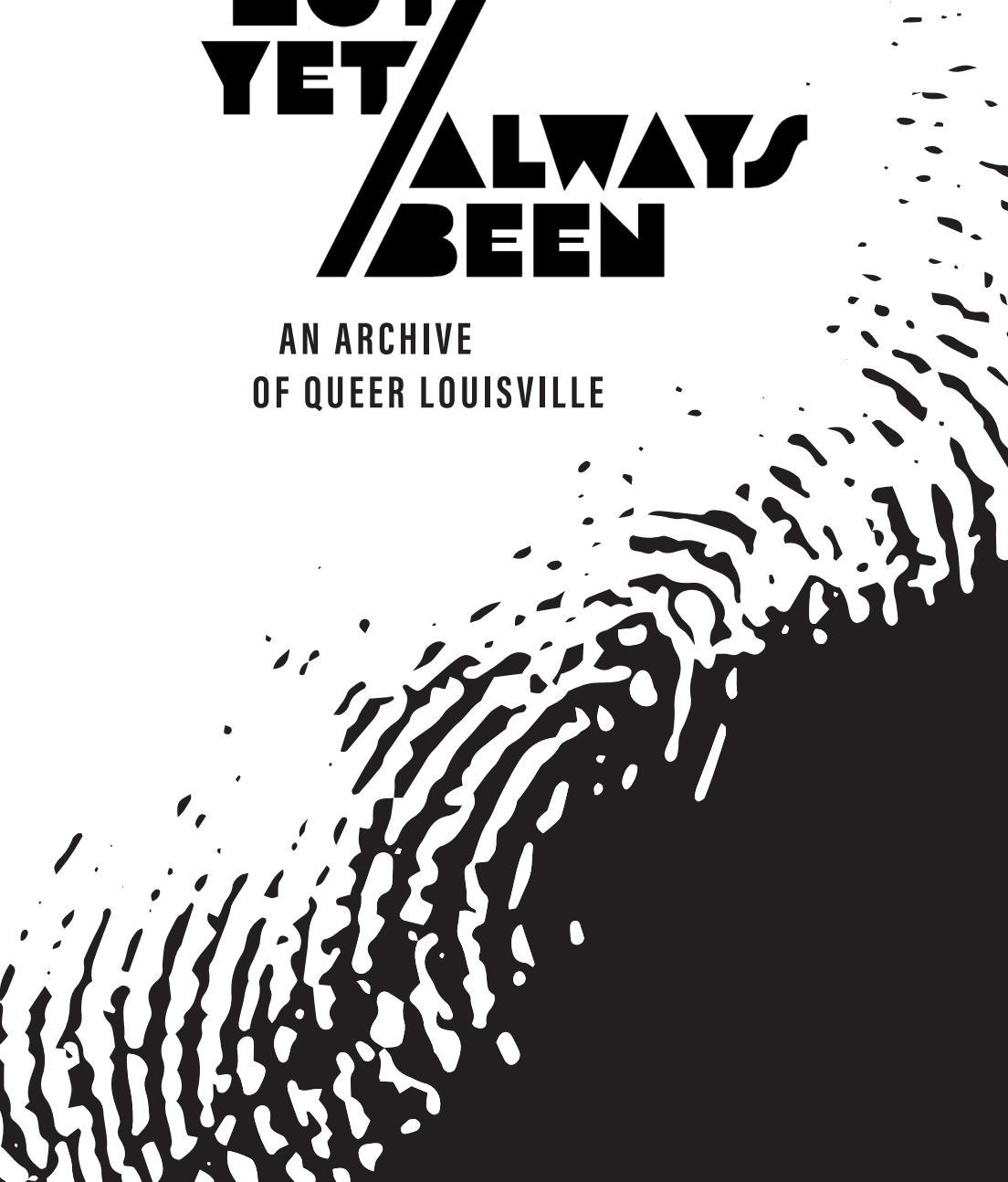


NOT/ YET / ALWAYS BEEN

AN ARCHIVE
OF QUEER LOUISVILLE



THE TEAM

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See our website for further information,
digital access, and additional content.

NotYetAlwaysBeen.com

This exhibition emerges from the collaborative labor of students
in Dr. Jennifer Sichel's seminar "Queer Theory & Curating"
at the University of Louisville (Spring 2024):

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Gray Koesters	Hope Arnett	Cassidy Meurer
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Finally, we want to extend immense gratitude to David Williams and his late partner Norman Nichols for their efforts in collecting, preserving, and sharing this history for us to learn about queer pasts and look forward to queer futures.



When I was growing up and I became aware of my gay inclinations, there was no place to go to learn what was going on with my body or if there were other people like me...

The collecting is a thrill, but we want to leave a legacy, and we want to leave things for other people to discover in the future.¹

David Williams

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INTRODUCTION

A Queer Exhibition

Not Yet / Always Been emerges from the classroom and the archives. The exhibition is a product of collaborative discussions and debates that a mixed graduate and undergraduate seminar provides. It showcases the material stuff of the Williams-Nichols Collection, yet it also puts on display the affective and imaginative—our creative processes of discovering hope and belonging in the archive. This project is a collective enterprise to envision from Louisville's queer past a future that complicates the normative scripts that dictate how a life should be lived. Mining the past, we reimagine how desire, intimacy, family, and community take shape and appear in both the public and domestic sphere. Drawing from queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz, this exhibition envisions queerness is an ever-present horizon of possibility...

Organized into five interconnected stations, *Not Yet / Always Been* showcases how queer life in Louisville can be traced, felt and experienced by making contact with the tangible evidence of its presence. Our stations—Organizing, Intimacy, Terrain, Performance, and Voices—each carve out discrete segments of this presence. The material in each station ranges across photographs, film, clothing, newsprint, flyers, posters, handwritten letters, and ephemera of all kinds from one of the nation's largest queer archival collections. The stations provide the possibility for new orientations, connections and perspectives. Each one is a center of gravity pulling together the lived experiences and complex realities

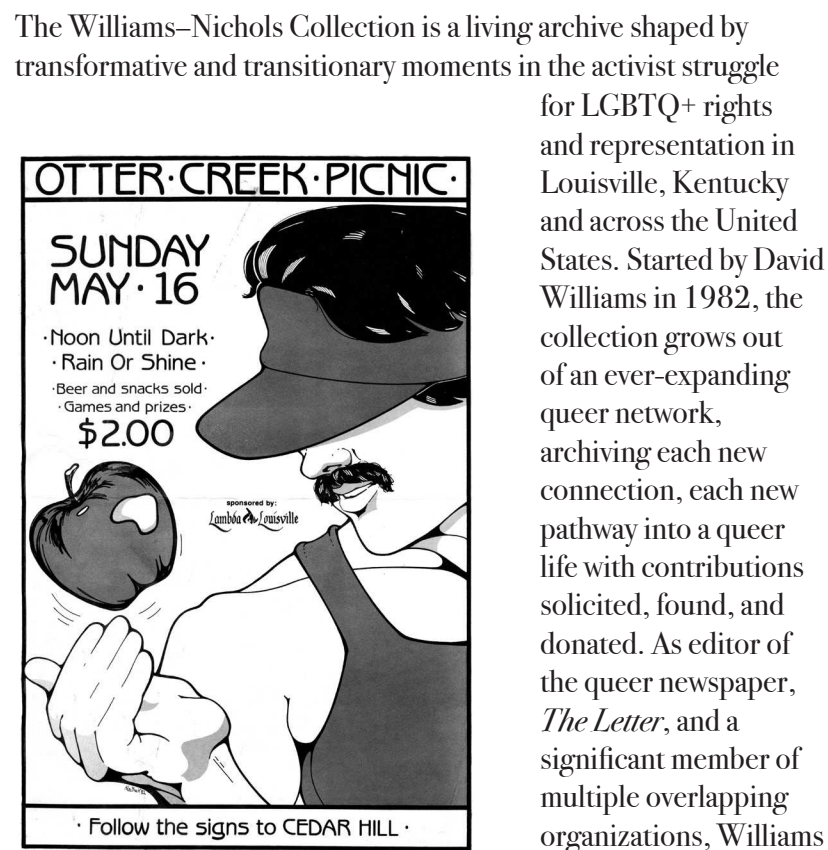
that make queer lives, LGBTQ+ stories, integral to Louisville's identity.

The first station, Organizing, flows into Intimacy. From the collective, the public, to the personal, the private, there is a confusion of boundaries as these designations reveal a set of complex intersections. During the AIDS pandemic, suffering experienced intimately was made loud and public by those organizing to make their presence known. Photos from a Louisville AIDS Walk line the wall together with significant objects, icons of a cause embedded in the local and bound-up in the national/global. Adjacent, in the Intimacy station, two queer weddings transform normally ostentatious ceremony into private ritual, binding together



love unrecognized by the law. Terrain abuts Performance on the main gallery wall. Mapped out in slide reproductions are spaces lost and revered, places invisible to some and felt especially in their absence by others. In Performance, also a mapping but of fleeting moments: a drag scene in formation, a kink community celebration, a lesbian folk band record an album. Concluding with Voices, there is again the interplay between individual and collective: queer periodicals, poetry, a call for solidarity, a drag queen discusses her artform.

A Queer Archive



for LGBTQ+ rights and representation in Louisville, Kentucky and across the United States. Started by David Williams in 1982, the collection grows out of an ever-expanding queer network, archiving each new connection, each new pathway into a queer life with contributions solicited, found, and donated. As editor of the queer newspaper, *The Letter*, and a significant member of multiple overlapping organizations, Williams

access to material sources was (and remains still) inexhaustible. And he was/is always out: at a new historical dedication, protest, AIDS memorial, drag show, pride parade, engaging and engaged, doing the work to historicize queer existence.

Our first foray into the archives as a group was one marked by exuberance and wonder at discovering that an entire world existed here, housed in an array of boxes, folders, plastic bags and filing cabinets. A teeming reality of queer experience, extraordinary and ordinary lives waited to be imagined and re-constructed. Key players in a host of major organizations—Gays and Lesbians United for Equality, Lambda Louisville, and the Fairness Campaign, among others—central to Louisville’s activist struggle, find voice and presence in the collection. Large and small moments, the Fairness Campaign victory and a poignant ‘coming out’ story, both have their place.

Exuberance was necessarily tempered as we set to work combing through the collection with an eye towards exhibition. A more solemn narrative emerged alongside and interwoven amongst the dazzle of drag queen bouffants, kinky rubber vests, and pride week picnics. We greeted a coinciding reality of mourning, loss, discrimination and hate, with reverence for the lives lost and seemingly insurmountable adversity facing so many then and still more now. When one enters the archive, they become a steward of memory. In the individual entries throughout this catalogue, we elaborate on the function of these objects as so many historical touchstones that preserve and transmit the social, political and cultural memory they are imbued with. Our enterprise is guided by prominent scholarship in queer theory and anchored in the narrative weave of queer Louisville’s *pasts, presence and potential futures*.

Jonathan Judd

I'm Tired

A Research Reflection by Vincent Young

Recent years have been exhausting as a trans person.

We're seeing unprecedented levels of visibility in media and cultural discourse. Somehow, my grandfather has learned what "nonbinary" means. My dad will come to me with questions about new terms that he doesn't understand. I'm not out to him, but as a 20-something, I guess we're just expected to be on the front of the cultural waves that crash over us. It's a strange feeling, though. On one hand, I think about the queer kids, the ones who now have more language than ever to talk about what they feel. They have an international community enabled by the internet, and search terms to plug into Google when they don't understand themselves. Something I had, sure, but not to the extent that there is now. This is, unequivocally, a good thing.

I'm also very tired, though.

I got emotional the first time I read Sara Ahmed's "An Affinity of Hammers," because I felt like - as is near constant in a trans person's life - I got language to describe how I had been feeling that I didn't have before. "We chip away at those walls by trying to exist or trying to transform an existence."² I think about this a lot, chipping by merely existing. I feel it every time I introduce myself with my preferred pronouns, the slight shake in my voice as I introduce myself as Vincent, even to this day, even several years into using this name.

It's hard, some days. I often think about going back into the closet. There is a burden that a lot of trans people place on themselves,

knowing or otherwise, that we have to be some kind of beacon of hope. The constant drumming that there is some poor little trans kid just like me who will see me and think that maybe, maybe we've always been here. I don't think this is untrue, as such, but I think it is individualist.

We have always been here. We will continue to be here. Existing as a queer person is often lonely, but you are never truly alone. There are generations on our heels. There are miles ahead of us. To chip at the walls that surround us always has been and always will be a group effort. As Ahmed says, "We happen upon each other. We witness the work each other is doing, and we recognize each other through that work. And we take up arms when we combine our forces. We speak up; we rise up."³

I get exhausted when I read the news, and that will not change for a few years at a minimum. What does change, however, is a matter of perspective. I see us speaking up. I see us rising up. *Not Yet/Always Been* is a reminder that things are difficult. They may be difficult for a long time. They may be difficult long after I die. However, there is nothing that can truly erase us and our mark on history, on each other's lives, on every waking moment. There is nothing that can make us not be here.

There is nothing that can stop us from chipping until

the wall

tumbles

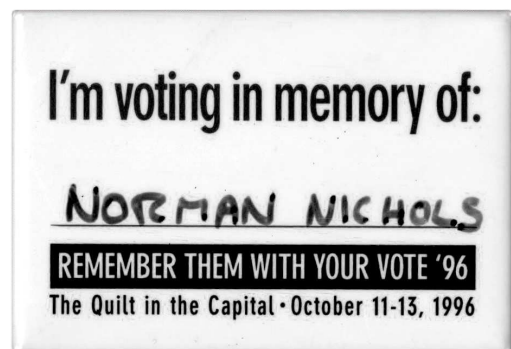
down.



ORGANIZING

Memorial Button

Sarah Melloy



This button saved from the 1996 Quilt in the Capital event presents itself as an unsuspecting vessel of love, grief, and memory. The design is simple, consisting of a white rectangle with the words: “I’m

voting in memory of _____. Remember them with your vote ’96. The Quilt in the Capital – October 11-13, 1996.”

The name “Norman Nichols” is written in all caps with a green sharpie above the small red line. The button was likely saved by somebody who was close with Nichols and wore it when they attended the Quilt in the Capital event in Washington DC that year. As the long-time partner of David Williams, the Williams-Nichols Collection is partially named in Nichols’s memory. Nichols died of AIDS in 1995, the year just before the last time the AIDS memorial quilt was displayed in the capital. By the time a memorial panel for Nichols was added to the quilt, his was one of 37,000 panels; the quilt covering the entire National Mall in Washington DC.⁴ While the button at first glance seems small, simple, and truly ephemeral, it is loaded with poignant meaning through the words it carries, as well as the events and people associated with them. This meaning is carried on both a personal and political level, as is so often the case with those effected by AIDS.

The button’s place in this archive amplifies its poignant meaning through its relationship with the objects around it, all of which take on heightened importance in the context of queer activism by the fact that they have been deemed worthy of preserving. In *Ordinary Lesbians*, Ann Cvetkovich describes the value that can be found in archiving ordinary lesbian lives, elaborating that their place in the archive highlights the extraordinary in the ordinary.⁵

This button certainly indicates that this is true of gay lives as well, or any life that falls under the LGBTQ+ umbrella. Cvetkovich writes “Ephemeral objects have that power – gesturing to affective meanings that are attached to objects but not fully present in them while also making immaterial ephemerality material.”⁶ The button does not explicitly represent the emotional weight of losing someone to AIDS, but it does hold the grief felt by those who were close to Nichols, someone who led a relatively “ordinary” life that was cut short by AIDS. It also holds some of the weight and grief of emotional meaning behind the quilt’s presence in the capital in 1996.

The “I’m voting in memory of_____” button exemplifies the way “the archive invites connections to the paper traces of love and passion... affirming the value of the archive of feeling that exceeds the historical record of an ordinary lesbian [or gay] life and its use for biographical information or documentation of facts.”⁷ In other words, an “archive of feeling” is one that contains not only historical information, but is also brimming with affect through the “ordinary,” personally meaningful objects that live in it.

This button’s presence here makes physical the realities of love and grief present in the personal and political realities of ordinary queer lives. These feelings remain present as they push and pull between the local and national level, between pleasure and death, and across temporalities past and present.

A Lavender Banner

Ashleigh Roth

This banner composed of purple synthetic material is a representation of the activism done by the newsletter *Lavender Letter*. The banner features sewn-on lavender lettering stating the organization's name and its goal, "preserving quality and dignity for our community." The banner is lined with gold trim enhancing its regality. *The Lavender Letter* was a monthly gay and lesbian newsletter that ran from 1981 to 1990 in Kentucky and southern Ohio.⁸ The newsletter covered art exhibitions, theatrical productions, bar scenes, and other local events significant to the queer community.



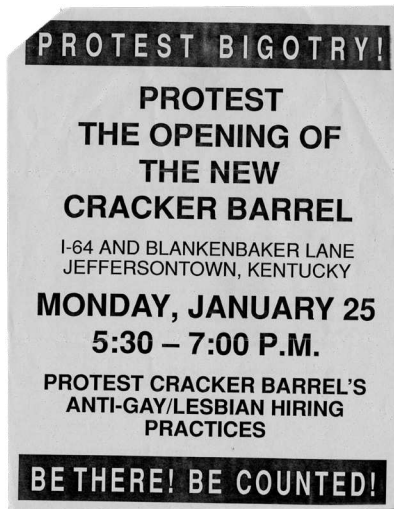
The Lavender Letter also had a strong involvement with the Metropolitan Community Church demonstrated by the attached button reading, "Ask me about MCC." Metropolitan Community Church, Louisville is part of a movement that aims to include people with different sexual orientations, gender identities, racial and ethnic backgrounds, spiritual histories, and traditions into the Christian faith.⁹

The Lavender Letter turned toward activism

in October 1981 with the headline "Rare Cancer seen in 41 Homosexuals." From that issue on, the newsletter focused on the AIDS epidemic and helping the community fight it. It provided such resources for AIDS patients and their loved ones as updated CDC guidelines, hotlines for AIDS information, and treatment centers.¹⁰ *The Lavender Letter* continued its activism outside of its publications as exemplified by this banner used to show their support in marches and protests. It was used in the March for Justice that started in response to city officials failing to meet the Greater Louisville Human Rights Coalition's demands to address discrimination against queer people in employment, housing, and public accommodations. The inaugural March for Justice was held in June 1987 and became an annual event.¹¹

The Lavender Letter provided for and fought for the queer community of Louisville. It was a queer publication that worked to dismantle what Sarah Ahmed calls an institutional wall: "An institutional wall is not an actual wall that exists in front of everyone. It is a wall that comes up because of who you are or what you are trying to do. Walls that are experienced as hard and tangible by some do not even exist for others. And this is how hammering, however exhausting, can become a tool."¹²

This banner serves as a physical reminder that *the Lavender Letter* hammered away at the walls that local government failed to address or even acknowledge. The newsletter's commitment to resource mobilization and community education on AIDS was essential in connecting individuals with the support and medical care they needed. Over time, the publication demonstrated a devotion to supporting and protecting vulnerable members of the queer community. *The Lavender Letter's* transformation from a cultural newsletter to an activist platform illustrates the power of grassroots organizing and community mobilization in addressing pressing social issues and advocating for marginalized communities.



The background of the image is a high-contrast, abstract pattern. It features thick, black, wavy lines that flow across the frame, creating a sense of movement and depth. Interspersed among these lines are numerous small, black, teardrop-shaped dots of varying sizes. The overall effect is reminiscent of a microscopic view of a textured surface or a stylized representation of a fingerprint.

INTIMACY

Wedding Snapshots

Erica V. P. Lewis

These photographs capture the wedding and subsequent “blessing party” of Kate Murphy and Willie McAnally on June 7, 1986, information annotated by David Williams on the back of each photograph he took. Kate and Willie were old friends of Williams, working together on the public access program, *All Together Now*, until 1988.¹³ As pictured here, they were married on a summer day in front of the fountain in St. James Court of Old Louisville. The other photographs, a series of sequential snapshots, function like a film reel or a photobooth print, capturing the evening following the wedding. The women’s faces cut from a joyful countenance to playful teasing before concluding with an embrace and a kiss.

These images not only document the special day for this couple, but they also emphasize a relatable moment of humanity through intimacy. At its core, intimacy foregrounds relational humanity, and these snapshots of posed levity and jovial embrace center queer joy instead of the hostile discrimination external to that joy. Though these photographs are primarily a document of a momentous occasion, they also directly address these stigmas and prejudices in their very existence *as resistance*. As personal images, they center the love and community of that day and that space without regard for oppressive systems outside of them. The photos focus on the exuberant care of shared celebration from those who matter most.

This wedding is a prime site for Judith Butler’s idea of interpellation, in which interpersonal performance, foremost including language, fosters social manifestations of both internal and external realities. Butler explains that authoritative speech functions as a discursive

performative act, such that those words become “statements which, in the uttering, also perform a certain action and exercise a binding power.”¹⁴ For instance, the phrase “I now pronounce you married” enacts the legal act that it describes when performed by someone ordained by the state.

Interpellation, in Butler’s terms, is an utterance performed with the binding power of law. However, due to the exclusionary laws of the time, a lesbian wedding could never be legally binding. Murphy and McAnally’s decision to perform this act outside of the authority of the state, not only challenges the state’s power to exclude them, but also subverts the legality of the exclusion through their own performative pronunciations of marriage. In doing so, they place the binding power of their commitment on the social dimension, valuing instead the interpersonal pronunciation of their marriage as ordained by their chosen community and by each other.



Gay marriage would not be legalized in Kentucky until 2015 with the passing of *Obergefell v. Hodges*; even still, these women gathered with loved ones to perform a wedding ceremony in the heart of Old Louisville, celebrating their love publicly under *their own* authority.

The legal citation and its consequential rights could not be invoked, but the social construction of marriage and the binding of lives functioned to not only subvert but also to refuse the illegality of their love and dedication to live a life in tandem.

Photo Album

Cassidy Meurer

40 years into collecting, David Williams has established a regional reputation for preserving the precious queer ephemera of Louisville's LGBTQ+ past. In 2019, an assisted living professional contacted Williams about a photo album gifted to him by one of his patients shortly before he passed away. The donor didn't recall the owner's name but remembered that this album was really important to him, that he "didn't want his family to have it."

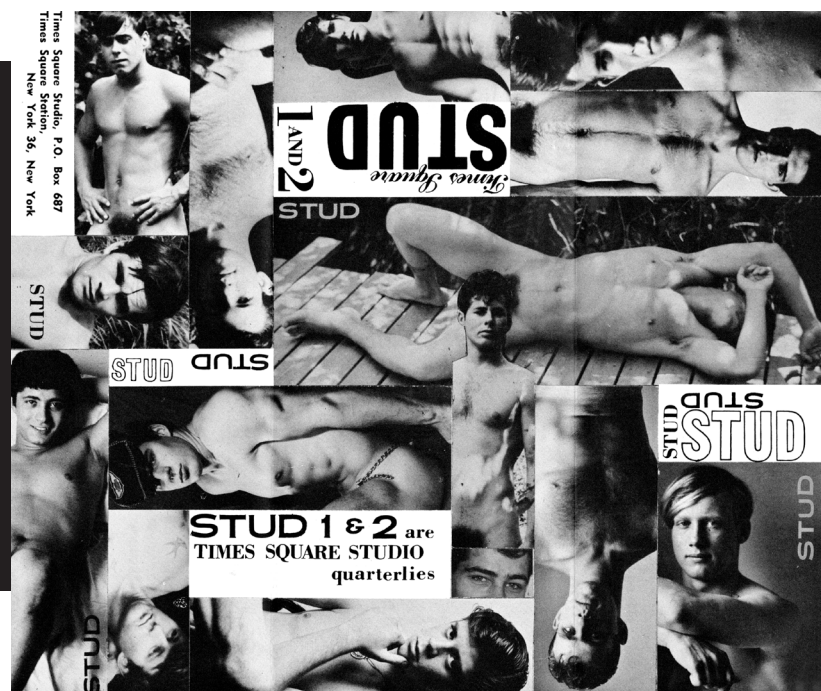
The album contained about a hundred photographs from the late 1950s and 1960s, and many of the images depicted men dressed in fabulous drag, almost always in the heavily curtained living room or basement of a single identifiable home. As glamorous starlets or campy debutantes, they appear posed and poised in a private world of their own making—free to express their kaleidoscope selves. None of the individuals within the photo album were identified—except for the single verso inscription "moi 1958,"—hinting towards a fear of being discovered, outed, echoing the owner's desire late in life to keep the album from falling into the wrong hands.

Compelled by the power of these images and their lack of description, Williams activated his network of queer historians, peers, performers, and scholars to painstakingly unlock the interwoven stories within this photo album. Through close analysis, Williams was able to identify the original owner and creator of the album as [REDACTED], a New England native who moved to Louisville ca. 1958, at age 21, after throwing a dart at a wall map of the United States. He worked as a hairdresser at [REDACTED] and lived on [REDACTED] in Old Louisville,

where many of these photographs might have been taken. After many false starts and dead ends, Williams identified nearly every individual within this album, providing biographical sketches and speculations on the lives of the men beyond the images. He transcribed his findings into a bound volume, documenting the ways in which a handful of queer lives intersected and diverged across the city of Louisville during a time when queerness could not be loudly or openly expressed. The photographs in this album represent a kind of queerness tied to its time, grounded in secrecy as a means to comfort and safety. The intimacy expressed by the men in the images translates to the intimate care David has paid to this photo album, preserved indefinitely within the archive.

Out of respect for the safety and privacy of the photo album's original owner and his descendants, we have redacted any identifying information from this essay and from the photographs. As this exhibition will permanently live on in varying forms beyond the temporary gallery show, there is a level of institutional responsibility to respect the wishes of those whose archival materials are on display. The invaluable research David has accumulated remains with the photographs, available upon request in the Archives & Special Collections research room. Make a visit to the archives to share further in this history and become a bearer of Louisville's queer past.





Not Yet / Always Been

A Research Reflection by Gray Koesters

This exhibition's title and theme draw upon the words of queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz. In the introduction to *Cruising Utopia*, Muñoz states, "Queerness is not yet here...queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future."¹⁵ Muñoz reframes queerness as a utopia worth striving toward by looking for moments of hope in the past to create a better, brighter future for queer people. What better way to do that than to look at tangible proof of queer life in the recent past as a means of envisioning what a queer utopia might look like.

Muñoz states, "We are not yet queer," meaning there is always more work to be done here in the present to imagine a safer, more accepting future.¹⁶ And yet, while a queer utopia as Muñoz envisions might not be here presently, we have simultaneously always been queer. This exhibition and the collection it draws from are physical evidence that, although sometimes hidden or overlooked, queerness has always been here—in Louisville and surrounding cities, in your neighborhood and backyard, maybe even in your closest friends. Through scenes of intimacy between lovers and friends, bar fliers welcoming home those without a family, newsletters keeping the community connected and entertained with message boards and comic strips, this archive maps the terrain of queer life in Louisville as an act of community care and an inspiration of hope. If queer people in Louisville and anywhere else could make complete lives for themselves full of love, joy, and interconnectedness several decades ago amidst the devastating AIDS epidemic and a not-so-accepting public, then so can we in the present.

By looking at the past for clues, we can learn how to best create a better future for ourselves, one where queerness is not only a utopian ideal just outside of reach, but one that is here and now and has room for everyone.

**We are not yet queer,
but we have also always been queer,
and we will continue to be queer
far into the future.**

This show and this archive are proof of that.



TERRAIN



Queer Locality

Jacob Grant

Photographs have long been utilized as portals into past lives, depicting individual moments amongst a myriad of political, social, and personal influences. The slide series *Gay History of Louisville, 1991*, taken by David Williams, is one of many photographic arrangements found in the Williams-Nichols archival collection. Each slide deliberately points out queer destinations, whether in current operation or long abandoned. Additionally, contextual labels provided by Williams explicate each location by reference to street approximation, and how the destinations functioned as a part of the gay community. It is relevant to note that up until 1992, gay sex was criminalized via Kentucky's sodomy statute of consensual sodomy. In overturning the statute in *Kentucky v. Wasson*, the Kentucky Supreme Court decriminalized consensual sodomy, reconstituting privacy for queer individuals.

By mapping the queer terrain of Louisville, the slide series offers a non-linear geographical history of queerness. Thus, the incognito and widespread cultural destinations of queerness are chameleons, engaging with their respective local cultures or blending into a heteronormative public. There's a lure to this, that queer destinations in the slide series dissolve into a fragmented network of queer-cultural integration. José Esteban Muñoz regards this phenomena as a negotiation of mainstream culture, in which queer individuals "subject a space to situate itself in history and thus seize social agency."¹⁷

Not all locations depicted in the slides are hidden, some exist as their own entities and pick out particularities of queerness. Slide 27 is labeled as "Steak and Eggs Restaurant: Fourth St. between

St. Catherine and Oak Long a hangout for gay men/lesbians, gay hustlers; Louisville, January 1991." While certain slides are explicitly attributed to a public queer domains, Slide 3 is labeled, "Third & Broadway, northeast corner. Former YMCA - popular with gay men..." The abandoned space functions as the component in which a queer space converges with a neutral or heterosexual one. Many of these spaces that incorporated gay sexuality, including cruising and hustler culture, operated under a camouflage and were not publicized as "gay." Slide 7 notes, "Fifth between Garland and Breckinridge, Former site of Windsor Hotel, with notorious men's baths (1960's and maybe earlier)." Spaces depicted in the named slides aren't authentically "straight," as the presence of queer people in these certain heteronormative territories are fraught with the intention that the authentic "straight" is merely a product of territorialization.

Engaging with queer geographies through David Williams' impassioned slideshow documentation, challenges the viewer to experience the complex and hybrid way that identity becomes spatialized. There is more to identity than identifying with one's culture, or standing against it. Queer terrain implies that there is a constant and mutable negotiation between Self and Other, wherein "straight" space becomes pregnant with and altered by the possibilities of queer presence. No location has its own essence, rather they are curated as destinations for identity performance. The queer terrain is illustrative of the transient nature of queer existence— the territorialization of certain bars, park boundaries, hotels, and gyms afforded queer people the ability to access performances of their identity. Social experiences are free-floating and disembodied fragments of society, no particular space or object is homogenized. The *Gay History of Louisville, 1991* series illuminates the notion that queer spatialities do exist; It is possible to live queer lives.

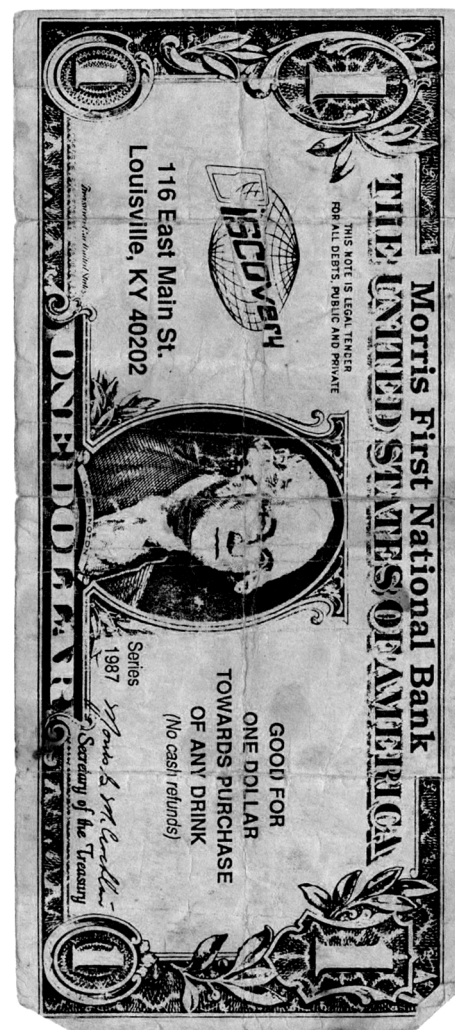
Drinks at Discovery

Candyce Sturgeon

This Discovery drink ticket from 1987 offered one free drink to anyone who holding it. The ticket is bold and eye catching, coated in hot pink and boasting the Discovery logo. Morris McCrocklin, the owner, signed the bottom right corner of this ticket, positioned as Secretary of Treasury. Discovery was a gay bar that opened sometime in the early 1980s, located at 116 E Main Street. The bar was mostly frequented by gay men, but anyone was welcome.

Before Discovery existed, there was Badlands Territory, a dance bar with locations in both Cincinnati and Louisville.¹⁸ The Louisville branch was managed by McCrocklin, who ultimately purchased the bar and renamed it Discovery. George Tannehill, a former DJ at Discovery, recalls the welcoming atmosphere of both Badlands Territory and Discovery. In a Facebook message he related, “I came out pretty much right out of high school, so the Spring/Summer of ’75. Badlands was a great place to feel welcome and comfortable. It’s difficult to talk about Discovery without talking about the Badlands, since they were the same bar.”¹⁹ Discovery was diagonally located from another gay bar, The New Downtowner, a reiteration of The Downtowner that burned under mysterious circumstances in 1974. In describing The New Downtowner George wrote: “That was a dance bar and a drag bar that offered GREAT drag shows. Patrons would often go from one club to the other.”²⁰ Unfortunately, Discovery closed amid the AIDS epidemic, most likely as a direct result of it.

While researching Discovery, I found there was a gap in the literature regarding information about gay bars in Louisville.



This was surprising as there has been a concentrated effort to historicize these now closed bars. As a result, I took an untraditional path with my research. I came across a Facebook group named Badlands/Discovery/Downtowner. It consists of 468 members who are “...a non-exclusive group celebrating our memories of the earlier days at Badlands Territory/Discovery, the Downtowner (New & Old), The Julep Lounge, Harlows, Octaves, etc.”²¹ Through this group I met George, who shared with me his firsthand accounts of Louisville’s former gay bar scene.

These interactions provided valuable

insights into a largely undocumented part of Louisville’s queer past. From the Badlands/Discovery/Downtowner Facebook group, an informal oral history emerges that further highlights the Discovery drink ticket as an archival marker of Louisville’s queer terrain, contributing to our project of inspiring hope for a queer future.

Tryangles T-Shirt

Gray Koesters



There are few other artifacts that are as tangible in their proof of queer existence than the humble t-shirt. This shirt, from 2003, features the logo for Tryangles, a local gay bar that closed in 2021.²² Belonging to Frankfort, Kentucky resident Tom Lewis, the printed label

stapled to the shirt, likely put there by archivist David Williams, indicates that Tryangles was Lewis's favorite bar.

The shirt features a black and white illustration of a shirtless man in a cowboy hat with a textured triangle surrounding him. "Tryangles," designed in a rope-like font, arches over the figure while "Louisville, KY" is printed underneath. A light brown stain can be seen to the right of the illustration, a small bit of wear and tear that adds to the shirt's personal nature.

Tryangles was first opened on South Preston Street in the early '90's by Mike Flatt.²³ With its western-themed décor, Tryangles was not only unique but quickly became a safe haven for queer Louisvillians during a time when heteronormative bars weren't as welcome to the gay community. According to a *Courier Journal* article reflecting on the bar's history, the owner "tried to build a culture of love and acceptance for people, who often, never felt it anywhere else."²⁴ It's easy to see why the original owner of this shirt, Tom Lewis, loved Tryangles so much.

T-shirts aren't often seen as conventional archival artifacts; however, they frequently appear in LGBTQ+ archives, due to their "serving as a record of political organizing and the cultural politics of visibility,"²⁵ as explained by Ann Cvetkovich in her essay "Artists in the Archives." Cvetkovich speaks of how the t-shirts themselves and the physical act of preserving them help queer the archive by "making space for idiosyncratic collections and different kinds of material ephemera."²⁶ Compared to the many paper materials displayed in this exhibition, this t-shirt emanates a tactile, transportive nature. Someone—Tom Lewis presumably—wore this shirt enough times that the crisp white collar has yellowed. It's been lived in, as evidenced by the stain. It is a portal to a partially hidden local queer utopia, highlighting an important period of community care. Few other archival materials emit such a distinctly human quality.

This t-shirt is also a declaration of queerness. Not everyone would have known of Tryangles during the time this shirt was worn in public, but those that did likely would have clocked it, its wearer, and their meaning. By wearing this shirt, one would be able to reclaim the body as a queer space during a time and place where queer bodies were/are violated or separated from their queerness due to forcible invisibility.

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PERFORMANCE

The Drag Scene

Hope Arnett

These vibrant, candid photographs capture highlights of the growing Louisville drag scene that continuously expanded throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Local hotspots such as The Connection, which—as local journalist Sarah Wagner reports—“opened in 1988 and quickly became one of Louisville’s biggest and most popular gay clubs,” acted as home base for many of these performers, which found their fame in a locally curated community that fully embraced this new creative outlet.²⁷ The 1997 Entertainer of the Year Pageant is well documented within this collection, placing emphasis on the finalists that gained the admiration of judges and audiences alike. Dressed in bright colors and expressive makeup, these performers boldly express their rejection of gender stereotypes through their drag performances becoming symbols of a new era.



Drag utilizes obvious visual representations of femininity as a counterstatement that amplifies the act of queer resistance in a performance-based setting. These exciting displays, paired with such pageants as Mr. Gay America, act as emphatic oppositions to the rigorous expectations of traditional pageant culture, which glorifies femininity as the pinnacle of desire. As we navigate a nation that continuously attempts to legislate against queer and trans



identities, it becomes increasingly important to recognize earlier examples of public displays that openly challenged the norm. Early figures like Logan Carter—an openly queer drag performer that often performed under the alias Roxanne Russell—amplified androgyny and gave this type of creative experimentation with identity a larger platform. They were paramount in

breaking down barriers set by centuries of gendered assumptions.

The presence of Logan Carter in Louisville’s early drag scene mirrors the establishment of drag scenes in larger cities such as New York, fronted by performers such as Stephen Varble. Varble’s story, though—much like Carter’s story—has been overwhelmingly censored and repressed in the decades since his prime. As scholar David J. Getsy points out, “[Varble’s] anti-institutional attitude became an obstacle to his being incorporated into histories of art and performance, and little has been written about him since the 1970s.”²⁸ This indicates the deep, historical stigma that surrounds queer performance, and mirrors the exact same form of oppression that the queer community faces today. In the United States, we have seen hundreds of pieces of legislation introduced that threaten the rights, history, and the very existence of the queer community. While this threat is incredibly real and urgent, it remains true that the queer community cannot be banned out of existence – we have always been here, and will always be.

Yer Girlfriend

Cassidy Meurer

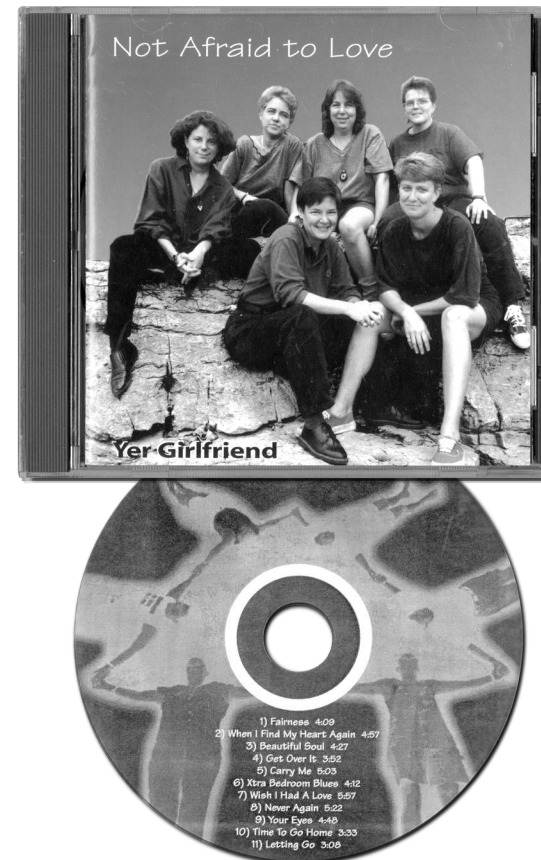
A letter written by Laura Shine in 1989 expresses her gratitude to her fellow Yer Girlfriend bandmates: “I’ve had so many people tell me what a ‘spiritual’ boost they get after watching us. They feel better about being lesbian or stronger against a heterosexual world... I think Yer Girlfriend’s a fucking miracle!”²⁹

1989 was just a year into this local lesbian folk band’s career. They dropped their final album *Not Afraid to Love* in 1995, but continued to engage in queer performance and politics through the new millennium. They garnered national support for their positive, uplifting, and socially minded tunes, performing at women’s music festivals from Michigan to Florida. Locally, members of the band were intimately involved in the queer community. Band member Carol Kraemer began serving as the organizational manager of the Fairness Campaign in 1996, around the same time that Laura Shine got her spot as the flagship DJ on Louisville’s new public radio station, WFPK.

Kraemer is credited with writing the first song on the 1995 album “Take Another Step.” It begins with the lyrics: “A stairway lies before us / Leading to the land of the free / It may be all around us / But no one seems to have the key / So take another step / One at a time.”³⁰ These lyrics recall José Esteban Muñoz’s introduction to his book *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*: “Queerness is not here yet. Queerness is an ideality... We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality.”³¹ This conception of queerness as “the land of the free” is tied into the Fairness Campaign’s

continual striving for protections against discrimination in Louisville throughout the 90s amid constant setbacks and rejections.

“The land of the free” appears in the United States National Anthem, but Kraemer argues that we’re not actually there yet, recognizing all the ways in which that promise is unfulfilled. She also implies the necessity for collective power, indicating that “no one” [emphasis added] has the key to the land of the free. Yer Girlfriend’s music became a calling cry and an emotional outlet for the queer community in Louisville at a crucial point in time.



Yer Girlfriend Members:

Patty O. Veranda
Flute & Keyboard

Phyllis Free
*Drums
& Percussion*

Janet Frank
Sound Engineer

Carol Kraemer
*Lead Vocals
& Acoustic Guitar*

Laura Shine
*Lead Vocals
& Guitar*

Kathy Weisbach
*Bass Guitar
& Banjo*

A Rubber Vest

Vincent Young

This rubber vest serves as a commemorative item of clothing from the 1999 *Mr. International Rubber* event, with a yellow logo displayed on the back. The exact usage of the vest is unknown, though photos suggest that title-holders got sashes, meaning this vest was likely for runners up or from another part of the event.



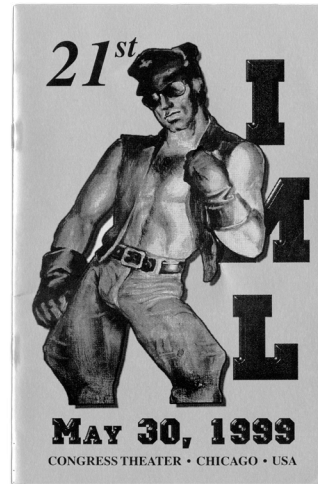
Rubber and leather contests have a long history for the queer community. *Mr. International Rubber* (now named MIR) was established in 1997, but the leather equivalent event—*International Mr. Leather*—was established in 1979. Before the major fetish conventions, however, rubber fetishes have been reported on as early as the 1920s.³² MIR is held in Chicago every year. In 1999, the event was won by Thomas Smith who was Mr. Kentucky Leather in 1997 and a well-known member of both the Kentucky and international kink communities. Winning the contest is not just about looking good in rubber—it also focuses on rewarding people who have done good in the community and are seen as a positive representative for rubber culture.

The latex community and leather communities would have significant overlap, particularly as it relates to the queer community.

Leather in particular is used as a shorthand for a variety of experiences, including rubber, S&M practices, and other types of non-normative sexuality.³³ Both are communities based around fetish-wear and fetish-participation, building a style of self-expression around these fetishes.

The tie between fetish and queer experience makes some uncomfortable—there is, of course, the dogged stereotype of the hypersexual, often predatory person that seems to stick to queer people. However, the fetish community is one that is a fundamentally anti-assimilationist project for queer people. In Andy Campbell's *Bound Together*, in discussing the importance of the existence of an archive of leather-sexuality, states that “I seek nothing less than to challenge, and potentially unseat, the orthodoxies of writing, structuring, and historicizing communities and artists that have heretofore been ignored, erased, destroyed, and decimated by the vagaries of discipline, illness, and a sex-negative society...”³⁴ In displaying this vest, we too hope to challenge the dichotomy of the intimate and the kinky, and display this as not just an object of sexual fetish (though this, too, is important to the object) but one that represents a history of community building and organization. One that embodies a queerness that denies comfortability for a mainstream cis heterosexual audience.

In discussing the archive with its founder, David Williams, he told us a story of being a queer child in a closed-off world, devouring any piece of knowledge of his existence. These reminders that queer people are here, have always been here, and will continue to be here, are important to any queer person struggling with their footing in a world that denies us our existence. A rubber vest is a tangible marker of existence, that queerness in all forms has always existed. Not just the sanitized, not just the chaste kisses on the TV screen, not just the desexualized, but the totality of queer experience, sex and all.



VOICES



The Letter

Jonathan Judd

Founded by Jeffrey Goldsmith and Humphrey Marshall in 1990 to “serve the gay and lesbian community statewide,” *The Letter* took over from an earlier newsletter called *The Lavender Letter*.³⁵ David Williams took over as editor of the Louisville-centric, LGBT newspaper in the second half of the 90s after writing for the publication during its first four years. A paper trail of handwritten letters, digital correspondence and other documents to and from Williams concerning *The Letter*, run throughout the archive demonstrating the integral role the periodical played for the community it served. Across its pages, we find evidence of the overlapping social, cultural and political lives of queer Louisville. The fight for LGBT rights that culminated in the Fairness Campaign during the 90s found voice in *The Letter*, but always woven together with cultural content, advertising and editorials.

An example of this social and cultural weave is activist Marie Jenkins’ 1995 draft for a report declaratively titled “Stonewall Needs YOU!” The report explores concerns over diversity in representation and recognition of service in Gays and Lesbians for Equality (GLUE). Narrating her own misgivings, she acknowledges the tensions involved in community activism and organizing. Listing the multiple factors that committee members consider in presenting awards for service, she diplomatically points to the idea that all acts of service are ultimately ways that both “individuals and groups enrich the life of the community.”³⁶

In *Cruising Utopia*, José Esteban Muñoz discusses the dynamic between the individual and the collective in thinking queer poli-

tics. He highlights the differences between an “abstract utopia” of critique and a “concrete utopia” of future possibilities rooted in the present. Championing the latter, he argues that critique of the status quo can only take us so far towards change, we must be able to feel our way towards “the worlds proposed and promised by queerness,” glimpsing them in aesthetic experience. Jenkins’ report at the level of critique contributes to engendering a “potentially transformative political imagination.”³⁷ However, we can point to the inaugural edition of *The Letter* to propose a more immersive and tactile experience of the queer community’s always-evolving story in flipping through its pages, discovering the editorial logic of its layout and the collaborative project it exhibits. *The Letter* was a queer field-guide but also a tool kit, it was a space for grievance, celebration, mourning and laughter, so it is in the experience of handling it and turning through its diverse content that we find the feeling of a community.

Put together with the grassroots tech. of the 90s, the zine style letter stock is folded and formatted by cutting and pasting articles, ad copy, headers, etc. onto a page before xeroxing it. The date of the first issue is typed onto graph paper and affixed to the front page, June 23-30, 1990, with a large “Louisville Pride Week 90” logo printed above. Originally titled *The Letterhead*, this piece marks an early moment when the periodical was first “Kentucky’s Gay Newspaper” before it quickly became gay and lesbian and finally in 1997, Kentucky’s LGBT newspaper.

The back cover entices the reader to watch this space with a list of things to come forecasting expanding parameters for representation: an interview with an all-female, lesbian folk-rock band; a look at the hate crimes bill effecting the entire LGBT community. The last word is a promise for growth across Kentucky and a note on the desire to have this space in print.^{##} A site, we can say, via Muñoz, for glimpsing a “queer futurity” of diversity, equity and inclusion.

ARTSWATCH

Xander Jarvis

ARTSWATCH was a local artist collective focused on highlighting the contemporary avant-garde scene, based in a gallery in the Clifton neighborhood of Louisville from the late 80's to the early 2000's—although an exact timeline is difficult to pin down. While ARTSWATCH was not explicitly queer, its orientation towards local, contemporary avant-garde art and artists led to many collaborations with queer artists and organizations that fell under a similar umbrella. Using their platform, they hosted exhibits highlighting queer artists, worked with local activist organizations like Gays and Lesbians United for Equality (G.L.U.E.), and raised money for AIDS-related activist causes and support groups. As a hub for Louisville Underground culture, they supported many queer performers like the iconic lesbian folk-punk band Yer Girlfriend.³⁸ ARTSWATCH's commitment to supporting queer artists led them to controversy several times.

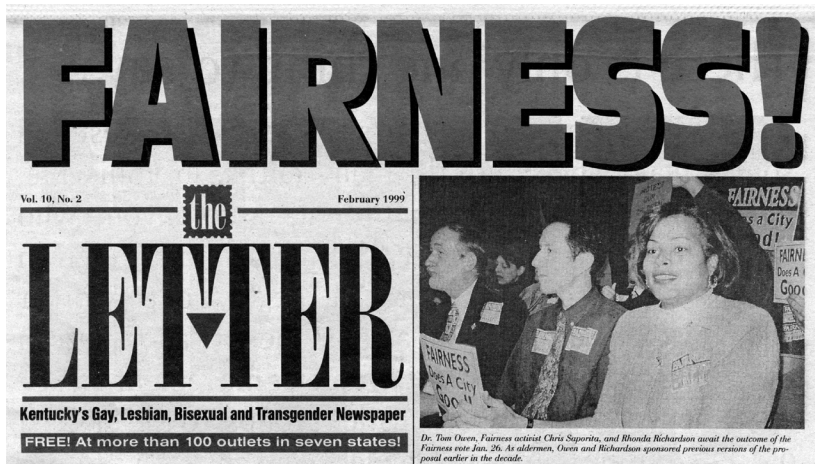
One notable example involved an exhibition organized in conjunction with G.L.U.E. for Pride Week 1990 that led to a complaint being lodged with the City of Louisville, demanding that the gallery required



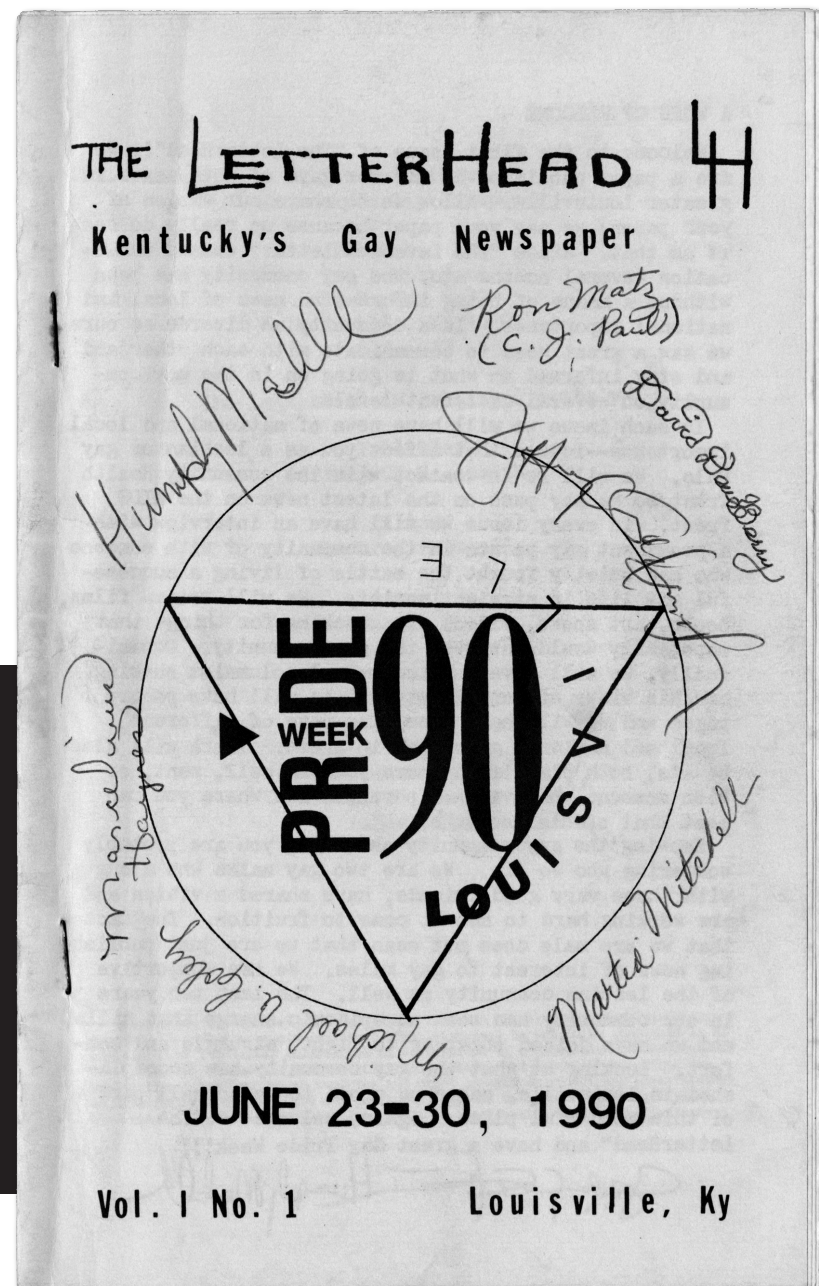
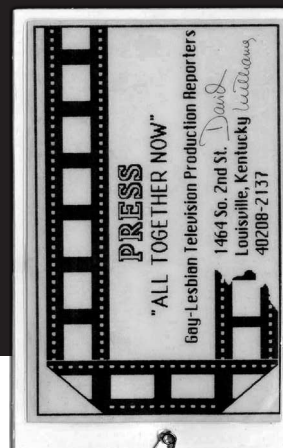
an adult entertainment license to exhibit the work on display—a complaint that rings strikingly similar to recent restrictions on drag performance that have arisen around the country. In this particular instance, the gallery was forced to move ‘explicit’ work away from street view but did not waiver in their support for their queer artists, earning them a column of praise written by David Williams in *The Letter*, Louisville's gay, lesbian, and transgender newsletter.³⁹

Nearly two decades after they closed their doors, much of the information about the organization that has survived is found in the correspondence they sent to their members, which Williams has preserved within his archive. This correspondence takes the form of advertisements for exhibitions and events, but also contains memos and newsletters, revealing the organization's secondary function. These memos and newsletters did not just inform members of the goings-on of ARTSWATCH but contained columns from contributors that discussed art world news on the local and national level. Through this correspondence, ARTSWATCH fostered a wider network of politically active members, mobilizing and garnering support at the local level for national issues, as seen in their heavy coverage of Karen Finley's struggle with the NEA after it restricted the grant access of artists engaged with the AIDS crisis.⁴⁰

Williams's impulse to keep ARTSWATCH's newsletters, advertisements and other correspondence is indicative of a queer fondness for ephemera and an impulse to make queer identity more tangible or concrete. They may have seen life tacked up on a bedroom wall or clipped to a refrigerator door as art—much like they are displayed in the gallery now—despite their likelihood to be deemed trash by the average person. Now they reside in Special Collections, lovingly tucked away into manilla folders so that they can declare the existence of queer artistic underground culture in Louisville long after the end of ARTSWATCH.



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Hope & Queer Futurity

A Research Reflection by Sarah Melloy

This archival collection contains a plentitude of likely and unlikely objects that represent and generate “queer utopia” through their affective charge. One can feel a glimmer of hope as they thumb through the collection’s copious amounts of newspaper clippings with the words “gay” or “lesbian” or “drag queen” penciled on the top, evidence that David Williams recognized queerness in the quotidian object of a newspaper and recognized this representation as important enough to be preserved. Glimmers of hope appear in the affective charge of personal belongings; t-shirts, buttons, photo-albums. These are all “ordinary” objects that, through their inclusion in this archive, have become extraordinary. They have become artifacts shooting towards a queer utopian future in that they make up their own queer utopian world, a sort of sparkling Oz that has always existed alongside ours. In this archive, unsuspectingly sitting beneath the campus library, queer utopia is vibrant, alive, and glittering with queer archival dust.

This archive, remarkable due to its size and breadth of content, offers us glimpses of a world in which belonging, intimacy, safety, and connection are experienced in abundance by queer people. The abundance of these feelings is what José Esteban Muñoz calls “queer utopia,” a place, a feeling, or a social structure that has both always been here (in glimmers) but has not yet arrived completely.⁴¹ As a queer-identifying person, navigating the normative world often feels confusing, daunting, and sometimes unsafe. It is an experience that pushes me, and maybe you, into a constant search for expressions of queerness in others among an often-blank sea of normativity.

Part of the reason queer utopia has always existed but is not yet here is that the term queer itself refuses to be contained in one easy definition.

What are we looking for, reaching for, when we’re trying to anchor ourselves to the safety and belonging of queer utopia?

In “Queer and Now,” Eve Sedgwick explains how the term “queer” comes in when the way one’s self-expression or expression of desire does not fit neatly into a tidy category of difference. She writes that “queer” can refer to “possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone’s gender, of anyone’s sexuality aren’t made (or can’t be made) to signify monolithically.”⁴² Searching for “queer” means searching for meaning beyond meaning. It is searching beyond monolithic signification in order to recognize work done in the past that may not explicitly signify as “queer” today. We search for “queer” to build a better present and future. This is a daunting task, but an exciting, hopeful, and necessary one. Using queer in this way is a re-tooling of a charged term originally used as harmful slur; one “fraught with so many social and personal histories of exclusion, violence, defiance, and excitement.”⁴³ As much as the term queer is reclaimed, retooled, it never fully loses the shameful burden of its origin. This is why queer utopia is and might always be “not yet” here. However, connecting across this fraught term and empathizing with others past and present that experience this tension generates hope. The Williams-Nichols Collection is an exceptional example of a generative well for a hopeful queer futurity.

¹ Cecilia Durbin, “‘We Were Always Here’: Unconverging and Preserving the LGBTQ+ Experience through the Williams-Nichols Collection,” *University of Louisville Library News* (2024). <https://uofllibraries.wordpress.com/2024/04/16/we-were-always-here-uncovering-and-preserving-the-lgbtq-experience-through-the-williams-nichols-collection/>

² Sara Ahmed, “An Affinity of Hammers,” *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 3, no. 1-2 (2016): 32.

³ Ahmed, An Affinity, 33.

⁴ National Aids Memorial, “The History of the Quilt,” <https://www.aidsmemorial.org/quilt-history>; David W. Dunlap, “AIDS Quilt of Grief on Capital Mall,” *New York Times*, October 13, 1996, <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1996/10/13/789330.html?pageNumber=22>.

⁵ Ann Cvetkovich, “Ordinary Lesbians and Special Collections: The June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives at UCLA,” in *Turning Archival: The Life of the Historical in Queer Studies*, 2022, 123-126.

⁶ Cvetkovich, Ordinary Lesbians, 116.

⁷ Cvetkovich, 129.

⁸ Emma Rose Johansen, “Land Lines Modes of Communication in Kentucky’s Queer Past and Present,” (Honors Thesis, University of Louisville, 2021): 32-33.

⁹ “Welcome to Our Church!,”

Metropolitan Community Church of Louisville, 2023, <https://www.louisvillemcc.org>.

¹⁰ Johansen, Land Lines, 33.

¹¹ Eileen Griseowens, Jeff Vessels, and Larry W. Owens, “Organizing for Change: One City’s Journey Toward Justice,” *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services* 16, no. 3-4 (2004): 3-4.



¹² Ibid.

¹³ Johansen, 45.

¹⁴ Judith Butler, “Critically Queer,” *GLQ* (1993): 17-32.

¹⁵ Muñoz, José Esteban, “Introduction: Feeling Utopia,” in *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York University Press, 2009): 1

¹⁶ Muñoz, Introduction, 1.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ George Tannehill (@George Tannehill), “Badlands/Discovery/Downtowner,” Facebook Message, April 23, 2024, https://www.facebook.com/groups/538420446203770/notif_id=1713838767313374¬if_t=group_r2j_approved&ref=notif.

¹⁹ Tannehill, Facebook message to author.

²⁰ Lilly, Alexia, and Clio. “The Downtowner (1954-1974),” *Clio: Your Guide to History*, March 10, 2019, <https://theclio.com/entry/76446>.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Maggie Menderski, “‘I Wanted People to Have Fun.’ After 27 Years, Louisville Says Farewell to Iconic Gay Bar,” *Louisville Courier Journal*, June 24, 2021.

²³ Menderski, Farewell to Iconic Gay Bar.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ann Cvetkovich, “Artists in the Archives: Ulrike Müller’s *Herstory Inventory* and the Lesbian Herstory Archives,” *GLQ* 29, no. 2 (April 2023): 188.

²⁶ Cvetkovich, “Artists in the Archives,” 188.

²⁷ Sara Wagner, “The Connection Closes Its Doors with One Last Dance | Whas11.Com,” *WHAS11*, 2016, www.whas11.com/article/news/local/the-connection-closes-its-doors-with-one-last-dance/417-289913593.



²⁸ David J. Getsy, “Rubbish and Dreams: The Genderqueer Performance Art of Stephen Varble,” *The Archive: The News Publication of the Leslie-Lohman Gay Art Foundation* (2017): 7.

²⁹ Laura Shine, Letter to Yer Girlfriend, May 26, 1989, Yer Girlfriend Collection, 2019_135, Box 1, YerGirlfriend_01, Research Photos, Group 1, UofL Archives & Special Collections Research.

³⁰ Muñoz, Introduction, 1.

³¹ *L-Word Spoken Here*, Yer Girlfriend album art mockup, Williams-Nichols Collection, Box 1, IMG_1620, Research Photos, Group 1, UofL Archives & Special Collections Research.

³² Cassidy George, “From Fetish to Fashion: The Rise of Latex,” *BBC Culture*, February 24, 2022, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/culture/article/20200108-from-fetish-to-fashion-the-rise-of-latex>.

³³ Andy Campbell, *Bound Together: Leather, Sex, Archives, and Contemporary Art*, Manchester University Press, 2020, 9.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Johansen, 38-41.

³⁶ Marie Jenkins, “Stonewall Needs YOU,” Folder: Louisville Pride Week – 1995, Williams-Nichols Collection, UofL Archives & Special Collections, 1.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ ARTSWATCH November 1990 Newsletter, Williams-Nichols Collection, UofL Archives and Special Collections.

³⁹ David Williams, “ARTSWATCH Faces Financial Crisis” (submitted to *The Letter*), Williams-Nichols Collection, UofL Archives and Special Collections.

⁴⁰ ARTSWATCH September/October 1990 Newsletter, Williams-Nichols Collection, UofL Archives and Special Collections.

⁴¹ Muñoz, ix-xiv.

⁴² Eve Sedgwick, “Queer and Now,” *Tendencies* (Routledge, 1994), 8.

⁴³ Eve Sedgwick, *Queer and Now*, 9.



FIRE

Cover. Silkscreen Print by EVPL. 2024.

Endpapers. Digital Collage by Cassidy Meurer. 2024.

**All objects below are from the Williams-Nichols Collection in Archives & Special Collections unless otherwise specified.*

p. 04. ‘Cutting the Cake’, December 14, 1991, photograph, from David Williams and Norman Nichols Wedding Ceremony and Celebration.

p. 04. ‘Cutting the Cake’, verso (back) side.

p. 05. ‘Exchanging of Rings’, Williams-Nichols Wedding.

p. 07. ‘LaDonna Murphy, Romer v. Evans Victory Rally, Louisville City Hall’, David Williams, May 21, 1996, photograph.

p. 09. ‘Drag on the Chaise Lounge’, ca. 1950s-1960s, photograph, from [redacted] album.

p. 10. ‘Lambda Otter Creek Picnic’, Ken Buck, May 16, 1982, original promo. poster print.

p. 16. ‘I’m Voting in Memory of Norman Nichols’, 1996, button, from Quilt in the Capital (an AIDS Memorial

Quilt event), Washington, D.C.

p. 18. ‘Lavender Letter Banner’, 1996, embellished fabric banner with misc. buttons, carried by Pam Frisk (Lavender Letter editor, 1981-1990) in the March for Justice.

p. 20 (Top Left). ‘Protest Cracker Barrels Anti-Gay Lesbian Hiring Practices’, January 25, 1993, protest flyer, printer paper.

p. 20 (Top Right). ‘Pat Hussain of Southerners on New Ground (SONG), Romer v. Evans Victory Rally, Louisville City Hall’, David Williams, May 21, 1996, photograph.

p. 20 (Bottom). ‘Lisa Doyle and Carla Wallace, Silent Protest Following the Defeat of END, Louisville City Hall’, David Williams, March 28, 1995, photograph.



- p. 21 (Bottom). '5th Louisville AIDS Walk (across Clark Memorial Bridge)', David Williams, September 28, 1997, photograph.
- p. 25. 'Exchanging Vows at St James fountain,' David Williams, June 7, 1986, photograph, from Kate Murphy and Willie McNally Wedding Ceremony and Blessing Party.
- p. 27. 'Two Drag Vocalists', ca. 1950s-1960s, photograph, from the [redacted] album.
- p. 28 (Top). 'Just A Kiss', ca. 1990s, T-shirt, Lisa Gunterman collection.
- p. 28 (Bottom). 'Stud 1 & Stud 2 Adverts', July 1, 1968, print advertising, from Times Square Studio Promotional Materials.
- p. 29 (Left). 'Candid Shots', selected photos from the Murphie and McNally Blessing Party.
- p. 29 (Top and Bottom Right). 'Playful and Formal', selected photos from the [redacted] album.
- p. 31. 'Milton Carpentier Gives the Rainbow Flag a New Use', David Williams, April 13, 1996, photograph, from Anti-KKK Protest, Jefferson Square, Louisville.
- p. 37. 'Discovery Drink Ticket', Morris McCrocklin, 1986, paper ticket.
- p. 38. 'Tryangles T-Shirt (with stain)', donated by the estate of Tom Lewis, 2003.
- p. 40 'Queer Business and Bar Ephemera', including Trixies (Hide & Seek) Bar and Music Venue Flyer (ca. 1990), and Kentuckiana Gay Yellow Pages (2002).
- p. 41 (Top). 'Gay History of Louisville Slide Collection', David Williams, 1991, selected slides.
- p. 44. 'Unkown Performer, Entertainer of the Year Pageant, The Connection', David Williams, August 17, 1997, photograph.



- p. 45. 'Audience Member with LaToya Bacall' (Entertainer of the Year), David Williams, August 17, 1997, Photograph.
- p. 47. 'Not Afraid to Love Album Art', Yer Girlfriend, 1995, Esther Records, front cover and CD view.



- p. 48. 'Mr. International Rubber 1999', Rubber Vest, worn by Thomas Smith.



- p. 50 (Top Left). 'Sunday Funday + Open Stage Hosted by Leah Halston', Play – Louisville, 1996, paper flyer.
- p. 50 (Top Right). '21st International Mr. Leather Brochure', 1997, brochure booklet, front cover.
- p. 50 (Bottom). 'Yer Girlfriend Live! On Stage during Pride Week 1989', Laura Shine Yer Girlfriend Photo Album, ca. 1989.
- p. 51 (Top). 'Tom Smith (Mr. Kentucky Leather, 1997) and Gary Hase (President, Bluegrass COLT) at Tryangles Bar', Darrell Robinson, May 1997, photograph.
- P. 51 (Bottom Left). 'Mahogony, performing at the Barony of Louisville Christmas Show at Score (gay bar), Dec. 1998, David Williams, photograph.
- p. 51 (Bottom Right). 'Kelly Matthews, Entertainer at the Town Cafe (gay bar)', David Williams, July 1997, photograph.
- p. 56. Controversial show at ARTSWATCH, photograph by Joseph A. Garcia, June 18, 1990, Barry Bingham Jr. Courier-Journal Photograph Collection, Archives & Special Collections.
- p. 58 (Top). 'The Letter: Kentucky's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Newspaper (front page, detail)', vol. 10, no. 2, ed. David Williams, Feb. 1999.
- p. 58 (Left). 'Original Promotional Teaser for The Letterhead', Jeffrey Goldsmith and Humphrey Marshall, ca. 1990, paper flyer.
- p. 58 (Middle Right). 'All Together Now', 1984, enamel button.
- p. 58 (Bottom Right). 'David Williams's All Together Now Press Badge', ca. 1986, paper badge in plastic sleeve.
- p. 59. 'The Letterhead: Kentucky's Gay Newspaper (front cover)', vol. 1, no. 1 (signed by contributors), June 1990, paper print.
- p. 62, p. 63, p. 64, p. 65, p. 66, p. 67. 'Misc. Protest & Lifestyle Buttons', ca. 1980s-1990s, assorted enamel and acrylic button pins.

**NOT
YET**

**ALWAYS
BEEN**