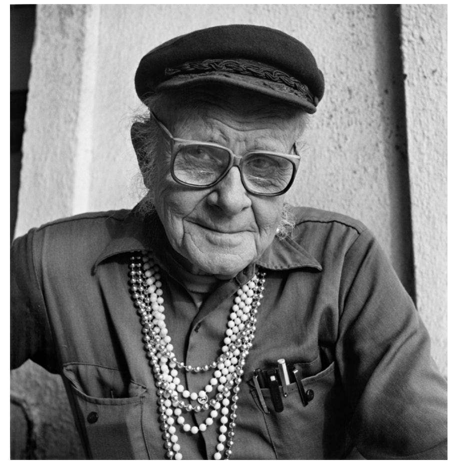
Harry Hay, “Statement of Purpose—Gay Liberation Front, Los Angeles, California” (1969)

After the Stonewall Riots emboldened the LGBTQ+ community, Gay Rights organizations arose throughout the country. The below document, written by longtime activist Harry Hay, is a statement of purpose for one such organization: The Gay Liberation Front of Los Angeles.



Harry Hay (Photo by Robert Giard)

History: 1969 was the Year of the New Homosexual. During that year new groups, projecting a militant, activist, and determined viewpoint, began to spring up around the country: Committee for Homosexual Freedom, San Francisco; Gay Liberation Front, New York; Gay Liberation Front, Berkeley; Gay Liberation Front, Minneapolis—new ones every week, with the current count at twenty-five. During December 1969, Gay Liberation Front, Los Angeles, was Founded.

Community of Interest: We are in total opposition to America’s white racism, to poverty, hunger, the systematic destruction of our patrimony; we oppose the rich getting richer, the poor getting poorer, and are in total opposition to wars of aggression and imperialism, whoever pursues them. We support the demands of Blacks, Chicanos, Orientals, Women, Youth, Senior Citizens, and others demanding their full rights as human beings. We join in their struggle, and shall actively seek coalition to pursue these goals.

Philosophy: We say that homosexuality is a perfectly natural state, a fact, a way of life, and that we enjoy our sexuality, without feelings of inferiority or guilt. We seek and find love, and approach love, as a feeling of loving mutuality. We refuse to engage in discussion of causation, “Sickness” (A LIE!), degree of sexuality, or any other Establishment Hang-Ups. We accept ourselves with total self-respect, and respect our associates as they are, not what some social arbiter says they should be.

Self-liberation: One of our foremost goals is to bring all sexual beings into total acceptance of their sexuality. We believe that homosexuals can best serve themselves by accepting the total naturallness of their homosexuality. We believe that, as quickly as possible, homosexuals should find ways to inform their friends, families, employers, and associates of their homosexuality, that through this confrontation mights come freedom from gossip, blackmail, guilt feelings, and self-destruction.

Action: We shall go immediately and militantly to the defense of one another and any homosexual deprived of his [sic] right to a joyful, useful, and personal life. Street actions are now organized, more will come; we shall not waste our energies, however, on irrelevant issues. Our goal is—total liberation—life is for the living!

((Power to the People))