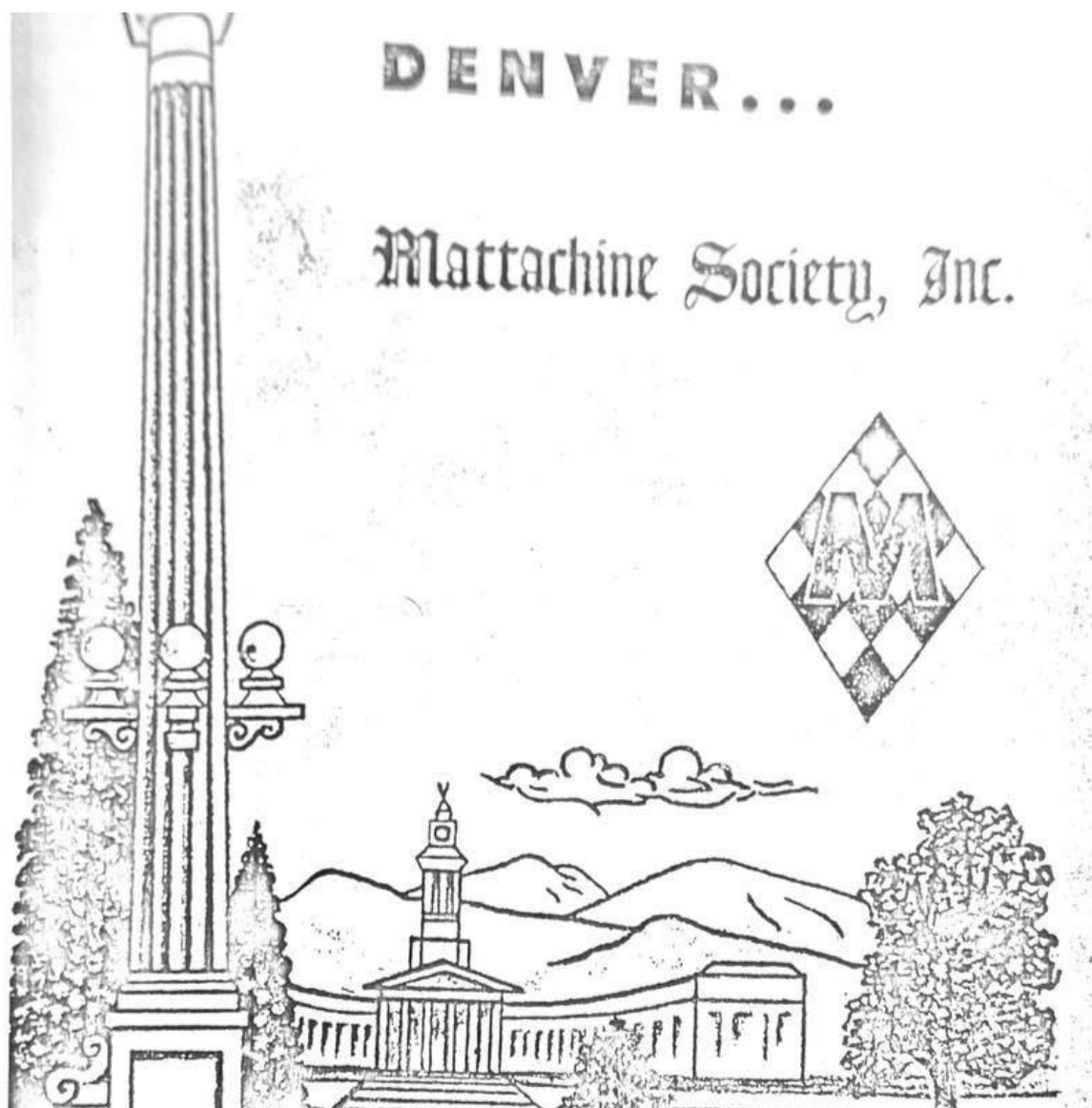


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The Queen City: Denver's Homophile Organizations from 1950-1970  
May 2020

This is an unpublished article.  
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<sup>1</sup> 1959 Newsletter Cover, Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July 1957-December, 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender,

Life in the United States prior to 1950 for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) individuals is unlike life today. LGBT individuals today can live without fear of arrest, harassment, or exposure for being who they are. Mid-twentieth century America did not provide a safe place for LGBT individuals to be themselves. Exposure for being a member of the LGBT community would lead to life changing events for individuals. The LGBT community feared arrest, and the police. Individuals could be arrested at a private gathering or party, in a gay bar, or soliciting sex in any location (including private homes).<sup>2</sup> If an individual was arrested on a “morals charge” their life changed. The “morals charge” is how the police department could quickly and easily arrest anyone they suspected of being homosexual. LGBT individuals faced social stigma, incarceration, commitment to mental institutions, losing jobs, and being ousted by family and friends.<sup>3</sup> Because of the vast consequences LGBT individuals faced if their identity was ever exposed, the need to keep their identity a secret was important. At the same time, LGBT individuals also wanted to find others like themselves and build a community where they could be their true self without fear.

The need to find like individuals led to the creation of Homophile Organizations around the United States in the 1950s. Starting on the coasts, and mainly in California, LGBT groups started to form, build community, and educate everyone that the LGBT community is as normal part of society, like any other group or person. Through the Archives of Sexuality and Gender digital access this paper seeks to explore two of the organizations founded as part of the

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<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGOJ983203277/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Douglas M. Charles. *Hoover's War on Gays: Exposing the FBI's "Sex Deviates" Program*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015, xi

<sup>3</sup> Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays*, xi

Homophile Movement in the United States. The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis. These organizations helped to shape the national narrative and helped to grow and develop LGBT individuals in other cities from New York, to Chicago to Denver. The purpose of this paper is to explore the national and local Denver community's history of the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis. An exploration of the purposes of the organizations, the organization's impact on the local LGBT Denver community, and the national attention both organizations brought forward with having their conventions in Denver in 1959 and 1968. I argue that Denver's LGBT community relied on these organizations for a foundation to build upon, and how these organizations helped the LGBT individuals of Denver find each other and educate others about the LGBT community.

### **Background**

Starting in the early 1950s, the homophile movement pushed for changes to US society. From 1950-1970 three main organizations: Mattachine Society, Daughters of Bilitis, and One, Inc were all created to help the movement and help members of the LGBT community. All three organizations originated in California with chapters and memberships around the United States. The Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis both formed national offices and opened chapters in major US cities, including Denver, Colorado.

US society was not education or accepting of the LGBT community in the 1950s and 1960s. The *Denver Post* published a series of articles about "Homosexuals in Denver" in February 1965 over a week, and an additional article about the Homosexuals in Denver was

published in October 1967.<sup>4</sup> These articles wrote a less than positive opinion about the homosexuals of Denver. For readers, the homosexual community in Denver presented a problem to society. These articles, along with collections at both History Colorado and Denver Public Library provide in-person opportunities to explore Colorado's LGBT past.<sup>5</sup> For this research and these organizations, the need to explore online archives is important. The Archives of Gender and Sexuality, accessed through the libraries of Auraria (University of Colorado Denver), University of Denver, and Colorado State University, helped to provide the majority of the documentation needed to help bring this history out of the archive and into the reader's hands.

### **Historiography**

The history and scholarship of the LGBT communities of Denver is limited. Scholarship about the history of the LGBT Denver community is primarily written in Ph.D. dissertations, several master's thesis, an undated draft of an article, and a peer-reviewed article published in a Social Science journal. The scholarship that is available about the LGBT community in Denver when focusing on the homophile movement is limited. To accurately examine the historiography of the homophile movement it is necessary to separate written Denver LGBT history, and US history which includes Denver LGBT history.

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<sup>4</sup> Bob Whearley, "Militant Minority Poses Serious Problems for Society," *Denver Post*, February 14, 1965 p. 25, Bob Whearley, "Tough Stand Aids 'Y' In Solving Problems," *Denver Post*, February 15, 1965 p. 6, Bob Whearley "Clientele Feels Safer in 'Gay Bars'," *Denver Post*, February 16, 1965, p. 15, Bob Whearley "Rebel Fights for "Honorable Way of Life, Love'," *Denver Post*, February 17, 1965, p. 50, and John Kokish, "Colorado Homosexual Law Challenged", Sunday, October 8, 1967 p. 28, *Denver Public Library*, Denver, CO. Accessed 12 March 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Newsletters of Mattachine Society's Denver Chapter, and the Neighbors – a newsletter established after the Mattachine Society Denver chapter was uncharted are available along with collections of individuals who lived during the 1950s – 1970s in Denver. The Western History department at the Denver Public Library is a great place to start for anyone interested in exploring the *Denver Post* or *Rocky Mountain News*. For the Mattachine Society newsletters in a partial set, and a complete set of the *Neighbors* Newsletters a visit to History Colorado's library.

Denver's LGBT history is written mainly through the independent research of graduate students, a community member, and a peer reviewed article. Primarily the main individuals who have directly written about LGBT history are Noel (1978), Mangun (undated), Gilmartin (1995), Everett (2013), Cole (2014), Moore (2014) and Humphreys-Smith (2016).<sup>6</sup>

The earliest known by publication date writing on Denver's LGBT history is an article written by Dr. Tom Noel, affectionately known by many in the historical community in Denver as Dr. Colorado.<sup>7</sup> Noel is a Professor at the University of Colorado Denver, a former state historian for the state of Colorado and well-respected historian in the American West, US History, and Colorado History. Noel's article does not directly discuss the homophile movement or any of the organizations which introduced the homophile movement to Denver. Noel writes exclusively on the Gay Bars of Denver in the 1970s. Noel's article provides the context of what individual homosexual men and women experience in Denver and the importance of finding a community of individuals who are like you. Even in the 1950s and the 1960s, Gay Bars were still one place to find other LGBT individuals, often at the risk of the individual. The harassment and

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<sup>6</sup> The majority of Denver's LGBT history can be found by reading: Tom Noel, "Gay Bars and the Emergence of the Denver Homosexual Community," *The Social Science Journal*, 15:2, 1978, 59-74; Terry Mangun, "The Gay West" unpublished, available from the Center on Colfax (<https://lgbtqcolorado.org/dev2018/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Terry-Mangun-The-Gay-West.pdf>) and History Colorado; Katie Gilmartin, "The very house of difference": Intersections of Identities in the Life Histories of Colorado Lesbians, 1940-1955." Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1995; Brent D Everett, *It is Okay to Be Gay: The History of Gay Denver: Volume one The Gay Social Construct*. Self-Published, 2013; B. Erin Cole, "R-O: Race, Sexuality, and Single-Family zoning in Denver's Parkhill and Capitol Hill neighborhoods, 1956-1989." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of New Mexico, 2014; Keith Moore, "Queen City of the Plains? Denver's Gay History 1940-1975" MA thesis, University of Colorado Denver, 2014; Lisa Humphreys-Smith, "Restructuring Feminism: A comparative history of women's activists and service provided groups in Denver's Capitol Hill Area, 1968-1995" MA thesis, University of Colorado Denver, 2016

<sup>7</sup> Tom Noel, "Gay Bars and the Emergence of the Denver Homosexual Community." *The Social Science Journal*, 15:2, 1978, 59-74;

profiling done toward LGBT individuals is important to Noel's argument and my argument in this paper.

Terry Mangun wrote an excellent article about the Gay West, focusing on Colorado and Denver.<sup>8</sup> Mangun was a leader in the homophile movement during the 1970s in Denver. Unfortunately, Mangun never published his article, and its existence is only known because the Center on Colfax (Denver and Colorado's LGBT Center), History project coordinator David Duffield located the article in an archive file at History Colorado and posted the article on the Center's website. Mangun's article, like Noel's, is not helpful to understanding the homophile movement because Mangun focuses heavily on the 19th century and early 20th century. The helpful part of having this article available is knowing that homosexuals have always been in Colorado/Denver, and they have always wanted to find a way to find each other, and in secret.

Two Ph.D. dissertations are written in the past thirty years, directly discussing the LGBT History of Denver. Katie Gilmartin wrote the first in 1995.<sup>9</sup> Erin Cole wrote the second in 2014.<sup>10</sup> Dr. Gilmartin's dissertation focused on interviews with Lesbians in Colorado and the neighboring states. Her dissertation gives insights into the Lesbian individual experience; however, in her dissertation, it ends when the Mattachine Society was starting in Denver. Dr. Cole's dissertation focused on Capitol Hill, a neighborhood in Denver that, for decades, has

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<sup>8</sup> Terry Mangun, "The Gay West" unpublished, available from the Center on Colfax (<https://lgbtqcolorado.org/dev2018/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Terry-Mangun-The-Gay-West.pdf>) and History Colorado

<sup>9</sup> Katie Gilmartin, "The very house of difference": Intersections of Identities in the Life Histories of Colorado Lesbians, 1940-1955." Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1995

<sup>10</sup> Brent D. Everett *"It is Okay to Be Gay": The History of Gay Denver: Volume one The Gay Social Construct*. Self-Published, 2013

been known as a gay-friendly neighborhood. The majority of her dissertation focuses on the neighborhood itself, and only a brief portion looks at LGBT individuals in Post-War II Denver.

Brent Everett's book is one attempt by an amateur historian to look at the history of the LGBT community in Colorado and Denver.<sup>11</sup> In his book, the coverage of the LGBT community and the Mattachine Society is limited. Everett focuses extensively on the national Mattachine Society, and briefly (without precise citation) the founding of the Mattachine Society.

Two Master of Arts (MA) thesis has come out in the last decade that is relevant to the larger Denver and Colorado LGBT history, which include: Keith Moore (2014) and Lisa Humphreys-Smith (2016) both through the University of Colorado Denver. Both MA thesis covers the Denver's LGBT community history but through important and separate individual contributions. Moore writes about how white homosexual men "navigated the boundaries of sexual morality to help define homosexual personhood and form the basis of Denver's gay community between 1940 and 1975."<sup>12</sup> Humphreys-Smith writes about feminism and looks at three organizations of importance in Denver history "Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood, the Denver Chapter of the National Organization of Women, and Big Momma Rag."<sup>13</sup> Big Mommas Rag was an organization formed by Lesbians in the 1970s in Denver, and likely had some of the same members as the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis. Both MA thesis examines important aspects of Denver's LGBT history that have little to no prior research or writing. Both

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<sup>11</sup> B. Erin Cole "R-O: Race, Sexuality, and Single-Family zoning in Denver's Parkhill and Capitol Hill neighborhoods, 1956-1989." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of New Mexico, 2014

<sup>12</sup> Keith Moore, "Queen City of the Plains? Denver's Gay History 1940-1975" MA thesis, University of Colorado Denver, 2014, iii

<sup>13</sup> Lisa Humphreys-Smith, "Restructuring Feminism: A comparative history of women's activists and service provision groups in Denver's Capitol Hill Area, 1968-1995" MA thesis, University of Colorado Denver, 2016, iii

do not write at length or all about the Mattachine Society of Denver chapter, or the Daughters of Bilitis local members.

Understanding the available sources for specific Denver LGBT history is important to understanding the broad historiography of LGBT history. It is also important to understand what the national sources have written about Denver history or the two homophile organizations Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis.

The 1990s started the research of the homophile movement and organizations. Starting with the groundbreaking works by Margaret Cruikshank (1992), Will Roscoe (1996), and John D’Emilio (1998). Margaret Cruikshank groundbreaking book, *The Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement*, examines the Gay and Lesbian Liberation movement from the lens of sexual freedom, politics, ideas, and the communities prior to the mid-1990s. As Cruikshank states in her book, "the existence of this book is a sign of social change," and opens the door to further studies.<sup>14</sup> Her study of the homophile movement is a small percentage of her overall book and broadly mentions that the homophile movement occurred but did not go into explicit detail. The need for groups like the Mattachine Society was to provide a place for homosexuals (mostly men) to meet other individuals safely and argues that the discussions that happened at Mattachine Society meetings “allowed participants to feel their self-worth for the first time.”<sup>15</sup> D’Emilio and Cruikshank wrote the earliest and heavily cited books by scholars published since 2010. The other book written in the 1990s that helps understand the homophile movement is

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<sup>14</sup> Margaret Cruikshank, *The Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement*. New York, NY: Routledge, 1992, 1

<sup>15</sup> Cruikshank, 67 & 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 1998, 64-68



Will Roscoe's book about the founder of the Mattachine Society Harry Hay.<sup>16</sup> Roscoe is one book that brought the writings, thoughts, and contributions of Hay into sources available to scholars and the public for the first time.

The 2000s expanded on the research and scholarship available. The majority of the books published are through university presses. One book writes a detailed examination of the history of one of the organizations of the Homophile Movement, the Daughters of Bilitis. The articles published cover the national organizations of the Mattachine Society, the Daughters of Bilitis, or broadly cover the homophile movement.

Continuing the works done in the previous decade by Cruikshank and D'Emilio, Elizabeth Armstrong brings one of the first focused books about LGBT history when she wrote about San Francisco from 1950-1994.<sup>17</sup> She writes about the founding of both the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis. Her book helps scholars understand the significance of the founding of these organizations, and how these organizations built the base for Denver's joining the homophile movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

Margaret Gallo wrote a detailed history of the Daughters of Bilitis, originally published in 2007.<sup>18</sup> Her book gives detailed accounts of the founding of the Daughters of Bilitis through interviews, direct sources from founding members stored in archives around the country, and helps to give a broad overview of the national organization. Her book does not discuss the

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<sup>16</sup> Will Roscoe, *Will, Radically Gay: Gay Liberation in the words of its founder Harry Hay*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996

<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth A. Armstrong, *Forging Gay Identities: Organizing Sexuality in San Francisco, 1950-1994*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002

<sup>18</sup> Marcia M. Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of the Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007

Denver members but does discuss the convention that occurred in Denver (one of the helpful paths to understanding how Denver fits into the larger homophile movement).

One of the rare articles written about the Homophile Movement is Martin Meeker's article from 2001, writing about the Mattachine Society.<sup>19</sup> Meeker wrote about how the historiography of the homophile movement did not have much writing, and Meeker's is one of the significant contributions to the homophile movement history since 2000. In 2001, Steve Valocchi wrote an article about identities, both individual and collective, and how identities tie into the gay liberation movement in the US homophile movement.<sup>20</sup> In 2007, Craig Loftin added to the sources with his article looking at society views around unacceptable mannerisms, reinforcing the fact that in order for homosexuals to exist in US society they had to "pass as heterosexual" and how many homosexuals could only meet others in secret or as he puts it "swishes."<sup>21</sup>

The 2010s brought detailed studies of how and why the organizations of the homophile movement were radical for their time. An understanding of how US society would accept, criticize of the organizations. The criticism is derived from an individual level, and from the state federal governments. Douglas Charles added to our understanding of LGBT History through his groundbreaking article and book both looking at the FBI's investigation into the early homophile organizations, which included ONE, Inc, the Mattachine Society and the

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<sup>19</sup> Martin Meeker, "Behind the Mask of Respectability: Reconsidering the Mattachine Society and Male Homophile Practice, the 1950s, and 1960s." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10(1) 2001: 78 - 116

<sup>20</sup> Steve Valocchi, "Individual identities, collective identities, and organizational structure: The Relationships of the Political Left and Gay Liberation in the United States." *Sociological Perspectives* 44 (4) 2001: 445-467

<sup>21</sup> Craig M. Loftin, "Unacceptable Mannerisms: Gender Anxieties, Homosexual Activism, and Swish in the United States, 1945-1965." *Journal of Social History* 40(3) 2007: 577-596

Daughters of Bilitis.<sup>22</sup> Other historians had mentioned the FBI investigations, and primary sources do exist of what the FBI had investigated, but his works looked not only at the national organizations but also at the individual chapters in many US cities including Denver.

Marc Stein wrote a book in 2012 with a challenge to historians and scholars to take a new critical look at the homophile movement.<sup>23</sup> Since the 1990s, when both Cruikshank and D'Emilio, along with others, initially wrote the histories of the homophile movement, additional sources have become available.

My study of the homophile movement, LGBT history in Denver, and LGBT US history differs from previous ones because I am using digitized primary resources for the first time from many archives around the country. As Cole said, her dissertation “in the ten years between the disbanding of the Mattachine Society and the founding of the Colorado Alliance for Homosexuals in 1971, there was no organization the Denver area for gay men or lesbians.”<sup>24</sup> By 1971, the Mattachine Society had all but disbanded, and no record of Daughters of Bilitis having members is available.

My questions include: why were the national organizations founded? How did the Denver chapter of the Mattachine Society form? What role did the Daughters of Bilitis play in Denver? How did Denver LGBT individuals know of the organization? What were the original intentions of the need for a Denver representation on the national level? How did the National

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<sup>22</sup> Douglas M. Charles, “From Subversion to Obscenity: The FBI’s Investigation of the Early Homophile Movement in the United States, 1953-1958.” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 19 (2) 2010: 262-187; Douglas M. Charles. *Hoover’s War on Gays: Exposing the FBI’s “Sex Deviates” Program*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015

<sup>23</sup> Marc Stein, *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2012

<sup>24</sup> B. Erin Cole, “R-O: Race, Sexuality, and Single-Family zoning in Denver’s Parkhill and Capitol Hill neighborhoods, 1956-1989.”160

Conventions help bring the Denver LGBT community closer and help to shape the social and political action needed to make the fight Denver's LGBT community would have in the 1970s? The sources for this have come from both Mattachine and Daughters of Bilitis archives found in California at the GLBT Historical Society, One, Inc, and the New York Public Library. In addition, the *Denver Post* and *Rocky Mountain News* both from the Denver Public Library.

## **Mattachine Society**

### **National organization**

What is the Mattachine Society? Why is having an organization like the Mattachine Society important? What is the purpose of having an organization that LGBT individuals, and primarily gay men needed to now being important to preserve the history and memory of the movement and struggles of the past? The short answer to all of these questions is because all history is important to preserve. The longer answer to all of these questions is because this history has not had a great amount of written history, and understanding the national organization is important to understanding the other chapters, specifically the Denver chapter.

First, what is a "Mattachine Society?" The Mattachine Society was an organization for members of the LGBT community to come together. "Mattachine" originates from medieval Southern Europe... and the Mattachine's were professional entertainers and prophets of the nobility, court jesters, teachers...fools in the traditional sense of the word.<sup>25</sup> Why would the founders of the Mattachine society then pick a word that translates to "fool." The founders of

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<sup>25</sup> Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July, 1957-December 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGQJ1983203277/AHSl?u=udenver&sid=AHSl&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020. December 1957 p. 2

the Mattachine Society liked the obscurity of the word mainly because Mattachine had no connection to anything in popular jargon at the time, making it harder to connect back to the organization being an LGBT organization.<sup>26</sup> The formation of the Mattachine Society was done carefully, and the choice behind the name the founders knew the importance of keeping the society as hidden as possible.

### **Origin of Mattachine Society**

The Mattachine Society is an organization that has not always existed and does not exist today. Like many organizations, it was created and ran during a time when the LGBT communities needed it. The Mattachine movement, known by individuals familiar with the early days of the society, started in 1950 when "a group of three men, convinced that the time was right for such an idea... gathered together in Los Angeles for the first discussion group (an idea that would carry on in the group for years to come)."<sup>27</sup> The group grew from three members to five members when an application with the state of California to become a non-profit research organization called the "Mattachine Foundation, Inc." occurred, creating a secret society as one way to help protect the members (presumably from the law at the time). However, the secrecy ended up hurting the efforts to expand the group.<sup>28</sup>

As the group continued to grow and expand, the society went from the original three to twenty to eventually sixty individuals. As the society continued to grow and the need to have

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<sup>26</sup> Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July, 1957-December 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGGQJ983203277/AHSl?u=udenver&sid=AHSl&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020. December 1957 p. 2

<sup>27</sup> Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. December 1957 p. 2

<sup>28</sup> Ibid December 1957, p. 2

visibility to help gain membership and also help to bring the needed support for the organization, the original founding members realized that they needed to continue to grow the organization. On April 11, 1953, the Mattachine Foundation was renamed to the Mattachine Society. Then in May 1953, the new organization Constitution, the election of officers, passing of resolutions and by-laws, and the initial policies occurred. Less than a year after the changes occurred, the association was formed the state of California approved the new society for non-profit status as an educational and research organization.<sup>29</sup>

The objective of the Mattachine Society, as developed by the National Office, is "to help build a cooperative world order and brotherhood in which organizations like the Mattachine Society will be completely unnecessary."<sup>30</sup> The men and eventually, women who attended the Mattachine Society meetings and events were seeking a place to meet fellow homosexual individuals but in a safe way. Across the United States, the arrest of individuals for being homosexual by police occurred regularly, and the Denver Police Department was no exception to making arrests. This need for organizations like Mattachine Society to provide a safe place for individuals and help to educate the public grew eventually getting to Denver.

### **Denver Chapter**

1957. A beginning of a new society for LGBT individuals in Denver. The Denver Chapter of Mattachine Society started before January 1957 but did not have a published record

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid December 1957, p.3

<sup>30</sup> Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July, 1957-December 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGGQJ983203277/AHSl?u=udenver&sid=AHSl&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020. July 1957, pg. 6

of individual LGBT, mostly gay men, meeting until January. In January, the Denver Chapter met with only five members. The Denver chapters charter to be a chapter of the Mattachine Society was submitted and approved during the National Convention.<sup>31</sup> From 1957 until 1961, the Denver chapter continuously provided a place for LGBT folks to be themselves and thrive.

The Denver chapter lasted until March 15, 1961 when on that day that the National Board of Directors of the Mattachine Society, Inc. “revoked the charters of all area councils.”<sup>32</sup> The response of the LGBT community to the choice by the National Mattachine Society to only have the national chapter based in California to operate was to form a new organization in Denver called the Neighbors.<sup>33</sup> The history of the Denver Chapter of the Mattachine Society and the formation of the Neighbors organization is key to understanding how the LGBT community in Denver came together to help build community and ensure that resources and support were available.

The original founding of the Denver Chapter of the Mattachine Society occurred in collaboration with the National Office following a shared format of how often, and why the society should meet. The development of a shared Education Handbook is written mainly by

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<sup>31</sup> October 1957 Newsletter, page 4. Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July, 1957-December 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGQJ1983203277/AHSl?u=udenver&sid=AHSl&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

<sup>32</sup> April 1961 Newsletter, page 7. Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, February 1953-June, 1961. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3: Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 11. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/HOUDXO430328349/AHSl?u=coloradosu&sid=AHSl&xid=aaf18b05>. Accessed 1 Mar. 2020.

<sup>33</sup> March 1961 Newsletter, page 3. Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, February, 1953-June 1961. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3: Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 11. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/HOUDXO430328349/AHSl?u=coloradosu&sid=AHSl&xid=aaf18b05>. Accessed 1 Mar. 2020.

Carl B. Harding, who served as the Denver Chapter secretary and treasurer and national office Education Director for Mattachine Society. The Education Handbook was approved during the National Convention in San Francisco in 1957.<sup>34</sup> This exploration of the founding of the Education Department is important to understanding the Denver Chapters' founding and original purpose as it directly relates the purpose of having an organization: community and education. Education has a broad definition, and many uses throughout history. For the Mattachine Society, education had two meanings: "education of the individual homosexual himself toward self-understanding and self-acceptance... and education for the general public toward understanding and acceptance of the homosexual for who he is as an individual without prejudice, fear, and discrimination."<sup>35</sup> In one of the Mattachine members, William Baker summed up the purpose well when he said: "the greatest lesson the homosexual must learn is to accept himself as more than different from others; first as a person, then as a homosexual."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> October 1959 Newsletter, page 5. Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July, 1957-December 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGQJ983203277/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

Memo to Don Stewart Lucas from Carl B. Harding, Homophile Organizations Mattachine Society Education Handbook and Drafts. December 28, 1957-1959, n.d. TS The Homophile Movement 5/32 Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/AQEXIB492679225/AHSI?u=coloradosu&sid=06e01dcd>. Accessed 12 Mar. 2020.

<sup>35</sup> Memo to Don Stewart Lucas from Carl B. Harding, Homophile Organizations Mattachine Society Education Handbook and Drafts

<sup>36</sup> October 1957 Newsletter, page 5. Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July, 1957-December 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGQJ983203277/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.



The Mattachine Society's Denver chapter took the opportunity for members to engage together as a priority. The leaders and the members had a shared goal of ensuring that individuals had space to continuously accept themselves, find community, and educate the rest of the Denver community and the larger global community about the LGBT community.

In order to meet, the members and other interested parties of the Mattachine Society meetings in Denver or the Social events had to change meeting locations continuously. The Denver Police department, similar to other police departments around the United States, would target LGBT establishments and individuals. If the police department knew where the society members were meeting, they could come and arrest individuals. This required the society to move their meeting location around to individual homes, and locations around the city. In all the newsletters from 1957 - 1961, the location of the various meetings (Business Meeting, Discussion Forum, Education events, Group Therapy Sessions, Guest Speakers, Newsletter Work Parties, Social Events) changed monthly, however, some addresses were used fairly often especially for the Newsletter Work parties. The map below maps out all the locations used by the Homophile Organizations of Denver members ranging from Arvada, Colorado to Aurora, Colorado, and the location of individual community members who made significant contributions to the movement. Locations of significance include #19 (King's Inn - Daughters of Bilitis 1968 Convention), #20 (the home of Wendall Sayers (Denver attorney and legal counsel for Mattachine Society, and #46 (the Albany Hotel – 1959 Mattachine Society Convention).

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The majority of the locations still exist today as apartment buildings or individual homes. A few locations are now parking lots (i.e., location on Lincoln street – see appendix A for picture of building and address). The number of locations does show how the members of the Mattachine Society were being careful and thoughtful about having locations easily accessible for the majority of those interested and avoided going to bars or public locations outside of social events that would not immediately identify members' sexuality. The locations also show how that the majority of members lived in Denver's capitol hill neighborhood after World War II to the present day.

Through the guidance of the Educational Guide created through the national office, and through initiatives by local Denver members, the Denver chapter provided one of the earliest places for LGBT individuals to feel safe. One helpful tool that the Denver chapter did that likely other chapters did not is to develop and build over time a library of resources for members.

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Address for Albany Hotel address provided by Denver Public Library in an email correspondence with Nick Ota-Wang April 2020.

Continuation of footnote 37: Spreadsheet from Nick Ota-Wang private archive data collected from: The newsletters and documents for the above originally researched from: Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July, 1957-December 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKQJ1983203277/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July 1957-December, 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 11. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/HOUDXO430328349/AHSI?u=COLORADOSU&sid=AHSI&XID=aaf18b05>. Accessed 1 Mar 2020

Denver - Correspondence & Documents National Convention Files Daughters of Bilitis National, June 28-August 9, 1968, n.d. MS Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin, and the Daughters of Bilitis, Box 7, Folder 20, Gay Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/AYYSXM582648369/AHSI?u=coloradosu&sid=AHSI&xid=9c3e3550>. Accessed 12 Mar 2020.

Denver also had the privilege of hosting the national Mattachine Society Convention in 1959, which provided another opportunity for members to meet the goals of the Mattachine Society and show their work to their brothers and sisters from around the country.

### **1959 Convention - Mattachine Society, Denver, Colorado**

The Mattachine Society held an annual convention each year to help bring the different city chapters and the national office together to fulfill the objective of the society. In 1959, Denver held the annual convention with a theme of “New Frontiers in acceptance of the Homophile.”<sup>38</sup> Sparking attention by not only the city of Denver, local media, Denver Police, Denver citizens, and the US government through an investigation by the FBI.

The 1959 Convention held at the Albany Hotel located at 17th Street and Stout Street (present-day office buildings and the Denver Hilton City Center or at 1712 Stout Street, Denver, Colorado).<sup>39</sup> The convention was published across all the newsletters of the Mattachine Society chapters but also with the local media. The Denver chapter sent the news release to 15 newspapers, four news services, five TV stations, and 17 radio stations in the Denver area.<sup>40</sup> The amount of publicity that the members and leaders of the Denver chapter had knowing the risks of arrest for anyone attended is impressive and brave. Both the *Rocky Mountain News* and

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<sup>38</sup> Homophile Organizations Mattachine Society Annual Meetings Sixth. March 23-September 7, 1959. MS The Homophile Movement 3/6. Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/BTQVGZ591709844.AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=90f1352c>. Accessed 26 Feb 2020.

<sup>39</sup> Email correspondence between Denver Public Library and Nick Ota-Wang, April 2020  
At the time of this papers creation the authors full time job is located in a building located at 707 17<sup>th</sup> St, Denver, CO which is the same land that the Albany Hotel sat on prior to its demolition in 1976.

<sup>40</sup> September 1959, p. 7 Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July 1957-December, 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGQJI983203277/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

*Denver Post* wrote articles about the convention bringing the convention and the Homophile Movement broadly to the Denver community. By having media attention, the society not only helped engage additional members who may or may not have known about the society but also opened the door to having names and faces available to the Denver Police and FBI, both of which had interests in the society.

Throughout the US, police departments and the FBI continuously were seeking to investigate, arrest, and harass members of the LGBT community. While no police records were available from September 1959, a memo from the FBI is available and provides some insight into how the FBI was watching homophile organizations. In the memo from October 1959 (a month after the convention) lists names of individuals who attended the convention, including Carl B. Harding, Harry B. Bateman Jr. (Vice-Chair of Denver group (chapter)), Earl Gebhardt, Richard Joyner, Elton Allbeck, Roland Howard. J. Randolph Grayson, Stanley Mithcell, Billy Maynard Matson, and Wendall Sayers (legal counsel for the Denver Chapter). Wendall Sayers, in particular, recounts his efforts with the Homophile Movement in an interview on Making Gay History, A Podcast.<sup>41</sup> The significance of finding all these names is that many they are not found in any other document about the Denver Chapter, and for Billy Matson, his address listed in the FBI memo at 1024 E. 17th Avenue, which means that the FBI was presumably closely watching all members. The majority of the memo has redactions, and according to other historians who have tried to get copies of FBI files, many files were destroyed as they were not deemed essential for preservation.<sup>42</sup> Douglas Charles specifically wrote about Hoover's War on Gays,

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<sup>41</sup> Making Gay History – Wendall Sayer's Interview, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-1-2/>, Accessed 26 April 2020

<sup>42</sup> Series 1. Federal Bureau of Investigation Files 1953-1984. Subseries 1.1 Headquarters and Field Office Files 1953-1979: Mattachine Society, FBI Denver File 100-8362 1959. November 1955-April 4,

which carried into years of investigations. Members of the Mattachine Society did everything they could to not be included on any police list, being arrested by police or having their name appear anywhere associated with their sexuality.

While the Mattachine Society did do a great deal for the LGBT community of the nation and in each of their chapters, especially the Denver chapter throughout the 1950s and early 1960s the need to have groups that helped gay men, and gay women (lesbians) to meet one another as separate organizations became more and more desired.<sup>43</sup> The Mattachine Society did have women members, but the number of women was small who attended, and many were also part of a national organization for women, the Daughters of Bilitis.

### **The Daughters of Bilitis**

The Daughters of Bilitis was a Homophile organization for women who loved women or Lesbians. The founding organization purpose: "promoting the integration of homosexuality into society by the education of the variant, education of the public at large, participation in research projects, and investigation of the penal code."<sup>44</sup> Similar to the Mattachine Society, the Daughters of Bilitis focused on education and on the individuals the group would help. What

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1967. MS Dan Siminoski Collection of Federal Bureau of Investigation Surveillance of Gays and Lesbians: Series 1. Federal Bureau of Investigation Files 1953-1985 Box 5, Folder. 8. ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives. Archives of Sexuality and Gender.

[https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/ACNSRK892883679/AHSl?u=auraria\\_main&sid=AHSl&XID=59401F44](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/ACNSRK892883679/AHSl?u=auraria_main&sid=AHSl&XID=59401F44). Accessed 15 Feb 2020.

<sup>43</sup> September 1959, p. 7 Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July 1957-December, 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGQJ1983203277/AHSl?u=udenver&sid=AHSl&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

<sup>44</sup> September 1960, p. 12, Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July 1957-December, 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKGQJ1983203277/AHSl?u=udenver&sid=AHSl&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

did each of these different integrations mean, and how did they help the organization accomplish its goals?

What is the origin of the name? Similar to the Mattachine Society, the name of the organization is not one that immediately would tell you who would be interested in the organization. The name comes from a Pierre Louys poem, "Songs of Bilitis."<sup>45</sup> Likely, the women chose this because Bilitis is a female character who was romantically associated with Sappho, the female Greek lyric poet.<sup>46</sup>

The education of the variant is a vague way to describe anything. The organizers of the Daughters of Bilitis focused on three main areas: psychological, physiological, and sociological, to enable a woman to understand herself better. To aid in understanding herself, this is aided through a library and help to understand the social, civic, and economic implications of being a lesbian.<sup>47</sup> Self-acceptance is an important part of any LGBT individual's ability to help educate others.

Education of the public at large is also an important part of the Daughters of Bilitis. The education of the public at large is done first by an individual accepting themselves (education of the variant above), the education of the public through public discussion with meetings, and

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<sup>45</sup> "The Daughters of Bilitis: A Brief History" Histories of Daughters of Bilitis, Various Dates Historical Research Files Daughters of Bilitis, n.d. TS Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin, and the Daughters of Bilitis Box 9, Folder 2. Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/AMYBHB005921291/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=05106fb94>. Assessed 26 Feb. 2020.

<sup>46</sup> Songs of Bilitis, Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Songs-of-Bilitis>. Accessed 26 April 2020

<sup>47</sup> September 1960, p. 12, Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society

the dissemination of educational literature on homosexuality.<sup>48</sup> Similar to the Mattachine Society, the importance of educating the masses is part of the organization's purpose.

Participation in research and investigation of the penal code are also important ways that the Daughters of Bilitis help to make the world accepting and better. Research projects conducted as surveys (both on the lesbian and gay men) through the expertise of psychologists, sociologists, and other experts to further the knowledge of the homosexual and make the legal changes to make being homosexual legal and safe.<sup>49</sup> Knowing the education of the self, education of others, and the movement to make a change is one of the ways that the Daughters of Bilitis was challenging the norm while providing a safe place for all members.

### **National Organization**

The founding of the Daughters of Bilitis did not happen as early as the Mattachine Society. The first meetings of the Daughters of Bilitis occurred in San Francisco in 1955, where a group of eight women met and founded a club whose primary purpose at the time was to offer Lesbians a social alternative to the "gay bar."<sup>50</sup> By 1957 the Daughters of Bilitis was incorporated by the State of California, and by 1958 two chapters were created (one in Los Angeles and one in New York) in addition to the San Francisco headquarters.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, September 1960, p.12

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 12

<sup>50</sup> "The Daughters of Bilitis: A Brief History" Histories of Daughters of Bilitis, Various Dates Historical Research Files Daughters of Bilitis, n.d. TS Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin, and the Daughters of Bilitis Box 9, Folder 2. Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/AMYBHB005921291/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=05106fb94>. Assessed 26 Feb. 2020.

<sup>51</sup> "The Daughters of Bilitis: A Brief History" & Community - Homophile General. December 1957 - July 1966. MS Wide Open Town History Project Records Box 2, Folder 16. Gay and Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Historical Society. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/MHRMXE467159903/AHSI?u=u=auraria\\_main&sid=AHSI&xid=ab2bce18](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/MHRMXE467159903/AHSI?u=u=auraria_main&sid=AHSI&xid=ab2bce18). Accessed 22 Feb. 2020.



Some of the well-known lesbians of history in the US were part of these initial organizing, including Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin, and Barbara Gittings.<sup>52</sup> According to the President of the Daughters of Bilitis in 1957, Helen Sanders, the founders, were unaware of the existence of One, INC (located in Los Angeles) and Mattachine Society, Inc (located in San Francisco) which caused them to want to find a lesbian organization. Other chapters had more awareness of other organizations as their foundation date allowed for information to be made available.<sup>53</sup> Official chapters with records still available were on both coasts but nothing in the middle of the country.

### **Denver Chapter**

Putting the Denver chapter as a header is semi-misleading. No record of a Denver chapter is available online through online databases, but local folks in Denver did know about the Daughters of Bilitis as the National Convention did come to Denver in 1968. Lesbians in Colorado mainly subscribed to the *Ladder* (Daughters of Bilitis national newsletter) and joined meetings with the Mattachine Society. The Denver chapter of the Mattachine Society does include women when they address their attendance numbers in many of the newsletters from 1957-1961, and advertisements about DOB appear in the newsletters, directing women to subscribe to the *Latter*.

By 1968 Denver was on the map with Homophile organizations partly from the work of the Denver Chapter of Mattachine Society but also the growing number of LGBT individuals

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<sup>52</sup> Making Gay History – Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Interview , <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/phyllis-lyon-del-martin/>, Accessed 26 April 2020 and Making Gay History – Gittings and Lahusen Interview, <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/episode-18-gittings-lahusen/> Accessed 26 April 2020

<sup>53</sup> Community - Homophile General

who actively moved to Denver (and further west) from the East Coast. In 1968, the National Office of the Daughters of Bilitis held its annual convention in Denver at a local hotel.

### **Daughters of Bilitis 1968 Convention in Aurora-Denver, Colorado**

The National Convention of Daughters started in 1960. The convention from the beginning, which occurred in San Francisco from May 27-30, 1960, was not only open to Daughters of Bilitis members but to members from One, Inc. and Mattachine Society who wished to attend. By 1968 the Mattachine Society was not as active (if at all.) The Daughters of Bilitis convention brought together women from all over the country to various cities in the US.

The convention of 1968 in Denver located at the King's Inn (11800 East Colfax, Aurora-Denver, Colorado) from August 9-11). The theme was "The Changing Scene," and the meeting was important to the future of Daughters of Bilitis, including if the organization would still move forward.<sup>54</sup> The number of women who came to the meeting seems to be quite a few based on the reservation sheets available through the online archive. Unfortunately, no meeting minutes are available from the meeting to fully know what the results of the meeting discussions.

### **Conclusion**

"I have spent the last 20 years helping other people understand and accept the gender variations in their children, and there are a lot of gender variations. And they are all okay."

~Karen Mason, Co-Founder/Owner of Circus of Books, a former bookstore in Los Angeles,

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<sup>54</sup> Denver - Correspondence & Documents National Convention Files Daughters of Bilitis National, June 28-August 9, 1968, n.d. MS Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin, and the Daughters of Bilitis, Box 7, Folder 20, Gay Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/AYYSXM582648369/AHSI?U=coloradosu&sid=AHSI&xid=9c3e3550>. Accessed 12 Mar 2020.

and PFLAG (Parents of Lesbians and Gays) facilitator.<sup>55</sup>

“We were trying to help lesbians find themselves, I mean, you can’t have a movement if you don’t have people that see that they’re worthwhile.”<sup>56</sup>

~Phyllis Lyon, founding leader in the Homophile Movement.

The quote above from Karen Mason is how LGBT individuals in the US and the world want to be understood and viewed. Accepted, and loved for being who they are. The LGBT community is similar to Karen's thoughts about gender variation, lots of different individuals, who are all okay. Sadly, LGBT individuals have and continue to struggle to accept themselves as LGBT. The laws and social acceptance of an individual for being LGBT has not always happened. The LGBT community, over time, have had to create space to build community, provide safe space, and educate the community. The quote from Phyllis Lyon celebrates why Lyon and her long life partner Del Martin fought in the Homophile Movement. Lyon passed away on April 9, 2020, at 95, and as a founding member of the Daughters of Bilitis and a leader in the Homophile Movement.

The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis helped Denver and its LGBT citizens find a place to be their authentic selves in a world that highly discriminated against and prosecuted LGBT individuals. The Mattachine Society, in particular, proved to be a helpful organization for Denver for not only men but also for women. For bisexual and gay men, the

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<sup>55</sup> Rachel Mason, dir. *Circus of Books*. Netflix, 2020, <https://www.netflix.com/watch/81011569?trackId=14170041&tctx=1%2C1%2C2e26beeb-781d-ons> in [4fb4-8d85-c8ce993d34ea-240678973%2C08a07138-3474-4b48-bc1a-4fcf3b5ad5f0\\_31322357X32XX1587749967390%2C08a07138-3474-4b48-bc1a-4fcf3b5ad5f0\\_ROOT](https://www.netflix.com/watch/81011569?trackId=14170041&tctx=1%2C1%2C2e26beeb-781d-ons)

<sup>56</sup> Phyllis Lyon passed away on April 9, 2020, at the age of 95. A big thank you to Phyllis and her long time partner Del Martin for their bravery and fight for equal rights for not only Lesbians but also for all members of the LGBT community. Rest In Power. More about the life of Phyllis: <https://makinggayhistory.com/podcast/phyllis-lyon-del-martin/> & <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/10/obituaries/phyllis-lyon-dead.html>

object of the society sums up its impact: “the major objective of the Mattachine Society is to help build a cooperative world order and brotherhood in which organizations like the Mattachine Society will be completely unnecessary.”<sup>57</sup> The brotherhood that the Mattachine Society and the sisterhood that the Daughter of Bilitis created helped the homophile movement in Denver grow from a few individuals to hundreds fighting for the right to exist free from harassment, persecution, and daily fear.

The Daughters of Bilitis, while they did not have a chapter chartered in Denver, did have a presence in Denver as seen through the regular mentions in the Denver Mattachine Society newsletters from 1957-1961. The similar purpose of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Mattachine Society in helping individuals find themselves, like-minded individuals, and educating others is an important and almost forgotten part of Denver's LGBT History.

The efforts of both the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis members to bring the LGBT community of Colorado and Denver together helped continue to move the community forward in the fights for acceptance and legal changes that will happen in the 1970s and 1980s in Denver. One writer for the Mattachine Society newsletter in November 1957 wrote a quote that exemplifies the bravery and determination of the LGBT community to exist.

"History contains a continuous record of people who exemplify the man who did not know something could not be done, so in his innocent ignorance, he went ahead and did it."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> July 1957, pg. 6 Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July 1957-December, 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/GKQJ983203277/AHSI?u=udenver&sid=AHSI&xid=6bfb855a>. Accessed 11 Feb. 2020.

<sup>58</sup> November 1957, pg. 2 Gay Organizations, Denver Area Council Mattachine Society, July 1957 – December 1959. July 1957-December, 1959. MS The Mattachine Society of New York Records, 1951-1976: Series 3. Gay Organizations Box 7, Folder 10. New York Public Library. Archives of Sexuality and Gender,

The only part of this quote that can be disagreed with when thinking about the brotherhood and sisterhood of the Mattachine Society and Daughters of Bilitis is that these Denverites knew what they were doing when they met and found each other. They risked so much to be themselves, and history cannot and will not forget their courage, bravery, and gumption to ensure their and future acceptance and happiness of the LGBT community in Denver and nationally.

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Series 1. Federal Bureau of Investigation Files 1953-1984. Subseries 1.1 Headquarters and Field Office

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Appendix A:

Apartment Building at 1644 Lincoln Street, Denver, CO (present day a parking lot).



- 1644 Lincoln Street is the building on the bottom left corner of this picture.

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<sup>59</sup> Photo Collection "Denver Streets – Lincoln", Mel Schieltz, February 4, 1970, Genealogy, African American & Western History, Denver Public Library