Guide to the Alan Amberg Gay History Collection 1924-2008
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Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.AMBERGA

Title  Amberg, Alan. Gay History Collection

Date  1924-2008

Size  9.75 linear feet (12 boxes)

Repository  Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract  The materials in this collection were gathered by Alan Amberg as well as his partner, the late Jerry Cohen. Materials cover a wide range of gay and lesbian subject matter, including the beginnings of the Gay Pride Movement in Chicago in the early 1970s; Chicago gay and lesbian organizations and culture during the 1970s-1990s; a substantial amount of material on the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights (October 11, 1987); gay and lesbian publications from the 1970s to the first decade of the 21st century; as well as a modest collection of "The Little Blue Book" series (1924-1930), with volumes that focus on marriage and sex. Although the collection contains some personal papers, especially correspondence relating to Cohen’s death, the bulk of the material consists of newsletters, articles, clippings, reports, and audio-visual selections. Materials date from 1924 to 2008, with the bulk of the materials dating from the 1970 to 2000.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Amberg, Alan. Gay History Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Biographical Note

Alan Amberg, born on May 10th, 1963, founded LesBiGay Radio in 1994; in 1998, the organization was inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame. Amberg was also a columnist for Gay Chicago Magazine, writing on various subjects related to gay and lesbian business. In addition to his accomplishments in journalism and radio, in 2003 Amberg taught Women’s and Gender Studies at the Humboldt University of Berlin and the University of Bremen.
His partner Jerrold "Jerry" Cohen (1943 – 1991) was the co-founder and Treasurer of the Chicago Gay Alliance, co-founder of the Chi-Town Squares (a gay and lesbian square dance organization), and Treasurer of Toddlin' Town Performing Arts. Cohen was also an accomplished photographer throughout the gay and lesbian community, contributing his work to the Chicago Gay Alliance Newsletter, the Chicago Gay Crusader, GayLife, BlueBoy, Man's Country, the International Mr. Leather competitions, and others. He even established his own photography studio, A Thousand Words, Unlimited. Cohen began his deep involvement in gay and lesbian community life in 1969 by attending the University of Chicago gay liberation meetings; he was posthumously inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame in 1993.

**Scope Note**

The Alan Amberg Gay History Collection is organized into 7 series:

**Series I: Personal Papers**; this series contains, primarily, correspondence concerning the death of Amberg’s partner, Jerry Cohen, as well as buttons related to gay and lesbian rights initiatives in the 1980s. Materials date from 1980 to 2002 and are arranged chronologically.

**Series II: Subject Files**; this series contains newsletters, correspondence, clippings, etc., related to specific publications, organizations, and events, including Advocates of Gay Action, the International Gay and Lesbian Archives, and the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. Materials date from 1924 to 2007 and are arranged alphabetically by title.

**Series III: Writings**; this series contains Amberg’s articles, speeches, and presentations, primarily his column entitled "Our Business" featured in Gay Chicago Magazine. Materials date from 1991 to 2003 and are arranged first alphabetically by title, then chronologically.

**Series IV: Writings by Others**; the primary item in this series is a typescript draft of Eric Presland’s play entitled The Tea Trolley, or A Midsummer Night Scream (1983). Materials date from 1983 to 1991 and are arranged alphabetically by author’s last name.

**Series V: Jerry Cohen Papers**; this series contains correspondence and clippings related to Jerry Cohen’s photography for International Mr. Leather, Blueboy Inc., and other gay publications and organizations. Materials date from 1975 to 1982 and are arranged chronologically.

**Series VI: Audio-Visual**; this series contains music, videos, and recordings of gay and lesbian culture and concerns, including the Chicago Gay Men’s Chorus, the Chicago Gay Pride Parade, and Chicago gay history. Materials date from 1970 to 2008 and are arranged first by type, then alphabetically by title.
Series VII: Oversize; this series contains clippings, photographs, and posters pertaining to various subjects, including LesBiGay Radio, the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. Materials date from 1970 to 2000 and are arranged first by type, then chronologically.

Related Resources
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

ACT UP Chicago. Records

LesBiGay Radio. Records [unprocessed]

Cohen, Jerry. Photograph Collection

Subject Headings
- Gays -- United States -- Political activity
- Gays -- United States -- Social conditions
- Lesbians -- United States -- Social conditions
- Lesbians -- United States -- Political activity

INVENTORY
Series I: Personal

Box 1
Folder 1
Box 1
Folder 2
Twelve Step Program – Correspondence and Pamphlets, 1983-1985
Box 1
Folder 3
Omicron Delta Kappa (￿Δ￿) – Alumni Highlights, circa 1991
Box 1
Folder 4
Correspondence – Condolences related to Jerry Cohen’s death, 1992
Box 1
Folder 5
Correspondence – South Shore Hospital HIV Program, 2002
Box 1
Folder 6
Business Cards, undated
Folder 7
Doral Plaza – Brochures, undated

Series II: Subject Files

Box 1
Folder 8
Advocates of Gay Action – Pamphlets and Advertisements, circa 1972

Box 1
Folder 9
Chicago Gay Alliance – Newsletters, 1970-1971

Box 1
Folder 10

Box 1
Folder 11
Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame – Correspondence, Nomination Form, and Newsletter, 1993

Box 1
Folder 12
Chicago Gay Liberation – Newsletters, 1970

Box 1
Folder 13
Chicago Medicine Magazine, 2004-2005

Box 1
Folder 14
Chi-Town Squares – Correspondence, Clippings, and Newsletters, 1988-1990

Box 1
Folder 15
Chi-Town Squares – Photographs, 1988-1990

Box 2
Folder 1

Box 2
Folder 2
Deathwatch – Play by Genet – Advertisement, undated

Box 2
Folder 3
Democratic Party of Illinois – Correspondence, Clippings, Press Releases, 1990

Box 2
Folder 4

Box 2
Folder 5
Diverse Communications and Health Media Foundation, Inc., 2003

Box 2
Folder 7

Box 2
Folder 8
Gay Liberation – Newsletter, 1970

Box 2
Folder 9

Box 2
Folder 10
Gay Pride Movement – Related Organizations – Correspondence, Newsletters, and Pamphlets, 1980-1986

Box 2
Folder 11
Himages: Original Designs by Bruce Cegar – Advertisements, Order Form, and Photographs, 1980

Box 2
Folder 12
International Gay and Lesbian Archives – Newsletters, 1981-1984

Box 2
Folder 13

Box 3
Folder 1
Little Blue Books, 1924-1930

Box 3
Folder 2
Man’s Country Pin-Up Calendar – Notes and Calendar, 1976

Box 3
Folder 3
Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center, 2004 [1/2]

Box 3
Folder 4
Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center, 2004 [1/2]

Box 3
Folder 5
Moderator’s Guide – Begin Again, 2000

Box 3
Folder 6

Box 3
Folder 7

Box 3
Folder 8
Shared Practices: Managing Patients Living with HIV/AIDS, 2007 [1/2]

Box 3
Folder 9

Box 3
Folder 10
Shocking Gray – Gay and Lesbian Catalog, 1991

Box 4
Folder 1
Teaching in Germany – Correspondence and Reading Materials, 1990-2002

Box 4
Folder 2
Toddlin’ Town Performing Arts, Inc. – Correspondence, Reports, and Budgets, 1980-1983

Box 4
Folder 3
Travel Guides for London and San Francisco, 1980-1983

Box 4
Folder 4
University of Maryland – Gay and Lesbian Jewish Life – Newsletters and Clippings, 1984-1988

Box 4
Folder 5
University of Maryland – Gay Organizations and Events – Correspondence, Announcements, and Clippings, 1981-1982

Box 4
Folder 6

Series III: Writings

Box 4
Folder 7
Case Presentation: A Low Cost Complete Social Marketing Infrastructure – Printed Copies of Powerpoint Presentation, 2003

Box 4
Folder 8
Gays and Lesbians Reinvent "Family Values" – Conscious Choice – Clippings, 1992

Box 4
Folder 9
Keeping the Promises You Make… – National Minority AIDS Council – Printed Copies of Powerpoint Presentation, undated
Folder 10

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Folder 14
Speeches – Monograph and Typescript Drafts, 1981-1987

Box 5
Folder 15

Box 5
Folder 16
Working With Creative Professionals – Talking to the Boss – Photocopies, 1992

Series IV: Writings by Others
Box 6
Folder 1
Jay Mortensen – Color Trends Drawn from Global Influences – Photocopies, 1991

Box 6
Folder 2

Box 6
Folder 3
Unidentified Scripts, undated

Series V: Jerry Cohen Papers

Box 6
Folder 4
Gay Press Association – Correspondence, Monograph Notes, Newsletters, and Clippings, 1975-1981

Box 6
Folder 5
Published Photographs by Jerry Cohen – Blueboy, Clothesdick, and Numbers – Magazines and Clippings, 1977-1982

Box 6
Folder 6
International Mr. Leather and Blueboy Inc. – Correspondence and Monograph Notes, 1980-1981

Series VI: Audio-Visual

Box 7
Audio Cassette - Ain’t it a Grand and Glorious Noise! - San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus, 1980

Box 7
Audio Cassette - Take Control: The result is in you (2 Copies), 1999

Box 7
Audio Cassette - Toma Control: El resultado está en tí (2 Copies), 1999

Box 7
Audio Cassette - What's it Mean?: HIV Lab Tests & You, 2000

Box 7
Audio Cassette - ¿Qué Significa?: Pruebas de Laboratorios para ti y el V.I.H., 2000

Box 7
Audio Cassette - 5 Unlabeled Cassette Tapes

Box 7
CD - Boy George and Culture Club: at Worst… the Best of, 1993

Box 7
CD - Cher: Believe, 1998

Box 7
CD - Catie Curtis: Truth from Lies, 1996

Box 7
CD - Melissa Etheridge: Your Little Secret, 1995
Box 7
CD - Michael Feinstein: Pure Gershwin, 1987
Box 7
CD - George Friedrich Handel: Concerti a du cori, 1997
Box 7
CD - Eddie Izzard: Definite Article, 1996
Box 7
CD - Eddie Izzard: Unrepeatable Live, 1995
Box 7
CD - Paula James: Special Request, 2002
Box 7
CD - Nedra Johnson: Testify, 1998
Box 7
CD - Patti LaBelle: Love Songs, 2000
Box 7
Box 7
CD - K.D. Lang: Shadowland, 1988
Box 7
CD – Stephen Lewis - Massey Lectures: Race Against Time, 2005
Box 7
CD - George Michael: Faith, 1987
Box 7
CD - Bette Midler: Experience the Divine, 1993
Box 7
CD - Morrissey: The Best Of, 2001
Box 7
CD - RuPaul: Supermodel of the World, 1993
Box 7
CD - Suzanne Palmer, 1999
Box 7
CD – Various Artists - The Derivative Duo: Opera for the masses, 1993
Box 7
CD – Various Artists - Glad to be Gay, 1998
Box 7
CD – Various Artists - I Am Woman, 1996
Box 7
CD – Various Artists - Jeffrey Soundtrack, 1995
Box 7
CD - Village People: The Best Of, 1994
Box 7
CD – Honey West: Take Honey West Home, 1997
Box 8
VHS - A Beautiful Mind/Queer Eyes, undated
Box 8
VHS - Chicago Gay Men’s Chorus: H.M.S. Pinafore, 2000
Box 8
VHS - Chicago Pride Invitational: Our Crowning Touch, 1999
Box 8
VHS - Chitrahar, July 24, 2004
Box 8
VHS - Chitrahar, December 18, 2004
Box 8
VHS - For My Kids & Good Safe Loving - Diverse Communications, 2004
Box 8
VHS - For My Kids & Good Safe Loving - Diverse Communications, 2004
Box 8
VHS - For My Kids & Good Safe Loving - Diverse Communications, 2004
Box 8
VHS - For My Kids & Good Safe Loving - Diverse Communications, 2004
Box 8
VHS - Kevin’s Room, 2001
Box 8
VHS - Kevin’s Room 2 - Trust, 2003
Box 9
VHS - Oprah/Ellen, undated
Box 9
Box 9
VHS - The Times of Harvey Milk, 1984
Box 9
VHS - Velvet Goldmine, 1998
Box 9
Box 9
Betamax Digital Video Cassette - Boat Cruise Along Chicago Lakefront - Color Silent, 3:47 Minutes, 1970 (For Access to Master and Copy, Please See Staff)
Box 9
Betamax Digital Video Cassette - Allerton Park PKMC and Gay Pride Parade - Color Silent, 29:01 Minutes, 1970 (For Access to Master and Copy, Please See Staff)
Box 9
Betamax Digital Video Cassette - Gay Pride Parade - Color Silent, 9:37 Minutes, 1970 (For Access to Master and Copy, Please See Staff)
Box 10
Film Reel - Boat Cruise Along Chicago Lakefront - Color Silent, 3:47 Minutes, 1970
Box 10
Film Reel - Allerton Park PKMC and Gay Pride Parade - Color Silent - 29:01 Minutes, 1970
Box 10
Film Reel - Gay Pride Parade - Color Silent, 9:37 Minutes, 1970
DVD - Hedwig and the Angry Inch, 2001

Box 10
DVD - Kevin’s Room I & II, 2003

Box 10
DVD - Out & Proud in Chicago, 2008

Box 10
DVD - Overcoming Addictions and Barriers, 2005

Series VII: Oversize

Box 11
Folder 1
Banner - Gay Pride Banner, circa 1970

Box 11
Folder 2
Clippings – Chicago Gay Liberation, 1970

Box 11
Folder 3
Clippings – Chicago Gay Pride, 1971

Box 11
Folder 4
Clippings – Gay and Lesbian Entertainment, 1975-1992

Box 11
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Box 11
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Box 11
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Box 11
Folder 10
Clippings – Democratic Party of Illinois, 1990

Box 11
Folder 11

Box 11
Folder 12
Clippings – Outlines, 1990

Box 12
Folder 1
  Clippings – Windy City Times, 1990
Box 12
Folder 2
Box 12
Folder 3
  Clippings – USA Today – Gay Rights, 1993
Box 12
Folder 4
Box 12
Folder 5
Box 12
Folder 6
  Windy City Times – Radio Free Chicago, 1999
Box 12
Folder 7
  Photograph - The Importance of Being Earnest – Photograph by Jennifer Girard, 1990
Box 12
Folder 8
  Poster - Chicago Gay Men's Chorus Presents: H.M.S. Pinafore, 2000
Box 12
Folder 9
  Poster - Sam Barber: Exhibition of Recent Paintings, 2000
Box 12
Folder 10
  Poster - LesBiGay Radio: Live on the Belmont Stage, undated
Box 12
Folder 11
  Poster - LesBiGay Radio Chicago, undated