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ACCESSION NUMBER: 1988-01

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society
San Francisco, California

CONTACT INFORMATION:
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Steven Mandeville-Gamble
Date Completed:
December 16, 1991
Encoded by:
Xiuzhi Zhou

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: Leonard Matlovich Papers,
ACCESSION NUMBER: 1988-01
CREATOR: Matlovich, Leonard
EXTENT: 4 Cubic Feet
San Francisco, California.
PHYSICAL LOCATION: Housed at the GLBT Historical Society.
LANGUAGE: English.

ACQUISITION
Before moving to Hollywood in April 1988, Leonard Matlovich transferred ownership of his personal papers to the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Historical Society. Archivist Bill Walker went through Matlovich's papers with him and helped select which materials would be transferred.

ACCESS
Collection is open for research.

PUBLICATION RIGHTS
Copyright to unpublished manuscript materials has been transferred to the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern California.

PREFERRED CITATION

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE
Leonard Matlovich was a decorated member of the United States Air Force. During his three tours of duty in Vietnam, he received a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. Like his father, he was a career military man and was considered an outstanding technical sergeant when, on March 8, 1975, he wrote a letter to his commanding officer at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, in which acknowledged his homosexuality but requested that he be allowed to remain in the Air Force. The Air Force responded by expelling Matlovich with a general discharge. He took the Air Force to court to contest this decision and
In November 1980, U.S. District Judge Gerhard A. Gessell in Washington, D.C. ordered the Air Force to reinstate Matlovich with back pay and the rank and salary that he would have obtained if he had not been discharged.

In an out-of-court settlement with the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, he agreed to drop his case in return for a settlement of $162,000, which included $98,000 compensation in addition to the $62,000 in back pay as well as having his discharge upgraded from a general to an honorable rating.

This series of actions set him on a path that transformed him into a symbol for the gay community throughout the United States. He appeared on the cover of Time magazine and his story was translated into a television documentary entitled “Sgt. Matlovich vs. the Air Force.”

After the settlement, Matlovich continued to fight for gay rights. He ran for public office, lectured, counseled gay men and women on their rights, and founded organizations such as the Matlovich Foundation and the Never Forget Foundation to fight for the rights of gays and lesbians. He was also deeply committed to the fight against racism. In fact, his experiences in the military as a lecturer about equal rights had spurred him into making his decision to come out.

Matlovich was a very devout man. During his tour of duty in Vietnam, Matlovich converted from Catholicism to Mormonism and eventually became a minister. When he publicly came out, the Church of Latter Day Saints took him to an ecclesiastical court and eventually expelled him from the church.

With the money that he received in the settlement, Matlovich started a small restaurant whose specialty was pizza in Guerneville, Ca., but he quickly tired of being a restauteur and sold it “as soon as I could make some money on my investment”.

In September 1986, he was diagnosed with AIDS. Though he had been a long-term San Francisco resident, he finally decided to move to Hollywood in April 1988 because the hills of San Francisco were too much for him to navigate in his deteriorating condition. Less than two months later, on Wednesday, June 22, 1988, he died of AIDS in the home of a friend who was caring for him.

Scope and Content
This collection consists of correspondence, subject files, legal documents, photographs and personal mementos. The bulk of the collection is comprised of correspondence. The first series, for example, is correspondence from 1975 which he received after his story hit the national media. He arranged this incoming mail by the state or country of origin. His replies are filed with the letter to which he was responding.

The second series is general correspondence in from 1961-1987. The arrangement is chronological. It should be noted that Matlovich had imposed no order on the vast majority of his personal papers. Therefore, the order found here has been imposed by the GLHS staff member who arranged the collection.

The third series is also correspondence, but this series has been arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent and thereunder chronologically. Again, the arrangement was imposed by the staff member who processed the collection. The fourth series relates to his legal battle with the Air Force and includes copies of the various motions, briefs, orders, etc.

The fifth series is a subject series. Again, the order found here was imposed, as Matlovich had kept these materials in no discernible order.

The sixth series is comprised of photographs of Matlovich, his friends, and his family.

The seventh series contains audiotapes as well as videotapes, including a copy of the made for television movie Sgt. Matlovich vs. the United States Air Force.

Series eight consists of newspaper clippings arranged chronologically. The bulk of these are from October through December 1975.

The final series is comprised of mementos, including the shrapnel removed from him after a land mine explosion in Vietnam, various military medals and awards, t-shirts, buttons, etc.

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Series 1: Correspondence 1975

| Box 1, Folder 1 | Correspondence 1975 [Alabama] |
| Folder 2 | [Arizona] |
| Folder 3 | California [1 of 2] |
| Folder 4 | California [2 of 2] |
| Folder 5 | Colorado |
| Folder 6 | Connecticut |
| Folder 7 | Delaware |
| Folder 8 | Florida |
Series I : Correspondence 1975

Folder 9     ______, Georgia
Folder 10    ______, Hawaii
Folder 11    ______, Idaho
Folder 12    ______, Illinois
Folder 13    ______, Indiana
Folder 14    ______, Iowa
Folder 15    ______, Kansas
Folder 16    ______, Kentucky
Folder 17    ______, Louisiana
Folder 18    ______, Maine
Folder 19    ______, Maryland
Folder 20    ______, Massachusetts
Folder 21    ______, Michigan
Folder 22    ______, Minnesota
Folder 23    ______, Mississippi
Folder 24    ______, Missouri
Folder 25    ______, Nebraska
Folder 26    ______, Nevada
Folder 27    ______, New Hampshire
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Folder 30    ______, New York [1 of 2]
Folder 31    ______, New York [2 of 2]
Folder 32    ______, North Carolina
Folder 33    ______, North Dakota
Folder 34    ______, Ohio
Folder 35    ______, Oklahoma
Folder 36    ______, Oregon
Folder 37    ______, Pennsylvania
Folder 38    ______, Rhode Island
Folder 39    ______, South Carolina
Folder 40    ______, South Dakota
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Folder 43    ______, Vermont
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Folder 45    ______, Washington [State]
Folder 46    ______, Washington, D.C.
Folder 47    ______, West Virginia
Folder 48    ______, Wisconsin
Folder 49    ______, Canada
Folder 50    ______, Germany and Foreign
Folder 51    ______, [Address]

Series II : Correspondence In, 1961-1987

Box 1, Folder 52       Correspondence In, 1961-1974
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Folder 54    ______, 1976
Folder 55    ______, 1977
Folder 56    ______, January 1978 - July 1978
Folder 57    ______, August 1978
Folder 58    ______, September 1978
Folder 59    ______, October 1978
Folder 60    ______, November 1978
Folder 61    ______, 1 December 1978-15 December 1978
Folder 62    ______, 16 December 1978-31 December 1978
Folder 63    ______, January 1979 - February 1979
Folder 64    ______, March 1979 - April 1979
Folder 65
______, May 1979 - November 1979
Folder 66
______, December 1979
Folder 67
______, January 1980 - September 1980
Folder 68
______, October 1980
Folder 69
______, November 1980
Folder 70
______, 1 December 1980-15 December 1980
Folder 71
______, 16 December 1980-31 December 1980

Box 2, Folder 1
Correspondence In, 1981
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______, 1982-1987
Folder 3
______, Undated and/or Unidentified, A-M
Folder 4
______, Undated and/or Unidentified, N-Z

Series III : Correspondence

Box 2, Folder 5
Correspondence In, Allen, Joseph
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______, Alvarez, Manuel
Folder 7
______, Anelli, Joe G.
Folder 8
______, Betty (Aunt)
Folder 9
______, Biggs, Tim R.
Folder 10
______, Bill and Roger
Folder 11
______, Blair, Fred
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Folder 13
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______, Puryear, Mike
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Folder 28
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______, Timmie, Dave and Matthew
Folder 30
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Series IV : Air Force Case

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Folder 32
______, [Your Letter 6 March 75 Lt. Col. Ritchie 13 March 75]
Folder 33
______, [Your Letter 6 Mar 75 Col. Thorgersen 14 Mar 75]
Folder 34
Folder 35
______, [Letter of Notification Lt. Col. Ritchie 20 May 75 Discharge]
Folder 36
______, Request for Delay in Commenting on Referral Airman Performance. Reploy to
Lt. Col. Schofield 3 June 75
Folder 37
______, Rebuttal to Referral Airmans Performance Report 10 Jun 75
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______, Rebuttal to 1st Endorsing Official Referral Airman Performance Report 20
June 75
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______, Answer to Request for Delay AFM 39-12 Board Proceedings 21 July 75
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______, Message from Secretary of Air Force 21 Oct 75
Folder 42
______, Request for Delay in Discharge 21 Oct 75
Folder 43
______, Consideration for Promotion Lt. Col. Ritchie 1 Apr 75
Folder 44
______, Notice of Amended Hearing Date Lt. Col. Applegate 16 Jul 75
Folder 45
______, [Discharge Orders]
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Folder 52
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Folder 64
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Folder 65
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Series V : Subject Files

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   "Airboy" Comic Book, Signed
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Folder 71
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Folder 73
   Awards, Honors, etc.
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Folder 79
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Folder 80
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Folder 81
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Folder 82
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Folder 83
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Folder 84
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Folder 85
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Folder 86
   Enlisted Times, clippings, etc.
Folder 87
   Genealogy
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Folder 90
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Folder 100
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<td>Tommorow Entertainment, Inc. Sergeant Matlovich vs. the U.S. Air Force (Script) 9/10/76</td>
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<td>Tommorow Entertainment, Inc. Sergeant Matlovich vs. the U.S. Air Force (Script) 2/16/77</td>
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<td>_____, LM's Family Members</td>
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<td>The Tommorow Show, 1 Dec. 80</td>
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<td>154</td>
<td>Sergeant Matlovich vs. the U.S. Air Force</td>
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| 155    | Tapes:
Series VII: Audiotapes and Videotapes

- 3-3 mm reel-to-reel audiotapes
  - 1 cassette: “History of Racism”
  - 2 cassettes: BACABI May 12, Rally, Parts 1 & 2
  - 1 cassette: unidentified
  - 1 cassette: Matlovich Notes, 4/28/88

Series VIII: Newspaper Clippings

Additional Note
* Files hold oversized items from other parts of the collection

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<td>Folder 6</td>
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<td>Folder 7</td>
<td>_____, 1979</td>
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<td>Folder 8</td>
<td>_____, 1980</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 9</td>
<td>_____, 1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 10</td>
<td>_____, 1982-1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folder 11</td>
<td>_____, Date Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Box *4, Folder 12 | Air Force Case [Briefs, Statements, Memoranda] [1 of 2] |
| Folder 13         | _____, [2 of 2]                                      |
| Folder 14         | _____, Photocopy of Settlement Check                  |
| Folder 15         | Awards, Honors, etc.                                 |
| Folder 16         | U.S. Civil Service Commission : Personal Qualifications Statement |
| Folder 17         | Hawthorn Books Contract                               |

Series IX: Mementos, etc.

Additional Note
Because of the odd size and shape of these items, they are housed in two separate locations: Boxes 3 and 4.

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<td>Bronze Star</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dog Tags</td>
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<td>Pendants</td>
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<td></td>
<td>34 Patch</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rosary Beads</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buddha Figurine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bracelet: &quot;Mat&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bracelet: &quot;Len Matlovich&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political Buttons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-shirt: <em>Time</em> Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T-shirt: Fighting for Our Lives!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shrapnel</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4</th>
<th>Tambourine</th>
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