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## Guide to the Randy Alfred Subject Files and Sound Recordings

### Collection number: 1991-24

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

Processed by:

David M. Campbell

Date Completed:

October 1996

Encoded by:

Bill Landis

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### Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Randy Alfred subject files and sound recordings

**Dates:** 1974-1990

**Collection number:** 1991-24

**Creator:** Alfred, Randall H.

**Collection Size:** 22 boxes and 3 folders (approximately 22 linear feet)

**Repository:** Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society  
San Francisco, California 94105

**Abstract:** Randy Alfred was a freelance journalist and radio talk show host in the San Francisco area during the 1970s-1980s. Collection contains research files (clippings, fliers, brochures, correspondence, and notes) and audiotapes--primarily concerning lesbian and gay issues and organizations in San Francisco during the 1970s and 1980s--assembled by Alfred in the course of his hosting of the KSAN public affairs radio show *The Gay Life*.

**Languages:** Languages represented in the collection: English

### Access

Collection open for research.

### Publication Rights

Copyright to unpublished manuscript materials created by the donor has been transferred to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

### Preferred Citation

Randy Alfred subject files and sound recordings, 1991-24, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

### Acquisition Information

Donated by Randall H. Alfred, October 1991.

### Processing Information

Subject headings used in the Research Files series are generally those supplied by Alfred; different subject headings were supplied during processing only when the originals seemed inadequate. Readily available printed material, such as election guides for local and presidential elections and Gay Pride Parade programs were removed during processing.

### Biography

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Randall H. (Randy) Alfred is a freelance journalist and former radio talk show host in San Francisco, California. Alfred was educated at Yale University (B.A., magna cum laude, 1967) and the University of California, Berkeley (graduate student in Sociology, 1967-1969 and 1971-1974). He collected materials about gay and lesbian life in San Francisco as part of his research for journal articles and his radio talk show *The Gay Life*.

Alfred's mass media career began in 1970. During the 1970s he was a freelance writer for numerous magazines and newspapers, including *The Advocate*, *Coming Up*, *Vector*, *The Berkeley Barb*, *Playboy*, *New West*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *Oakland Tribune*.

In 1975, Alfred became a news editor for the *San Francisco Sentinel* and wrote the column "Waves from the Left." He remained with the *Sentinel* until 1977, when he became news editor for another local gay newspaper, *The San Francisco Bay Times*. Alfred left in 1978, and found work as a freelance researcher and reporter for KPIX-TV and KPFA-FM, two Bay Area broadcasting stations. During a previous radio stint, Alfred had been a public-affairs reporter for KPFA-FM from 1973-1974. From 1979 until 1981, Alfred did freelance work until he became editor-in-chief of the *Sentinel* in 1982. He also wrote for a nationally syndicated column known as "Dateline S.F." A year later, in 1983, Alfred became a story consultant for KRON-TV. From 1979-1984, Alfred was the producer and host for *The Gay Life*, a weekly 60-minute public affairs radio show on KSAN. He was also editor of Rip N'Read News Service in San Francisco from 1983-1986, and news writer for KRON-TV starting in 1986.

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

Includes primarily research files and reel-to-reel audiotapes documenting gay and lesbian life, events, and issues in San Francisco in the 1970s and 1980s, including the early years of the AIDS epidemic. Also includes photographs of Harvey Milk and others, and 1978 gay pride parades in San Francisco and Berkeley. Research files comprise primarily clippings, fliers, brochures, correspondence, and notes made by Alfred.

### **Arrangement**

This collection is arranged in two series:

- Series 1. Research files
- Series 2. "The Gay Life" audiotapes

### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection.

Alfred, Randall H.

*The Gay Life* (radio talk show)

Gay men

Gay men--Social life and customs

Lesbians

Lesbians--Social life and customs

AIDS (Disease)

Talk shows

Audiotapes

Clippings

Correspondence

Fliers (printed matter)

Printed ephemera

California--San Francisco (county)--San Francisco

Boxes 1-9 Series 1 **Research files 1974-1990 1977-1984**

**Physical Description:** Approximately 9 linear feet (9 boxes of textual materials and 1 folder of photographs)

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

Subject files pertain primarily to the gay and lesbian community in San Francisco. Alfred used his research files for journal articles and *The Gay Live*, his radio talk show. Topics include political, sexual, cultural, and religious subjects, such as gay liberation and mainstream gay political organizations; sado-masochism, bisexuality, and man-boy love; books and film; gay religious organizations; gay businesses and community organizations; local and national political leaders; academic issues and professional interests. A small number of subject files concern gay and lesbian life in other major American cities and foreign countries. Alfred's writing on a variety of subjects, from nuclear power initiatives to mayoral contests, always looked at issues from the perspective of the gay and lesbian community, and the impacts of particular issues on gays and lesbians. Materials in this series include handwritten and typed correspondence, both incoming and outgoing; note cards; drafts of articles; surveys; state and municipal reports; magazine articles; book reviews; pamphlets; campaign ephemera; fliers from events, rallies, and demonstrations; and clippings.

Of particular note in this series are several files documenting the trial of the individuals who murdered Robert Hillsborough in 1977, a hate crime clearly motivated by Anita Bryant's homophobic campaigns. Alfred covered the trials for the *Bay Times* and KSAN-FM radio and took extensive notes while in the courtroom.

The series also includes 3 folders of photographs of Harvey Milk and others, and 1978 gay pride parades in San Francisco and Berkeley. In the final 2 boxes of this series are files containing clippings, articles, and printed ephemera concerning AIDS, Alfred's AIDS-related correspondence and notes, and reports from conferences and seminars. AIDS-related materials primarily cover the period 1981-1987. Several files at the end of box 9 relate to the KSAN-FM radio program *The Gay Life*.

**Arrangement**

Files are arranged alphabetically by subject, with 2 boxes of chronologically arranged files on the AIDS epidemic, and several files on *The Gay Life* at the end.

**Other Finding Aids**

A list of the file headings in this series is available at the GLBT Historical Society.

**Processing Note**

Topical headings used in this series are generally those supplied by the creator. Headings were supplied during processing when it was determined that the original headings would be meaningless to future researchers.

Boxes 11-23 (the Series 2 *The Gay Life* audiotapes 1977-1984

is no Box 10)

**Physical Description:** 13 linear feet (13 boxes of sound recordings)

**Series Scope and Content Summary**

Series includes approximately 95 reel-to-reel audiotapes and 2 CD-ROMs of broadcasts of the radio talk show *The Gay Life*, for which Alfred served as the host. Broadcasts typically lasted for an hour. Topics include Harvey Milk and the memorial services following Milk's assassination; pride parades and activities; gay men and lesbian health issues; San Francisco area political, community, and athletic organizations for gay men and lesbians; theatrical and dance companies and performances; and interviews with gay and lesbian authors and activists.

**Arrangement**

This series is arranged chronologically.

**Other Finding Aids**

A list of broadcast dates and some talk show topics is available at the GLBT Historical Society.