentary* (New York: Crowell, 1976), 386-87.

<sup>8</sup> The organization ended as a result of their exclusion of bisexual individuals. One of the founding members, Reverend John T. Graves, was married and had two children (unknown to Gerber). When Grave’s wife found out about the organization, she tipped off the authorities that “degenerates” were organizing. The next morning, Graves and Gerber were arrested and the organization was dissolved. For more, see Jim Kepner and Stephen O. Murray, “Henry Gerber (1895-1972): Grandfather of the American Gay Movement,” 27.

<sup>9</sup> From this point forward, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* will be referred to as *SB-HM*.

among men in the United States. He found that 48 percent of men interviewed had participated in homosexual relations at least once and that 60 percent of the 212 pre-adolescent interviewees had done so as well.<sup>10</sup> The statistics detailed in the report showed the public that homosexuality, while not visible, was covertly present and undeniably more common than previously perceived. The product of the first sexology research of the twentieth century, Kinsey's findings on homosexuality contributed to the growing moral panic of Cold War American politics, culture, and society.

Just as Hirschfeld influenced Gerber's founding of the Society for Human Rights, Kinsey and his report ignited the fire within Hay's revolutionary spirit. With *SBHM* in hand, he searched beaches, parties, and local hangouts in Los Angeles, California, for homosexual men. He had the blueprints for an organization; all he needed was a group of like-minded individuals to get it off of the ground. At the time, Hay was teaching a course on the history of folk music at the California Labor School, a Communist-led institution for the study of social sciences.<sup>11</sup> This venue brought together the founding members of the Mattachine Foundation (also known as the "Fifth Order"): Harry Hay, Chuck Rowland, Rudolf "Rudi" Gernreich, Dale Jennings, and Bob Hull.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders, 1948), 5.

<sup>11</sup> Chuck Rowland, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 23, 2016, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-1-7/>

<sup>12</sup> While Harry Hay, Chuck Rowland, and Dale Jennings will be discussed at length in the second chapter, Rudi Gernreich and Bob Hull will not receive the same treatment. For this reason, their biographies are here. Rudi Gernreich was Harry Hay's partner at the moment the Mattachine Foundation started to form. While he was not entirely present after 1953, he did go on to become a notable fashion designer who produced avant-garde pieces during the 1960s. Most historians have not mentioned his full name; in John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), he refers to Rudi as "R," which remained a constant until recent years. Most histories on Rudi are located in the history of fashion. Bob Hull, on the other hand, is someone that historians have known very little about. What they do know, is that Hull was Chuck Rowland's partner; the rest remains in obscurity. At this time, M. David Hughes of the Hull Family Association is working on developing a full biographical history on Hull. For more, see M. David Hughes, "Robert "Bob" Booth Hull, Gay Rights Pioneer," *Hull Family Association Newsletter* 30, no. 3 (Autumn 2010): 6-10. [http://www.bob-hull.com/docs/hfa\\_bob\\_hull.pdf](http://www.bob-hull.com/docs/hfa_bob_hull.pdf).

The name Mattachine was derived from Provencal and Italian. It refers to a clown or court jester during the thirteenth century. These men were commonly homosexual, and spoke the truth despite the possibility of stern consequences.<sup>13</sup> Formed in 1950, the Mattachine Foundation went on to become one of the most successful homophile organizations in Cold War America. Like the Society for Human Rights, the Mattachine Foundation reflected the social and cultural context in which it was formed. In both cases, the organizations were under intense police surveillance as well as targets of harassment at every level of government. Furthermore, sexologists or professional biologists, psychologists, and zoologists who studied sex profoundly influenced gay liberation activists.

This thesis analyzes Alfred C. Kinsey's relationship with the Mattachine and its members to ask the question: what aspects of their bond assisted in sustaining the homophile movement that emerged in the 1950s? Their correspondence, newsletters, pamphlets, and other archival sources illuminate a unique comradeship. Ultimately, these sources reveal that their work together assisted in growing and sustaining the homophile movement, which continued to expand even after Kinsey's death in 1956 and the fragmentation of the Mattachine in the 1960s. The gay liberation movement that emerged in the late 1960s moved away from the agenda mapped out by older homosexual activists and focused on militant fights for gay emancipation. While the homophile movement was superseded, however, it never fully disappeared; remnants of its efforts have trickled through LGBTQIA+ activism in the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> In chapter two, I discuss the decision to name the organization Mattachine Foundation in more detail, for there was quite a bit of disagreement in choosing that specific word. *The Denver Post*, 1959, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, Inc. – San Francisco," Vertical File #48, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library. This definition of "mattachine" is found at the beginning of most of their early newsletters. The society set its anniversary for April 1<sup>st</sup>, All Fool's Day (also known as April Fool's Day).

<sup>14</sup> The Washington, D.C. chapter of the Mattachine Society continues to serve their community to this day. They operate as an LGBT archive and a community center for LGBT youth.

By the time Kinsey's research galvanized the Mattachine's founders, professionals in the field of sex research had a long track record of influencing movements and social, cultural, political, and legal understandings of sexuality. One of the first texts on sexual pathology, Richard von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*, published in Germany in 1886, described ways to "cure," diagnose, and avoid homosexuality.<sup>15</sup> According to Krafft-Ebing, homosexuality was a psychopathology that corrupted men and undermined entire societies.<sup>16</sup> He defined homosexual men as effeminate, relegating them to a masochistic role posited as a woman's part in a heterosexual relationship.<sup>17</sup> These stereotypes resonated with the mainstream at the turn-of-the-century. In the United States, this resulted in an onslaught of anti-homosexual laws, increased homophobia in society at large, and invasive immigration procedures to determine who was and was not a homosexual. Ultimately, Krafft-Ebing argued that homosexuals committed degenerate acts and spread moral dissipation, as they were inherently "sickly" and perverted.<sup>18</sup> As a means to remove themselves from the negative connotation of the medicalized term "homosexual," Hay and the Fifth Order settled on the term "homophile" to define their identity.<sup>19</sup> They were aware that identifying as homosexual would put them at risk.

In 1896, Hirschfeld challenged Krafft-Ebing's argument by asserting that homosexuality was not a threat to society. Hirschfeld suggested that it was simply natural and benign: nothing to

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<sup>15</sup> Richard Von Krafft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, Translated by Charles Gilbert Chaddock, Authorized Translation of the 7th Enl. and Rev. German ed. (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis, 1892), Accessed November 5, 2019, 191, 321. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiuo.ark:/13960/t5cc0z51p>

<sup>16</sup> Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 28-29.

<sup>17</sup> Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 47.

<sup>18</sup> Terry, 47.

<sup>19</sup> While the term existed in Holland prior to the Mattachine's use of it, Hay explained that there was no way they could have known. In order to obtain such documentation, they had to have acquired illegal pamphlets and documents from Holland, and, surely, the restrictive nature of the United States Post Office would have intercepted them. Harry Hay, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 1, 2018, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/harry-hay/>

fear.<sup>20</sup> Not only did Hirschfeld attempt to alleviate society's fear of the homosexual; he also actively sought to provide a space within society for homosexual men and women.<sup>21</sup> Based on his own experience and knowledge as a homosexual, he argued that the main source of a homosexual "disorder" was solely caused by the contempt that they experienced from society."<sup>22</sup> Fighting for personal freedom through his scientific investigations, he sought to free all homosexuals. Furthermore, in 1897 he organized one of the world's first homosexual rights organizations, the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee.<sup>23</sup> His efforts came to an end when the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft (Institute for Sexual Science) in Berlin was burnt to the ground by Nazis in 1933, resulting in his exile.<sup>24</sup> Hirschfeld died in France in 1935, but his legacy as an avid proponent of homosexual freedom lived on. In this regard, he shares common ground with fellow sexologist Alfred C. Kinsey, despite their working in different countries and belonging to different generations.

Kinsey's scientific research was driven by the utmost sympathy for and determination to validate sexual preferences commonly perceived as alien.<sup>25</sup> In the eyes of both Harry Hay and the Mattachine, that much was evident. When the organization formed in 1950, the founding members met at each other's homes and discussed Kinsey's findings from the first sexology report. According to Chuck Rowland, Hay never left the house without a copy of *SBHM*.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Terry, 53.

<sup>21</sup> Ralf Dose and Edward H. Willis, "Introduction to the U. S. Edition," In *Magnus Hirschfeld: The Origins of the Gay Liberation Movement* (New York: NYU Press, 2014), 7. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qg6t2.3>.

<sup>22</sup> Terry, 53.

<sup>23</sup> Terry, 53.

<sup>24</sup> Ralf Dose and Edward H. Willis, "Introduction to the German Edition," In *Magnus Hirschfeld: The Origins of the Gay Liberation Movement* (New York: NYU Press, 2014), 14. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qg6t2.4>.

<sup>25</sup> Regina Markell Morantz, "The Scientist as Sex Crusader: Alfred C. Kinsey and American Culture," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 5 (The Johns Hopkins University Press, Winter, 1977), 566.

<sup>26</sup> Chuck Rowland is discussed in-depth in chapters two and three. Chuck Rowland, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 23, 2016, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-1-7/>

Mattachine members agreed that Kinsey's findings validated their existence. His report conflicted with the dominant mid-twentieth-century ideology that defined homosexuals as mentally disturbed. *SBHM* established that, if homosexuality was inherently abnormal, it was not statistically rare; according to Kinsey's findings, almost 50 percent of the male population deviated from the putative norm. This challenged the very idea of "normal" sexuality.

Homosexuals' level of trust in sexology varied based on the researcher and methodology. Krafft-Ebing studied sexual conduct with an eye to psychopathology, using case-by-case studies of individuals to illuminate the inner workings of the presumably warped homosexual mind. On the other hand, Hirschfeld's biological research posited a natural predilection for one sexuality over another. As he saw things, both homosexuality and heterosexuality were entirely natural. While Kinsey harbored similar beliefs, his methodological practice differed greatly from Hirschfeld's. Kinsey's research was based on extensive in-person interviews conducted across the United States and focused on a variety of behaviors. This research yielded an array of graphs and charts to outline statistics on sexual behavior in correlation with age brackets, locations, income, and marital status.<sup>27</sup>

On August 22, 1953, Mattachine members wrote to Alfred C. Kinsey and declared that they would happily further his future research projects in any way they could. They proudly proclaimed themselves as "a group which is organized to study, discuss and set upon the

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<sup>27</sup> Kinsey's interviews were not as diverse as they appear. His interviewees were almost all white and cisgender, therefore it does not speak to all United States citizens and results in an inaccurate picture of the "average" person. In the report, Kinsey states that "The present volume is confined to a record on American and Canadian whites, but we have begun accumulating material which will make it possible to include the American and Canadian Negro groups in later publications." For more on the lack of racial inclusion in *SBHM* see, Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders, 1948), 75-76.

problems of the homosexual.”<sup>28</sup> They included reports on research projects they had begun without the professional input they so desperately needed to move forward. As luck had it, Kinsey and his associates at the Institute for Sex Research were just the individuals who could assist in their analyses. They agreed to the partnership with Mattachine, thus cementing a close relationship with the homophile movement.

The history of the homophile movement encompasses a larger history of anti-homosexual legislation, restrictive state policies, and secrecy. At the same time, it is also the story of the emergence in the 1950s of revolutionary tactics towards gay emancipation, which Kinsey and the Mattachine activists both endorsed. This history has generally been consigned to footnotes or merely mentioned in passing. The correspondence between Mattachine activists and Kinsey reveals an indisputable connection between homosexual organizers and sexologists that helped to sustain the homophile movement through an exceedingly repressive era. While other homophile organizations may have existed at the same moment as the Mattachine, none have proven (thus far) to garner such evidentiary support of a sexologist-homophile relationship.<sup>29</sup> The fact that the Mattachine survived for so long (approximately fifteen-years as a national entity), participated in countless forms of protest, and distributed information around the United States in such a turbulent time makes them more than worthy of note. It did not take long for historians to realize this fact.

John D’Emilio’s *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (1983) is considered the definitive history of the homophile movement in the United States. It was the first of its kind. It showcases

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<sup>28</sup> The Mattachine Society to Alfred C. Kinsey, 22 August 1953, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>29</sup> Other homophile organizations include Knights of the Clock (an interracial gay organization), Daughters of Bilitis (a lesbian organization), ONE, Inc. (a gay organization), and the Janus Society (a gay organization).

the absolute importance of organizations that catered to building a larger sense of community for gay men and women.<sup>30</sup> D’Emilio utilizes an array of archival documents to trace this history of the homophile movement. The result of his work is a full landscape of early activism for gay emancipation – now referred to as “gay liberation.”<sup>31</sup> His work reflects a portion of the activism present during the movement and seeks to locate just one pioneer of gay liberation. He provides an extensive history of the early beginnings of the Mattachine, the first homophile organization, and the primary focal point of this research,<sup>32</sup> founded by communist and labor activist Henry “Harry” Hay.<sup>33</sup>

The Communist Party believed that homosexuality was a result of the tensions of life brought on by capitalism. While other Party affiliates believed homosexuality to be a symptom of the decay of capitalism.<sup>34</sup> As a member of the Party, Mattachine founder Henry “Harry” Hay walked a thin line between acceptance and dismissal. Ultimately, he became ostracized for unapologetically identifying as who he truly was. After leaving the Communist Party, Hay sought to form an organization that accepted both homosexuals and communists.<sup>35</sup> As a result, the Mattachine Foundation was born. Hay founded the organization in order for homosexuals to come together as a community, to express political opinions, fight against social, cultural, and political stigma, and create a space where homosexual men and women were welcome regardless

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<sup>30</sup> John D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 9-10.

<sup>31</sup> For more on the primary documents analyzed by John D’Emilio that are referenced in *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* see, Thomas A. Foster and John D’Emilio, *Documenting Intimate Matters: Primary Sources for a History of Sexuality in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2012). Nearly every footnote in *Sexual Politics* refers to a primary source document.

<sup>32</sup> While there may have been homophile organizations that existed prior to the Mattachine, their documentation is fairly limited. Because of the extensive and clear documentation, this research follows D’Emilio’s lead by choosing to maintain their existence as the first homophile organization beginning in 1950.

<sup>33</sup> Harry Hay’s life and activism is discussed at length in Chapter two.

<sup>34</sup> Aaron Lecklider, “Two Witch-Hunts: On (Not) Seeing Red in LGBT History,” *American Communist History*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2016, 241-247. (538–539)

<sup>35</sup> D’Emilio, 59.



of race, creed, or class.<sup>36</sup> D’Emilio’s work seeks to address the dearth of scholarship on the Mattachine by making their purpose, their formation, and efforts towards gay liberation known where previous historians had left it underreported. This, and other works by D’Emilio, make him a pillar in the history of homosexual in the United States.

In 1988, historian Estelle B. Freedman partnered with D’Emilio to write the text *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*. Prior to working with D’Emilio, Freedman had published historical texts on women’s sexuality in the Victorian Era as well as lesbians in the United States. This text is the first extensive history of sexuality in America beginning in the 1600s and ending where D’Emilio’s *Sexual Politics* left off in the 1980s.<sup>37</sup>

While building upon his own research, D’Emilio and Freedman provide new research on the similarities between civil rights organizers and homophile leaders.<sup>38</sup> In the footnotes, D’Emilio tells the reader that, unless otherwise noted, all information on gay life is taken from *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*.<sup>39</sup> In doing so, he confirms that the work he conducted on the Mattachine did not grow much between 1983 and 1988. The authors utilize the previous text to solidify their own argument that the menace of homosexuality, under which the Mattachine formed, permeated every aspect of American society, culture, and politics.<sup>40</sup>

The most up-to-date scholarship that the two reference is the then unpublished work of Allan Bérubé. Bérubé’s *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World*

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<sup>36</sup> *The Mattachine Society Today*, 1954, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles,” Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>37</sup> John D’Emilio, Estelle B. Freedman, “Redrawing the Boundaries,” in *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988).

<sup>38</sup> D’Emilio and Freedman, 320.

<sup>39</sup> D’Emilio and Freedman, 395.

<sup>40</sup> D’Emilio and Freedman, 288.

*War Two* appeared in 1990, two years after the publication of D'Emilio and Freedman's text.<sup>41</sup> *Intimate Matters* discusses Bérubé's analysis of military psychiatrists and the methods they used to discharge homosexuals from the armed services.<sup>42</sup> While Bérubé does not reference the Mattachine except to note that they formed in the 1950s, during the period he is writing about.<sup>43</sup> He does introduce Kinsey. Bérubé references the two in order to highlight how they influenced the larger social, cultural, and political landscape of 1940s and 1950s America.<sup>44</sup>

Bérubé's *Coming Out* was profoundly influential in the fields of sexuality studies and history. He provides an in-depth analysis of the broader implications of homosexuality on government and military crackdowns against it; it comes as no surprise that he is consistently referenced in every major historical work on the subject. During the 1980s, when these three historians published their research, homosexuals were experiencing a new form of demonization. The HIV/AIDS epidemic rose as a major public health crisis and homosexual men, in particular, were blamed.

This political context undoubtedly influenced the rise of histories on homosexuality and the homosexual menace. Their histories were published during a moment of cultural and political division in the United States. By referencing the Mattachine and the homophile movement during McCarthyism, these three scholars showcase how successful organizing and building a community nationally can be in gay liberation efforts. Their histories serve a greater purpose than documenting a movement: they play the role of showing examples of success and failure.

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<sup>41</sup> Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

<sup>42</sup> D'Emilio and Freedman, 288-289, 395. For more information on the specific references that D'Emilio and Freedman make, see page 28 in Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

<sup>43</sup> Bérubé, 273.

<sup>44</sup> Bérubé, 264.

The work of 1980s historians laid the foundation for future histories on homosexuality to be written.

In 1999, Jennifer Terry published *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society*. With her book, historians started to consider the influence of science on homosexuals, medical professionals, politics, and government. Terry expands upon D'Emilio's work by analyzing the history of sexological research with homosexual activists beginning with Richard Von Krafft-Ebing up to Dean Hamer and Simon LeVay.<sup>45</sup> She finds that homophile organizations such as the Mattachine Society "saw research of the sort that Kinsey conducted as useful and important while they heavily criticized psychoanalytic opinions that equated homosexuality with disease."<sup>46</sup> In short, Kinsey's sexology research was inherently different from those that preceded him, other than a few exceptions in Germany such as Hirschfeld. Kinsey, Terry argues, does not claim homosexuals as diseased. Furthermore, she notes, he called for the decriminalization of homosexuals, whereas others (Krafft-Ebing) recommended conversion therapy and forced psychiatric care.<sup>47</sup>

In 2001, following Terry, historian Henry Minton published *Departing from Deviance: A History of Homosexual Rights and Emancipatory Science in America*. Minton focuses on the beginnings of Kinsey's sex research when he came in contact with a large number of homosexuals during his initial series of trips to Chicago in 1939.<sup>48</sup> *Departing from Deviance*

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<sup>45</sup> Dean Hamer and Simon LeVay conducted the "Twin Studies." The research consisted of analyzing sets of twins to determine if one was or may become a homosexual, and whether or not the other may as well. They attempted to uncover an indisputable biological factor that influenced homosexuality rather than an outside influence on the individual. They did not test perceptively heterosexual sets of twins (twins that outwardly appeared heterosexual); therefore, their research was inherently skewed. For more, see Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 388-92.

<sup>46</sup> Terry, 354.

<sup>47</sup> Terry, 354 and 45.

<sup>48</sup> Henry L. Minton, *Departing from Deviance: A History of Homosexual Rights and Emancipatory Science in America* (The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 162.

explores how scientists and professionals worked together, building upon each other's work, Terry, by contrast, emphasizes their differences. Minton makes very little mention of Kinsey and the Mattachine Society. Noting why he states, that Kinsey and his communications assisted in reinforcing a desire to work with homosexuals through collaboration.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the need more for historical research on sexologists and homosexual movements, the years following Terry's and Minton's work showed that historians were more concerned with the politics, laws against, and persecution of homosexuals. David K. Johnson's text *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (2004) is the most well-known. Johnson details how Wisconsin Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy's (R-Wisconsin) politics contributed to the conflation of the "Red Scare" and the "Lavender Scare" during the Cold War. McCarthy's Wheeling, West Virginia speech is the pivotal moment that he revealed that the State Department was infested with sexual perverts.<sup>50</sup> This is the first time that a historian has given ample recognition of the existence of the marrying of the Lavender Scare and the Red Scare.<sup>51</sup> Homosexual purges predated the Lavender Scare and were institutionalized within the government from as early as the 1930s until the 1970s.<sup>52</sup> However, McCarthyite politics were more aggressive, insisting on tactics of forced removal from the military, government jobs, and public life.

Johnson covers the moment of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when Washington, D.C. was considered a gay mecca, similar to present day San Francisco and New York. Referencing Allan Bérubé, he states that a "wartime study of homosexual men concluded that they had

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<sup>49</sup> Minton, 174.

<sup>50</sup> David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), 1.

<sup>51</sup> Johnson, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Johnson, 4.

‘considerable talent in stenographic, musical, clerical, and special service activities.’<sup>53</sup> Neutral civil service entrance examinations and what was perceived as feminized work made government offices hospitable to gays and lesbians prior to the rise of McCarthy in the 1950s.<sup>54</sup> Johnson argues that the Mattachine was the first sustained gay political organization in the United States.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, Johnson focuses the entirety of the text’s conclusion on the Mattachine Society of Washington, D.C. as a militant organization in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He does so in order to reinforce that gay organizing did not cease after the Mattachine Society started to deteriorate.<sup>56</sup>

In 2009, Margot Canaday’s *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* exposed the long history of homophobia in immigration processes, welfare, and the military. She continues the integral history Johnson established with specified focal points for each analysis. Canaday argues that early sex psychopathology negatively impacted an individual’s ability to emigrate to the United States.<sup>57</sup> Not only does Canaday find Johnson’s research useful to her own work, but she also supports Terry’s thesis that sexologists, even today, uphold a strong influence over society, government, and politics.<sup>58</sup> Historians know it to be true: sexological research on homosexuality has the power to influence every aspect of the United States in positive and negative ways. The next contribution was on how exactly a national community was created in order to fight against the aggressive homophobia woven into American politics.

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<sup>53</sup> Johnson, 45.

<sup>54</sup> Johnson, 45.

<sup>55</sup> Johnson, 169.

<sup>56</sup> Johnson, 179-208.

<sup>57</sup> Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 33-39.

<sup>58</sup> Canaday, 242.

As the historical discourse on the homophile movement continued to grow and flourish, it also became very divided. LGBT historians turned to analyzing social movements in their entirety to uncover the genealogies of massive spikes in gay liberation history (the homophile movement and Stonewall.) Marc Stein's *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement* (2012) took on this task. He finds that the shift from WWII to the Cold War caused the United States to grow increasingly concerned with possible threats on the home front. As a result, they focused on domestic loyalty and strength.<sup>59</sup> Stein notes a dramatic change in sexual consciousness, stimulated by the development of popular culture through the writings of Truman Capote, Charles Jackson, and Carson McCullers during the 1950s. He reported literature that embraced same-sex relationships began to flourish.<sup>60</sup>

While relating the various components assisting in the rise of gay liberation efforts during Cold War America, Stein emphasizes that Kinsey's research was crucial towards the goal of destigmatizing homosexuality.<sup>61</sup> Ultimately, Kinsey, the distribution of homophile publications are not the only factors in the fight for gay liberation. People who identified as politically left mobilized the gay liberation movement; they all came together for the homosexual rights.<sup>62</sup> He identifies the proponents of gay emancipation as *The Pittsburgh Courier*, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the ACLU, the George W. Henry Foundation, several members of the U.S. Congress, and various veterans' organizations.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Marc Stein, *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement. American Social and Political Movements of the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 42.

<sup>60</sup> Stein, 43.

<sup>61</sup> Stein, 44.

<sup>62</sup> Stein, 45.

<sup>63</sup> Stein, 45.

While Stein recognizes Kinsey's influence as an important piece of the gay liberation puzzle, he asserts that there were others that influenced its mobilization. As each of these historians report on the various aspects of the homophile movement, sexologists, and the social, political, and cultural landscape of Cold War America, very few have provided a detailed analysis of the relationships *between* sexologists and homophile organization activists. The intention of this thesis is to fill in the gaps of history on LGBTQIA+ individuals, the homophile movement, and Alfred C. Kinsey. This research demonstrates the larger history of how sexologists have assisted in the sustaining of gay liberation movements and supported gay men and lesbians in their fight for rights. This is not to say all sexologists have felt obliged to help, but Kinsey surely did.

This thesis reflects on the specific aspects of education, sexual histories, and Kinsey's first sexology report discussed in the correspondence between him and the Mattachine. In turn, this research reveals that, by working together, they assisted in sustaining the organization and, as a result, the homophile movement more generally. The methodological approach to this research involves the examination of archival documents and oral histories. They were collected from some of the largest repositories for LGBTQIA+ documentation and preservation: Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections at Indiana University, the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco, the LGBT History Project of Central Pennsylvania in Harrisburg, and the New York Public Library. The materials uncovered from the archives demand that Kinsey be woven into the discourse of LGBT history far more than he is currently. Furthermore, they reflect the relationship between Kinsey and the Mattachine as well as aspects of their bond that assisted in sustaining the organization and the larger homophile movement.

This thesis is organized to encompass a much larger history of sexologists and homosexual activists related to Kinsey and the Mattachine. Chapter one focuses on Alfred C. Kinsey's personal background and professional drive towards his sexological research. This chapter argues that, while Kinsey risked his personal life and professional career to undertake his research, he was rewarded with *SBHM*'s recognition as one of the most important studies of 1948. The chapter outlines the financial aspects and scientific methods that made the text possible. Both the risks and rewards of its publication are emphasized in order to convey the threat posed by Senator Joseph McCarthy and his anti-homosexual politics.

Chapter two begins in 1948; Henry "Harry" Hay has in his hands *SBHM* and the goal of forming a homophile organization in California. The chapter follows Hay's childhood to the exact moments of realization that called him to fight for gay emancipation, and the steps he took to found the Mattachine Foundation in 1950. This chapter focuses on the years 1950 to 1953, when Hay was the leader of the organization. For those three years, Hay was at the forefront of the homophile movement. His work allowed the extraordinary survival of the Mattachine during a moment in history fraught with anti-homosexual rhetoric and laws. The chapter ends as leadership of the Mattachine was handed over to Harold "Hal" Call; the man who came to be known as "Mr. Mattachine" rather than Hay.

Chapter three begins with Call as he declares that the Mattachine must seek evolution over revolution, to assimilate rather than demand acceptance. He believed working with scientific and political professionals could better this cause. Call began the correspondence with Kinsey. Therefore, chapter three documents the relationship between Kinsey and the Mattachine, and conveys how the sexologist was able to assist in their growth, sustainability, and development. It finds that the two sought out one another for a variety of purposes and goals



central to bettering the life of homosexuals in the United States. This chapter illustrates the central argument of the thesis: the aspects of their correspondence that assisted in sustaining the homophile movement. The answers are in correspondence, issues of the *Mattachine Review*, and oral histories. They unequivocally demonstrate that Kinsey wished to see the organization flourish with the ultimate goal of actualizing gay emancipation, and the *Mattachine* sought to assist in assuring the future publication of his research projects.

The epilogue pulls together the complex history of the relationship between Kinsey and the *Mattachine* and uses the *Review* to explore the enduring influence he had on the organization, even beyond his death in 1956. In so doing, the epilogue highlights the ways specific instances that the aspects of their relationship assisted in sustaining the movement, and hence reveals the crucial influence of sexologists on gay emancipation activism pre-Stonewall. Thus, this thesis finds that Kinsey's bond with the *Mattachine* is situated within a larger conversation on sexologists, the homophile movement, and the genealogy of movements. It demonstrates the importance of this thesis as an integral addition to the historical discourse on gay life in America. Ultimately, the history of Kinsey and the *Mattachine's* relationship is of immense importance as the field of LGBTQIA+ history moves towards understanding the full landscape of the lives of gay men and lesbians in the United States in the twentieth century.

## Chapter 1:

Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Sexology Bomb of 1948

“We are the recorders and reporters of facts – not the judges of the behaviors we describe.”

– Alfred Charles Kinsey

On January 5, 1948, a frigid wind blew through Bloomington, Indiana.<sup>1</sup> It was the day scientific data on the sexual behavior of American men were publicized for the entire world to discover. This news must have been expected, buzz grew rapidly as reports swept through every magazine, news broadcast, and newspaper across the nation.<sup>2</sup> The gusts of change grew stronger as the sun rose, and the mid-twentieth century’s most influential, controversial, and important scientific study hit the shelves. On that windy day in January, Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey’s *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* was officially released. The moment it went on sale, it became a bestseller.

Just as predicted by Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey – then age 53 – and his colleagues at Indiana University at Bloomington, the sexology report made a whopping impact. They knew, just as well as everyone else, that the text had the power to flip social ideologies of sexuality on their heads. Weighing in at three pounds, with a length of 804 pages, and priced at \$6.50<sup>3</sup> before tax, it sold over 200,000 copies within the first two months. Orders continued to pile up. The publisher, W.B. Saunders Company in Philadelphia, had to work around the clock to meet demand.<sup>4</sup> It was only a matter of time before the book was translated into thirteen different

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<sup>1</sup> The *Old Farmer’s Almanac* marks January 5, 1948 as having an average temperature of 31.8 degrees Fahrenheit with a high of 35.1 degrees and a low of 28.9 degrees Fahrenheit. Wind speeds were at an average of 9.44 miles per hour and a maximum of 24.17 miles per hour. “Weather History for Bloomington, IN,” *Old Farmer’s Almanac*, [www.almanac.com/weather/history/IN/Bloomington/1948-01-05](http://www.almanac.com/weather/history/IN/Bloomington/1948-01-05)

<sup>2</sup> As will be discussed later in this chapter, *Time* magazine, *The New York Times*, and various popular media sources reported on *Sexual Behavior on the Human Male* and the months following its publication.

<sup>3</sup> Today, \$6.50 is the equivalent of approximately \$70 USD.

<sup>4</sup> James H. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Life* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1997), 564.

languages and recognized as the most influential scientific study of sexuality to date.<sup>5</sup> Kinsey took the world by storm with this single text. Americans were intrigued, disturbed, angry, and, most of all, hungry for more of what the sexologist had to offer.

Within the book's pages, Kinsey exposed the presence of what government officials understood as sexually "deviant" behaviors – anything not confined to the heterosexual marital bed – and posited that sex could be for pleasure rather than for reproduction. Kinsey disrupted a conservative ideology of sexuality with cold hard facts. He dismantled previously held notions that presumed every inhabitant of Earth was heterosexual and restricted their sexual appetite until the day they said "I do." As a result, Kinsey's report drew attention to the truth of American sexuality. Many panicked at the thought that sexual deviance was joining the threats posed by Communism and the Cold War. And no one, not even Kinsey's parents, could have predicted that her would grow from a sickly young boy in Hoboken, New Jersey, to a post-doctoral student studying the gall wasp to the most talked – about doctor of sexology in the twentieth century.

On June 23, 1894, in Hoboken, New Jersey, Alfred Charles Kinsey was born to Sarah Charles Kinsey and Alfred Seguine Kinsey. He was given his father's first name, a common practice to signify that the first-born son was given certain privileges and expectations. His middle name, Charles, was given to him by his mother. Sarah and Alfred S. were an unlikely match, coming from separate parts of the country and different class statuses. She was not middle-class or college – educated; due to Alfred's constant appetite for upward mobility, people often questioned why he married her.<sup>6</sup> Born in 1869 in Colorado, she was the fourth child of Welsh immigrants, Robert Charles and Elizabeth. Alfred S. Kinsey, on the other hand, came

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<sup>5</sup> Janice M. Irvine, *Disorders of Desire: Sexuality and Gender in Modern American Sexology* (Temple University Press, 2005), 37-43.

<sup>6</sup> Jones, 11.

from a family whose roots were deeply imbedded in New York and New Jersey. His parents, Benjamin and Margaret, married for business purposes, seeking an alliance between the Seguines and the Kinseys.<sup>7</sup> Their first child, Alfred S., became the most successful of the five they shared. He rose from work as a blue-collar shop boy into a white-collar college teacher, substantially improving his social status. Alfred S.'s childhood resembled Sarah's. This possibly attributes to the pair's seemingly unlikely bond.

There is very little information on Sarah Charles prior to her marriage to Alfred S., but scholar James Jones finds that she was a woman from a working-class family that was poorly educated.<sup>8</sup> The lack of information on Sarah renders the relationship with she and her husband difficult to trace. At this moment, biographers and historians do not know how she met Alfred. Kinsey biographer James Jones finds that they were wed in 1892, two years prior to the birth of Alfred C. Kinsey.<sup>9</sup> Following Alfred C., the Kinseys had two more children: Mildred Elizabeth (1896) and Robert Benjamin Kinsey (1907). The family remained in Hoboken until their eldest son reached the age of thirteen,<sup>10</sup> when they packed up and moved to South Orange, the wealthiest of the four Oranges in New Jersey.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Jones, 7. The families ran "Seguine & Kinsey, Wheelwrights" repairing wooden wheels. Two years later, the business failed.

<sup>8</sup> Sarah Charles's history was never written and when mentioned is almost entirely mythic, excluding her class status and her home state of Colorado. Alfred C. Kinsey's sisters and surviving relatives report that Sarah's stories of her past never made much sense or matched with other retellings of them. Sarah's true story remains unknown. This fact alone suggests that biographers of Kinsey offer only a partial view of his childhood, the dynamics and/or discrepancies in parenting techniques, and a potential influence on his future as a sexologist. Furthermore, the lack of knowledge on her suggests that Kinsey's father was the largest influence on his life, whether scientifically or personally. For more see, James H. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Life* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1997), 10-11.

<sup>9</sup> Jones, 11.

<sup>10</sup> Jones, 11.

<sup>11</sup> The four Oranges of New Jersey are Orange, East Orange, South Orange, and West Orange. Jones, 25.

Jones describes Alfred C.'s childhood as unpleasant prior to the move to South Orange. He reports that the young boy's experiences in Hoboken were so troublesome that he repressed them.<sup>12</sup> Jones attributes his disdain for the city to its poverty and overcrowding. Considering Alfred S.'s continual push towards an upper-class lifestyle for his family, it may have impacted Kinsey's perception as a child. His father was a powerful figure in the household and cast a dark looming shadow over his children and wife. They were a highly religious family, belonging to the Methodist church as evangelical Protestants.<sup>13</sup> The Kinseys believed in a god of the Old Testament, one full of jealousy and vengeance, and his father's parenting reflected this ideology of a punishing patriarch.<sup>14</sup> Kinsey's father attempted to shape his moral understanding of life and relationships based on a patriarchal, heterosexual, and religious ideological sense of the two.

As a child, Kinsey struggled with illnesses that deeply impacted his ability to live a normal life. Rickets and typhoid fever<sup>15</sup> left him bedridden for a great portion of his early years of adolescence.<sup>16</sup> Once overcoming these illnesses to the best of his ability, he returned to school

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<sup>12</sup> Jones, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Evangelical Protestants are considered one of the most conservative sects of Protestantism, were closely related to Catholicism in their teachings of the vengeful God and Old Testament. While not all Methodism preached fire and brimstone, Kinsey's congregation tended to fall into this sector. Kinsey's father's religious beliefs deeply reflected in his method of parenting, as he took on the role of the vengeful father that dictated the moral and spiritual upbringing of the family. For more on conservatism and Protestants, as well as Evangelical Protestants, see Robert D. Woodberry and Christian S. Smith, "Fundamentalism et al: Conservative Protestants in America," *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 24 (1998), 25-26 and Lydia Bean, "The Boundaries of Evangelical Identity" in *The Politics of Evangelical Identity: Local Churches and Partisan Divides in the United States and Canada* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

<sup>14</sup> Jones, 13-14.

<sup>15</sup> Rickets is a disease commonly found in children with a severe and prolonged vitamin D deficiency. It can cause delayed growth, bowed legs, weakness, and pain in the spine. Typhoid fever is a bacterial infection from a strain of salmonella. It is accompanied by weakness, fever, abdominal pain, and more. Patient Zero for typhoid was Irish immigrant Mary Mallon, who was asymptomatic and spread the disease throughout Manhattan and the greater New York area unknowingly. Vaccinations for typhoid is now available but was not during Kinsey's childhood. There is no vaccine for rickets. For more information on Mary Mallon and typhoid fever see, Judith Walzer Leavitt, "'Typhoid Mary' Strikes Back Bacteriological Theory and Practice in Early Twentieth-Century Public Health." *Isis* 83, no. 4 (The University of Chicago Press, Dec. 1992), 608-29. For more on rickets' impact on children during the early-twentieth century see, E. Laming Evans, "Acute Rickets in Late Childhood and Adolescence," *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 3286 (BMJ, 1923), 1212-213.

<sup>16</sup> As will be discussed further, his childhood illness may have contributed to his short life span.

only to face a poor physical self-image in comparison to his peers. He turned to social and academic success to boost his morale.<sup>17</sup> The primary source of Kinsey's unhappiest memories in his childhood are ultimately rooted in his father: he was a hard man and dominated everyone he had authority over (workplace and home).<sup>18</sup> Alfred S. steamrolled his family and took out the anger he felt towards his inability to further his career on them. If Kinsey failed at fitting into the expectations his father and, ultimately, society set for him, it was met with the utmost contempt. Kinsey and his siblings knew that their father had a volatile personality, fueled by resentment and the need for absolute control.<sup>19</sup> The pressure from Alfred S. resulted in Kinsey striving to abide by a cultural script to live up to his father's demands. As the Victorian era was reaching its end, his childhood continued to leave him in a prison of expectations. Kinsey felt the heavy burden of self-criticism very early on.

Despite his poor physique, lack of physical prowess, and self-criticism, Kinsey's interest in academics proved to be his most valuable asset. His passions developed during a moment when science and religion were continuously at war.<sup>20</sup> Darwin's theory of evolution was fairly new – introduced 35 years prior to his birth – and it challenged the religion that Kinsey's family practiced.<sup>21</sup> Darwinist theories dominated a variety of discourses, and were used to argue scientific concepts of evolution in psychology, biology, chemistry, and sociology. Eventually, it

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<sup>17</sup> Jones, 15-17. While Kinsey turned to successes in the form of academics, his absences and restricted activities stunted his victories and his efforts towards progressing at the rate of his peers.

<sup>18</sup> Jones, 19.

<sup>19</sup> Jones, 21-22.

<sup>20</sup> To an extent, the argument between Darwinism and religion continues in the early twenty-first century.

<sup>21</sup> Darwin's theory of evolution is derived from his text *On the Origin of Species*, published in 1859, and focuses on biological evolution over creationist theories that were accepted prior to its public release and critical reception. Darwin posited that biological evolution occurs in natural selection, when inherited traits increase a species' chances of survival and reproduction. A common model for Darwin's theory is the evolution from primate to human. For more on Darwinism and "pure-Darwinism," see Michael Ruse, "Darwinism," in *On Purpose*, 91-113 (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018.) Accessed February 7, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvc773jn.10](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvc773jn.10).

became the central theoretical method Kinsey selected for his lifework.<sup>22</sup> As his father's demands for absolute excellence mixed with his passion for science, he strove to be the best he could be, and this continued beyond childhood into adulthood.<sup>23</sup>

During high school, Kinsey started defying his father. Alfred S. demanded that his son become an engineer and enrolled him in the same institution where he taught. Kinsey started at the Stevens Institute in 1912.<sup>24</sup> In his last spring semester, he attended a commencement ceremony, leaving with the resentment that was building towards his father since childhood. At 20 years old, Kinsey was ready to stand up against his father. He told him that he was going to follow his own dream, not his father's, and become a biologist, effectively ending their relationship. Kinsey left the Stevens Institute and promptly enrolled in Bowdoin College to pursue biology.<sup>25</sup>

In June of 1916, Kinsey graduated from Bowdoin College *magna cum laude*. His outstanding academic achievements and impressive drive towards his studies rewarded him with a scholarship to the Bussey Institute at Harvard.<sup>26</sup> The Bussey became the backdrop of Kinsey's future research into the gall wasp, or American Cynipidae. The gall wasp is an ant sized wasp that neither stings nor bites. The insect resides on roses and blackberries. They are considered a parasitic insect. They grow swiftly and copulate even quicker while causing abnormal growths

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<sup>22</sup> Jones, 18.

<sup>23</sup> Jones, 22.

<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *Kinsey: Sex the Measure of All Things* (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 27-28. The Stevens Institute is a private college in Hoboken New Jersey. It was founded in 1870 and is known as the oldest technological colleges in the United States, as well as the first U.S. college to focus on mechanical engineering.

<sup>25</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 29. In 1924, Alfred C. Kinsey's younger brother Robert had a similar experience with their father and left the family home. Robert's son, Jim Kinsey, reported that getting along with grandfather Kinsey was always short lived and nearly impossible.

<sup>26</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 40-41. At the time, the Bussey Institute at Harvard for applied biology research was regarded as one of the most outstanding graduate schools in the United States.

on the plants they inhabit.<sup>27</sup> Kinsey's interests in the insect began when he noticed that they were almost entirely unstudied.<sup>28</sup> Producing original research offered him the opportunity to become the leading expert on the gall wasp. Furthermore, as an evolutionary biologist he focused on the insect because of its vast range of species, the ease with which specimens can be collected, and the unmistakable evidence that it has evolved over time.<sup>29</sup> In June of 1919, Kinsey graduated from Harvard with a ScD (Doctor of Science) in biology and the definitive dissertation on the gall wasp.

At the age of 25, Kinsey continued his research on the insect and began his journey towards becoming a sexologist. Between 1919 and 1920, he was the recipient of the Sheldon Traveling Fellowship, which included a stipend of \$1,500<sup>30</sup> and the opportunity to expand on his doctoral research.<sup>31</sup> He set off on an expedition across the nation continuing to conduct his influential research on the gall wasp. Over the course of Kinsey's studies, he collected specimens and examined the various species at the University of Texas.<sup>32</sup> He proved himself a dedicated and disciplined researcher.

After Kinsey's fellowship ended, he applied for a professorial position at the University of Indiana at Bloomington to teach an introductory biology course, along with working with the entomology department.<sup>33</sup> While interviewing for the position in the spring of 1920, he met Clara Bracken McMillen, a junior studying chemistry at the university and one of its best students in

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<sup>27</sup> Jones, 142. For more information on Kinsey's research on the gall wasp, see Alfred C. Kinsey, *The Gall Wasp Genus Cynips: A Study in the Origin of Species* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1930). Does the title sound familiar? It could possibly refer to Darwin's text on evolution, *On the Origin of Species*, an undoubtable nod to one of Kinsey's major scientific influences.

<sup>28</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 45.

<sup>29</sup> Jones, 143.

<sup>30</sup> Due to inflation, \$1,500 is the equivalent of approximately \$22,500 today.

<sup>31</sup> Jones, 148.

<sup>32</sup> Jones, 148-149.

<sup>33</sup> Jones, 155.



the field. Right before the lecture he gave at the meeting of Sigma Xi (the national honor society in science), the two met and made an immediate connection.<sup>34</sup> Luckily, Kinsey was offered the position as the assistant professor in the Department of Zoology – to conduct a scientific study of behaviors, structures, and physiology of animals – with a starting salary of \$2,000.<sup>35</sup> The pay was less than the average offered by other institutions at the time. Regardless, Kinsey started the position on August 1, 1920.<sup>36</sup> Once he arrived in Indiana, the two began to see each other seriously and found that their shared love of nature brought them together. On Valentine's Day 1921, less than a year after they met, Kinsey asked Clara to marry him. She said yes.

Despite the fact that the Kinseys remained married for over thirty years, for the rest of their lives, the topic of his research led to speculation about his sexuality. When discussing Kinsey's life, it is irresponsible to let the debate over his sexuality and sexual behaviors go unrecognized. While this thesis does not propose to assign any sort of sexual identity to Kinsey, it does highlight that his life's work was just as personal as it was professional and political. Biographers and historians have latched onto the question of Kinsey's sexuality. Jones posits that his lack of sexual experience with women is common among homosexuals.<sup>37</sup> Jones's biography of Kinsey implies that he was a homosexual, which Kinsey never confirmed. Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy continues the debate in his biography with the assertion that Kinsey was bisexual.<sup>38</sup> Ultimately, these issues are irrelevant in the greater scheme of Kinsey's influence and the history of his life's work. Most important, Kinsey never described himself as homosexual or bisexual.

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<sup>34</sup> Jones, 164.

<sup>35</sup> Due to inflation, \$2,000 is now considered \$25,900.

<sup>36</sup> Jones, 155.

<sup>37</sup> Jones, 169.

<sup>38</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 83

A colleague of Kinsey's, Paul Gebhard, stated that "The only homosexual thing that he ever mentioned in his early part [of his life] was in his childhood when there was preadolescent sex play with a neighborhood group."<sup>39</sup> Kinsey never publicly discussed this matter. However, Gebhard's use of the word "homosexual" suggests that Kinsey might have described the incident that way. Exploring sexuality as a child was quite common – as Kinsey himself demonstrated in his research – and this in itself did not mean that the child became homosexual as an adult. Given his work, he knew that children commonly participated in exhibitionism and voyeurism; Kinsey was one such child.<sup>40</sup> Kinsey was raised with an Evangelical Protestant ideological understanding of what it meant to be a man. A man did not experiment with others prior to marriage, same sex or otherwise. To do so was to be known as a "sexual deviant," "moral degenerate," and/or "pervert." In the 1920s, terminology that referred to homosexual men in particular was, more often than not, negative and effeminate. The term "gay" was not popularized until the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, authorities commonly referred to men that engaged in same-sex relations as "morally degenerate" and/or "perverts."<sup>42</sup>

As Kinsey began his career at the university, the United States government started its own research on homosexuals and Communists with the goal of purging these individuals from state and military positions. In 1919, Chief Machinist's Mate<sup>43</sup> Ervin Arnold claimed he could

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<sup>39</sup> Jones, 22.

<sup>40</sup> Jones, 23.

<sup>41</sup> For more on the history of LGBTQIA+ terminology see, Vicki L. Eaklor, *Queer America: A People's GLBT History of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York, NY: The New Press; 2008).

<sup>42</sup> People used a variety of terms to negatively refer to homosexual men: "nance," "nancy boy," "pansy," and "buttercup." All of which have roots in perceptively feminine items or names, such as flowers. For more see, Douglas Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays: Exposing the FBI's "Sex Deviates" Program* (University of Kansas Press; Lawrence, Kansas, 2015), 12.

<sup>43</sup> A Machinist's Mate is a rank given to a member of the United States Navy's engineer community. It refers to an individual that operates, maintains, and repairs ship machinery. There are over a dozen variations of Machinist's Mate ratings. For more see, United States Department of the Navy, "Navy Personnel Command: NEOCS Manual Vol II (NECs)," Navy Personnel Command | NEOCS Manual Vol II (NECs), The United States Navy, Jan. 2020, [www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/nec/NECOSVolII/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/nec/NECOSVolII/Pages/default.aspx).

easily identify homosexuals.<sup>44</sup> Arnold witnessed same-sex relations occurring between fellow Navy personnel while in a military hospital. He took his findings to Washington, D.C. and reported what he saw to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt. Concerned by this report, Roosevelt authorized Arnold to investigate “perverts.”<sup>45</sup> They feared that these moral degenerates soiled the fabric of the American heterosexual family structure.

Chief Arnold set up decoys in order to catch gay men in the act. His method involved seeking young, attractive, and heterosexual sailors in their late-teens or early-twenties that offered themselves as “sex decoys.” They frequented locations suspected of having homosexual activity, lured gay men into a scenario where anal or oral intercourse was expected, and then arrested them.<sup>46</sup> As early as 1919, the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) surveillance of gay men was underway. The targeting of homosexuals ceased in the late-1920s as the fear of Bolsheviks rose and the Leopold and Loeb case brought on new fears of moral degeneracy, causing the Department of Justice to step in.<sup>47</sup>

The Leopold and Loeb case caused national fear that American youth were growing increasingly immoral.<sup>48</sup> In May of 1924, Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb brutally murdered

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<sup>44</sup> Charles, 15.

<sup>45</sup> Along with “perverts,” – men participating in same-sex relations – Roosevelt also authorized that the two investigate drug and alcohol use and female prostitution, which Chief Arnold ignored. Charles, 13-15.

<sup>46</sup> Charles, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Charles, 35.

<sup>48</sup> The Leopold and Loeb case went to trial in the autumn of 1924. The two young men, Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb, brutally murdered a fourteen-year-old named Bobby Franks. When the case went to trial, the courts determined that they were “perverts,” but Leopold was the aggressor who agitated Loeb into murdering Franks in return for sexual favors. They murdered Franks in order to demonstrate their superiority. However, the case did not discuss homosexuality, it focused on sexual depravity and prosecutors invoked Sigmund Freud’s research as a model to suggest that they were merely teens without enough morality in religion. As historian Douglas Charles states, “members of the public did not perceive an overarching flaw in US society that led them to see a dangerous threat in gays and reevaluate gender roles.” The case simply suggested that there was a moral drift occurring in the 1920s. For more on the Leopold and Loeb’s impact on early-1920s thoughts on homosexuality and morality see, Douglas Charles, *Hoover’s War on Gays: Exposing the FBI’s “Sex Deviates” Program* (University of Kansas Press; Lawrence, Kansas, 2015), 18-21.

fourteen-year-old Bobby Franks. While the case revealed that Leopold's participation was sexually charged, the court determined that the murder was committed due to moral degeneracy and a lack of religion in the boys' lives. Therefore, their inadequate moral upbringing made the fact that same-sex desire was present in the case entirely moot. The threat of Communism and moral degeneracy merged and government focus shifted from homosexuals to potential attacks on the United States.

In 1920, the Russian Revolution was underway and the fear of Communism and the growth of a Communist movement on American soil continued to grow.<sup>49</sup> As a result, the threat of same-sex relationships between men dissipated for the time being. That is until John "J." Edgar Hoover stepped in as Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.<sup>50</sup> By 1937, under Hoover, the FBI began to surveil homosexual men and lesbians as suspected moral degenerates. They believed that they were murderers in the making and targeted women and children.<sup>51</sup> With the onset of a Second World War, Hoover and other FBI officials investigated homosexuals – within and outside of the government – as national security threats. At the same moment, Kinsey's research began to develop. Initially, it was a way to challenge Freud's psychopathology of sexuality on the grounds that he had non-existent evidence of sex research. Kinsey's intent

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<sup>49</sup> The Russian Revolution began in 1917 and lasted until 1923, resulting from the increase in industrialization and production in 1908 and 1913. It officially began during the First World War in 1917 when Russian women took to the streets to protest and the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' was established. During the Revolution, Communism and Marxism (Karl Marx – a theory for the practice of Communism) were at the forefront, and Vladimir Lenin continued to write theories on capitalism. For more see, Michael Reiman, "About the Russian Revolution of 1917," in *About Russia, Its Revolutions, Its Development and Its Present* (Frankfurt Am Main: Peter Lang AG, 2016), 13-24, and Amiya Kumar Bagchi, "The Russian Revolution and Its Global Impact," *Social Scientist* 46, no. 3-4 (538-539) (2018): 45-54. Accessed February 19, 2020. doi:10.2307/26610334.

<sup>50</sup> Charles, 36.

<sup>51</sup> Charles, 34.

was to yield unbiased and scientifically proven data on sexual behaviors, thus hopefully dispelling stereotypes and biases on same-sex desire.<sup>52</sup>

In the spring of 1938, the Association of Women Students approached Kinsey to request that he teach courses on marriage.<sup>53</sup> As a married man, he was the ideal candidate. By February, Kinsey's courses included engaged and/or married students, students in their final year of study, and faculty members and their wives. Each course entailed six lectures on biology that were "frank and open" and five additional lectures taught by professors from other disciplines (religion, economics, sociology, and law).<sup>54</sup> Courses such as Kinsey's were popularized in the 1920s as a result of shifting gender roles and sexual mores. In addition, the growing youth counter-culture and revolutionary development of birth control contributed to the need for these courses.<sup>55</sup> Administrators intended Kinsey to teach a course that helped steer an individual towards maintaining their sense of morality in preparation for marriage through abstaining from any physical contact with a partner. As the fear of moral degeneracy continued to grow, these courses were increasingly prevalent at American universities such as Indiana at Bloomington.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey challenged Sigmund Freud's theories on human sexuality by demonstrating that Freud's research lacked empirical evidence. Furthermore, he had not conducted any sort of sex research. Kinsey believed that Freud's findings were based on personal concepts and thoughts that could be changed and/or challenged by his own accord at a whim. He believed that Freud, while highlighting the importance of removing the secrecy surrounding sex, he did not do so with an accurate or trustworthy method. For more on Kinsey's rejection of Freud's theories see, Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *Kinsey: Sex the Measure of All Things* (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 159-160, 252-253.

<sup>53</sup> The course did not count for any credit towards the degree. Gathorne-Hardy, 124.

<sup>54</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 125.

<sup>55</sup> Donna J. Drucker, "'A Noble Experiment': The Marriage Course at Indiana University, 1938-1940," *Indiana Magazine of History* 103, no. 3 (Indiana University Press, 2007), 236.

<sup>56</sup> Indiana University at Bloomington taught courses similar to Kinsey's marriage course throughout the early-twentieth century. In the 1930s, the university taught Hygiene Courses that were meant to help lessen the venereal disease panic. Research on hygiene courses is few and far between. For a brief synopsis see, Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *Kinsey: Sex the Measure of All Things* (Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998), 122-124. For a history on the spread of venereal disease and Midwestern reactions see, Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Harvard University Press, 1999), 30-32.

Hence, this request was not unusual. However, in June 1938, Kinsey's first opening lecture took everyone by storm.

Administrators at Indiana University assumed Kinsey's curriculum taught the negative aspects of sex outside of marriage, as well as the importance of maintaining a traditional, heterosexual, and religiously influenced union. Instead Kinsey delivered to the lecture room, filled with nearly one hundred people, an uncensored sexual education course. Contrary to expectations, he talked at length about clitoral stimulation, coitus, reproductive anatomy, and other topics that shocked the attendees. The audience listened and continued to come back to his lectures. Students started asking him questions, if he could include specific graphs or images, and explain every biological factor that pertained to sex.<sup>57</sup> He knew this was just the beginning of educating others on the sexual behaviors of people living in the United States.<sup>58</sup>

Being the disciplined researcher that he was, Kinsey wanted to acquire as much information on sexuality as possible in order to educate accurately. He asked if anyone wanted to volunteer to offer their sexual histories. By the following semester, class enrollment doubled, reaching over 200 students. His pupils were the first to provide their sexual histories, and the questions Kinsey could not answer drew him further away from gall wasps towards a deeper interest in sexology.<sup>59</sup> While he maintained an affinity towards researching the gall wasp, he found that this aspect of his work was growing less important. He had collected enough data that it accounted for an entire population. His research on the gall wasp was complete, he had

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<sup>57</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 126-27.

<sup>58</sup> Kinsey was pressured by members of the Bloomington community as well as faculty to teach a more structured course that focused on morality and abstinence. Rather than do as he was told, Kinsey prepared a syllabus that included the realities of sex and sexuality. For more see, James H. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Life* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1997).

<sup>59</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 129.

exhausted the topic.<sup>60</sup> Kinsey's new research quest was to uncover the under-studied science behind the sexual behaviors of humans. As a result, Kinsey constructed questions for his students that pertained to homosexuality, masturbation, orgasm, and peaking sexually.<sup>61</sup>

Only a year later in June 1939, he had 280 sexual histories. He travelled to Chicago to gather sexual histories from anonymous homosexual men with the help of friends and colleagues based in the city. On his trip, he became immersed in the homosexual underground known as The Village.<sup>62</sup> His visits to the city convinced Kinsey to conduct more research on sexuality and publish his findings.<sup>63</sup> The more histories he gathered, the more homosexual acts he documented. Enter the "Kinsey Scale."<sup>64</sup> When creating the scale, he immediately made his mark as a sexologist by providing the first scientific documentation on sexual fluidity. For the purposes of this thesis, Kinsey's terminology for the scale is used, "Het" marks heterosexual and "H" for homosexual. Figure 0-1 is the scale that appears in *SBHM* and displays a range of purely heterosexual acts to purely homosexual acts with various gradations in between.<sup>65</sup> The scale approximated Kinsey's findings. Come fall of 1939, he continued to ask for volunteers for sexual histories, but not without confrontation.

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<sup>60</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 130-131.

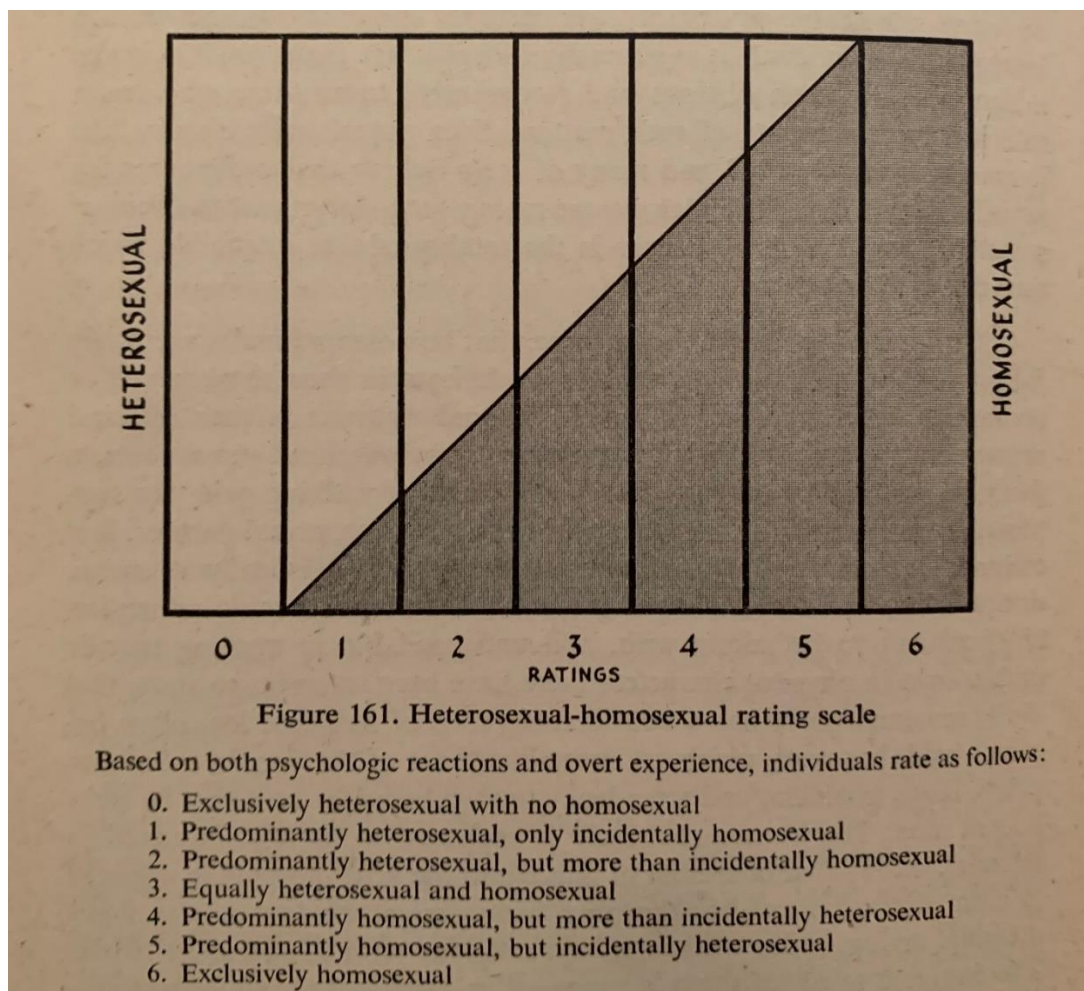
<sup>61</sup> Kinsey, et. al., *SBHM*, 638

<sup>62</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 133.

<sup>63</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 135.

<sup>64</sup> Gathorne-hardy, 134. The Kinsey Scale is still used today, whether by curious adolescence surfing the internet to find out more information on their own sexual feelings or by the occasional doctor. It is not an exact measure of how heterosexual or homosexual someone is; rather, it is a suggestion based on a personal sexual history that Kinsey utilized for research purposes. Today in 2020, the scale is rather limiting to heterosexual, homosexual, or a mix of the two (presumably bi-sexual). There are a variety of other sexual identities that it does not include such as a-sexual and pansexual.

<sup>65</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 134-135. To see the scale and to read more on its uses see, Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders, 1948), 638-641.



*Figure 0-1 Alfred C. Kinsey's "Heterosexual-homosexual rating scale."*<sup>66</sup>

By 1940, the Ministerial Association – Bloomington's clergymen – petitioned Indiana University's administration to remove the marriage course from the curriculum. Soon after, the medical school of Indianapolis attacked the university for having a biologist teach the course. They argued that biologists could not know anything about sexual behavior; medical professionals might be more adept at teaching the course. Faculty at IU also attacked the course and regarded the histories Kinsey recorded as detailing immoral acts. Rather than cancelling the popular course altogether, the university's administration gave Kinsey a choice: he could either

<sup>66</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia, PA: W.B. Saunders, 1948), 638-641.



continue teaching the marriage course or he could collect sex histories. He chose the sex histories.<sup>67</sup>

In 1937, two years prior to the creation of the Kinsey Scale, a major public hysteria about sex crime began.<sup>68</sup> This particular panic originated from a series of child murders that appeared to be sexually motivated. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover fueled the national crisis by calling for a “War on the Sex Criminal.” While Hoover did not state this directly, he implied male homosexuals were the primary offenders.<sup>69</sup> His call to action prompted the passage of “sex psychopath” laws in several states including: Michigan, Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, and California.<sup>70</sup> While these laws were enacted in order to protect women and children, they were not enforced in the 1940s until the release of *SBHM* in 1948. This delay demonstrates that political concern was not actually in the interest of women and children but of men and their sexuality instead.<sup>71</sup> Rather than calling for the protection of these at-risk groups, they targeted homosexual men.

Despite the political climate, in which Kinsey faced the possibility of tarnishing his reputation or getting put on an FBI list, he carried on. The university, as well as the Medical Division of the Rockefeller Foundation, sponsored Kinsey in his pursuits “of obtaining data

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<sup>67</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 148-150.

<sup>68</sup> Estelle B. Freedman, “‘Uncontrolled Desires’: The Response to the Sexual Psychopath, 1920-1960,” *The Journal of American History*, Oxford University Press on behalf of Organization of American Historians, Vol. 74. No. 1 (Jun., 1987), 92.

<sup>69</sup> Freedman, “‘Uncontrolled Desires,’” 94.

<sup>70</sup> Freedman, “‘Uncontrolled Desires,’” 95-96. The “sex psychopath” laws technically began in 1935, but Hoover’s efforts towards catching sex criminals – homosexuals – made them more stringent and police enforced them with a new found fervor. These laws were vague and commonly unreported by officers, possibly due to their own brutality when enforcing them. They include charges such as rape, exposure to a female child, oral copulation, and more. If one was charged with anything that fell under sex psychopath laws, they could be charged with a misdemeanor or prolonged incarceration for multiple offenses against children. Based on Sigmund Freud’s psychopathy, government officials believed that continuous offenses resulted in murder. For more see, Philip Jenkins, “The Sex Psychopath Statutes,” In *Moral Panic: Changing Concepts of the Child Molester in Modern America*, 75-93 (Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>71</sup> Freedman, “‘Uncontrolled Desires,’” 96.

about sex which represented an accumulation of scientific fact completely divorced from questions of moral value and social custom.”<sup>72</sup> After Kinsey presented a paper on his research, Robert Yerkes of the National Research Council (NRC) took interest in the research and brought it to the attention of the NRC committee. The National Academy of Sciences formed the NRC in 1916 to bring together the broad community of science and technology. They primarily focused on gathering further knowledge on scientific research. Yerkes’s committee included Alan Gregg, the Rockefeller Foundation’s Medical Director. The two most prestigious organizations for scientific research, the NRC and the Rockefeller Foundation funded his research. As a result, Indiana University wanted in on the opportunity, giving Kinsey and his team additional funds.<sup>73</sup> He grew increasingly aware of people’s desires and demands for such data and demands for accurate sexual representation based on comprehensive scientific fact. Through his research, Kinsey sought not only to provide the public with data on sex, but also to provide an “objectively determined body of fact on sex which strictly avoids social or moral interpretations of the fact.”<sup>74</sup> He challenged the social and moral clauses that prescribed definitions of normative sexual behaviors, and replaced them with scientific data demonstrating that an array of sexual behaviors was normal.

At the beginning of his research, Kinsey investigated the *general sexual behaviors of men* instead of the normal man, the normal behavior of men or the abnormal man, or the abnormal behavior of men. Through his work, he sought to identify the broad range of sexual experiences of the average American man. The data and sexual histories he collected showed that large numbers of men (predominately white men) of varying backgrounds had engaged in such

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<sup>72</sup> Kinsey, 3. This quote is taken *SBHM*, presumably these are Kinsey’s own words.

<sup>73</sup> Gathorne-Hardy, 187-189.

<sup>74</sup> Kinsey, 5.

behaviors as homosexuality, premarital sex, and masturbation. Thus, the data illustrated that, in general, men's sexual mores and desires of the 1940s were more complex than was previously understood. Furthermore, he argued that a normative and universal experience of sexuality does not exist. He proved this by ample evidence from his large study sample, which included men from medical and psychiatric associations, persons from 528 institutions of American higher education, administrators of correctional facilities, and individuals associated with social or civic organizations.<sup>75</sup>

Although Kinsey travelled throughout the United States to conduct his research, the map provided in *SBHM* suggests that most histories were collected in the Midwest – especially Indiana and Illinois. In the early years of his sex research, Kinsey funded his own work. Gathering information in Indiana or travelling a few hours north to Illinois was what he could afford. He hoped that someday his sample might expand to represent a thorough cross-section of the entire population of the United States. Until then, the bulk of his participants came from Indiana, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.<sup>76</sup> Upon receiving funding from the NRC, Rockefeller Foundation, and Indiana University, he could finally afford to conduct his investigation on sexuality in more states. In addition to the limited geography, it is important to note the research scope focused primarily on white men. Kinsey himself noted that he intended to expand his research to include other races. These included “American and Canadian Negro,” British, Western and Northern European, Mediterranean European, Latin American, Slavic,

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<sup>75</sup> Kinsey, 13-16.

<sup>76</sup> Kinsey, 5.

“Oriental (Asia),” Filipino, Polynesian, and “American Indian.”<sup>77</sup> Ultimately, his goal, as he wrote in *SBHM* was to expand to studying these races in the future.

Through interviewing participants, Kinsey found that there were six primary sources that influenced orgasm and/or ejaculation: masturbation, nocturnal emissions, heterosexual petting, heterosexual intercourse, homosexual relations, and intercourse with animals.<sup>78</sup> Despite the presence of bestiality, Kinsey’s research on homosexual behaviors in men was at the forefront in debates on whether or not same sex desire constituted as sexual deviance. He found that 48 percent of adult men reported homosexual activity in pre-adolescence, and 60 percent of the 212 pre-adolescent boys interviewed at the time of the study did as well.<sup>79</sup> Recognizing the social significance of his research on homosexuality, Kinsey contended that his findings disrupted pronouncements of the current religious institutions of Judaism and Christianity that “have considered this aspect of human sexuality to be abnormal and immoral.”<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, he argued that, based on the unbiased scientific data, it was unjust to penalize men who were discovered to have had homosexual relations. Through his research, Kinsey attested that this kind of sexual behavior was not uncommon. Unfortunately, conservative government officials used the cold hard facts of the report to further demonize homosexuals.

Republican senators took the findings in Kinsey’s report and argued that homosexual behaviors were so widespread that homosexuality was a far bigger problem than they had expected.<sup>81</sup> In particular, Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-Wisconsin) seized on Kinsey’s work. The

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<sup>77</sup> The terms featured in quotations are Kinsey’s exact words. He passed away before he was able to feature any of these racial categories in a future volume of the report. Kinsey, 73-74.

<sup>78</sup> Kinsey, 193.

<sup>79</sup> Kinsey, 168.

<sup>80</sup> Kinsey, 610.

<sup>81</sup> John D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 42.

McCarthy era propelled widespread fear of a “homosexual menace”<sup>82</sup> that continued throughout the 1950s. While it was deeply invested in the removal of Communism from United States, McCarthyism became known as a campaign against both Communists and homosexuals, which prompted the military to issue a wave of punitive “blue discharges” that stripped veterans of G.I. benefits.<sup>83</sup> These benefits included, but were not limited to, the provision of educational support along with employment allowance, loans for the purpose of home ownership, and an employment service for veterans specifically.<sup>84</sup> The recipients were deeply disadvantaged in the postwar era.

While anyone could receive a blue discharge, they were disproportionately distributed to homosexuals and black men. They were neither honorable nor dishonorable discharges. Rather, they were imposed on individuals who showed evidence of undesirable traits or characteristics (such as homosexuality or a propensity to protest racism).<sup>85</sup> The military held the right to remove any soldier suspected of being homosexual even without evidentiary support. This tool was used to remove anyone deemed as unfit for service without the label of dishonorable discharge. During World War Two and the postwar demobilization, blue discharges became deeply associated with homosexuals. This caused an obvious problem for men that were closeted prior to their removal from military service: they were outed publicly, did not receive benefits or support, and, oftentimes, were excommunicated from their family, friends, and neighbors.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> McCarthyite politics constructed the homosexual menace – coined by John D’Emilio – as a homosexual boogeyman. He lurked in the darkest shadows of American society and tore at the fabric of social morality and sexual normalcy (heterosexuality) to shreds. For more see, John D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 42.

<sup>83</sup> Margot Canaday, “Building a Straight State: Sexuality and Social Citizenship under the 1944 G.I. Bill,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 90, No. 3 (Oxford University Press; 2003), 940.

<sup>84</sup> Canaday, 937.

<sup>85</sup> Canaday, 940.

<sup>86</sup> Canaday, 945.

A blue discharge made it virtually impossible for soldiers to reenter society. Historian Margot Canady explains that, rather than opening the doors by removing “dishonorable” from their discharge, “their blue discharges were actually closing doors that were open to them before the war.”<sup>87</sup> When soldiers fought for their country, blue discharges put them at risk of losing their ability to maneuver through society without stigma and marked them with a blue “H” for homosexual for the rest of their lives. Senators such as McCarthy manipulated the findings of *SBHM* in favor of eliminating homosexuality and removing the rights of homosexual citizens. In this regard, the work that Kinsey conducted was taken out of context. Kinsey was unable to speak up against this use of his work. If he did, he risked his reputation and funding. Other professionals in scientific fields exploited Kinsey’s findings to further escalate the fear of homosexuals and uphold McCarthy era politics.

Among scientists, Kinsey’s research was applauded by some and criticized by others. The *American Journal of Psychiatry* regarded his interviewees as not representative of average Americans. They suggested that his overall findings on sexuality were inflated based on the types of people he interviewed.<sup>88</sup> Critics argued that Kinsey was subjective in his methods and analysis. Furthermore, they believed he promoted and valorized the practice of sexual perversions.<sup>89</sup> Psychoanalysts scrutinized his work relentlessly. They charged Kinsey with disregarding the unconscious motivations of interviewees and suggested that his use of candid questions skewed his data sample. Their scrutiny in many ways was a reaction to Kinsey’s own criticisms of psychoanalysts, most of whom viewed homosexuality as an abnormal

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<sup>87</sup> Canaday, 946.

<sup>88</sup> Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 304.

<sup>89</sup> Terry, 304.

psychopathology.<sup>90</sup> Kinsey's biggest critic was the former assistant director of the Freud Clinic in Vienna, Dr. Edmund Bergler. He attacked Kinsey for what he viewed as an over exaggeration of how many homosexual men populated the United States.<sup>91</sup> He concluded that Kinsey must have conducted his research in cities with a dense population of perverse men. As a Freudian psychoanalyst, Bergler countered Kinsey's research with his own. He speculated that the homosexual man was an individual trapped in a pre-Oedipal stage, a person perpetually stuck in a neurosis of rejection and defeat or a masochist. Bergler suggested that the trouble with this individual was that he craved danger and destruction. The homosexual presented by Bergler was fundamentally disloyal. His illogical and incoherent findings on homosexuals appeared in the rhetoric of anti-communist and anti-homosexual public officials.<sup>92</sup> In particular, McCarthy took advantage of it in order to demonize homosexuals by supporting Bergler's argument that they were fundamentally disloyal which made them a threat to American life.<sup>93</sup>

Acclaim for Kinsey's report far exceeded the negative feedback. Following *SBHM*'s release, *New York Times* reporter Howard A. Rusk wrote an article "Concerning Man's Basic Drive." Rusk suggested that "For some it [*SBHM*] will be clarifying. Others it will confuse."<sup>94</sup> Rusk recognized the polarizing effect of the report while stating its importance in the need for sexual education that is not dictated by a preconceived notion on sex and sexuality.<sup>95</sup> Ultimately, Rusk found that the report, while controversial, provided a deeper sense of what Americans needed to grow past prescribed norms for its citizens. Furthermore, he ended the article stating,

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<sup>90</sup> Terry, 307.

<sup>91</sup> Terry, 309.

<sup>92</sup> Terry, 310-311.

<sup>93</sup> Terry, 310.

<sup>94</sup> Howard A. Rusk, "Concerning Man's Basic Drive: SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN THE HUMAN MALE. by Alfred S. Kinsey. New York: W.B. Saunders Co. \$6.50," *New York Times (1923-Current File)*, Jan 04, 1948. <http://remote.slc.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.remote.slc.edu/docview/108148372?accountid=13701>.

<sup>95</sup> Rusk, "Concerning Man's Basic Drive."

“It [*SBHM*] offers data that should promote tolerance and understanding.”<sup>96</sup> Rusk was only one of many reporters who offered their opinion on Kinsey’s sexology report. While journalists were polarized on the subject, their words reached the ears of many Americans and prompted a more open social discourse on sexuality.

What Kinsey’s research did was issue a powerful challenge the notion that homosexual men were disturbed, perverted, degenerate, or deviant. Whether he knew it or not, Kinsey and his report became an inspiration to men across the United States who felt alone in their sexuality; men who felt like they held a dirty secret that must never be told or expressed. Despite the risks he faced – whether it was defying his father, upsetting every minister in Bloomington, losing his position as the marriage course professor, and having his merit questioned by government officials and colleagues – Kinsey stood by his research and issued his report. *SBHM*’s publication was a necessary contribution to the field of sexology and, as Kinsey later found out, social activism.

In January 1948, Americans raced to bookstores and newsstands to snatch a copy of the revolutionary sexology report. It quickly became a “must read.” While Kinsey and his colleagues celebrated over a decade’s worth of hard work and determination, another reaction was building in Southern California. Over a thousand miles away, a young man named Henry “Harry” Hay walked the streets and beaches of Los Angeles, California with *SBHM* in his hands. Like a hurricane, Hay blew through the city with revolution on his mind. What started as a zoologist’s interest in sexual behaviors rapidly turned to a cause of concern for some and celebration for others. Moreover, the sparks of a revolutionary fire began to ignite inside the minds of

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<sup>96</sup> Rusk, “Concerning Man’s Basic Drive.” Rusk’s article is just one of many that reported on *SBHM*. It is one of the most positive out of all of the articles *New York Times* published in their newspaper.



homosexuals across the United States. That year, homosexual men and women began to establish organizations, eventually giving birth to the homophile movement. With *SBHM* and the prospectus for the first homophile organization in hand, Harry Hay started the Mattachine Foundation, which crossed paths with Kinsey in 1953.

## Chapter 2:

Radical, Gay, and a Sissy: Henry “Harry” Hay Ignites the Fire of 1950s Homophile Activism

“Up until I was eleven years old, I thought I was the only one of my kind in the world. I couldn’t find anybody else who felt as I did.”

– Henry “Harry” Hay, 1998

On a warm day in August of 1948, Henry “Harry” Hay – then age 36 – walked the beaches and boardwalks of Los Angeles with the Kinsey report in hand. With clear skies above, Hay stepped out of his home with the intent to form an organization for homosexuals.<sup>1</sup> A young and spirited Communist, he taught Party-approved courses in Los Angeles on folk music. After petitioning for the candidacy of the Progressive Party candidate Henry Wallace,<sup>2</sup> Hay prepared to organize a group called Bachelors for Wallace. He proposed that the association include homosexual men that supported Progressive Party politicians’ election to office.<sup>3</sup> Not only did they have to support the political party; Hay determined that they must also intend on forming a gay organization.<sup>4</sup> While the committee did not accomplish much of anything, it did kickstart the formation of the Mattachine Foundation and Hay’s decades of activism in the burgeoning gay movement.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Weather Channel’s* website *Weather Underground* marks August 1948 as having an average temperature of 64.97 degrees Fahrenheit with highs of 71.68 degrees and lows of 63.49 degrees Fahrenheit. There was no rain reported and wind speeds were at an average of 5.28 miles per hour and a maximum of 14 miles per hour. *The Weather Channel*, “Los Angeles, CA Weather History,” *Weather Underground*, [www.wunderground.com/history/monthly/us/ca/los-angeles/KLAX/date/1948-8](http://www.wunderground.com/history/monthly/us/ca/los-angeles/KLAX/date/1948-8).

<sup>2</sup> Henry Wallace was Franklin Roosevelt’s Vice President throughout his third term. However, he was replaced by Harry Truman in 1944 for Roosevelt’s fourth term. Wallace broke off from the Democrats, believing that the political group was growing towards right wing politics. Other politicians followed his lead, resulting in the formation of the Progressive Party and his presidential nomination in the name of the party in the 1948 election. Communists influenced Progressive Party politics, though Wallace was not a Communist. For more see, Vern L. Bullough, “Harry Hay (1912- )” in *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (Harrington Park Press: New York, 2002), 77.

<sup>3</sup> Vern L. Bullough, “Harry Hay (1912- )” in *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (Harrington Park Press: New York, 2002), 77.

<sup>4</sup> Harry Hay, *Radically Gay: Gay Liberation in the Words of its Founder* (Boston, MA; Beacon Press, 1996), 358.

<sup>5</sup> Bullough, “Harry Hay (1912- ),” 77.

Two years passed before his dream of a successful homosexual organization – for them, by them – came to fruition. Prior to his involvement in Communism, gay liberation, and activism, Hay grew up in a financially secure and privileged environment. He never had to want for anything. Born on April 7, 1912, in Worthing, Sussex, England, he was raised by his father Harry Hay Sr. and mother Margaret Hay. Once Henry “Harry” Hay Jr. was born, his father went by Henry to distinguish himself from his son. Hay’s father worked tirelessly as an overseer in mines throughout his early childhood and he often cited his mother as the primary caregiver.<sup>6</sup>

Harry Jr. was never particularly close to his father. Margaret Hay – born at Fort Bowie, Arizona Territory – showed her son creative outlets of song, dance, and musical instrumentation. He played piano and displayed his talents for his mother. The nanny, Miss Pittock, taught Harry Jr. how to speak French, which he spoke to his mother to show her he had mastered the correct pronunciation. While Harry Sr. wanted him to be a man who exhibited the utmost masculine qualities, Margaret hoped for their son to be a kind gentleman. She enrolled him in seven years of piano lessons that began at age eight. When he became a teenager, she arranged for him to take ballroom dancing classes. Harry Jr. and his mother had nearly identical tastes and the same love for creative expression. His father, on the other hand, never seemed to be around much to influence Harry Jr.’s extracurriculars.<sup>7</sup>

Harry Jr.’s father worked for some of the most prominent families across the world. When he was a young boy, his father was offered a position by the Guggenheim family’s Anaconda Company. The job was to manage a copper mine at Chuquicamata in the Andes. He accepted, but his family remained in England. As World War I began to close in on the family,

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<sup>6</sup> Stuart Timmons, *The Trouble with Harry Hay: Founder of the Modern Gay Movement* (London; 1990), 10-12.

<sup>7</sup> Timmons, 3, 14-20.

Margaret and her children (Harry Jr. and his sister Margaret Caroline “Peggy” Hay born in 1914) fled on the last American transport ship out of Great Britain. They arrived in South America to reunite with Harry Sr. At this point, he was making a yearly salary of \$50,000 from the Chile Exploration Company – a subsidiary of the Anaconda.<sup>8</sup> His work in Chile came to an end in mid-June of 1916, after the birth of Jack Hay.

Harry Sr. worked on a job site while Margaret remained in the hospital with the newborn. Unexpectedly, a one-ton carload of ore fell. To avoid being crushed, Harry Sr. jumped, but his right leg was destroyed. Given the uncertainty of his health, the family left Chile to seek further treatment in Southern California. With all three children in tow, the Hays boarded the S.S. *Chile* and set off for the United States.<sup>9</sup> Harry Sr. had grown up in Los Angeles. Living there was familiar and reminiscent of the years when he had taken professional courses that gave him the opportunity to purchase his mother her own orange grove. Happy memories or not, the accident changed the course of the family’s life.

Margaret had high hopes and dreamt of Harry Jr.’s receiving a private education in Switzerland and attending the University of Heidelberg. But Harry Sr. could no longer work; his leg was amputated below the knee. While the Guggenheims offered him a position as a mining consultant at the same pay rate he had earned in Chile, he declined the offer.<sup>10</sup> The family then settled in Long Beach, California for six months until they moved to Tustin, a town in southeast Orange County.<sup>11</sup> By February 1919, the Hays arrived in Los Angeles, California and bought a

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<sup>8</sup> Due to inflation, \$50,000 is approximately 1.3 million dollars today. Henry Hay Sr. was paid such a high amount due to the price of copper skyrocketing during World War I. Timmons, 13.

<sup>9</sup> Timmons, 15.

<sup>10</sup> Henry Hay Sr. attested that he rejected the offer solely off of his own pride. He felt that he was paid for a “half job” and would be an office-bound bureaucrat. His attitude towards working with a disability may reflect the way they were viewed during this time as well. For more see, Timmons, 17-18.

<sup>11</sup> Timmons, 17.

large property in South Hollywood.<sup>12</sup> Along with a home for his family, Harry Sr. purchased thirty acres on Azusa Avenue in Covina, growing lemons and Valencia Oranges.

Harry Sr. sold his bounty of citrus to the Sunkist Co-op, invested in stocks, and built up a portfolio of real estate to secure his family's finances and income.<sup>13</sup> Despite his successes, Harry Sr. grew increasingly aggravated with his family. His disability left him resentful and angry, which he took out on Harry Jr. His father forced perfection on Hay; if he did not meet these expectations, his father reacted with verbal attacks and physical beatings.<sup>14</sup> The most provocative of the beatings occurred when Harry Jr. was nine years old. During dinner, Harry Sr. made a remark about Egypt to Harry Jr., who had just studied the subject in class the day prior. Harry Jr. knew his father was wrong, and told him so. Everyone at the dinner table fell silent. His mother gasped. But he refused to apologize. No one in the family had stood up to Harry Sr. before and, at nine years old, Harry Jr. learned a lesson he never forgot. After a forceful whipping from his father, Harry Jr. speculated that if his father could be wrong, then so could teachers, priests, and even God.<sup>15</sup>

By the time Harry Jr. entered high school, Harry Sr. decided that his son needed to have a more masculine understanding of the world. He put Harry Jr. to work at his cousin George's ranch in Western Nevada, where Harry Sr. had worked as a teenager. What Harry Sr. hoped for

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<sup>12</sup> The house that the Hays purchased still stands today on 149 South Kingsley Drive in South Hollywood. Timmons, 18.

<sup>13</sup> Prior to the stock-market crash, Harry Hay noted his father's worth as nearly \$750,000 in 1927 which, due to inflation, is approximately eleven million dollars. For more see, Stuart Timmons, *The Trouble with Harry Hay: Founder of the Modern Gay Movement* (London; 1990), 18-19.

<sup>14</sup> Timmons, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Harry Hay marked this moment as one of the many that defined his activism. It was the moment his child-self comprehended that people in power could be wrong and if they were wrong, someone ought to stand up against those wrongs. As a gay speaker in his adulthood, Hay told this dinner-table story to an audience and end it with "the voice of dissent began that night." For more see, Stuart Timmons, *The Trouble with Harry Hay: Founder of the Modern Gay Movement* (London; 1990), 22-23.

was that the work would make him more masculine and “manly” but it was not achieved. Harry Jr. began to resent his father further, especially his conservatism, and started to identify as a working-class kid. While in Nevada, he read Marxist literature and grew increasingly interested in Communism. Former members of the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies) provided Harry Jr. with the literature. These men were mostly Washoe Indians, whom Harry Jr. knew very little about. From the moment they told him that the silver spoon of his youth was forever tarnished, he sought out political activism against an unjust capitalist system that oppressed the working class.<sup>16</sup>

In 1937, at the age of 25, Hay<sup>17</sup> started attending Marxist and Communist party beginner courses. The Party was aware of his past homosexual tendencies, so he was initially unable to join. He always knew he was a homosexual, but the policies of the Party did not allow gay men and women – though some did join without others knowing – into their organization. As a result, Hay did what so many other gay men were doing. He got married. Party psychiatrists further influenced his decision to marry a woman, especially when they heard of a “boyish girl” by the name of Anita Platky.<sup>18</sup> She was 24 at the time and came from a large Jewish family that had moved from New Jersey to Los Angeles in 1929. Platky was described as having a relatively athletic build, slim hiped with a strong jawline. Her friends described her as mannish, causing her to feel deeply insecure – that is, until she met Hay, who stood six feet and three inches tall. Platky recalled that standing next to Hay in heels was one of her favorite things, because she still stood no taller than him.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Timmons, 32-33. Will Roscoe and Harry Hay, *A Blessing From Wovoka* (San Francisco: Vortex Media, 1988).

<sup>17</sup> From now, Henry “Harry” Hay Jr. is referred to by his last name, Hay.

<sup>18</sup> Timmons, 96-98.

<sup>19</sup> Timmons, 98.

A month after meeting Anita Platky, Hay went to the downtown headquarters of the Communist Party to apply for formal membership. When questioned about his homosexuality, he responded with his plans to marry Platky. That was enough for the headquarters to hear; they accepted his application. As the progression from courting to marriage continued, Hay began to shed his homosexual life. He dropped his old friends and stopped going to gay spaces he had once frequented. On September 9, 1938, Harry Hay and Anita Platky exchanged vows before an audience of fifty.<sup>20</sup>

Hay's outward façade of a happily married man was not indicative of how he truly felt on the inside. In fact, he was struggling tremendously as he repressed his homosexuality. In the spring of 1939, he broke and sought out sexual encounters. The practice continued until the end of his marriage.<sup>21</sup> Later in 1939, the couple moved to New York where they joined the Communist Party of New York and Hay began cruising Central Park at night. This location, brought Hay to Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey for the first time. A man he met through cruising introduced Hay to John Erwin, a medical student at Bellevue. John told him that there was a doctor conducting research on sexuality and interviewing men who had same-sex experiences. He introduced Hay to Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey at Bellevue Hospital. The day they met, the two – Kinsey and Hay – went into a small office, and Kinsey interviewed Hay on his sexual history. In that moment, Harry Hay contributed to the statistics that appeared in the first extensive sexology report of the twentieth century. In 1948, his and approximately 12,000 other men's statistics appeared in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*.

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<sup>20</sup> Timmons, 104.

<sup>21</sup> The end of Hay's marriage is discussed further in this chapter. Timmons, 105.

Platky and Hay's time in New York were short lived. They returned to Los Angeles where they adopted their first child in September of 1943, Hannah Margaret, and their second daughter in December of 1945, Kate Neall. While sexually active with one another, the couple had tried for a child for the first five years of their marriage but were unable to conceive. Adoption was their only choice, and they loved their daughters immensely. Regardless of the addition of children and the ostensibly heterosexual life, Hay's homosexual past caused a great deal of tension between him and Platky. He could not stand to repress his sexuality any longer. The two knew the marriage was nearing a close. In the last years of his marriage, Hay taught musicology courses on "Music, Barometer of the Class Struggle." His courses on music led him further towards homosexual organizing and acceptance of his identity more than he could have imagined.<sup>22</sup>

Henry "Harry" Hay became one of the most prominent figures of gay liberation activism. He moved through a world of privilege, and began to identify as working-class when his father forced him to uphold a hyper-masculine stereotype, and always remembered the moment Henry Hay Sr. struck him with a cat-o'-seven tails<sup>23</sup> after the Egypt debacle. His marriage was a mask of respectability donned so that he could become a formal member of the Communist Party. The repression he felt during his marriage, and subsequent cruising, brought him to Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey to provide his sex history. All of the events detailed so far led to the igniting of a homophile organization.

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<sup>22</sup> Timmons, 127-129.

<sup>23</sup> A cat-o'-seven tails is commonly known as a cat-o'-nine tails. It is a multi-tailed whip used to implement severe physical punishment. The device has nine – or however many tails the maker chooses – knotted tails at the end of nine ropes that are then lashed across a person's body, commonly their back. For a history on corporeal punishment and the cat-o'-nine tails see, Holly S. Harvey, "Of Flogging and Electric Shock: A Comparative Tale of Colonialism, Commonwealths, and the Cat-O'-Nine Tails," *The University of Miami Inter-American Law Review* 24, no. 1 (1992), 87-119.



Before Harry Hay touched down in Los Angeles and began the process of developing a homophile organization, California already had a rich history of same-sex relations. Throughout the mid-to-late 1800s, colonizers regarded the land that was Los Angeles as particularly nefarious and overwhelmingly populated by sodomites. The Spaniards witnessed same-sex relations between men, but were drawn to the fantasy of women's participating in sexual activities together. In fact, they were so enamored, they maintained the name of the state as California. In 1535, Hernan Cortes found inspiration for the name through a fifteenth-century author Garcí Rodríguez de Montalvo's protolesbian tale of Queen Califa who lived on the island of California.<sup>24</sup> During the 1840s, some Los Angelenos escaped restrictions of gender expectations: women began dressing as men and claiming the rights of men.<sup>25</sup>

By 1875, the city remained relatively lawless. As All Fool's Night<sup>26</sup> approached, the city created a law that forced men to perform in a masculine role and women in a feminine role. Los Angeles adopted this law from Denver, Colorado's "Offenses Against Good Morals and Decency" ordinance. It prohibited any man from dressing feminine and women from dressing masculine. If someone went against this ordinance, they received a misdemeanor. The genderless expressions of early Los Angeles were coming to a swift close. In 1898, the ban of the celebrations was passed (Ordinance 5022) and made it illegal for men to dress as women and vice versa. This ordinance did not stop an underground community of stage performers dressing in articles of clothing opposite of their gender. In fact, citizens of Los Angeles were entertained

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<sup>24</sup> Similar to Amazonian women of Greek mythology, the masculine women of California waged wars, killed mostly men, – only keeping a few for procreational purposes – keeping female babies, and slaughtering male babies. For more see, Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 8-10.

<sup>25</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 14-15.

<sup>26</sup> All Fool's Night was the culmination of La Fiesta when citizens participated in gaudy pageants. The event was similar to the tradition of Carnival in Europe, including the temporary suspension of city government. Faderman and Timmons, 16.

by the gender-bending of vaudeville performers of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century.<sup>27</sup>

Despite attempts to regulate queer Los Angeles, the underground gay subculture had already taken root. In 1915, new sodomy laws, such as lewd and vagrancy offenses, further restricted gay men's relations with one another. The fear that the city turned into a debaucherous and vice fueled environment prompted police to hunt gay men. Similar to the sex decoys in New York, police tactics included entrapping gay men by attracting them with the promise of sexual pleasure (oral or otherwise) and then swiftly apprehending them.<sup>28</sup> Then, Hollywood and silver screen actors arrived and brought an unapologetic expression of queer desires with them.

According to the *New York Times*, Hollywood was "gayer, newer, brighter, and younger."<sup>29</sup> This was true. Due to the influx of Europeans seeking refuge in California from the growing fascism of Europe, the Weimar Republic's unconventional sexuality opened up a wealth of opportunity for gays and lesbians in Los Angeles to explore and understand their desires.<sup>30</sup> Movie industry workers and individuals were drawn to the city's secret society of homosexuals, finding Hollywood an attractive location. Designer Howard Greer threw parties that catered to homosexuals, making gay gatherings parties such as Greer's a secretive and safe location for gays and lesbians to congregate.<sup>31</sup> In 1933, with the growth of gay nightlife, law enforcement grew increasingly anti-homosexual, especially towards gay men.

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<sup>27</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 17-19.

<sup>28</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 30-33.

<sup>29</sup> Mildred Adams, "The City of Angels Enters Heaven," *New York Times*, August 3, 1930, 5.

<sup>30</sup> For more on the Weimar Republic's influence on Hollywood see, Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 42-43. For more on homosexuality and the Weimar Republic see, Laurie Marhoefer, "Degeneration, Sexual Freedom, and the Politics of the Weimar Republic, 1918-1933," *German Studies Review* 34, no. 3 (2011), 529-549.

<sup>31</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 34.

Lesbian and bisexual women in Hollywood had the ability to exist under the radar. This was in part due to the fact that most woman-to-woman relationships were recognized as friendships even though they were indeed romantic. A large portion of Hollywood socialites and actors found safety from police and anti-homosexual legislation by marrying people of the opposite sex who were fellow homosexuals; lesbians married gay men and vice versa. That they were in heterosexual unions averted attention from their public gender expressions.<sup>32</sup> For gay men the fear of legal prosecution was still at the forefront of their concerns, regardless of a heterosexual appearing marriage.

In fact, the subject of this chapter, Harry Hay, was an actor during the 1930s. As he later recounted in an interview, Hollywood social connections were just as valuable as sexual ones. Producers who were part of the underground gay scene were more likely to give homosexuals parts in productions if they got to know them at a party rather than through an audition.<sup>33</sup> Hay navigated the growing homosexual underground long before he formed the Mattachine. After the Pearl Harbor Bombing of 1941, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) exhausted their attacks on homosexuals and averted their attention to potential wartime threats on American soil. Los Angeles was a port city utilized by the military. As World War II raged on, the military attempted to prevent soldiers from participating in Hollywood's gay life. Bars and cafes that were speculated or known to cater to homosexuals had to hang signs stating that their establishment was "Out of Bounds to Military Personnel." Despite the military's efforts on this front, the war eventually assisted in nurturing a larger homosexual community in Los Angeles. Servicemen and -women who were gay found solace in L.A., in part due to its size, which

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<sup>32</sup> For more on lesbian Hollywood see, Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), pp 47-54.

<sup>33</sup> (trying to figure out where this interview between Stuart Timmons and Hay is) For now just Faderman and Timmons, 58.

promised anonymity, but also due to the gay underground that that swelled with the influx of new people.<sup>34</sup>

As Senator Joseph McCarthy's (R-Wisconsin) anti-homosexual rhetoric began to circulate across the United States, the LAPD moved towards conducting police sweeps of gay bars. In fear of the growing assault on their community, actors, designers, producers, and directors started to return to a straight-passing appearance and looked over their shoulders wherever they went. Regardless of police actions, the California Supreme Court remained fairly lax with regard to charges against homosexuals and oftentimes dismissed cases that targeted homosexuality. Once McCarthy's rhetoric found its way into the mainstream political discourse in 1950, Los Angeles's Vice Squad started utilizing entrapment – similar to officers of the 1910s.<sup>35</sup> Moral laws that criminalized homosexuals proliferated. The most common charge was “Vag Lewd,” or the “lewd and lascivious conduct” which fell under antivagrancy statutes and section 674 of the California Penal Code. If convicted, an individual could face high cost fines, a year or more of probation, and having to register as a sex offender.<sup>36</sup>

In the postwar years, homosexuals started to consider modes of activism that could liberate them from all of the injustices they faced. A man by the name of Joseph Hansen reported in 1948 that he encountered a man who invited him to meetings. They were orchestrated by an association of homosexual men that discussed ways to make life better for gays and lesbians in

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<sup>34</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 72-73. For more on the military and homosexuality see Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990) and Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>35</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 78-79.

<sup>36</sup> For more on Vag Lewd laws and homosexuals in California see, Douglas M. Charles, "From Subversion to Obscenity: The FBI's Investigations of the Early Homophile Movement in the United States, 1953-1958," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 19, no. 2 (2010): 262-87.

America. Hansen dismissed the idea. Whether or not this man was Harry Hay is unknown, but Hay was organizing a very similar space to the one described by Hansen.<sup>37</sup>

On August 10, 1948, Hay began to formulate what became the Mattachine Foundation. After signing the petition for Henry Wallace's candidacy, he attended a meeting with other progressive men. Paul Falconer, a man Hay met while cruising Westlake Park, invited him to the event. What he initially perceived as a party was actually a laidback organizational meeting. Two dozen guests attended and all were homosexual. This was the location, near St. James Park by the University of Southern California, where Hay first heard of the Kinsey report. A student from France asked if he had heard of it, which he had not. When Kinsey interviewed Hay all of those years prior, he never mentioned what the name of the book would be. The student told Hay that *SBHM* was the most talked about book of the season and claimed that thirty-seven percent of adult men experienced homosexual relations.<sup>38</sup> Something clicked.

To Hay, this high percentage revealed that there were enough homosexual men that could constitute an organizable minority. He vocalized the idea to the room but they told him that organizing homosexuals was impossible.<sup>39</sup> Hay proved it was not. That year, he formed "International Bachelors Fraternal Order for Peace and Social Dignity sometimes referred to as Bachelors for Wallace."<sup>40</sup> Hay supported the politician because he was a member of the Progressive Party which called for desegregation, racial and gender equality, a national health insurance program, and other left-leaning policies. Wallace and Hay had shared political beliefs. Using the politician's name as a signifier of political belief, he named his first homophile

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<sup>37</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 110.

<sup>38</sup> Timmons, 134.

<sup>39</sup> Timmons, 134.

<sup>40</sup> Timmons, 136.

organization after Wallace in hopes of bringing together likeminded men. He decided that a fraternal order kept homosexuals that joined the organization safe from laws against lewd vagrancy. Hay was fearful that fascism could lead to the senseless killings of homosexuals as it had in Nazi Germany. Therefore, the organization had to seem detached from homosexuality to survive.<sup>41</sup>

Bachelors for Wallace did not survive. Hay's initial supporters backed out of the organization and recommended that he find prominent individuals to support his cause. It took two years for Hay to find a committee to sponsor his group discussions. On July 8, 1950, he met Rudi Gernreich and it changed everything.<sup>42</sup> The pair went out to a restaurant west of the Sunset strip. At the time, Hay had the third draft of the Bachelors for Wallace prospectus written up, so he slid it over to Gernreich. He was intrigued and responded that it was one of the most dangerous proposals he had ever seen, but he was with Hay one hundred percent.<sup>43</sup> The two men worked tirelessly on preparing pamphlets and flyers that offered an open and honest discussion on the newly published findings on social deviancy: the Kinsey report.<sup>44</sup>

Although five hundred beachgoers signed up for the semipublic forum, all it amounted to was a mailing list of tentative supporters. By November, Gernreich proposed that Hay give one

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<sup>41</sup> Timmons, 136-137.

<sup>42</sup> Timmons, 137. Rudi Gernreich's identity was kept a secret in accordance to the Mattachine Foundation's oath of secrecy. Hay never revealed his name until Gernreich passed away from lung cancer in 1985. The need for secrecy was due to his fame as a designer throughout the 1960s and 1970s. He broke through the fashion world with his topless bathing suits and the unisex designs of his garments. Hay referred to Gernreich as "X" in interviews, and historians have utilized "R" and "X" as a result of the need for anonymity. After he passed, Hay wanted to ensure that he was given credit for assisting in creating the pattern for the gay liberation movement. Today, the American Civil Liberties Union, the estate of Gernreich, and his life partner, Dr. Oreste Pucciani, have an endowed trust to provide litigation and education for LGBTQIA+ rights. For more see, Stuart Timmons, *The Trouble with Harry Hay: Founder of the Modern Gay Movement* (London; 1990), 139-140.

<sup>43</sup> Timmons, 141.

<sup>44</sup> Harry Hay, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 1, 2018, Accessed November 5, 2019. <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/harry-hay/>

of their proposals to Bob Hull, a student in one of his music classes. At the next Thursday class, Hay handed Hull the prospectus.<sup>45</sup> Chuck Rowland, who lived with Hull at the time, remembered how eager he was to get involved with what Hay was proposing.<sup>46</sup> Even Rowland felt that he could have written the prospectus himself; he was that excited.<sup>47</sup>

On November 11, 1950, Hull called Hay and asked if they could meet with a couple of his friends to discuss the prospectus. When Rowland arrived, he excitedly announced that he was ready to get the ball rolling on organizing. That day, Robert Hull and Charles Dennison Rowland became two of the Mattachine Foundation's founding members, as did their friend Dale Jennings.<sup>48</sup> These five men became the Fifth Order: Hay, Gernreich, Hull, Jennings, and Rowland. These five met weekly over the next season to discuss the format for discussion groups on homosexuality. The group's first decision was to use the moniker of the "Fifth Order" as well as to adopt similar rituals and ceremonies resembling those of Communists, fraternal organizations such as the Masons, and Alcoholics Anonymous. They also developed a cell-like structure that guaranteed anonymity.<sup>49</sup> In order to keep their secrets (about the organization, their identities, and their homosexuality), they had to form a close circle whose members understood the risks of being outed to law enforcement and government agencies. Being in the Fifth Order

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<sup>45</sup> Timmons, 143.

<sup>46</sup> Charles Dennison Rowland was born on August 24, 1917 in Gary South Dakota. He knew he was homosexual from the age of nine. His parents supported him and gave him open access to literature on sexuality. Rowland was one of the founding members of the Mattachine Foundation. He was with the organization until 1953, when most of the founding members stepped down. For more on Chuck Rowland's involvement with the Mattachine see, Chuck Rowland, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 23, 2016, Accessed November 5, 2019. <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-1-7/>

<sup>47</sup> Chuck Rowland, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 23, 2016, Accessed November 5, 2019. <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-1-7/>

<sup>48</sup> Timmons, 144.

<sup>49</sup> Todd C. White, "A Social History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights," *Pre-Gay LA*. (University of Illinois Press, 2009), 18-19.

meant that you protected your comrades and they protected you. All five of the men had experienced at least one instance of homophobia.<sup>50</sup>

The next order of business was to figure out a name for their political position and the movement they hoped to launch. The concept of homosexual organizing was not completely new to the founders. They had heard of the Society for Human Rights founded by Henry Gerber and the organizational efforts of Magnus Hirschfeld in Germany. Gerber had even warned Hay against organizing. With the publication of the Kinsey report the cause for gay men and women to organize grew in 1950.<sup>51</sup> In the mid-twentieth century, “homosexual” was a clinical and pathological term and members of the Fifth Order were determined to remove themselves from its negative connotations. They went over new terminology, utilizing Latin and Greek prefixes *homo* or *homeo*, meaning “same,” and grouping them with different suffixes. Ultimately, they landed on “homophile.” The term is derived from the Greek *philos* (loving) and, in turn, New Latin *philia* (friendship). They were homophiles and their movement was the homophile movement.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The term “homophobia” did not come into use until the 1960s. It was and is still used to describe any anti-homosexual feelings an individual has or presents. Mental health literature suggests that the phobic person feels anxious around a homosexual and may fear or attack if placed in a situation with anything or anyone relating to the phobia. The individual may feel entitled to their malicious intent or fear because they believe that the person causing them pain and fear deserves to feel the same. For more see, Richard C. Friedman and Jennifer I. Downey, “Homophobia, Internalized Homophobia, and the Negative Therapeutic Reaction,” In *Sexual Orientation and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy: Sexual Science and Clinical Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 167-193.

<sup>51</sup> Timmons, 145-146.

<sup>52</sup> The term “homophile” existed prior to the Mattachine Foundation’s forming of the word. It was used in Germany during Magnus Hirschfeld’s homosexual activism. Gernreich informed Hay after the fact, and Hay was shocked by this discovery. He claims he had never heard of the word prior, asserting that the only way he could have, would have been through German homophile materials intercepted by government officials through the mail; hence, there was no way. For more see, Harry Hay, “Making Gay History Podcast,” Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 1, 2018, Accessed November 5, 2019. <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/harry-hay/> and Stuart Timmons, *The Trouble with Harry Hay: Founder of the Modern Gay Movement* (London; 1990), 148-149.



Next on the docket was the organization's name. In April 1951, Konrad Stevens and James Gruber joined as the final founding members. The group decided to replace its interim name, Society of Fools, with Mattachine Foundation.<sup>53</sup> Historians disagree on the exact year of founding; some cite 1950, others 1951, and a few 1953. For instance, D'Emilio asserts in *Intimate Desires* that the year was 1950 despite his claim in *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* that it was 1951.<sup>54</sup> The organization officially became known as the Mattachine Foundation in 1951, but it was founded in 1950. The term "Mattachine" refers to mediaeval performers who satirized people in the ruling class. They donned masks to keep their identities a secret, and may have been homosexual.<sup>55</sup> Commonly, the Mattachine Foundation utilized imagery of court jesters and fools to symbolize the organization.

In a newsletter issued April 1, 1965, the organization defined the term Mattachine as meaning "little fools" who spoke the truth in the "face of consequences too stern for ordinary citizens, because they stood behind the throne of the princes."<sup>56</sup> This was also the belief of the Mattachines of the early 1950s. Since they identified themselves as court jesters, fools, and other symbols that were speculated as homosexual, The Fifth Order defined its founding date as April 1, 1950 – "All Fool's Day," better known as April Fool's Day.<sup>57</sup> Not everyone was happy with the name Mattachine; Dale Jennings believed that its connotations might prompt people not to

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<sup>53</sup> Timmons, 150.

<sup>54</sup> The location of D'Emilio's findings on the Mattachine's formation date are located in D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 58 and D'Emilio and Freeman, *Intimate Matters*, 320. He is not the only historian with a notable discrepancy in locating the year that the Mattachine Foundation formed but, as he wrote the foundational text on the homophile movement, his is the most noteworthy.

<sup>55</sup> *Mattachine Society Today*, 1 April 1965, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, Inc. – San Francisco," Vertical File #48, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>56</sup> *Mattachine Society Today*, 1 April 1965, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, Inc. – San Francisco," Vertical File #48, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>57</sup> *Mattachine Society Today*, 1 April 1965, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, Inc. – San Francisco," Vertical File #48, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

take the group seriously. But after some reflection, he understood the name's importance.<sup>58</sup> The men of the Mattachine intended to speak the truth of their homosexuality despite the possibility of the stern consequences in the form of anti-homosexual laws and police brutality.

The Mattachine Foundation started holding semipublic discussions by the end of 1950 to slowly move from an underground organization to a public one. Meetings revolved around systemic analysis of social problems that plagued homosexuals. This generated the concept of homosexuals as an oppressed cultural minority and the conclusion that homosexual men and women must band together in order to tackle their shared issues.<sup>59</sup> The organization urged participants in its group discussions to exhibit extreme loyalties to one another. In doing so, they hoped to further create a structure of security and safety for members of the Mattachine.

Regardless, fear lingered. The founders were acutely aware that homosexuals were targets of tyrannical government and police. McCarthyite politics and homosexual targeting continued to grow like weeds in the United States. American historian David K. Johnson notes that the presence of homosexuals in government positions could take over the preexisting fear of Communists in government.<sup>60</sup> Just as the Communist Party organized underground, so did homosexuals. To McCarthy, if both Communists and homosexuals could organize in a similar fashion, they posed the same threat. The idea of psychopathology proved useful to McCarthy's need to instill in the hearts and minds of Americans that homosexuals were inherently disturbed. If psychological sex research claimed that they were, then they must be. As the two became

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<sup>58</sup> C. Todd White, "Dale Jennings (1917-2000): ONE's Outspoken Advocate," in *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (Harrington Park Press: New York, 2002), 85.

<sup>59</sup> John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 64-65.

<sup>60</sup> David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), 30-31.

conflated, the Red Scare became the Lavender Scare and the threat of severe prosecution was twofold, especially for homosexual organizations and organizers.<sup>61</sup>

Hay's identity as both a Communist and a homosexual posed a new threat during a time of celebration that the Fifth Order had built a viable organization. As the organization continued to grow, Hay grew increasingly aware that his time working with the Communist Party was coming to an end. As a homosexual, the Party did not accept him; as a Communist, he was a liability to the Mattachine. According to the Party's constitution, it must forbid him membership as a homosexual. Hay recognized that certain members of the Party preferred that he stay, but if news were to break nationally that homosexual intermingled with Communists, it could be detrimental to the Party. He proposed his own expulsion from the Party,<sup>62</sup> which rejected his proposal, finding it more important to honor his eighteen years of membership and ten years of teaching at a Party school. The Communist Party did not find him a security risk; Hay was a lifelong friend to the Party.<sup>63</sup> Regardless, he did not want to put the Party in danger, so he believed that he had to resign.

Shortly after Hay exited the Party, his partner Rudi Gernreich was offered and accepted a position as a fashion designer in New York. When Gernreich left, Hay immediately discovered just how much his marriage to Platky had deteriorated. After returning from a family vacation in 1951, Platky told Hay that his homophile organization could pose a threat to her and their daughters' public image if word got out and newspapers publicized his work. On September 23, 1951, the courts granted them a divorce on the grounds of "Extreme Cruelty."<sup>64</sup> Even worse than

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<sup>61</sup> Johnson, 31.

<sup>62</sup> Timmons, 159.

<sup>63</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz's interview with Harry Hay published in Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.: A Documentary* (New York: Crowell, 1976), 413.

<sup>64</sup> Timmons, 158. The trial was short and only lasted ten minutes.

his divorce, Hay became an outcast in Communist circles. Although he had left the Party prior to his divorce, he still was able to frequent political gatherings and parties that Communists held. Occasionally, Platky attended them as well. At one social get-together, CP members spread rumors that Hay had been dismissed from the party after getting caught in the act of sex with a man or divorcing his wife because he was a homosexual.<sup>65</sup>

Historically, the Western Communist Party held anti-homosexual procedures and practices. Friedrich Engels, co-author of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) with Karl Marx, were speculated to be against homosexuals.<sup>66</sup> Though the speculation does not assert any expectation or explanation on the anti-homosexual sentiments of the Western CP. Historians and gay activists briefly mention the true root of anti-homosexual procedures in the Communist Party. Yet, there is an astounding lack of research dedicated to the homophobic roots of the Party, it is difficult to pinpoint an exact reason for their rejection of homosexuals.

In the aftermath of the divorce and rumors, Hay found solace in his mother, who had always made him feel valued. Margaret Hay ensured that her eldest son felt validated creatively and emotionally. During this tumultuous time for Hay, he told his mother that he was homosexual, to which, she responded “Your father knew Cecil Rhodes.”<sup>67</sup> Rhodes was a known homosexual; Margaret and Harry Sr. knew that based on stereotypical identifiers such as his bachelor status and love of antiquing. After this very brief conversation about this sexuality, Hay

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<sup>65</sup> Timmons, 158-161.

<sup>66</sup> Jean-Baptiste von Schweitzer, a German socialist, sent a letter to the two requesting they join a committee to defend him. Schweitzer was arrested on moral charges. Marx and Engel refused to defend him and responded with cruel and vulgar jokes about the incident. Wayne Dynes, *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality: Volume II* (New York & London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1990), 771.

<sup>67</sup> Timmons, 8. Cecil Rhodes was Henry “Harry” Hay Sr.’s employer in Johannesburg.

and his mother never again spoke of it. Even when she became the face of the Mattachine, she did not speak of Hay's homosexuality.

Hay came to his mother – possibly in the same conversation mentioned above – when the Mattachine leaders started to consider making organization a foundation. He asked if she wanted to act as one of the directors, to which she agreed. In an interview with historian Jonathan Ned Katz, when questioned about his mother's issues with his homosexuality, Hay responded that, "She was a very well-developed Edwardian lady, and anything that her older son did was bound to be good. I don't think the sexual part ever crossed her mind."<sup>68</sup> Hay asked his mother to join the organization as a director mostly due to its need for a presentable front. The Mattachine's members needed heterosexuals who worked with them as well as listened to them and their needs. To Hay, his mother was the most respectable person he could think of, with a shining reputation in the community. Margaret Hay was not someone the average citizen feared: she was an older, white, heterosexual, Edwardian woman with a kind appearance.<sup>69</sup> She became the primary director of the Mattachine's correspondence with individuals and between government agencies.

By 1952, the organization continued to grow but at a snail's pace. Once it took on Dale Jennings's landmark case, however, new members poured in. In spring of that year, the Los Angeles Vice Squad arrested Jennings on a morals charge for allegedly soliciting sex from a police officer in a bathroom in Westlake Park, now MacArthur Park.<sup>70</sup> He pled that he had been

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<sup>68</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz's interview with Harry Hay published in Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*, 414.

<sup>69</sup> Eric Marcus's interview with Harry Hay published for public listening, Harry Hay, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 1, 2018, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/harry-hay/>

<sup>70</sup> Todd C. White, *Pre-Gay L.A.: A Social History of the Movement for Homosexual Rights* (University of Illinois Press, 2009), 19.

entrapped by a member of the squad. Furthermore, he said, the charge was unfounded as the individual was lying when he accused Jennings of lewd conduct. The Mattachine took the opportunity to fight in Jennings's defense. Hay acquired an attorney for Jennings. The Foundation held fundraisers to pay for the legal expenses. All of the work that the Mattachine, Hay, and Jennings put into the case culminated in an acquittal. At that moment, mentions of the case and the Mattachine organization entered every conversation in the gay community.<sup>71</sup>

Soon, a dozen Mattachine chapters had opened in Southern California and the organization eventually spread to Northern California. As it grew beyond Los Angeles, it also became more diverse. The Mattachine had a few women members, but in 1952, several lesbians were invited into leadership roles in the Bay Area branch.<sup>72</sup> As attendance at meetings continued to grow, the founders created a questionnaire that facilitated discussion. It covered the law, sexual encounters, gay spots around the city, and family members discovering the respondents' sexuality. While this document seemed to structure how the conversation went, the questions prompted lengthier discussions on survival and being marked as "deviant" for same-sex desires.<sup>73</sup> Some of the conversations divided members, but they also prompted the founders to consider their existence as a gay organization with a deeper understanding than they had before. The Mattachine gave people in the gay community a safe arena in which they could discuss any and every issue that they faced.<sup>74</sup>

In April of 1953, Mattachine members had already faced a tremendous number of obstacles. On April 11<sup>th</sup>, the Mattachine Foundation held a convention at the First Universalist

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<sup>71</sup> Faderman and Timmons, 112-113.

<sup>72</sup> D'Emilio, 72.

<sup>73</sup> D'Emilio, 66-67.

<sup>74</sup> Eric Marcus's interview with Jim Kepner published in Eric Marcus, *Making Gay History: The Half-Century Fight for Lesbian and Gay Equal Rights* (HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2002), 30-31.

Church in Los Angeles to discuss new members' opposition to the founders and leaders of the organization, who had never stood for election. As the church filled with 500 gay men (some members of the Mattachine, others representatives of other gay organizations), the opposition wanted a democratic organization. Rather than having a Mattachine led by men known to have been affiliated with the Communist Party, a majority of members wanted the founders to leave the organization to keep everyone safe from McCarthyite targeting.<sup>75</sup>

The founding members of the Mattachine knew what they were up against. Chuck Rowland wrote a new constitution that made it a fully democratic organization with bylaws that were workable and included elected officers. They did not expect anyone to come up with a constitution that opposed theirs. Rowland found that the group going against them was full of conservative people who wanted the organization to remain accepting of everyone, but refused to include Communists. The constitution written by the conservative members was positively received by attendees. They made promises that their methods would expand national acceptance of homosexuality. While there were no absolute decisions made by members of the Mattachine at this specific meeting, members had the opportunity to vote for which constitution they preferred. On the second day of the convention, Bob Hull announced that a Congressional investigating committee was coming to look into foundations that could be left leaning; this was a part of McCarthy's red-baiting campaign to catch Communists. Acknowledging that they could easily be identified as former Communists, the Fifth Order decided to make a statement that changed the Mattachine forever.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz's interview with Harry Hay published in Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*, 417.

<sup>76</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz's interview with Harry Hay published in Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*, 419.

By the end of the second convention in May, the original five members decided to dissolve their leadership board immediately in order to keep the organization safe. That was it; Hay, Hull, Rowland, Jennings, and Gernreich left the Mattachine. Each experienced a new type of isolation. By starting the Mattachine, they had forfeited their ties to Communist Party by going public as homosexuals. They started the Mattachine to build a sense of community founded on organizational practices that had historically worked for Masons, Communists, and Alcoholics Anonymous. But, now, the organization they had together created and built for a community outcast from society had been taken over by forces that pushed them out.

In an interview with Eric Marcus, Chuck Rowland told him that, in the aftermath, “Harry was so inaccessible that we thought he hated us. And Rudi never spoke to anybody again, except for Harry. I think that as an indirect consequence of the breakup of Mattachine, Bob Hull killed himself.” Rowland also became suicidal. The charter members who had devoted so much to the Mattachine had watched their work burn bright and then, in the words of Rowland, “It all turned to shit.”<sup>77</sup> He was not wrong. Hay continued to isolate himself; some speculated that he had run away or disappeared. The conventions had changed everything, dissolving the original structure of the Mattachine Foundation based in optimism about what gay life could be and how homosexuals could contribute to society.<sup>78</sup>

One man at both the April and May conventions was a Midwesterner named Harold “Hal” Call, a member of the Mattachine Foundation in San Francisco. He had traveled down to Los Angeles with the intention of taking over leadership and changing the organizational

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<sup>77</sup> Eric Marcus’s interview with Chuck Rowland published in Eric Marcus, *Making Gay History: The Half-Century Fight for Lesbian and Gay Equal Rights* (HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2002), 42-43. This interview is also featured in Eric Marcus’s podcast for more see, Chuck Rowland, “Making Gay History Podcast,” Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, November 23, 2016, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-1-7/>

<sup>78</sup> Jonathan Ned Katz’s interview with Harry Hay published in Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History*, 419-420.



structure of the Foundation. By the end of the May convention, he stood at the organization's helm. Call believed that the way to get ahead was "evolutionary methods, not revolutionary methods."<sup>79</sup> The desire for evolution over revolution speaks to the differences between the Mattachine Foundation of 1950-1953 – renamed Mattachine Society under Call's leadership – and the Mattachine that took shape on his watch.

Henry "Harry" Hay was a homosexual man and self-described "sissy" who wanted nothing more than society to accept that homosexuals were human beings and did not deserve to be isolated. He fought for the homosexual community to come together as one and discuss methods of furthering its contributions to society. Hay wanted homosexuals to understand their own validity. He contributed his sexual history to Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey in the belief that the research the doctor was conducting would revolutionize how homosexuals were discussed and viewed by society and government. In 1948, when Kinsey published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, he published a piece of Hay's life. When Hay discovered the text was in print, he took it with him as he scoured Los Angeles for anyone interested in forming an organization. The first meetings of the Mattachine were geared towards discussing the Kinsey report and its potential impact on the lives of homosexual men. Hay put his safety and security on the line when he began his journey towards homosexual organizing and activism, and he continued to do so until Call took over in 1953.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Eric Marcus's interview with Harold "Hal" Call published in Eric Marcus, *Making Gay History: The Half-Century Fight for Lesbian and Gay Equal Rights* (HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2002), 44-45. This interview is also featured in Eric Marcus's podcast for more see, Harold "Hal" Call, Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, March 16, 2017, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-13-hal-call/>

<sup>80</sup> Henry "Harry" Hay did not return to activism until he created a new organization in 1979 called The Radical Faeries.

### Chapter 3:

Harold “Hal” Call and Alfred C. Kinsey: The Correspondence that Reveals the Personal and Professional Relationships of Activists

“Our movement is not an elegant gay tea.”

Chuck Rowland<sup>1</sup>

April 11, 1953, was a particularly chilly day in Los Angeles, California. The maximum temperature was unusually cold at sixty-six degrees Fahrenheit, but temperatures were rising behind the doors of the First Universalist Church.<sup>2</sup> The Mattachine Foundation convened for its first major meeting. Leaders (Harry Hay, Bob Hull, Chuck Rowland, and Dale Jennings) called upon its members to discuss democratic organizing’s advantages over the secretive structure then in place. The founders were hesitant to change the structure that had proved trustworthy. Regardless, conservative members clashed with members with past involvement with the Communist Party. Virtually everyone agreed that the Mattachine needed a new structure, but it took two full weekends – one in April and one in May – to settle on a plan.

The May convention was the ultimate turning point for the organization. Prior to the event, Chuck Rowland drove north from Los Angeles to visit its San Francisco chapter. To a room of Mattachines, he discussed the secrecy of the organization and highlighted the importance of maintaining its leadership structure for security purposes. Rowland was not aware that a young conservative Harold “Hal” Call was in attendance. Call was entranced by the dialogue. He analyzed what Rowland said and swiftly recognized his affiliation with the Communist Party along with the organization’s resemblance to the Party’s structure. Call aligned

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<sup>1</sup> *Special Leadership Meeting*, 17 May 1953, San Francisco Alpha Chapter, Mattachine Society, Call Papers.

<sup>2</sup> The *Old Farmer’s Almanac* marks April 11, 1953 as having an average temperature of 55.7 degrees Fahrenheit with a high of 66.9 degrees and a low of 45.0 degrees Fahrenheit. “Weather History for Los Angeles, California,” *Old Farmer’s Almanac*, <https://www.almanac.com/weather/history/CA/Los%20Angeles/1953-04-11>

himself with conservative politics and other conservative homosexuals in the organization such as Ken Burns.<sup>3</sup> The idea of a Communist in their midst, especially in their own society, was unacceptable to him.

Call believed that the Mattachine needed a complete reassessment: new leadership, new bylaws, new procedures, and new goals. He assumed that Hay's Mattachine saw as its sole purpose to provide a group of homosexual men with a place to gather together and read literature and history. Call did not believe that Hay was the sort of leader who could accomplish the primary goal of homosexuals everywhere, social and political acceptance.<sup>4</sup> When Call proposed a total reconfiguration of the organization at the spring meetings, the Mattachine Foundation began to change. Members of the organization wrote minutes and have since participated in oral histories to create some semblance of a record of what occurred during the weekend conventions, but they conflict. It is clear, however, that after Rowland's visit, Call created a temporary chapter for all of the Bay Area that was disconnected from the beliefs underlying the Los Angeles chapters.<sup>5</sup>

Despite warnings from Chuck Rowland, Hal Call along with David Finn, Gerard Brissette, and Bob Maxey<sup>6</sup> formed the new Mattachine Society. They adopted the general aims

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<sup>3</sup> Ken Burns was a conservative member of the Mattachine. Burns was close friends with Hal Call and influenced his conservatism as well. He was a physician in Orange County and believed that same-sex behavior had nothing to do with a homosexual culture or ethic. For more on Ken Burns see, James T. Sears, *Behind the Mask of the Mattachine: The Hal Call Chronicles and the Early Movement for Homosexual Emancipation* (Harrington Park Press: New York; 2006), 164.

<sup>4</sup> James T. Sears, *Behind the Mask of the Mattachine: The Hal Call Chronicles and the Early Movement for Homosexual Emancipation* (Harrington Park Press: New York; 2006), 197.

<sup>5</sup> Sears, 199-201.

<sup>6</sup> David Finn was an accountant and member of the Mattachine. He also served on their Council's Loyalty Research Committee. Gerard Brissette was the elected chairman of the Bay Area Mattachine during the mid-May convention that became the Mattachine Society. He was one of Call's primary supporters and assisted in creating a council that looked over the newly structured Society. Bob Maxey was a psychologist elected chairman of the San Francisco chapter of the Mattachine. For more see, James T. Sears, *Behind the Mask of the Mattachine: The Hal Call Chronicles and the Early Movement for Homosexual Emancipation* (Harrington Park Press: New York; 2006), 197-200.

of the organization but with a new constitution that did not abide by the original. The only connection to the Los Angeles Mattachine was that it sponsored the San Francisco chapter. But the Mattachine needed to go a step further. Call packed his bags and went back down to Los Angeles in May to meet with the leaders of Mattachine Foundation – the last time it was referred to as such.<sup>7</sup>

The pressure brought by the conservative members of the San Francisco Society came to a head in May, as noted previously, and leadership was officially relinquished to those who wished to form a Mattachine Society that was affiliated with the democratic ideals.<sup>8</sup> On November 17, 1953, the Secretary of State from Sacramento Frank M. Jordan wrote to Herbert E. Selwyn – a criminal defense attorney and counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) – about the incorporation status of the Mattachine. Jordan acknowledged that Mattachine Foundation’s incorporation had been pending dissolution since November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The name Mattachine Society was available for corporate use only with the consent of the Foundation.<sup>9</sup> Shortly thereafter, the foundation granted permission and the incorporation status of the brand new Mattachine Society was created.

Historians, scholars, and activists often suggest that the Mattachine Foundation and the Mattachine Society were entirely separate from one another. They are divided into the radical Foundation and the conservative Society. Hay’s organization was devoted to revolutionary means of winning the acceptance of homosexuals as a cultural minority. Call favored

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<sup>7</sup> Sears, 201-202.

<sup>8</sup> Eric Marcus’s interview with Harold “Hal” Call published in Eric Marcus, *Making Gay History: The Half-Century Fight for Lesbian and Gay Equal Rights* (HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2002), 44. This interview is also featured in Eric Marcus’s podcast for more see, Hal Call, “Making Gay History Podcast,” Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, March 16, 2017, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-13-hal-call/>

<sup>9</sup> Ernestine Stahlhut to Marilyn P. Rieger, Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, 1941-1988, no. 1997-25, “Correspondence, 1953,” Box #1, Folder #3, GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives.

evolutionary method for gaining homosexual rights. He believed that creating relationships with scientists and professionals,<sup>10</sup> while accommodating to social normalcy, benefitted the lives of homosexuals more than militancy. In fact, Call wanted the Mattachine to abandon the old ways entirely and create a new organization that mobilized a gay constituency towards assisting research in sexology.<sup>11</sup> Hal Call's past reveals why the desire for evolutionary means over revolutionary action was so embedded in his leadership of the Mattachine Society.

On September 20, 1917, Harold "Hal" Leland Call was born in Grundy County, Missouri, approximately one-hundred miles northeast of Kansas City. His mother, Genne Call, prematurely delivered her first son in the home she shared with her husband Fred.<sup>12</sup> They were a Baptist family, belonging to one of the two largest religious groups in twentieth-century America – the other was Methodists. Baptists tended to follow two separate paths, one conservative and the other progressive.<sup>13</sup> The progressive Baptists welcomed the twentieth century with hope and excitement, while the more conservative Baptists believed modernity led to moral corruption.<sup>14</sup> Baptists of both persuasions focused on teaching the New Testament of Christianity, promoting mission trips to convert others to the faith.<sup>15</sup> While it is unclear whether Call's family were progressive or conservative Baptists, his mother was a fervently religious Baptist and raised Call (along with his two brothers) as such.

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<sup>10</sup> When referencing the term "professionals" this encompasses individuals that work in scientific fields such as psychoanalysts, psychologists, sexologists, and biologists.

<sup>11</sup> John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 81.

<sup>12</sup> Sears, 53-54. Harold "Hal" Call's life is not as well documented as Henry "Harry" Hay's or many other LGBTQIA+ activists of that time and later. James T. Sears is the primary historian that has reported on his early childhood up until his late adulthood. Historians tend to focus on the history of the homophile movement and the Mattachine over the people that made it what it was.

<sup>13</sup> Bill J. Leonard, *Baptists in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 34.

<sup>14</sup> Leonard, 32.

<sup>15</sup> For more on the history of the Baptist religion and tradition in 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present see, Bill J. Leonard, *Baptists in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

Despite this upbringing, Hal Call did not carry his religion into adulthood. Early on, he questioned the contradictions between religious doctrine and real life, especially at the moment his parents divorced.<sup>16</sup> When Call was ten years old, Fred Call had an extramarital affair with one of the family's nearby neighbors. Hal begged his mother not to dissolve the marriage on account of the affair, but his words fell on deaf ears and the divorce was finalized. The divorce proceedings are not discussed at length in any history of Call's childhood, and it is impossible to unpack how and why his father gained full custody of him. By 1927, however, Call was living with his paternal grandparents and father on a 120-acre farm southwest of Trenton, Missouri.<sup>17</sup>

Growing up, Call worked on the family farm and enjoyed playing with his nearby cousin Clifton. But with the onset of the Great Depression and the droughts that plagued the Midwest in the 1930s, his childhood swiftly came to a close. These major incidents had an indelible impact on his way of thinking. As he was reaching sexual maturity, Call began to participate in mutual masturbation with his cousin by the nearby Hickory Creek Channel.<sup>18</sup> Voyeurism and mutual masturbation were not uncommon among young men; Call and Clifton's shared sexual exploration was neither romantic nor homosexual.<sup>19</sup> When Alfred C. Kinsey's research appeared nearly twenty-five years later, it became clear that many young men participated in sexual discovery with one another. Despite the non-romantic and heterosexual relationship between the cousins, Hal Call always knew he was a homosexual.

During one of these occurrences of mutual masturbation, Call and Clifton ejaculated at the same time. Call later referred to that incident as the moment when he knew he was "attracted

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<sup>16</sup> Vern L. Bullough and James T. Sears, "Hal Call (1917-2000): Mr. Mattachine," In *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (Harrington Park Press: New York, 2002), 15.

<sup>17</sup> Sears, 54.

<sup>18</sup> Sears, 54-56.

<sup>19</sup> Sears, 56.

to a penis.”<sup>20</sup> In 1932, he left his grandparents’ farm and moved to St. Joseph, Missouri, where he attended high school. The city lacked any familiar connections for Call. He did not reveal his desires to his classmates, but he found solace in physique photographs from catalogs. His exposure to them was enough to implant in a desire for someone like Clifton.<sup>21</sup>

After graduating from high school, Call took the opportunity to enroll at the University of Missouri in Columbia. In 1935, he started his collegiate career studying journalism full-time. In June of 1941, prior to completing his degree, Call enlisted in the United States Army as a private while World War II was on the horizon.<sup>22</sup> During his service in the army, he kept his homosexuality a secret. While military psychiatrists analyzed potential servicemen for homosexuality, Call was able to present himself in a heterosexual manner and avoided rejection or discharge.<sup>23</sup> According to Call, due to the need for more men in the military, they did not pay much attention to whether or not someone was homosexual.<sup>24</sup>

Call’s personal experience in the military conflicts with an array of historical accounts of homosexuals enlisted in branches of the United States service. According to historians of LGBT military history, at the time of Call’s participation in the armed services physicians and psychologists analyzed men and women to determine their heterosexuality or homosexuality.<sup>25</sup> There were three potential signifiers of homosexuality or “sexual deviance” among men: feminine physical characteristics, dressing in an effeminate manner, and an expanded rectum.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Sears, 56.

<sup>21</sup> Sears, 60.

<sup>22</sup> Vern L. Bullough and James T. Sears, 151-152.

<sup>23</sup> Sears, 103-104. For more on the United States military’s treatment of homosexuals see, Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> Sears, 103.

<sup>25</sup> Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 28-29.

<sup>26</sup> Bérubé, 19.

They were markers of a distinctly feminine and sexually passive man that was, according to military physicians, homosexual. If a man was found to exhibit any of these signs, military judges and prosecutors deemed him a security and personnel risk. They feared that one homosexual person made the whole group homosexual.<sup>27</sup> But not every homosexual in the military encountered this regime. It is entirely possible that Call successfully evaded any type of harassment on account of his sexual desires.<sup>28</sup>

After several years of service, Call left the army, wounded in the Pacific War, in which he received the Purple Heart. Many GIs were excited to return home to continue their education and see their loved ones. Call was one of the lucky homosexual men that flew under the radar of military targeting and was able to retain all of his GI benefits. While he was anxiously awaiting going home, Call was concerned with being able to live a life that was not confined to heterosexuality. During his military service, he came to the realization that he would never be sexually interested in a woman; his romantic and sexual desires focused solely on members of his own sex.<sup>29</sup>

Once arriving home in Missouri, Call returned to the University of Missouri to complete his journalism degree in 1945. By the end of his collegiate career, he was offered a junior partnership with Eldon, Missouri newspaper the *Eldon Advertiser*. By the spring of 1950, he went to work at the *Kansas City Star*. This came as a big relief to Call. Missouri was a fairly

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<sup>27</sup> Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 80-81.

<sup>28</sup> For an entire history on homosexuality and the military during WWI, WWII, and the Cold War see, Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009) and Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

<sup>29</sup> Sears, 104.



conservative environment for a homosexual man to navigate, but Kansas City was one of the only locations homosexuals in that part of the Midwest could find solace.<sup>30</sup>

In August of 1952, Call was arrested for lewd conduct. While visiting Chicago, he was parked in close proximity to the police station in Lincoln Park. He and three of his companions were victims of police threats and taunting for leaving a gay bar/club that night. He was ordered to pay an \$800 fee that guaranteed that the courts granted him dismissal.<sup>31</sup> Upon returning to Kansas City, Call told his supervisor what happened and the *Kansas City Star* threatened to fire him for being gay. Hal Call responded with, “Well, that may be so, okay, but if you fired all the homosexuals on the *Kansas City Star*, you wouldn’t get the newspaper out.”<sup>32</sup> He decided then that he was going to go where he wished and follow his own path.

In mid-October 1952, Call and his friend Jack (a student in Kansas City) drove to San Francisco.<sup>33</sup> At the Black Cat Tavern, a Bay Area bar frequented by homosexuals, Call heard about the Mattachine Foundation. His desire to become politically active was ignited when he heard about the organization. In the beginning of 1953, Hal Call attended his first Mattachine discussion group in a Berkley dorm room. But he did not like what he heard, and he certainly did not like that there were Communists in the group.<sup>34</sup> Call viewed anyone associated with it was a threat to the United States and could not be trusted. He led the charge against Communists in the

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<sup>30</sup> Bullough and Sears, 155. Chicago was also very accepting of homosexuals. For a history on homosexuality in Chicago see, St. Sukie De La Croix, *Chicago Whispers: A History of LGBT Chicago Before Stonewall* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

<sup>31</sup> Hal Call, “Making Gay History Podcast,” Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, March 16, 2017, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-13-hal-call/>

<sup>32</sup> Hal Call, “Making Gay History Podcast,” Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, March 16, 2017, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-13-hal-call/> For more on Harold “Hal” Call’s response to the Chicago incident see, Vern L. Bullough and James T. Sears, “Hal Call (1917-2000): Mr. Mattachine,” In *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (Harrington Park Press: New York, 2002), 154.

<sup>33</sup> Bullough and Sears, 154.

<sup>34</sup> Bullough and Sears, 155.

Mattachine. It is worth noting that it was true then, and it was true until his death, Call disapproved of and rejected Communists in the organization.<sup>35</sup>

Call succeeded in replacing the Mattachine's original leaders and transforming the organization into the Mattachine Society. Historian James T. Sears has since recognized Call as "Mr. Mattachine," the father of the organization.<sup>36</sup> He instituted changes he believed necessary to the organization's viability. Furthermore, Call believed his work helped new Mattachine chapters to form across the nation and furthered the growth of the homophile movement throughout the mid-twentieth century. When Call came into leadership, the Mattachine became remarkably more conservative than it had been under the leadership of Hay. Despite its shift towards a more moderate ethos, its new leader fueled the fervor and growth of the homophile movement simply, supporting the proliferation of homosexual newsletters, magazines, organizations, information, and education. Despite their politically conservative leader, the Mattachine pursued radical goals, including the formulation and dissemination of scientific proof that homosexuality was neither a disease of the mind nor an unnatural desire.

Historically, California has never abided by the stringent laws of the East Coast. That is, when the government bodies in Washington enacted laws that went against Californian beliefs and legislature, the state took its laws into its own hands. Some of the state's leaders believed more in the acceptance of their citizens than controlling them but not all of them. As discussed in length in chapter two, Los Angeles has a rich history of homosexual gatherings, identities, organizations, and more. San Francisco is similar in this regard. The history of San Francisco as a "queer town" starts during the Gold Rush of 1849. When gold was discovered in the California

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<sup>35</sup> Bullough and Sears, 155. Hal Call, "Making Gay History Podcast," Podcast Audio, Eric Marcus, March 16, 2017, Accessed November 5, 2019, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-13-hal-call/>

<sup>36</sup> Bullough, 151.

foothills, it transformed brought on exponential growth in their economy and residence. It continued to grow from 35,000 people in 1850 to an astounding 149,000 in 1870. By the turn of the century, San Francisco became one of the largest cities in the United States. Not only was it the largest city, it was also a city predominantly comprised of foreign-born citizens.<sup>37</sup>

San Francisco attracted gold miners from Valparaiso, Chile, Lima, and Peru (the two formers also being port cities). People came from all over the globe for an array of purposes, though gold was a large reason. Gold seekers from China's Guangdong province arrived in the city for a chance to garner some of the land's riches. As southern slavery and the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 continued to threaten Black lives, Black people travelled west to San Francisco in hopes of escaping racism and violence with the possibility of also finding wealth in gold.<sup>38</sup>

The Gold Rush brought together a multi-cultural landscape to the city, but the second half of the nineteenth-century made way for harsher penalties and legislation. A Vigilance Committee was formed in 1856. One of their primary goals was to control sexual vice and regulate brothels; thus, regulating sexual capital.<sup>39</sup> In 1890, San Francisco had the highest proportion of drinking establishments – larger than New York and Chicago. As a result of the two converging, an early underground gay culture began to flourish in the bar scene of the city, especially in the Barbary Coast.<sup>40</sup>

The Barbary Coast offered visitors brothels, bars, and prostitution, the epitome of 19<sup>th</sup> century vice. Brothels were officially shutdown in 1917. With the collapse of sexual capital in

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<sup>37</sup> Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide-Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2005), 2-3.

<sup>38</sup> Boyd, 4.

<sup>39</sup> Boyd, 5. Sexual capital is defined as the social worthiness of an individual based on their ability to use their attractiveness to gain power. In this context, sexual capital was often gained through sex work.

<sup>40</sup> Boyd, 27.

the Barbary Coast so came the expansion of an underground gay culture.<sup>41</sup> While drag and performance were still available for anyone that transgressed gender norms of the century, it was not until the early-twentieth-century that homosexuals in San Francisco had expansive options for socializing.

San Francisco's publicly queer history began with the repeal of Prohibition in 1933 and the expansion of gay nightlife. Bars such as the Black Cat Tavern became popular sites of coming together for homosexual men. It offered a bright and welcoming environment to its patrons as well as assuring them safety. While it is rumored that the Black Cat Tavern was the location of a riot, it was actually the scene of a civil demonstration against police brutality towards homosexuals. Two men were arrested the night of the protests but the tavern continued to work towards a safe environment for its patrons. With the popularity of bars that catered to homosexuals, more began to open, but with progress came aggression in this history of homosexuality. The Black Cat Tavern was targeted and officials in the city cracked down on San Francisco's gay underground.<sup>42</sup> As McCarthyism crept in to disrupt the security of the West Coast, gay San Franciscans experienced similar fears, threats, and restrictions on their sexuality as Los Angelenos.

When the news spread from Los Angeles to San Francisco of Dale Jennings's appeal, a chapter of the Mattachine Foundation formed in the Bay Area; the same one that Call joined and become the leader of. He believed that homosexuals needed to assimilate into society, rather than have society accept them. While Kinsey's research proved that there was nothing unnatural or pathological about homosexuality, homosexuals faced stereotypes of conducting themselves in

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<sup>41</sup> Boyd, 28.

<sup>42</sup> Boyd, 108-110.

overly flamboyant and exuberant ways. Call believed that challenging those stereotypes by presenting and acting in an expected heterosexually normative way could further their cause. Hence, in order for society to accept them they could not stand out, they must fit in. In Call's formulation, the Mattachine had to present as heterosexual in order to do so.<sup>43</sup>

As soon he took the helm, Hal Call put his plans for the Mattachine in motion. Beginning in 1953, the same year Kinsey published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, the organization frequently sent letters to Alfred C. Kinsey and the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction.<sup>44</sup> The first correspondence was dated August 22, 1953. The Mattachine sent Kinsey a letter declaring that its members were determined to assist him in his future research projects and they hoped he could offer assistance in return.<sup>45</sup> While Kinsey's response to this letter has not surfaced, it must have been positive for, he and the Mattachine henceforth worked together.

On October 16, 1953, the Mattachine wrote to him requesting multiple copies of a pamphlet they heard he had written titled "*Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behavior*."<sup>46</sup> The society's their research and public relations team intended to study the

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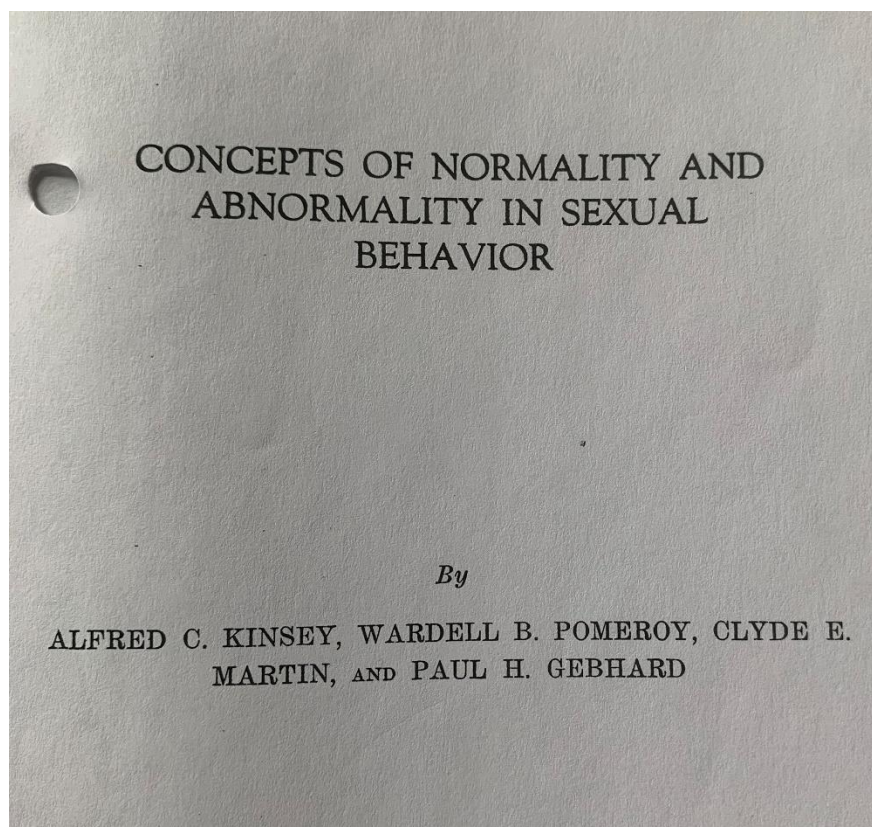
<sup>43</sup> The concept of dressing as "heterosexual" is derived from the misconception that every homosexual man looks and acts effeminate. Call's Mattachine Society looked very white and male. There were not women in the Society as there had been when Hay and the Fifth Order were in leadership. There were no Black men or women either to be seen. For more on Call's goals for the society to assimilate and evolve rather than radicalize homosexuals see, John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 75-84. And Vern L. Bullough and James T. Sears, "Hal Call (1917-2000): Mr. Mattachine," In *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context* (Harrington Park Press: New York, 2002).

<sup>44</sup> Its name is traditionally shortened to The Kinsey Institute and will be referred to as The Kinsey Institute moving forward.

<sup>45</sup> The Mattachine Society to Alfred C. Kinsey, 22 August 1953, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>46</sup> Mattachine Society to Alfred C. Kinsey, 16 October 1953, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

pamphlet's usefulness as an educational tool. Thus, began three years of mutual exchange, with the Mattachine Society helping Kinsey and receiving his help in return.



*Figure 0-2 "Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behavior" By Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, and Paul H. Gebhard sent to the Mattachine Society's public relations team.<sup>47</sup>*

The Kinsey pamphlet is approximately thirty pages in length and details the complexities of the restrictions that are placed upon people's sexuality and sexual activity.<sup>48</sup> Kinsey and his colleagues discuss the historical origins of sexuality. They find that the Christian church's ties to Jewish and Roman origins resulted in "the control of the whole body of sex law and custom fell

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<sup>47</sup>Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin and Paul H. Gebhard, "Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behavior," Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, no. 1997-25, Box #7, Folder #15, GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives.

<sup>48</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin and Paul H. Gebhard, "Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behavior," Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, no. 1997-25, Box #7, Folder #15, GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives.

into religious hands.”<sup>49</sup> “Concepts of Normality” mentions the success that religion has had in controlling the sexuality of United States citizens and the moral justifications embedded in religious code. The researchers mention how their methodology was unpredictable. They had to prepare for the product of their results to recognize a subconscious need to abide by the pressures of Christian sexuality.<sup>50</sup>

“Concepts of Normality” summarizes the primary points of Kinsey’s research that found the high incidence of homosexual relations in men and women. He lists immediate stimuli, past experience, and individual inheritance as potential causes of homosexual behavior. In doing so, Kinsey asserts that the justification for rejecting homosexuals from society is nonsensical. He found that the homosexual individual will always favor the same-sex and there is nothing society, science, and politics can do to change it. No matter how harsh the criminal repercussions may be, “Concepts of Normality” regards the 1953 political views of homosexuality as dated and unjust.<sup>51</sup>

If *SBHM* did not quite project that homosexuality must be accepted socially and politically, “Concepts of Normality” surely finished the job. The pamphlet was distributed among members of the Mattachine, Call included. His reaction to it is unclear, but it undoubtedly left a lasting impact on how he viewed the importance of the correspondence with Kinsey. Once

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<sup>49</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin and Paul H. Gebhard, “Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behavior,” Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, no. 1997-25, Box #7, Folder #15, GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives, 14.

<sup>50</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin and Paul H. Gebhard, “Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behavior,” Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, no. 1997-25, Box #7, Folder #15, GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives, 19.

<sup>51</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin and Paul H. Gebhard, “Concepts of Normality and Abnormality in Sexual Behavior,” Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, no. 1997-25, Box #7, Folder #15, GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives.

again, their relationship as confidants proved to be a valuable asset to the Mattachine and to gay emancipation activism.

As the year progressed and the correspondence continued, Kinsey began to travel to San Francisco and Los Angeles to interview members of the society for an upcoming project on sexual deviance.<sup>52</sup> While it is nearly impossible to tell which members of the Mattachine contributed to Kinsey's research – besides those who were named in correspondence – letters between he and Donald S. Lucas and E.M Nickel reveal that a great many of them were open to making a contribution. Most notably, Bois Burk<sup>53</sup> – regarded as one of the founding members of the Mattachine – provided his own history to Kinsey in San Francisco in November of 1953.<sup>54</sup>

The addition of Mattachine members' histories to Kinsey's future research were not the only exchange of information on homosexuality and the hoped-for third report on sexual behavior. In a letter from Kinsey to Ken Burns (a Mattachine member for a short period in the early 1950s) on September 18, 1953, he shared that he had upwards of four-thousand histories of persons with homosexual experiences. These histories were included in the research he intended to publish, and were only a small portion of what he accumulated.<sup>55</sup> The unnamed third research project never came to fruition (as is discussed later in this chapter).

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<sup>52</sup> The process to uncover the location of a manuscript has not been fruitful. The journey to discovering what Kinsey's intentions were in writing about sexual deviance may remain unknown for some time and many leads have resulted in dead ends. Due to time constraints, I am unable to provide any concrete facts that this manuscript exists in an archive or an estate. Regardless, it is an indisputable fact that Kinsey was writing a third sexology report. Kinsey's own statements to the Mattachine and Sam Steward solidify this fact. Sadly, as it neared completion, Kinsey died. For more, see Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>53</sup> Mini bio of Bois Burk right here. Primary source reference to his sex history courtesy of the GLBT Historical Society. Bois Burk Papers no. 1989-07, "Bois Burk Sex History, Letter from Alfred Kinsey (1953)," Carton #1, Folder #5, GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives.

<sup>54</sup> Bois Burk to Alfred C. Kinsey, 30 November 1953, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>55</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey to Ken Burns, 18 September 1953, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.



As the Mattachine continued to grow, through correspondence and their relationship with professionals such as Kinsey, they began to distribute pamphlets to other chapters and among one another. In an information digest published in 1954 titled “*The Mattachine Society Today*,” the Beta Chapter of San Francisco announced its incorporation status as a “non-profit educational and research organization.”<sup>56</sup> The digest states that the organization is comprised of men and women, as well as any and all individuals regardless of race, creed, color, or sexual preference. The Mattachine claimed, “The organization is definitely no organization of homosexuals alone.”<sup>57</sup> They asserted this but their all white and all male appearance says otherwise. While they claim that the organization is diverse, there is not enough evidence to substantiate such a pronouncement.

The Beta Chapter’s pamphlet included the Mattachine Society’s constitution and by-laws created by Call. It is no coincidence that Call took note of the popularity of “The Mattachine Society Today” and made it grow into *The Mattachine Review*. In October of 1954, Call and six other associates bought a printing press and began a printing firm. The seven of them quickly dropped to just two: Hal Call and Don Lucas.<sup>58</sup> In a 1954 Society convention, Burns called the members to action. He instructed them that they must broaden their network and reach a larger audience to build a stronger political agenda: communication was the only way the organization

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<sup>56</sup> “The Mattachine Society Today,” 1954, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles,” Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>57</sup> “The Mattachine Society Today,” 1954, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles,” Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>58</sup> Don Lucas attended his first Mattachine meeting in November 1953 at 27 years old. He was an insurance company employee at the time. Born in Colorado in 1926, he grew up without a father. He and his brother (who was disabled by cerebral palsy) were raised by his mother. He moved to Tacoma, Washington for a short period of time and learned of gay nightlife. Hearing that there was an abundant homosexual culture in San Francisco, he moved there in 1949. Like Call, Lucas heard of the Mattachine through word of mouth and joined the organization in 1953. For more see, Martin Meeker, *Contacts Desired: Gay and Lesbian Communications and Community, 1940s-1970s* (University of Chicago Press, 2006), 42.

could survive.<sup>59</sup> While they already had strong ties to Alfred C. Kinsey and the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research, the Mattachine wanted and needed a larger network of members, readers, and supportive professionals. As a result, Call and Lucas formed Pan-Graphic Press.<sup>60</sup>

To announce the upcoming Mattachine Society magazine, they sent out an extra titled “*Sex, Science, and Sensation*” in 1954. It told the reader that the first issue was coming January of 1955.<sup>61</sup> Among the topics they intended to include were the “vag lewd” laws in California. More specifically, they promised a critical examination of how the law impacted individuals and the entire landscape of California. Furthermore, the upcoming January 1955 *Review* included findings by psychologists on homosexuality, the issues facing friends and families of homosexuals in small towns, and an open letter to a U.S. senator (unknown).<sup>62</sup>

In December 1954, the press ran 2,500 copies of their forthcoming magazine, *Mattachine Review Extra*. Its distribution spanned every state and fifteen different countries. By publishing such high volume in one go, they utilized their already existing network to broaden their numbers.<sup>63</sup> However, the first mailing flopped and readers were primarily reading *ONE* magazine or one from a European homophile press.<sup>64</sup> The Mattachine did not have much of an audience that warranted the widespread publication of a magazine when readers were already

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<sup>59</sup> Meeker, 43.

<sup>60</sup> Bullough, 155.

<sup>61</sup> “Sex, Science, and Sensation,” 1954, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles,” Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>62</sup> “Sex, Science, and Sensation,” 1954, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles,” Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>63</sup> Meeker, 44-45.

<sup>64</sup> *ONE* Inc. established their magazine years before the Mattachine ventured into the publishing realm. They were known as having more radical ideologies in their magazine. European homophile magazines such as *Der Kreis* was around longer than the Mattachine’s and it was extremely popular in Germany and throughout Europe. For more see, Martin Meeker, *Contacts Desired: Gay and Lesbian Communications and Community, 1940s-1970s* (University of Chicago Press, 2006).

fans of *ONE*. They came up with a new strategy. The Mattachine planned to go beyond their current reach.

The press went on to publish fellow homophile organization, Daughters of Bilitis (The Ladder) and One Inc.'s (ONE) magazines and newsletters after the organization searched for a new publishing company.<sup>65</sup> Much later in Pan-Graphic's history, Call began publishing *Dorian Book Service Quarterly* in 1960.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, *Quarterly* reported on censorship laws, homosexuality, and obscenity. Furthermore, they provided their readers with an extensive list of fiction and non-fiction texts on sex and sexuality.<sup>67</sup>

*Quarterly* was very different from the *Mattachine Review*. A closer analysis of the physical issues of the *Review* reveals that the function of *Quarterly* was to broaden topics mentioned in the Mattachine's publication. A few years after they started printing the *Review*, the Society began to include a short portion at the end of every monthly – previously quarterly – issue that displayed literature aimed towards a homosexual audience and/or anyone that desired to broaden their knowledge on sex and sexuality. Most notably, issues recommended books by the Marquis de Sade, the illustrious French libertine philosopher, and *Der Kreis*, the German homophile magazine.<sup>68</sup> The mission of the Mattachine was to provide the community with education, justice, and community. Their provision of a list of literature was an attempt at broadening the scope of knowledge of the greater homosexual community in the United States.”

When one flips through pages of the *Review*, one name in particular seems to pop up more than anyone else: Alfred C. Kinsey. Compiled by Mattachine member Carl B. Harding (a

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<sup>65</sup> Bullough, 155-156.

<sup>66</sup> Meeker, 101.

<sup>67</sup> Meeker, 101-102.

<sup>68</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 3, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

pseudonym used by Elver Barker); the Kinsey Institute holds every copy of the *Review* published by the original society. The publication was originally released every two months but switched to monthly by 1956. On January 1955, the first issue of the *Review* debuted for the months of January and February. In an article titled “Sex Deviation Studies Made in Two States,” the author mentions Kinsey and his research throughout the piece, finding that his research was accurately described homosexual men and women in America.<sup>69</sup> Every article in 1955 mentions Kinsey at least once, and the following year, the *Review* features excerpts taken from *SBHM* summarized by Hal Call.

On April 19, 1956, Kinsey wrote to Call telling him that the quotations and excerpts compiled from the first of his reports constituted a “correct interpretation of the whole” and requested to have upwards of one hundred reprints of the article.<sup>70</sup> In the August 1956 issue of the *Mattachine Review*, Kinsey’s research appeared. Following this issue, in June of 1956, it stated, “Dr. Alfred Kinsey appears for the first time in *Mattachine Review* as the author (in conjunction with research associates Wardell B. Pomeroy and Clyde E. Martin of the Institute of Sex Research, Indiana University).”<sup>71</sup> The following month, the *Review* published Kinsey’s research as “Toward a Clarification of Homosexual Terminology.”<sup>72</sup> Historically, the purposes of the *Mattachine* served to educate other homosexuals on their identity, sexuality, and protection (legal, physical, and mental). By publishing a portion of *SBHM*, they provided the

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<sup>69</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 1, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>70</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey to Harold “Hal” Call, 19 April 1956, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>71</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 2, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>72</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 2, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

community with an accessible form of ingesting the complex research and writing by simplifying his findings and narrowing in on one specific issue; homosexual terminology.

Hal Call took all of the information that he received from Dr. Kinsey to disperse it among his fellow Mattachines. He distributed the information through in-person meetings, the *Review*, and correspondence with homosexual men across the nation. The research Kinsey continued to conduct well into his last few months of life was integral to the Society. Kinsey viewed homosexuals as a group of individuals who were treated unjustly by the government and society. By providing a continuous stream of updated information that proved them normal rather than deviant, he nurtured Mattachine Society's confidence to carry on and keep pushing for gay emancipation.

In September 1956, the Mattachine Society published its monthly newsletter just as Hal Call had ensured every month since it began. While it appeared that this issue was just like the others – abundant with content on current issues and events regarding homosexuality – it proved to be a memorial to the greatest bond a sexologist and a homophile organization could have. The September issue announced the death of Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey. Situated between pages about the United States government's attempts to gain control over shipments to the Institute for Sex Research, lies a bright green four-page insert with the bold lettering "Dr. Kinsey Dies."

In the early morning hours of August 25, 1956, the doctor of sexology passed away at Bloomington Hospital in Bloomington, Indiana. After years of struggling with health complications from childhood illnesses, the leading U.S. sex researcher died. While in the hospital, surrounded by his friends and loved ones, he had suffered from an array of heart problems. The obituary states that he had been in failing health for months, and within three days

of his hospitalization, he was gone.<sup>73</sup> The *Mattachine* included his obituary to pay homage to the brilliant doctor and one of their most trusted allies. The green paper beckoned the attention of every reader, and the “quotable quote” related a message that had guided Kinsey’s entire life. It reads, “Prejudice is a great time-saver. It enables you to form opinions without bothering to get the facts.”<sup>74</sup>

Kinsey was a man driven towards sexology with the hope of uncovering the truth in order to dispel the myth that any sexuality and/or consensual sexual act was abnormal. The two reports are facts that argue against the prejudice of society, culture, and politics. By presenting this quote in the September issue, the *Mattachine* established that Kinsey had, undoubtedly, contributed in the fight against prejudice against homosexuals. The *Mattachine* was no stranger to prejudice, and it was no stranger to the help that Kinsey provided by his efforts to use indisputable facts to remove the stigma on homosexuality.

The *Mattachine* wrote a declaration that “It goes without saying that the *Mattachine* and all its members and friends have lost a valued counselor and advisor with Dr. Kinsey’s passing,” and “His helpfulness to *Mattachine* leaders will never be forgotten.”<sup>75</sup> Every member of the *Mattachine* seemed to share a deep sense of validation in their sexuality from Kinsey. They did not view the relationship as one meant to serve them selfishly, but as a bond meant to remove prejudice from an unjust system that demonized, criticized, and ostracized them. Furthermore, this document elaborates the relationship between the sexologist and the society went far beyond

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<sup>73</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 2, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>74</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 2, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>75</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 2, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

the publication of the first sexology report. It is a public announcement that they worked together.

This issue of the *Review* is the most open either party was about their partnership throughout its entirety. The issue posits that *SBHM* was not the only contribution to the gay community that Kinsey made. He helped the leaders of the Mattachine, meaning Harold “Hal” Call. Along with his correspondence, he counseled them on where they could find lawyers that could assist them in “vag lewd” cases, therapists that could serve them, and fellow homosexuals that may want to join their fight.

Hal Call made sure that the Mattachine persisted in forming alliances with professionals in scientific fields. With the knowledge of Kinsey’s breakthrough sexology report and the release of the second volume, Call took to the typewriter to bond with the sexologist. The relationship between the Mattachine and Kinsey assisted in sustaining the homophile movement. The answer is as follows: he advised them; he counseled them; and he helped their leaders. They are rather short and simplistic answers, yet the primary sources of correspondence shine a brighter light on the indisputable fact that Kinsey and the Mattachine’s relationship is integral to gay emancipation history. Furthermore, any doubt about this fact is put to rest by the September *Mattachine Review*.

## Epilogue

### The Oppressed Will Always Revolt

“Live! Live the wonderful life that is in you! Let nothing be lost upon you. Be always searching for new sensations. Be afraid of nothing.”

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Grey* (1890)<sup>1</sup>

August 25, 1956 was a suspiciously chilled day in Bloomington, Indiana. The highs were in the seventies, but the minimum dipped down to the mid-fifties.<sup>2</sup> In the very early hours of that cold morning, doctor of sexology Alfred C. Kinsey passed away of congestive heart failure.<sup>3</sup> As Alfred C. Kinsey lay in the hospital awaiting his inevitable end, he suffered with pneumonia but it was not what caused his death; it was his poor heart health that did. He died that day.

Since he appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1953, things had not been going well for Kinsey. The general public was disappointed in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* and a Congressional committee investigating his research concluded that he was a Communist. His financial support began to decline; the Rockefeller Foundation withdrew its support, and the threat of the closure of the Institute for Sex Research (ISR) became very real.<sup>4</sup> In the years leading up to his death, it appeared that everything he had built had begun to crumble.<sup>5</sup>

In the September issue of *The Mattachine Review*, the Mattachine Society announced Kinsey's death and included heartfelt messages from its leaders about him. Alongside his

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<sup>1</sup> Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Grey* (London: Vintage; 2004), 18.

<sup>2</sup> The *Old Farmer's Almanac* marks August 25, 1956 as having an average temperature of 67.1 degrees Fahrenheit with a high of 78.1 degrees and a low of 55.0 degrees Fahrenheit. Wind speeds were at an average of 6.56 miles per hour and a maximum of 10.24 miles per hour. “Weather History for Bloomington, IN,” *Old Farmer's Almanac*, <https://www.almanac.com/weather/history/IN/Bloomington/1956-08-25>

<sup>3</sup> James H. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Life* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1997), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Jones, 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 2, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.



obituary was their undying support of his research. They continued to applaud his endeavors. The *Review's* September 1956 issue announced that the "U.S. Sues to Kill Kinsey Imports" when a shipment of photographs, paintings, and books was sent from Europe for Kinsey's collection at the Institute.<sup>6</sup> This specific issue was a heartbreaking one for the Mattachine and the scientific community. While it covered Kinsey's death, it also highlighted the extent to which the U.S. government was attempting to censor the study of sex and reproduction by destroying information bound for the Institute.

Without Kinsey's determination to keep sex research alive, the ISR became an easy target for government officials to censor and destroy. He stood as an academic and scientific safety guard for the study of sexual behaviors. When he passed, the gates were left wide open to anyone to withhold items the Institute intended to archive and study. By slowly stripping away the rights of the Institute to receive particular items, the study of sex was under attack. Regardless, researchers carried on with the knowledge of Kinsey's lasting contributions to the scientific study on sexual behaviors of women and men.

Every member of the Mattachine seemed to share a deep sense of validation in their sexuality from Kinsey. Tracing the history of the Mattachine and its members reveals that their sexual identity was regarded as common by Kinsey and *SBHM*. Harry Hay was led to the doctor when he vocalized the need for a homosexual identity to be recognized and accepted, leading him to provide Kinsey with his own sexual history. The ties between the Mattachine and the famous sexologist began before 1953 when correspondence started. It came before 1950 when Hay walked the beaches and streets of the Silver Lake district looking to form an organization. It

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<sup>6</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 2, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

started in 1941, when Hay gave Kinsey his sexual history. The Mattachine viewed the relationship as a comradeship meant to remove prejudice from an unjust system that demonized, criticized, and ostracized homosexuals. It did not serve them selfishly. The relationship between the sexologist and the society was far beyond the publication of the first sexology report. It is a public announcement that they worked together.

After Dr. Kinsey died, the Mattachine continued to reach out to the Institute in order to maintain their bond. Wardell Pomeroy stepped in as the main correspondent with the Mattachine Society. On May 9, 1959, Call invited Pomeroy to have an in-person discussion on the future of sexological researchers and how they could form a corporate organization that could be affiliated with the homophile organizations.<sup>7</sup> He agreed to meet but there is no evidence that this ever came to fruition. Pomeroy was not a reliable responder to their letters and showed little to no interest in sustaining the personal relationship with the Mattachine that Kinsey had developed. His responses were inconsistent and he tended to break promises to meet when the opportunity to arose. Yet, the society continued to reach out and provide information about Bay Area politics and legal issues pertaining to homosexuality.<sup>8</sup> In correspondence following the end of November in 1959, no dates are marked or noted on any of the archived letters. Pomeroy's unreliable nature further supports that Kinsey maintained their relationship with purpose and with the knowledge that it mattered to the Society and the Institute.

Despite the fact that their relationship to the Institute faltered, the Mattachine remained highly active up until the year 1965. They released publications; sought further advancement in

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<sup>7</sup> Harold "Hal" Call to Wardell B. Pomeroy, 9 May 1959, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>8</sup> Harold "Hal" Call to the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research, 27 October 1959, Box 12, Alfred C. Kinsey Correspondence Collection, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

the fight for gay emancipation; and created bonds with allies in professional fields across the nation. *The Mattachine Review* continued to mention Kinsey, his work, and the importance of scientific professional input on homosexuality up until it dissolved in 1965.<sup>9</sup> In a 1957 *Advanced Bulletin*, they invited the community to listen in on two panels that featured professors, psychiatrists, mothers, attorneys, and housewives speaking on homosexuality in general.<sup>10</sup>

Panelists for the first two-hour segment were Blanche M. Baker, M.D., psychiatrist; Mrs. Leah Gailey, housewife; and Harold Call, editor of *Mattachine Review*. The second panel consisted of Karl M. Baker, M.D., psychiatrist; Frank Beach Jr., professor of psychology at University of California at Berkeley; Morris Lowenthal, an attorney in San Francisco; and David Wilson, of the School of Criminology at, UC Berkeley.<sup>11</sup> Most, if not all, of the speakers advocated for the revision of sex laws and called upon the United States government to draw a line between criminality and sinfulness.<sup>12</sup>

In an advanced bulletin, the Mattachine reverted back to their earlier mission of providing their community with as much as they could. They outlined that they wished to provide education through their monthly publication of *The Mattachine Review*. Furthermore, they conducted bi-monthly, monthly, and quarterly public programs open to individuals twenty-one and older to discuss police brutality against homosexuals. The Mattachine worked on group therapy and area projects that assisted in research, writing, and editing, as well as education on

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<sup>9</sup> *Mattachine Advanced Bulletin Press*, 1957, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles," Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>10</sup> *Mattachine Advanced Bulletin Press*, 1957, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles," Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>11</sup> *Mattachine Advance Bulletin Press*, 1957, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles," Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>12</sup> *Mattachine Advance Bulletin Press*, 1957, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles," Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

the legal and legislative problems facing homosexuals.<sup>13</sup> They opened three libraries, one for each major city with a large Mattachine presence: New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

They stated that they have special qualifications based on their work with the late Dr. Kinsey and their contributed sex histories to the continuation of sex research. The Mattachine San Francisco, including Call, continued to work with professionals such as Evelyn Hooker.<sup>14</sup> Call's determination to establish close relationships with professionals in fields of science and psychology continued well after Kinsey's passing but no one quite surpassed the impact the sexologist had on him and the organization. Kinsey's name and work continued to appear in issues of *The Mattachine Review*.

The third anniversary issue in January 1958 featured Evelyn Hooker's research with a subsection of her work dedicated to Kinsey's introduction of the ideas of overt and covert homosexuality.<sup>15</sup> Hooker's article compiled statistical data that aims at "rating and matching homosexual and non-homosexual" in a similar fashion to the Kinsey scale.<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, there are spelling errors and typos throughout later issues of the *Review* due to rushed printing and affordability. By this point, the press was hemorrhaging money and making edits had proved an ineffective and costly venture with little reward.

In later issues, Kinsey and the Institute frequently graced the *Review*'s pages. The February 1958 issue, editors showed a keen interest in how the courts were handling the

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<sup>13</sup> *Mattachine Advance Bulletin Press*, 1957, "Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, INC. – Los Angeles," Vertical File #45, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>14</sup> Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 357.

<sup>15</sup> *Mattachine Review*, Book 4, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>16</sup> This is the true spelling that appears in the *Review*. For the purposes of staying true to the source, the original typo is present in this thesis. *Mattachine Review*, Book 4, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

materials Kinsey had ordered from other countries prior to his death.<sup>17</sup> An article taken from the *Portland Oregonian* newspaper entitled “Government Decides Not to Contest Court Ruling to Admit Pornographic Material for Use in Kinsey Research Work,” explained that the materials were not legally obscene as they were unlikely to arouse anyone who saw them.<sup>18</sup> The *Mattachine* followed with their own feature that included congratulatory praise of the courts and their decision to release the materials from customs to the University of Indiana and the Institute for Sex Research.

The Society believed that the District Court not only helped serious scholarship when they took the materials out of the hands of the Customs Bureau, but they also stepped over the federal government’s control on what is taught. The next few pages detailed the importance of the academic study of sexuality and includes the Kinsey Scale as a portion of their argument.<sup>19</sup> By that spring, Kinsey’s colleagues came forward with their own contributions to the *Review*. A medical doctor named Harry Benjamin stated that “It was the later Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey who first called my attention to the *Mattachine* Society.” He details how Kinsey praised their work and goals, as well as his own pride in being able to work with them as the organization continued to grow.<sup>20</sup>

Despite praise and continued assistance from other professionals, the *Mattachine* struggled to make ends meet. At the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the *Mattachine* that following

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<sup>17</sup>*Mattachine Review*, Book 4, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>18</sup>*Mattachine Review*, Book 4, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>19</sup>*Mattachine Review*, Book 4, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>20</sup> The article where this quote is taken from is the first part of a paper Dr. Benjamin delivered at the fourth annual convention. It was a part of a panel discussion on “Must the Individual Homosexual Be Accepted in Our Time?” For more see, *Mattachine Review*, Book 4, Assorted Periodical Collection no. 342, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

year, *The Denver Post* reported on the event. The theme of that year was “New Frontiers in Acceptance of the Homophile” and was held in Denver, Colorado.<sup>21</sup> Their report appeared on Monday September 14, 1959 and featured a cut out that a reader could send to the Mattachine to request membership or subscribe to the *Review*. It is the first time the Mattachine publicly called for donations and therefore, the first time the greater public became aware of the organizations inability to stay afloat due to a lack of external funding.<sup>22</sup>

In 1964, *The Mattachine Review* ceased publication, and in May of that year, the Mattachine Society openly discussed financial troubles. While pamphlets and short waivers were distributed, the *Review*'s longer magazines no longer appeared on newsstands. By November of 1965, it was more than six-thousand dollars in debt, which led to the suspension of the publication officially on the 17<sup>th</sup> of that month.<sup>23</sup> Between 1964 and 1965, Call distributed thinner issues of the *Review* that were closer to a pamphlet than their usual magazine format. As the mid-60s neared, the notion of a national Mattachine Society began to splinter. Younger generations found that the organization's activism, goals, and modes of working towards gay emancipation were conservative in comparison to a new generation's methods for gay liberation. Call refused to change his methods. As a result, chapters of the Mattachine became much more militant and advocated for radical and revolutionary methods of protests rather than evolutionary.

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<sup>21</sup> *The Denver Post*, 1959, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, Inc. – San Francisco,” Vertical File #48, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>22</sup> *The Denver Post*, 1959, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, Inc. – San Francisco,” Vertical File #48, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

<sup>23</sup> *The Denver Post*, 1959, “Homosexual Organizations – Mattachine Society, Inc. – San Francisco,” Vertical File #48, Kinsey Institute Archive and Special Collections, Indiana University Library.

The old ways of the original 1950-1953 Hay Mattachine were coming back and Call's methods became increasingly irrelevant in the fight towards gay emancipation. Similar to when Call took over, chapters of militant Mattachines formed across the country that were not attached to the San Francisco chapter. Taking this as a hint, the Bay Area Mattachine chose to focus on local politics rather than national. Call kept himself and his fellow members in the box they had stayed in since the beginning of his leadership. He refused to grow with the militant youth culture, so the gay liberation movement went on with and without him.

This thesis outlines the absolute importance of Kinsey to the Mattachine Society. He was a confidant who revealed important and up-to-date information on the growth of his sexology reports, supported their endeavors as a homophile organization, supplied them with educational tools that they desperately needed, and helped guide them towards the goals they wished to achieve as a society. The Mattachine Society gave Kinsey the necessary information he needed to understand the importance of his research, and the power he had as a vocal proponent of gay liberation. His role as a friend and ally of gay liberation is integral to the early history of the gay liberation movement. Without Kinsey's voice and sexology reports, perhaps the homophile movement and the subsequent movement towards liberating homosexuals may not have occurred until much later. It happened regardless, but his research is integral to fabric of the history of sexuality and gender. To disregard his personal, political, scientific, and literary contributions ignores a formative moment in history. While the archive initially alluded to a short lifespan of three years, it actually opened up a treasure trove of information involving the decades of influence Kinsey had on the formation of the world's oldest homophile organization.

A Letter for Every Activist That Was and Ever Will Be

April 1, 2020 marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mattachine Society. Seventy years ago, Harry Hay contributed to where gay liberation is now. His efforts reverberated throughout the years that succeeded them. Whether the LGBTQIA+ community found their means of activism through riots, protests, meetings, and organizing, now is a significant reflection of where they were in the past. The acknowledgments section of this thesis could contain names of hundreds of thousands of LGBTQIA+ activists that fought for our rights and others that continue to do so. This thesis is yours. It is for you, the activists that were and that will be; those that wake up and recognize that enough is enough; the people brave enough to walk through the world with their authentic selves exposed; for everyone who cannot escape the trauma of the closet.

This research was written during a horrific and uncertain time in the United States. I finalized the introduction during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. When the stay at home order was set in place for the state of New York, I edited, made additions to my argument, and, ultimately, produced this final product. With archive and library closures, it felt, at times, as if this research would not see the light of day. The impact of the pandemic is personal and political. As LGBTQIA+ historians, it is our responsibility to recognize how our subjects, our communities, and chosen families have been affected by it.

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, during the COVID-19 pandemic, co-founder of the lesbian homophile organization, Daughters of Bilitis, Phyllis Lyon passed away. She was one of the last remaining activists from the homophile movement. Throughout her life, Lyon fought for the rights of lesbians and gay men to be seen, heard, and recognized at state and federal levels. When her death was announced, my colleagues and I mourned one of the most inspirational people in our lives.



As the world continued to spin and doctors sought a vaccine for the virus, we were furious and reminded of another global pandemic when we heard that gay men could not contribute their antibodies to vaccine trials. If a gay man wanted to assist, they could not be on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a daily medication to prevent HIV.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, he would have to abstain from sex for at least a full year. When this news came to light, it solidified that, even in the twenty-first century, homosexuals are still considered a risk to the medical establishment.

Every day, the death toll and the number of affected people grows. There is no telling what the future holds as states begin to prematurely reopen non-essential business and continue to run out of protective gear for employees. On May Day (May 1<sup>st</sup>), workers from Amazon, Target, Instacart, and more went on strike to protest the companies' unfair treatment of employees and the lack of provisions of protective gear. The United States can no longer continue as it stands now, it requires a system change. It is time for people at the grassroots to rise once more, as they always have, to create change in this country. Even if people are confined to their homes, they have the power to rise and fight. As LGBTQIA+ individuals, Black people, Asian people, Indigenous communities, and more continue to be oppressed, it is time to stop playing by the rules. The next coming months and even years are unpredictable, but it is certain that change is in the air and now is the time for revolution over evolution; it is time to rebel.

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<sup>24</sup> Center for Disease Control, "PrEP," *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 3 Dec. 2019. [www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/prep.html](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/prep.html).

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