



October 21, 2008

## **INTRODUCTION TO LGBT HISTORY PACKET**

The creation of this history packet began with the staff at Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE) recognizing the lack of resources for teaching lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) history in high schools. Our experience preparing to bring the exhibition *Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933-1945* from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to Wisconsin in the fall of 2008 precipitated our interest in working with historians and teachers to create a resource to assist educators in making LGBT history more accessible to their students.

This packet is not all-inclusive of the wide array of people and events making up the rich LGBT histories in the geographies we cover, nor does it address LGBT world history beyond the United States, Germany and the early cultures that influenced what later became Germany. Here, we provide basic information about the following:

- **German LGBT History Timeline**
- **Study Guide for U.S. LGBT History Timeline**
- **U.S. LGBT History Timeline (11 ½ x 14 paper needed for this timeline only)**
- **Wisconsin LGBT Curricula and Timeline**

In whatever teaching opportunities you find to use this packet, we hope it will assist you in making LGBT history more visible. In so doing we believe that one outcome will be for all students' understanding of history to be enriched. We are also confident that another outcome will be for sexual minority students and children of same-sex parents to gain historical perspectives on discrimination they may experience, diminishing any sense of invisibility they have so that they may thrive more academically.

The packet begins with a German LGBT timeline from 98 to 2008. The second part includes a U.S. LGBT History timeline, biographies, a bibliography, lesson plans, and questions to stimulate discussion. The last section is on Wisconsin LGBT history and includes a timeline and lesson plans.

On behalf of the staff and board of Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools, thank you to the volunteers who used their expertise to help the staff create this history packet:

- **Pat Calchina**, high school Social Studies (U.S. History)/Women's History teacher at James Madison Memorial High School, Madison, for her work on the U.S. LGBT history section with the GSAFE staff.
- **Mary Mullen**, retired elementary school and high school teacher and published curriculum writer, for developing lesson plans for the U.S. and Wisconsin sections.
- **Jim Steakley**, UW-Madison German Dept., for creating a timeline of German LGBT history.
- **Richard Wagner**, Wisconsin historian and former chair of the Dane County Board of Supervisors, for creating a timeline of Wisconsin LGBT history.

We also thank the Public Broadcasting System and Eliza Byard, acting executive director of the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network, for the use of the U.S. LGBT history timeline developed by Eliza Byard and to which GSAFE staff made additions.

Finally, thank you for your interest in LGBT history and dedicated work as school professionals and as students of history.

Cindy Crane  
Executive Director

Brian Juchems  
Program Director

Tim Michael  
Program Assistant

**Note about the period of Nazi Persecutions and the Holocaust:** Along with homosexuals, the Nazis persecuted Poles and other Slavic peoples; political opponents--primarily Communists, Socialists, Social Democrats, and trade union leaders; writers and artists whose works they considered subversive; Catholic, Lutheran and other Christian church leaders who opposed Nazism, as well as thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to salute Adolf Hitler or to serve in the German army; and people with disabilities. See U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum website: [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

The word "Holocaust" is used to refer to the murder of Jews for whom the Nazis planned a systematic genocide in Europe (the word genocide itself developed after the Holocaust). "The Nazis frequently used euphemistic language to disguise the true nature of their crimes. They used the term "Final Solution" to refer to their plan to annihilate the Jewish people." (U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Website). Sybil Milton, who was a leading scholar of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust and a senior historian at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum until her death in 2000, maintained that Roma (formerly known as gypsies) were part of the Holocaust. Including Roma in the Holocaust is widely accepted today though still controversial in some circles. Other groups not included in what the Nazis called the "Final Solution" in their systemic plan to rid all of Europe of Jews and Roma, but who were placed in prisons and concentration camps and murdered by Nazi soldiers are referred to as "persecuted."

Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools  
301 S. Bedford St., Ste. 1  
Madison, WI 53703

Telephone: 608-661-4141  
Fax: 608-661-1360  
[www.gsaforsafeschools.org](http://www.gsaforsafeschools.org)