

## Synopsis:

Gay Pioneers is the story of the first organized annual “homosexual” civil rights demonstrations held in Philadelphia, New York and Washington, DC from 1965-69. When few would publicly identify themselves as gay, these brave pioneers challenged pervasive homophobia.

On July 4, 1965, forty (40) people carried signs in front of Independence Hall supporting gay emancipation. Each year in NY, DC and Philadelphia their numbers grew. By July 4, 1969, one month after Stonewall one hundred and fifty (150) people demonstrated at Independence Hall. The annual demonstrations were consolidated in 1970 to mark the first anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. That led to the then largest gathering for gays and lesbians when between two to five thousand people congregated in New York’s Central Park.

The 1970 demonstration encouraged activists to stage the first gay pride parade in NYC. The New York Pride Parade was emulated in large and small cities in North America and worldwide and helped catapult an international civil rights movement.

Gay Pioneers is directed by PBS award-winning documentary filmmaker Glenn Holsten and produced by PBS affiliate WHYY and Equality Forum. It is about the gay and lesbian Rosa Parks.

Gay Pioneers braids archival footage from these seminal demonstrations; FBI investigative files obtained under the Freedom of Information Act; gay pioneer interviews about the homophobia of that era, the protocol for the demonstrations and how those demonstrations impacted the movement and Barbara Gittings, Frank Kameny and Lilli Vincenz on-camera in 2004 discussing same-sex marriage.

For more information, please visit [www.gaypioneers.com](http://www.gaypioneers.com)

Glenn Holsten  
Producer/Director

**Glenn Holsten** is a producer and director of documentaries and performance programs. His most recent documentary for Equality Forum is award-winning JIM IN BOLD ([www.jiminbold.com](http://www.jiminbold.com)). His most recent documentary for PBS, *Thomas Eakins: Scenes from Modern Life*, examines the city through the eyes of the 19th century American painter.

National PBS production credits include *Mothers March*, *The Sounds of Philadelphia*, *Philadelphia Diary*, *The Great Comet Crash* and *Neptune All Night*. He was director of *An Angel In The Village* (a portrait of Philadelphia-based artist Lily Yeh), which was broadcast on public television in May 1999. *Gay Bingo*, is a portrait of AIDS in the year 2000, as seen through the community surrounding Philadelphia's premiere AIDS fundraising event. He directed *MURAL*, a video diary project involving four Philadelphia mural artists. In collaboration with the MIT Media Lab, Glenn developed a prototype for an interactive documentary titled *Intersections at Third and Indiana*.

On the international production scene, Glenn has directed documentaries in Portugal, Kenya, Northern Ireland, Poland, Bosnia and the Republic of Georgia.

Other works include *AKA Judy Garland Park*, *Pulling it Together in North Philadelphia*, *The Sounds of Philadelphia*, *First Person Philadelphia*, *Words In Place* (a series of video-poems inspired by the city), and *Philadelphia Diary*, a feature-length fictional film inspired by the drama of everyday life in the city of Brotherly Love.

Glenn is a recipient of the 1997 Pew Fellowship in the Arts, a 2000 Independence Foundation Fellowship in the Arts, and a Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Fellowship. His works have been featured at the Banff, Dance on Camera, Houston, Columbus and New York Film Festivals, and have been awarded silver and gold awards from Corporation for Public Broadcasting for innovative television production. He has been honored with eighteen Mid-Atlantic Emmy Awards. A collection of his work was exhibited in the Philadelphia Museum of Art's 20th Century Video Gallery.

In the summer of 2000, Glenn traveled to Mongolia, where he conducted a workshop for television professionals that explored creative methods for storytelling on television. In Philadelphia, Glenn has taught a post-production workshop for adults at the Scribe Video Center and after-school video production workshops with teens at North Philadelphia's Village of Arts and Humanities. He holds a BA in English from the University of Pennsylvania.

Glenn is currently in working on Equality Forum's third documentary film, which is scheduled to premiere in early 2005.

Malcolm Lazin  
Co-Executive Producer  
Gay Pioneers

**Malcolm Lazin** is the Executive Director of Equality Forum. Mr. Lazin is the Executive Producer, JIM IN BOLD ([www.jiminbold.com](http://www.jiminbold.com)), an award-winning documentary film produced by Equality Forum.

Mr. Lazin is a graduate of Boston University School of Law. He served in the United States Department of Justice, where he led federal grand jury investigations into white collar crime and official corruption. He taught investigators of white collar crime to US Attorney's offices. He received the Department's highest annual honor, the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award.

Mr. Lazin chaired the Pennsylvania Crime Commission with a staff of 60 employees. The Pennsylvania Crime Commission's principal mission was to investigate organized crime. Mr. Lazin entered private practice where he was a partner at the law firm of Rubin Quinn Moss & Paterson.

In 1985, Mr. Lazin left the active practice of law to be the president of a real estate development firm specializing in urban waterfront renewal. His company built the first major project on Philadelphia's dormant waterfront. That project included a 300-slip full service marina; a 10,000 square foot pier for outdoor dining and entertainment; a rehabilitated 180,000 square foot pier for indoor dining and entertainment and the decking of charred pilings into a 85,000 square foot parking pier.

Mr. Lazin chaired the Philadelphia Waterfront Developer Council. During his term the Council initiated major infrastructure planning for Philadelphia's waterfront. In 1985, Mr. Lazin conceived the idea to light the Ben Franklin Bridge as the permanent commemorative to the bicentennial of the US Constitution. He helped organize the bi-state bridge lighting committee and served as the co-chair of the \$1.8 million fundraising committee. The lighting of the bridge premiered on September 17, 1987 and has become a moniker for the Philadelphia region.

Mr. Lazin has served on numerous philanthropic, business, religious and community service organizations. From 2000 to 2003 he was President of Society Hill Civic Association. He presently serves on the Board of Trustees, Lebanon Valley College. He is the recipient of numerous regional and national community service awards.

In 1992, Mr. Lazin helped found Equality Forum. He served as the volunteer Co-Chair until 1999, when the Board of Directors unanimously asked him to serve as its Executive Director.

## Equality Forum

**Equality Forum** advances national and international gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) civil rights.

Equality Forum annually presents the largest national and international GLBT civil rights forum. Equality Forum 2004 with Canada as the Featured Nation had 57 events with 80 regional, national and international nonprofits participating. Twenty-four (24) prominent Canadians represented their nation and twenty-three (23) Executive Directors of leading state, national and international organizations served as moderators and panelists.

There is no registration fee and 44 programs including all substantive programs were free. Programming includes parties, cabaret, art exhibit, International Business Colloquium dinner, film, BB”Q” and SundayOUT.

Equality Forum produces documentary films. “JIM IN BOLD” ([www.jiminbold.com](http://www.jiminbold.com)) about the impact of homophobia on GLBTQ youth was critically acclaimed and screened in film festivals on three continents. Equality Forum is in production on its third documentary film, which is expected to be completed in late 2004.

Equality Forum undertakes high impact initiatives including PROJECT 1138 ([www.project1138.com](http://www.project1138.com)) and its Fortune 500 project.

Equality Forum is a nonprofit and 501©(3) organization headquartered in Philadelphia.

## **Barbara Gittings**

Barbara Gittings has been a gay rights activist since 1958 when she started the New York chapter of the lesbian organization Daughters of Bilitis (DOB). She edited DOB's national magazine The Ladder from 1963 to 1966. Barbara marched in the first gay and lesbian civil rights demonstrations held annually from 1965-1969 at The White House, Pentagon and Independence Hall.

From 1971 to 1986, Gittings headed the Gay Task Force of the American Library Association (ALA). She edited its Gay Bibliography and other gay/lesbian reading lists as well as wrote a brief history of the group, Gays in Library Land. She was in the group's gay kissing booth, "Hug a Homosexual," at the 1971 ALA national convention in Dallas. Her campaign to promote gay materials and eliminate gay invisibility in libraries was recognized by an honorary lifetime membership conferred by the ALA in 2003.

In the 1970s, Barbara served on the boards of the National Gay Task Force (now National Gay & Lesbian Task Force) and the Gay Rights National Lobby (forerunner of the Human Rights Campaign). In the 1970s, Gittings promoted gay/lesbian visibility at annual conventions of the American Psychiatric Association with exhibits such as "Homophobia: Time for Cure" and "Gay Love: Good Medicine".

Barbara and her life partner Kay Lahusen continue to be active in LGBT civil rights.

## **Franklin E. Kameny**

Frank Kameny was born May 21, 1925 in New York City. He obtained a B.S. in Physics from Queens College in 1948, a M.A. and Ph.D. in Astronomy from Harvard University in 1949 and 1956.

In 1957, Kameny commenced an 18 year effort to overturn the US Civil Service Commission ban on the employment of gays. In 1975, the ban was eliminated. President Clinton formalized that non-discrimination policy in Executive Order 13087.

Frank helped initiate gay activism in Washington in 1961. In 1963, he helped initiate the effort to reverse the classification by the American Psychiatric Association of homosexuality as a mental illness. In 1973, that classification was eliminated. In 1993, a law that Kameny drafted overturned the DC sodomy law. He helped organize the first annual demonstrations by gays and lesbians in 1965 through 1969 in Washington, DC, New York City and Philadelphia. In 1968, Kameny coined the phrase "Gay is Good".

Franklin Kameny is recognized as the authority on security clearances for gays and lesbians. He handled many cases and was responsible for the 1975 reversal of the ban on security clearances for gays and lesbians. He worked with the American Bar Association on recommendations, which led to Clinton Executive Order 12968 banning anti-gay discrimination in the issuance of security clearances.

In 1971, Kameny ran for Congress from Washington DC as the second openly gay candidate for public office in the nation and the first for national office. The Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington (GLAA) was formed from the nucleus of the campaign committee. He was also one of the founders of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).

In 1975 and 1976, he helped found the Gay Rights National Lobby from which the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) was formed and the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club in Washington, DC. In 1981, Franklin Kameny was elected from Washington, DC Ward 3 as Delegate to DC Statehood Constitutional Convention.

Kameny has published articles, book chapters, editorial commentaries and letters. He continues to be involved in a variety of gay-related issues and DC-related politics.

## **Randolfe Wicker**

Randolfe Wicker was born on February 3, 1938. In 1958, Wicker joined the New York Mattachine Society. Wicker was an organizer of Mattachine's monthly lectures. Randolfe graduated from the University of Texas in 1960.

In 1962, Wicker parlayed an interview about homosexuality with the Pacifica station WBAI-FM in New York City into a nationally covered event including a full page in *Newsweek Magazine* and a news story in *The New York Times*. This was among the first vocalizations of the homosexual community's demand for equal treatment.

In April 1963, Randolfe Wicker led a demonstration for homosexual civil rights at the U.S. Army Induction Center at Whitehall Street in New York City. The Homosexual League of New York was joined by heterosexual members of The League for Sexual Freedom.

In February 1964, Wicker was the first publicly-acknowledged homosexual to appear on television. A few months later, he appeared as a guest commentator with Dick Leitsch of the New York Mattachine Society in the first nationally broadcast discussion of homosexuality on television's "David Suskind Show".

In 1965 to 1969, Wicker helped organize and participate in the first annual gay and lesbian civil rights demonstrations that took place in New York, Washington, DC and Philadelphia.

## **Lilli M. Vincenz**

Lilli Vincenz holds degrees from Douglas College (B.A. in 1959, French and German), Columbia University (M.A. in 1960, English), George Mason University (M.A. in 1976, Psychology) and University of Maryland (Ph.D. in 1990, Human Development).

In 1963, Vincenz joined the Mattachine Society of Washington (MSW). Vincenz was a member of the MSW delegation that first met with the Civil Service Commission in 1965 to discuss the federal government's discriminatory policies toward gays and lesbians. She was an active member until 1971. Vincenz demonstrated in all Annual Reminder Day demonstrations in Philadelphia on July 4 from 1965-69. She participated in every homophile picket in Washington, DC, including at The White House, Civil Service Commission, State Department and Pentagon.

From 1971 to 1979, Lilli Vincenz held at her home a Gay Women's Open House to discuss common concerns in a non-threatening social environment.

In 1971 Vincenz was instrumental in helping to launch the Kameny for Congress Campaign. That campaign enabled Franklin Kameny, PhD and president of MSW, to run as independent candidate for Nonvoting Delegate to Congress in Washington, DC. This marked the first time a publicly acknowledged gay person ran for public office anywhere in the United States. That campaign gave birth to the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) of Washington.

Lilli Vincenz is currently active with Human Rights Campaign, American Civil Liberties Union, National Organization for Women, Arlington Gay and Lesbian Alliance, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Equality Virginia, Community for Creative Self-Development and National Coalition for Lesbian Rights. She has written for numerous publications and has appeared on television and film. Since 1976, she has worked as a psychotherapist.

Vincenz and her partner, Nancy Ruth Davis, live outside Washington, DC.

## **Jack Nichols**

Jack Nichols co-founded the Mattachine Societies of Washington DC in 1961 and of Florida in 1965. Nichols helped organize the first protest demonstration at The White House on April 17, 1965. He was among the first gay activists to challenge the American Psychiatric Association's position that homosexuality was a mental illness. In 1967, he appeared as a self-affirming gay male in an interview by Mike Wallace. That was *CBS'* first documentary on homosexuality.

From 1969 to 1973, Nichols and his partner, the late Lige Clarke, were the editors of *GAY*, America's first gay weekly newspaper from 1969-1973. Together they wrote the first non-fiction memoir by a male couple, *I Have More Fun with You than Anybody*. Nichols authored several books including *Men's Liberation: A New Definition of Masculinity* and *The Gay Agenda: Talking Back to the Fundamentalists*. Nichols' latest book is an account of his youthful indiscretions, *The Tomcat Chronicles*. Since 1997, he has edited the Internet news magazine, *GayToday.com*. He has been chronicled in 45 histories. Jack Nichols' biography appears in Dr. Vern Bullough's new history *Before Stonewall: Activists for Gay and Lesbian Rights in Historical Context*.

## **Nancy Tucker**

Nancy joined the Mattachine Society of Washington in 1967. Her involvement in the Mattachine Society launched a 25-year career in the gay/lesbian movement. Mattachine members nominated her as the female co-editor of *The Gay Blade* (now *The Washington Blade*), which was the monthly gay/lesbian newsletter for the Washington, D.C. area. Nancy served as the *Blade's* editor, sole writer, researcher, layout artist, circulation director and controller from 1969 to 1973.

In 1972, Nancy began a professional involvement with alcohol recovery. In 1979, she helped found the National Association of Lesbian and Gay Addiction Professionals. Nancy, who now resides on the west coast, was the first east coast correspondent for *The Advocate*, member of Washington's Gay Liberation Front and president of the Gay Women's Alternative.

Nancy participated from 1967 to 1969 in the annual gay and lesbian civil rights demonstrations in New York, Washington, DC and Philadelphia.

## **Reverend Robert W. Wood**

A veteran of WWII, Robert Wood received two Battle Stars, a Purple Heart, a Combat Infantry Badge and the Bronze Star for “heroic achievement in combat”. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania (1948) and Seminary at Oberlin College (1951). He was ordained in 1951 in the Congregational Christian denomination, which became part of the United Church of Christ (UCC).

Rev. Wood began speaking and writing for gay causes shortly after his ordination. He wrote Christ and the Homosexual (1960), which helped begin the dialogue between organized religion and the GLBT community. He was among the first clergymen to advocate for same-sex marriage.

Rev. Wood participated in the seminal gay and lesbian civil rights demonstrations from 1965 to 1969. *The Advocate* and *Out* have called Rev. Wood a “pioneer for gay rights” in America.

Rev. Robert Wood lives in New Hampshire. In 1986, he retired after 35 years as a parish pastor. His partner of over 26 years, American abstract artist Hugh M. Coulter, died on January 3, 1989. Rev. Wood remains an engaged advocate for GLBT equality.

## **J. Edgar Hoover**

Archivist

In 1965 to 69, gays and lesbians were almost invisible in the media. When the Gay Pioneers staged the first organized annual demonstrations for gay and lesbian civil rights The New York Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Washington Post and other news organizations paid almost no attention.

As with the African American civil rights movement, the FBI under J. Edgar Hoover, Director did pay attention. The FBI assigned field agents to photograph the demonstrations and produce investigative reports.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, Equality Forum and WHYY, Co-Producers have obtained those FBI files. FBI surveillance photographs and reports are included in Gay Pioneers and provide a context for the homophobia and repression of that era.

We acknowledge J. Edgar Hoover for his unintended role in preserving our history.

For more information:  
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**EQUALITY FORUM 2004 OPENS WITH A SCREENING OF  
*GAY PIONEERS***

Equality Forum 2004 opens on Monday, April 26 with a screening of the documentary film *Gay Pioneers* at 8:30 p.m. at the Prince Music Theater, 1412 Chestnut Street. Produced by Equality Forum and WHYY, and directed by PBS award-winning filmmaker Glenn Holsten, *Gay Pioneers* tells the story of a group of brave men and women who organized the first homosexual civil rights demonstrations in the United States from 1965 to 1969, prior to the Stonewall uprising in New York.

The story is told through archival footage from the annual demonstrations in Philadelphia, New York and Washington, D.C., and includes interviews with pioneers Barbara Gittings, Frank Kameny, Lilli Vincenz, Randy Wicker, Reverend Robert Woods, Nancy Tucker and Jack Nichols, all of whom demonstrated in the picket lines of the “Annual Reminders.” The film includes FBI files and surveillance obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. The documentary will be updated this year with recent interviews and footage from Equality Forum 2004.

*Gay Pioneers* is free of charge and will be followed by a question and answer session moderated by Equality Forum Executive Director Malcolm Lazin, with panelists Glenn Holsten, Barbara Gittings and Frank Kameny.

“Equality Forum decided that there was no better way to start Equality Forum than by screening *Gay Pioneers*, which documents the birth of the GLBT civil rights movement and the start of the march to equality.” Mr. Lazin said.

Equality Forum 2004 is April 26 to May 2 in Philadelphia. For more information call 215-732-3378 or visit [www.equalityforum.com](http://www.equalityforum.com).

**Equality Forum** is the largest regional, national and international Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) civil rights forum, working to create understanding about homophobia and its multifaceted impact on individuals, families and society. Each year, in addition to promoting and discussing GLBT organizations and issues, Equality Forum highlights a Featured Nation and explores that country’s GLBT culture, social issues and advancements in civil rights. Equality Forum embraces a number of projects throughout the year, including the production of the documentary films *Gay Pioneers* and *JIM IN BOLD*.

Equality Forum is a nonprofit and 501(c)(3) organization headquartered in Philadelphia, the site of some of the earliest gay civil rights protests.

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