Finding Aid to the Tom Mertz Collection on Queer Nation, 1990-2000
Coll2014.025

Finding aid prepared by Loni Shibuyama
Processing this collection has been funded by a generous grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.
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(c) 2014
Title: Tom Mertz collection on Queer Nation
Identifier/Call Number: Coll2014.025
Contributing Institution: ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.4 linear foot. 1 archive carton + 1 mapcase drawer.
Date (inclusive): 1990-2000
Abstract: Press material, flyers, clippings, correspondence, notes, protest signs, audiocassettes, and a VHS videocassette from Tom Mertz documenting the activities of the Los Angeles chapter of Queer Nation, 1990-2000. The collection documents the actions Queer Nation/LA organized and the media attention it received, including a zap on the Arsenio Hall Show in 1991.
creator: Mertz, Tom

Historical Note
Queer Nation was an action-oriented movement formed in New York City in April 1990 in response to a sharp increase in violence against LGBT people. The group sought to increase LGBT visibility and fight "oppression, homophobia, racism, misogyny, the bigotry of religious hypocrites and our own self-hatred" through direct actions. By the next year, 60 chapters of Queer Nation sprung up in cities throughout North America. Queer Nation/Los Angeles formed in 1990 and engaged in actions such as protesting Governor Pete Wilson's veto of AB 101 anti-discrimination bill; picketing during the Academy Awards and encouraging Hollywood actors to come out; and organizing a zap on the Arsenio Hall Show to confront the host on his lack of LGBT guests.

"Queer Nation (organization)," ONE Subject File collection, Coll2012-001, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California

Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to researchers. There are no access restrictions.

Conditions Governing Use
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Acquisition
Gift of Tom Mertz, December 14, 2006.

Preferred Citation
[Box/folder #, or item name] Tom Mertz Collection on Queer Nation, Coll2014-025, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.

Processing Information
Formerly box #102-A135. Collection processed by Loni Shibuyama, May 2014.

Scope and Contents
The collection comprises press material, flyers, clippings, correspondence, notes, protest signs, audiocassettes, and a VHS videocassette from activist Tom Mertz documenting the activities of the Los Angeles chapter of Queer Nation, 1990-2000. The bulk of the materials documents the actions Queer Nation/LA organized and the media attention it received, including actions against the Arsenio Hall Show, Barney's Beanery, and Dr. Laura Schlesinger. Also included is material for a radio documentary on the 20th anniversary of the Los Angeles Gay Community Services Center, produced by Mertz for the IMRU radio program on KPFK.

Arrangement
This collection is arranged chronologically.

Separated Materials
Queer Nation News (December 1990-February 1991) has been separated to the periodicals.

The following items have been separated to the ONE Archives garments collection:
"ACT UP" circa 1990 (1 sweatshirt).
"Make Queer Film" circa 1991 (1 t-shirt).
"Queer Defense Squad; Queer Nation/LA" 1991 (1 t-shirt).
"Stop Dr. Laura: are you a biological error?" 2000 (1 t-shirt).
"We'll Have a Gay Old Time" circa 1992 (1 t-shirt).

The following items have been separated to the ONE Archives posters collection:
"Every 10th Jesus is a Queer" 1991.
"Who is the Most Important Man in the World?" 2000.

The following art works have been separated to the Jaime Green Collection (unprocessed):
"Easter Eggs XII" 1996.
"How to Use a Condom" 1996.
"Sister X" 1993.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Hall, Arsenio
L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center.
Queer Nation (Organization).
Schlessinger, Laura
Demonstrations--California--Los Angeles
Gay activists--California--Los Angeles
Homophobia
Mass media and gays--United States

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Tom Mertz collection

Box 1, Folder 1  Actions and protests; clippings (miscellaneous) 1990-1992
Box 1, Folder 2  Flyers 1990-1992
Box 1, Folder 3  Media committee records 1990-1992
Box 1, Folder 4  March on Hollywood, Hollywood actions records 1990-1991
Box 1, Folder 5  Barney's Beanery November 1990-February 1991
Box 1, Folder 6  Arsenio Hall Show December 1990
Item WV3098  Arsenio Hall Show [video recording] December 14, 1990

General Physical Description note: 1 videocassette (VHS).

Box 1, Folder 7  Queer Bashing December 1990-January 1991
Map-case 3.2  "Come Out of the Celluloid Closet" picket sign 1991
Map-case 3.2  "It's Okay to be Gay" picket sign 1991
Map-case 3.2  "Queer Hollywood, Come Out" picket sign 1991
Map-case 3.2  "Queer Stars Shine Brighter" picket sign 1991
Box 1, Folder 8  Gay Rodeo March 1991
Box 1, Folder 9  IMRU on KPFK; L.A. Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center April-July 1991
Item AC2613  "20 Years of LA Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center" [sound recording] July 1991

General Physical Description note: 1 audiocassette.

Item AC2614  "20 Years of LA Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center" raw interviews [sound recording] 1991

General Physical Description note: 1 audiocassette.

Box 1, Folder 10  Queer Pink, Dodger Blue July 1991
Box 1, Folder 11  KCET and PBS, Stop the Church August 1991
Box 1, Folder 12  Academy Awards, Hollywood Homophobia January-March 1992
Box 1, Folder 13  Dr. Laura (Schlesinger) March 2000
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<tr>
<th>Map-case 3.2</th>
<th>&quot;Hate the Sinner, Love the Sin&quot; Dr. Laura picket sign 2000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Map-case 3.2</td>
<td>&quot;No More Dr. Laura&quot; picket sign 2000</td>
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