

History of the Faeries (including: *Murray Edelman, Joey Cain, and Agnes de Garron*)

January 15th 2012

<http://vimeo.com/35171786>

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Summary: Joey Cain, Murray Edelman and Agnes de Garron pass down their understanding of early faerie beginnings – personally and generally. Before the first gathering, The “First Gathering” and discussed the role Harry Hay played in the formation of the Radical Faeries as well as feedback and discussion from many faeries present at this circle – held at the William Way LGBT Center on January 15th 2012 during the Philadelphia Faerie MLK Gatherette.

Body:

Joey Cain: “My name is Joey Cain and I live in San Francisco. I have been involved with the faeries since about 1980 and was very involved with Harry Hay and John Burnside in their care in San Francisco. I was part of the group that moved them up from LA and took care of them in the last ten years of their lives. I have been researching not just Radical Faerie history, but what I call the roots of the Radical Faeries, which implies that there is a set of values that we share as Radical Faeries and there is an actual historical precedent for those values as gay men have come from. So part of my larger project is starting with Walt Whitman, who I do see as the sort of inventor of not just modern gay male consciousness, but I think of a particular way of men viewing themselves. Starting with him I have traced it through Edward Carpenter, who I talked about yesterday. I was invited to be on this panel without knowing it. So I threw together a few notes. I am going to start, I think, and I’m going to do some early first gathering background. It is my belief that history is very local and that the history I have, I have

been based in San Francisco for a long time, is really the history of the San Francisco Radical Faeries, and maybe even more so, the West Coast. I think every city and every locale has their own faerie history and what I'd like to do is maybe give us a chance to share some of that history. Murray, who has been very involved in New York and Agnes, who is very involved in San Francisco and then New York, is going to talk. But I would like to open it up and give every a chance to contribute to the history dialogue. "

Peter "speck" Lien: I just want to say I am videotaping. Does anyone object to videotaping?

JC: In 1969, there was a great riot in New York City called the Stonewall Riot. In a way, that was a watershed event in our community. And again, I am only really speaking about the gay male community. I don't presume to speak for the lesbian community, the transgender community, or the bisexual community. Although that was a watershed moment, there had been lots of stuff going on before hand. And of course there had been a tremendous amount of stuff afterwards. One of the things that the stonewall riot provided was us taking our liberation into our own hands, forming our communities, being out there fighting for our own, not only our own rights, but actively creating our shared community. Throughout the fifties and sixties, and it even continues now, there has been a historical dichotomy within the queer movement. There have been the people who have said no we are just like straight people, we just need to change a few laws and we are really individuals. And then there are other people who have said no: we are a community; we have shared psychologies; often a shared language; very often a shared geography. And that is the tradition that the Radical Faeries has come out of. I think with the Faeries, we have meld both those things and it can be messy. I am hoping that we are moving towards being able to integrate communalism and individualism.

So stonewall happened and Gay Liberation Front was a product of that, and one of the things Gay Liberation Front found was an incredible tool for organizing was consciousness raising groups. These were gay men and often lesbians talking about their lives on a deep level, not just who I fucked last Saturday, but on a deep heart felt level. And that was a building tool for Gay Liberation Fronts all across the United States. You move into the mid-seventies and there is this phenomenon where you

suddenly have an incredibly successful burgeoning gay “ghettos” in cities. There are the gay discos, the clone look and by the end of the seventies a lot of people who had been involved in the initial gay liberation impulse and had been political activist were starting to feel that there was a bit of, what I call, a vapidness entering into the gay community, shallowness had sort of come in. We really were really just about partying and hairdos and clothes.

Out of that, a group of gay men started to talk to each other, centered around Harry Hay. Harry Hay for those of you who don't know was really the theoretician and one of the founders of the Mattachine Society in 1950. He had continued to be involved in the gay community. Around the early 70s, just after Gay Liberation, Harry was corresponding with young gay radicals across the country, specifically a man named Carl Whitman, who was living up in Oregon. Carl had written a very influential paper on gay liberation very early on. The two of them corresponded through most of the early seventies. In the mid-seventies through Jonathan Ned Katz's book *Gay American History* and the film *Word is Out*, Harry Hay was sort of re-discovered by the Gay Liberation generation as a communist, as someone who said we are unique as gay people and we need to look at our own culture and look at who we are to achieve our own liberation. Two people, having rediscovered him, started to write to him. One was a Gay Liberationist out of Los Angeles named Don Kilhefner. Don had been instrumental in creating the gay community center in Los Angeles. By the late seventies he was teaching a class called *Gay Visions and Voices*, where he went back and took writings by people like Whitman and Carpenter, by Aleister Crowley, by Lee Heflin, by gay visionaries. Gay men would sit together and read this as a way of starting to explore what is it that is unique about us and what do we have to contribute to the larger society.

Harry and Don corresponded and Don went to visit him. Harry at this time is living in New Mexico at San Juan Pueblo. He had been very involved in Native American land rights issues at the time. A little bit after Don, a man named Mitch Walker, who was involved in Jungian psychology at the University of Berkeley, also started to contact Harry and also went to visit him. And the three of these folks found themselves all sort of on the same page: about who we are as gay people; where do we go next; what is the next step? And so the three of them, alongside John Burnside, who was Harry Hay's companion and partner since

1963, decided to call a national gathering. And they planned the food, where it would be held. They found a place in Arizona that was an ashram. They put together a call; they discussed what would be the name. Harry had been using the name Faerie and Radical Faerie since the late sixties and he and John actually, I should interject, I hope I am not going to fast here, had a group that they called the Circle of Loving Companions, which they started in '63. It was a legitimate group although most of the time it was just Harry and John. So, it was a circle of two. They would include other people who shared their vision. So they put together a call. They decided to use Radical Faerie on the call. And if people were over at Albo's the other day and saw Pizza's fabulous exhibit, there was a copy of the original call. And it was a spiritual gathering of, a call to gay brothers of a spiritual gathering for Radical Faeries.

That first gathering they were expecting fifty people to show up and over two hundred plus people showed up. It was a vivid awakening for most of the attendees to suddenly see other gay men as having this concept of gay men as having a political and spiritual component and an activist component. It brought together people who had been doing various things all over the country. There were a lot of streams that flowed into the first gathering. I'm not going to go too much into that, but I know in San Francisco we had a group called the Radical Sissies and there was still the remnants of Gay Liberation. There were radical Feminists. There were people involved in gay centered spiritual practices. I had been involved in a group called the Ordo Templi Orientis, which was a ceremonial sex magic order that had been reorganized by Aliester Crowley back in the '10s and '20s and it was one of the few ceremonial magic groups that had what they would call "the gay degree" and I and several other people who had been initiated into that order were reactivating that degree; it was called the eleventh degree. There were also people that were involved in feminist Wicca. There were folks involved in traditional Wicca, witchcraft. There were people involved in Eastern Mysticism and now I'm starting to identify where the folks came from who came to this gathering. And Murray, who was at the gathering, can probably go into it a little bit better than I can. Most were leftist; they shared left-wing communist values. They had feminist orientations. Their spiritual practices were everything from humanism and atheism to, like I said, the Crowley, the Wicca,

Eastern Mysticism, Maharishi, there was a lot of folks who had been politically engaged. They had either been in political campaigns locally or they had been involved in anarchist politics or they were involved in setting up alternative communities, communes both in the city and the country. There was a men's movement at this point, which a lot of gay men had been going to their conferences. One of the general principals or shared values was the idea that it was for gay people that were not assimilations. To put it simply, what that really means is do we just assimilate into the hetero culture and change a few laws and that essentially where are the same as straight people except for the things we do in bed. Or are we a full cultural minority that has a unique psychology and perspective on the world. And by developing that, we don't assimilate into the dominant culture, but we create our own culture, which then becomes part of a multiplicity, a polymorphous culture. And the faeries were focused on that track, the creation of a non-assimilationist gay male community and culture.

The conference, it was actually called a conference, not a gathering went on for three days and there are famous photographs on the mud ritual and again I'll let Murray talk more about that. Out of that gathering, it was like seeds spread to the wind. People went from that gathering back to their cities and towns and started to hold faerie circles and other gay men who had not been at that gathering started to attend these circles. In San Francisco, the circle involved a heart circle where people would come together and hold hands and do a bit of a meditation and then do the heart circle process. It was also involve some food. This went in Portland and Seattle and all over the West Coast and that is really the kernels of what we are doing today sprang from. And from that I want to turn it over to my two co-presenters here.

Murray Edelman: As you know, when you put two faeries together you get three stories. I am going to give you my view. And Joey gave you the general history as people say it; I want to give you my view and experience. I want to start a little bit by talking about a pre-faerie conference. The image I got when I start this is 1965, now how many of you were alive then. Well, it was a while ago. In 1965, around February, I was in a paddy wagon in Washington, DC. Why? Well, I just turned 21 and had discovered through, a whole other seminar, my first gay bar. In the 1960s, you didn't know those kinds of things. At that bar there was some party afterwards that I went to. I went to this party and for the

first time in my life I saw two men dancing and the whole concept of men dancing was not part of my world. It was all men and women; I had no sense of what gay life was. I discovered gay bars and I could, well that's a whole other seminar as I said. But the point I am trying to make is that the world that lived and experienced. I am doing this because I have told some stories I have been involved in the Naraya, which is a whole other seminar. I found that people are hungry for what it is like, that we were real people in those days. We had real experiences as you are now. And perhaps in 20 or 30 years people will be talking about this time. Our perceptions of the world were different then. At that time, I was just becoming aware of my sexuality. I remember being really thrilled at the idea of, I saw two men dancing. I was attracted to them. I found myself getting hard and turned on. Then there were clicks and I was like oh that is why people dance. I had been dancing with women and had no clue what that was all about. Right then these men stood up all around and they came out and said, "you are all under arrest." Here I was being marched out into a paddy wagon. I just stated a job with the government. I had just signed something that said I had no homosexual feelings because that's what you had to do to work with the government. At some point on the ride down, I started humming "we shall overcome" and people picked it up and we sang it. I like telling that story; it came to me years later, I remembering it.

That was the first impulse of what became a life's work. There was something connecting. The setting of the time brought about that possibility. That was gay life then. If you went to a bar or something, you could be arrested easily. I remember at some point in 1968 the Chicago tribute, there had been a raid of a bathhouse, listed everybody who was at the bathhouse. It destroyed their lives, careers, and families. That was the time. Then in December of 1969, I had tried other things along the way and I had some impulse there had been something in me that was calling for something more, that we could do more. And I had connected with a friend Henry Wiemhoff, while I was a student at the University of Chicago. He had told me about Stonewall, he showed me the Village Voice article and we had talked for a while. We then started a group in Chicago. We had a few meetings. They were not that different from Heart Circles; people would talk about what it was being gay, what the experience was. I remember people slowly came to a realization that we were keeping ourselves down. We didn't know quite what would

happen if we stepped out into the world. We kept that question going around. What we decided is that a couple of us would start coming out. So we got this button that said, "out of the closets and into the streets." And so we summoned our courage and did that for a week. And people came back and said that the reaction was that it was really hard doing it but no one knew what the button meant. People thought it was marijuana, or this or that. So we gradually increased and people kept coming and coming. People were coming from seminars and discovering their sexuality.

I don't want to go too far, but I do want to talk about it because for me that was so much the seeds of the Faerie is that the early Gay Liberation movement. In so many ways it is the seeds of the movement. It's the sense of possibility. It's the sense of openness. We had meetings. We didn't have leaders. We had unofficial leaders, a whole other thing we could get into. But it provided a space for someone like me, who was pretty much excluded during my early years and not much a leadership to step up and other people like that. We didn't have the pullback because of the structure. I don't want to go too much into Chicago, but I want to talk about the sense of discovery. We would do things like a dance, and we had 500 people come and the meeting just kept growing. At first it was the university, and then it became Chicago Gay Liberation and then people from Wisconsin and Minnesota were coming. It just kept escalating. I'm sure New York was similar. I went to some of the New York meetings. There was a sense that we were stepping into something that we were connecting to each other and we had power together. It was a discovery of who we were and it created a change in us. Like I had the courage to talk to friends and tell them that I was gay because I had a sense of support and I had a feeling about myself and initially I had anger and a lot of other stuff and it was through what Joey mentioned, the consciousness raising, the heart circles, whatever you want to call them. Small groups of people talking about what their experiences are and putting the pieces together, you know, it's one thing to say there was this movement and these consciousness groups happened, it's another thing to be in it. It's in this process that you make connections and you see something bigger and possibilities. That was what was going on.

I left Chicago in 73. Partly what happened was that initial impulse of the gay liberation movement, really moved around us and we beat our

heads together and then it died around us for a while. We had racism to deal with. We have sexism to deal with, all the isms. And they can turn you against each other, as well as outside as I am sure many of you know. And then I went to San Francisco. And San Francisco in 1973, 1974, 1975, it was a magnet for gay men and women from all over the country. It was a time when a lot of the early Gay Liberation people went to San Francisco as well. We were all looking for something. One of the people I met there was Arthur Evans. Arthur was a major Gay Activist Alliance member. That was a group in New York. Arthur was outspoken, he had courage and he was sure of who he was. There was this idea of Gay Liberation and then this idea of freedom. It was an experience of the possibilities of what we could do together. And that too me still excites. What happens when we are aligned around a possibility or an idea? It's amazing. So anyway, it was a time of experimenting. I had received a PhD in psychology.

I had started doing weekend retreats and counter-groups with gay men. And that was pretty new and exciting. We would have ten or twelve men for the weekend. On Friday night we would have some pairing and you know some getting the lay of the land. Saturday morning we would start it by asking what happened last night. People would start talking about the feeling they were having about the jealousy and attraction they were having. We just kept going all day. There was a lot of chanting. There was a lot of stuff in the environment, this was San Francisco. There was a lot of spirituality. I took acid for the first time. Arthur was the scholar and he was doing research into *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture*. We had a lot of talks about it. For me, it was really exciting when he would talk about our history because I didn't have any clue about this kind of stuff. For me, I was just inventing as I went because that was what Gay Liberation was. We didn't know we had much of history. I discovered Walt Whitman and Edward Carpenter much later. The history filled in as we learned more. We started having gay historians like Alan Berube and John D'Emilio. We talked about it. He gave a lecture series when his book came out and I said you know I think we should start a group. He said what are we going to do. I told him about my groups and said I guarantee we'll keep a group busy. Next thing I know, a month later he has a group together. So we form a group. He calls it the faerie circle because the group is about the faeries. Someone said, "I was in this Native American thing and we passed this talisman around"

and so we started doing that. And so we passed it around and people talked about what we talk about. That led to ceremonies, we had one at someone's house a week or so later. It looked like a Friday night at one level. We started with ritual and chanting and it became sexual and relaxed. For me, it was healing because my whole sexuality had been in the box. And here was this really nice and easy way to meet someone. I just remembered this guy and I watched him dance and we had this wonderful night together and there was this feeling that we could heal this division that we have as gay men. The way we objectify each other. The way we are so separate. That became more of a reality as our group continued. We had ritual at Land's end. We did naming rituals. In this San Francisco community, we began taking on new names as a way of creating new identities. We lived collectively. We had the same issues. We also did a group at the bathhouse. There was a place called Sutro Baths and we met there. We were into experimenting. It was a bathhouse that wasn't used a whole lot. They had an outdoor space. They had a Jacuzzi. At one point, there were 20 or 30 of us naked in the Jacuzzi chanting and that took me to a whole other place. That was something. It's the connections. This is where our sexuality could go. We did that a couple of times. It got to me. Being together like that. In those days that was it, there was no alternative.

The joke was that we became homophiles and we wanted to become homosexuals. The sexual had gotten lost. With the faeries it came together. From that I decided to combine my experience with therapy techniques with what I had been experiencing and I turned it into a different night at the baths. That became popular but took a really big drain. I learned a new phrase, "top drop." When you are building something there is so much work and you're the focus of all this energy and attention and then it is all gone. I had trouble dealing with it. Anyway, the kind of community and excitement peaked. Things were dying out. In the 1970s we didn't have the idea of creating organization that would go on. We had ideas we came together and then boom. I went to New York because I had a job offer there. I received this letter from Harry Hay, I didn't have a clue who he was, but he sent me this call. He included a two-page letter, which stroked me big time. He talked about my work at the baths and how much he would like if I came out. I don't know how many he sent out, but it was good. I have the letter in a box somewhere. So, I went. I went to Benson, AZ. It was in September of

1979. I met people at the airport. I felt really at home. I had spent time in faerie space many times over the years. So the fact that there was sort of a program, but there wasn't, that was fine. I volunteered and did the bath thing, like Harry asked, at the pool. So on Saturday night I did my night at the baths at the swimming pool. Someone suggested a mud ritual, which was really cool. It was like a lot of the things we were doing in San Francisco. The energy would build and someone would suggest something. People were naked and rolling around in mud. For me it was great because I had done things like this before, but for other people it was mind blowing to be with other men and physically that way. I remember circling a couple of times. We did a talking circle; I don't think they were called heart circles. I remember Harry talking a bit about his subject-subject and subject-object stuff like that.

The highpoint for me was, you had mentioned Carl Whitman, he had written the Gay Manifesto, which was like a short thing that was out in 1970, and it touched me. And there he was and he was beautiful and I was in love and he was into me. That was heaven. I don't remember having a big dance party, but there was a lot of hanging out time. I remember heading back in an eight or ten hour ride back. I know Will Roscoe was in the car. It was a great high. In my mind, it wasn't the start of something new, but just the continuation. It puzzled me because people said that all this was new and this for me was just how the seventies were. Something would start and then people would pick it up in a different way. When I got back to New York I got in touch with Martin Warman. Martin had moved back to New York. He was involved with the Cockettes early on and then involved in the gay community center. I said let's start it. I felt resurgence. So we started meeting. We put an Ad in the local paper. Word got around. Art Finn, Frank Jump Came. They took to it. We did stuff for a year or two. Carl Whitman came in, he taught us contra dancing. We did a Wiccan ritual that was really neat. It kept going; it was a constant flow of people. I felt done and that I needed more spirit. So I started intense meditation practice. After that I got involved with the Naraya, which is a Native American dance. That dance started in 1991. Two or three years into a bunch of faeries came and then more kept coming and then LightEagle suggested that we take it to Wolf Creek and so then he arranged it and we had a dance. At Wolf Creek and that went on for a few years and then Dazzle wanted to talk it to Short Mountain and so that has been going. It's a dance that goes on

seven times a year and two of them are on faerie spaces. The one at Short Mountain is now some miles away from Short Mountain and now that brought me kind of back into the faeries. So I still am really pulled by that sense of what is possible. It's being pulled out of that muggle world and being really free about your sexuality and who you are. It's also about magic and that other levels and layers of connection that we have and to me that is what the faeries were. It was that start of where can we go with it. I did an erotic ritual. I still see a future there around ceremony because when we have a common intent. We open to something bigger than ourselves. We didn't have those words then but when I look back at Gay Liberation as looking towards something bigger than ourselves. That's really what consciousness raising was all about. That's what the actions were. That's the kind of thing I want to leave you with.

When we talk about history it is about what happened and this led to this and Harry Hay did this. Harry Hay certainly did stuff like calling that national gathering was certainly important. There's no question about that. But it was all the other things that were going on. All these people taking chances, taking risks, opening themselves up to something else. That is what it is about that's what it is still about. What choices do you make? Do you choose to open yourself up to something higher and possible with each other? OR do you choose to go with just what is and the world as it is?

Agnes de Garron: Hi. My name is Agnes. When I talk to younger people and one was my niece and one that I could never get the concept of was, and she's straight and is very gay friendly and inviting to me, and quite a bit younger than me, the thing I couldn't get over was the bridge. She didn't understand what living in the closet was and that people living in the closet and she thought coming out was a simple thing, the door opens, you come out and your life changes. It wasn't like that because to be living in the closet like that meant that as you came out you made divisions of yourself, you divided yourself up into pieces. And so there wasn't one of you, but more than one of you and these were people that existed separately. They had different lives; they didn't connect at all. We all know what role-playing is. I grew up in a very small town and I wasn't interested in sports, I was always labeled as a sissy, but the

primary word was faerie. Fairy was this negative word. No one ever called me a faggot and sissy was more of a descriptive thing about how you did something. I cannot pull up the negativity around those feeling because they are not there anymore. I cannot search back and find out. I don't have those memories. I got very involved in doing stuff in the performing arts as a child and it was like a sanctuary for me. I found out later as an adult that one of the safe places it was to be a faerie was to be on a stage, which sounds ridiculous for people who don't perform because that is the most frightening of places. They can't touch you and you can run to the wings. I got parts in high school, you play straight people, straight men and boys, and so you are in training basically. You get your first experience of playing straight in front of people. I was giving myself an education to be better in the closet, as safe as possible.

I continued that and started to have a sex life that was separate and secretive, but it was the way I live so it was normal way for me. After I got out of college, it was during the Vietnam era and my gay friends were just starting to come out. They were like you don't have to serve if you tell them you are a faggot. That meant though that I would have to come out to a stranger and that was impossible. And then I heard about straight guys who were saying they were faggots and I found that disgusting because it was the draft. We had to go unless we were wealthy or had connection to get into the reserves. Years later I realized that the first political act I did, because I was not a political person, was saying that I was going to go into the military. My two best gay friends had been in and got out and they said we only have one bit of advice, blend in. I remember looking into a mirror with my head shaved and I couldn't find myself and I was like fine. I stayed in the military; I got a commission and became an officer. I loved being around all these men. I had never been to a boy's school or a men's college, and they were all young men and I was 22. It was a separation. I have friends who know me as this drag queen and they were like, "you were a captain in the air force?" I make their day with them. I used to speak to 200 men in an assembly as an officer. It didn't out me; my acting paid off. To come out for me after I got out was finding a small gay community in Norfolk. I went to graduate school. I didn't live in fear, but you knew what could happen. Everything you did was bad and you were a criminal and to this day I don't have... I will see a policeman and think are they going to arrest me, even though I'm not doing anything. I still feel like a criminal

cause I grew up with that. The only way for me to come out was to go to bigger cities and go where you could do that. I did about as much as you could in Norfolk and my friends started migrating from San Francisco. They would call at all hours of the night, different time zones, they would say you have to come out here. So I had a break from grad school, I went out and I never came back.

So here I am face-to-face in a city where I am still in the closet, but the area has expanded with your gayness. The most astounding thing wasn't men dancing for me, but men holding hands in the street- it was phenomenal. It was the most important thing for me- not having sex, not get a boyfriend, but be able to walk down the street holding hands. It was just precious. I just threw myself into the culture, which was basically being a sexual being. But even though there is the gay community, I didn't have a community. I had some old friends from Virginia there and I met people constantly as sexual partners. At that time, they told us that each day in San Francisco a 100 new people arrived that were gay, so we weren't going to run out of people. Everyone was like, "I just arrived yesterday." I once was in a bathhouse and I met this Mormon who just escaped his family. And I had sex with him but he really wanted to be held and cry in the bathhouse because that is where he ended up. That was home in San Francisco. So I had pushed away my Catholic-ness and hate to get around that, but I guess I was an atheist. I wasn't practicing anything. I found my sexuality, but there were separations. I was doing well. I was a teacher. I had a life, roommates, and I knew people. I still didn't feel connected.

So in the Castro, I saw this poster plastered to a phone pole. I didn't know the word Faerie, I saw the word spiritual and that's the one that popped up at me. What I didn't know them was is there anyway to connect my sexuality with my spirituality? I didn't know that I needed that. And I had a car and a job, so I had money. I loaded up my car with people I hadn't met and we drove down there. We slept at rest stops and we had a wonderful time, we were excited, but had no idea what was going to happen, where it was, or that it was at an ashram. We were just following directions. Being at that gathering, was a spiritual thing for me. There was this fusion for once that made what I thought was right anyway. Sex wasn't just sex there was something special happening to you, if you could make that connection. I then went back, the faerie that I had found was this child, and it was myself as a tiny person doing

rituals in the woods. I had a history, but no memories. And all these memories flooded back to me that I never thought about. This all happened at the first gathering, getting that part of me that wasn't in my mind or connected with. I am already a faerie. Everything was so new. The gay men we were becoming hadn't existed before. That was exciting. Something that never happened was what we were producing and we were told no. This is the Radical Faeries and this is a new name but you all have existed since the beginning of time that you are just way in the edges of this long history. It is this completely new connection.

I wanted to talk about the mud ritual and what it did for me. Now I am with all these great guys. I am having a wonderful time and it didn't happen right away. It wasn't something on the menu; it wasn't planned. They got some water and we are in the desert. As we slowly completely covered our bodies, the differences slowly started disappearing. All the age differences disappeared. You could not tell the difference between a young person and a middle-aged person. Our hair was covered. There was nothing there. Race disappeared completely. You see pictures of us staring at each other and we are completely all individuals, we were all different and had different backgrounds and we had made ourselves the same as a way of unifying. It was all unspoken; no one ever said anything except looked at each other. And if you see photographs, we are standing there, and we are not doing anything, except looking at each other. Someone is taking our picture. And it was like being reborn. You lost who you were too and were being reborn at the same time.

I went back to San Francisco. And I would say the majority of the people were from the San Francisco area. Now, I have this community. It's not the gay community, but the faerie community. So everyone just didn't go back and disappear to their jobs. I had all these new friends. And not in the way that you are all my friends and I love you all but will not remember you all. Some I know better, but I feel I am in a friendly place. But these friends, we were going to do something. And there wasn't a plan for another gathering. It wasn't like we said we will do this next week; that was a big undertaking. They just threw you out and you were on your own. Now, I am with these people and we were like what are we going to do with all this feeling, we have to do something with it. I went, and I want to mention this because it was part of gay history, the majority of the people, except one or two, whatever this activism was,

what came out of it was this idea of creating a gay male convent of nuns. How do you recruit for something like this? But the faeries, I said I want us to be clones because that is the world we live in, the Castro clone was like this perfection. You put your clone outfit on and you go down these. So we wanted to mimic this and look absolutely identical. Most of us had beards at the time, but that was just a coincidence. We didn't wear white face. There was no makeup. We didn't even have lipstick on. I asked faeries to help me. They said I am not that interested and I said well would you go to a fitting and the city of San Francisco made each of our habits for ten dollars and I designed them. They went to fitting as a favor. And then I said there's a photo shoot, we're going to start off with some postcards. I know you don't want to be a nun, but can you do a photo shoot. Well what happened was they didn't want to be a nun, but they didn't want to leave us. Can I just help you out and be a priest? It was like a glue, like we were glued by Murray during hypnosis. What was interesting was the nuns dealt with consensus, we brought the faerie culture into what we were doing and that we had something to say, which we weren't sure what it was. But with the sisters that the faeries were plugged into was community because we didn't exist unless we went out into the streets and that was everybody. Now there are nun orders all over. Someone about ten years ago found out about me years ago, they said there's this faerie connection with the sisters; maybe we should check it out. So they came to Short Mountain. And maybe we should check out who this Agnes person was; they were a founder but what kind of person was he. So they are spying on me and they were like we're not going to ask him we're just going to try and find out what kind of a person he is. They didn't get it until they went to the talent show and then they saw me perform. It was non-verbal like most fabulous communication. They were in the audience crying; it was so sweet. I am going to stop there. I never left the faeries, maybe I should have. There were ups and downs. I lost my subtlety, I ended up in Vermont and I asked the landlady if we could have a faerie gathering the day after we moved in. I had never met her, but she was a hippy that grew marijuana. I told her there would be all these people on her land and she said I don't think I have a problem with. If you do sweat, it's already there. I and Gabrielle Toole started the Vermont Faeries. I am going to stop now.

JC: If people were up to it, I was thinking about opening it up to other people and trying to keep the topic around history. One of the things that I think is important to look at are people's individual stories of how they came into the faeries, but also what the actions were that people took to build the community. There is a myth around the faeries that things just happen. Having been an organizer in the faeries for over thirty years, I know that things happen because people take action. And things like the sisters happen people because have a vision and they follow through on it. It doesn't just happen. Community centers happen, Sanctuaries happen because people take action and that is a very important part of our history, along with our individual stories of how we came into the faeries. I am interested in hearing a mix of those from folks. We have a talisman. We have Harry and John here in this vase; it contains some of their ashes. We can pass this. I want to relinquish.

AdG: Harry and John are in a zip lock bag. I think someone put a joint in there.

Puppy Pause: So I started the Faeries in a Pittsburgh circle back in the early or mid- nineties. I was 19 and discovered the faeries had potlucks. I didn't know what the faeries were. All these gay men were getting together and eating food. I found out about the faeries through the Metropolitan Community Church of Pittsburgh. Most of the faeries went to church there and most of them were not even Christian. They just wanted a place to go and be spiritual and gay at the same time. I went to my first potluck and afterward we went upstairs and boom puppy pile. It was incredible. That was the first time I had done anything like that. Eventually the group felt that I was ready to make the trek down to Short Mountain. I went when I was 21. I saw Sister Mish and Clara and those were the first sister I met in my entire life. I thought who are these glorious creatures. I grew up as a man and a faerie in the environment, Pittsburg and Short Mountain. Then I met Faeries in DC and then when I moved from DC to Portland, I met faeries, and then when I moved to Seattle, I met faeries. I have met so many faeries from so many places and it all seems connected somehow. We all know faeries in the places I have been. I am involved with the sisters as well. My involvement with them sprung out of my involvement with the faeries. It is an extension of being a faerie even though it is different. It was the same feelings for me and always has. I am not sure if this has important or relevance but

that's my experience. I literally grew up in the faeries. I was always a faerie without ever knowing I was a faerie.

Pizza: Wow. You (Cain) mentioned so many of my heartthrobs. Arthur Evans, Carl Whitman, and Will Roscoe. I encourage you all to find out about LGBT history. Harry Hay draws upon the berdache, he talks about the folk and the institute berdache. But Will Roscoe did a fantastic book; he's done a number of them, on the berdache. I recommend you look into them. Carl Whitman was in SDS, Students for a Democratic Society. He was organizing a conference with Tom Hayden. He had done a number of things with Hayden. Hayden said he don't want marijuana or homosexuals. He encountered such homophobia in the alleged new left. That he left. He wrote the Gay Refugees from Amerika, with a K, and it was before stonewall. It helped inspire people in the homophile movement.

ME: That was written before stonewall, the gay manifesto?

P: Ya, a couple months before.

ME: I did not know that.

P: So he left, he was rejected by the New Left. It set him on the path towards the left coast. I do have a question, but encourage you to turn to youtube and for example see videos of Sylvia Beach. You can also find Arthur Evans. He does an amazing discussion on the symposium that is really relevant to us. So see if some of these current people who might be on youtube. Some of them might be there. I encourage you to seek that out and find out other parts of our history. The question I have: I find out that Arthur Evans tends to get eclipsed. It's usually all about Harry. And I am not slamming Harry Hay; he is an amazing person. You have Arthur Evans who is doing research around 1973 and as you indicated more in the pagan and witchcraft direction of the faeries. But they are both in California and Hay I can't imagine didn't know that there was this other influence on the faeries. I have never seen where there was a connection or influence. Did Arthur Evans influence Harry Hay?

ME: I have a good answer for that. Do you (Cain) want to go first? I didn't go there because I have anger around that thing. One of the reasons I didn't get back into the faeries was the way that Harry treated

it as though it was his thing. And here I had this whole experience. And in White Crane there was this back and forth where Harry basically says he. Well there were different things around it. I can tell you my experience. I went to a sex magic workshop that Harry did. He was supposed to do it. Clyde Hall, my teacher, and really encouraging and he said why don't you go there and tell Harry what you think and work it out. That's what is what it is all about. It's about consensus. So he finally got me to go and Harry didn't go because he wasn't feeling well.

After I went to San Francisco. I had a lot of mixed feelings at Sex Magic because I felt like part of my history was being denied. On the other hand, Wolf Creek was this wonderful place and the faeries had given me so much and I had given a lot through the Naraya. The sex magic was nice. I went back talked to Harry and he said I didn't know much about you guys. And I said Harry how could you not know about us. You sent me this letter that knew about all my stuff at the bathhouse. That came right out of the faeries. How could you have not known? Mitch Walker was one of the people working with you and he was constantly working with Arthur. Arthur would constantly tell me about Mitch criticizing what we were doing. You had to know. And he had a reaction and I had to leave for a little bit. They called me back in and he said well Arthur's thing was about witches and mine was about sissies and that was different. I was you both came from different perspectives but the faerie experience is that same. What you did at the conference was what we did at the conference and what we have been doing? That dropped it. This wasn't the place to do it.

I was at the Faeposium with Joey and Ganesh put together this Faerie history thing. We told our stories and Don Kilhefner was later. I had known him since Gay Liberation. After I asked him Don what was going on, didn't you guys know about us? And he said, of course we knew about you. And I said why has there been this denial? And he said well you know how Harry is, if he didn't think about it than it didn't exist. Then he said why do you think we called it the Radical Faeries, to separate it from what you were. I was like oh. Then he said what did your group do, you went on for a year then dissolved. Look what we did. I was like oh my god. I was like what about gay liberation. It started and there is no group called Gay Liberation, but it was still there. So my side of gay history that we have, as everyone knows history is written by the survivors and it's about famous people. Doing things. They are

the ones doing things. My point of view is that it was a lot of people doing things. I don't want to deny what he did. He was an important figure, but the faeries came from Gay Liberation and this experience. They were in each of us and it was evolving other time. That was my experience. I feel like I did as much to start the Faeries as Harry did. Arthur certainly did. I asked Arthur before he passed, which was just a few months ago and we both agreed. It wasn't like we wanted credit; we just wanted recognition of the history, the evolution of it. We all had a part in this. I have mixed feelings about it because it feels petty to go there, but on the other hand, part of my history has been denied. I have feelings about it.

AdG: The irony of this was that our bible when we got involved, Harry was one of the people but we didn't see him as the leader at the time of the first gathering. Our bible was witchcraft and the Gay counter culture. Maybe you had never met Arthur Evans but he is your book. So there is some irony there.

JC: So I take a different approach. I see the faeries as just being a more recent manifestation of a tradition that goes back to Whitman. When you start to look at it that way, it's easier to get over this who did what first. First Harry rarely makes the claim that he founded the Faeries. That claim is usually made for him. Second of all, Harry had been researching gay men's roles way back in the 50s. And Harry, and I had seen the letters, had criticisms of what he saw as Arthur's very sloppy historical research. So Harry did see a role of gay men as priests of the cults of the goddess throughout history in various forms and he felt that Arthur had missed a huge part of gay males roles in not just serving the goddess but then as the culture was forming into patriarchy and gay men being the roles of social transformation and gay men's roles in transitioning to patriarchy. He felt Arthur ignored that whole element of the historical research. So he did know about Arthur's' book. I have a letter where he says, "this book is totally full of shit but it is very important and people should read it." Yes, *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture* were very important at that time, I personally now have criticisms of Arthur. I think he tends to be very dualistic. Its either the country is good and the city is bad, women are good, men are bad. He had, in my reading, a very hetero-world-view. That being put aside, I think looking at it as a tradition. And I'm one of the people writing the history and I know that *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture* was very

influential for a lot of folks for people who came into the faeries. And that is the history that I tell and that Arthur had this group in San Francisco and as I always point out there were all these rivers that flowed into it from other parts of the country, but there is a historical event that happened because there was a group of people who did the work to put together a gathering. They ordered the food, found a location, put together a call. They made connections and made actions and it is true.

History is made of people who do action. That's what changes the world. I mean in terms of magic, magic is the ability to change the world in accordance with will. And so that's what happened. Arthur changed the world by publishing *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture* in *Fag Rag* magazine. I think there's a way to have both and not either or. I also would like to make a promotion. This year is the 100th anniversary of Harry Hay's birth and I came curating a public exhibit in the San Francisco Public Libraries, his archives are there. But we are also putting on a conference in New York called *Radically Gay: the Life and Times of Harry Hay* and we are encouraging faeries to come and submit and do presentations. We are seeing this as having multiple things. We are hoping to have radical re-envisioning within the LGBT movements, which right now is pretty fucking still. I mean between military and marriage. Hello! I would like to make available this call for papers. It is a little tight. We are excepting a lot of different things. We are looking for performance and panels. We really want to bring in faeries. It is an academic conference. But we want the faerie and what we have done for the last thirty years to be recognized by Queer and Gay Studies.

The way I write history is that there was this group of people. They called a gathering. I look at who came and the larger social context. I do feel the Radical Faeries are the continuation of Gay Liberation.

ME: I suspect that Joey and I are not going to come to an agreement, so just let me have the last word. I want to say a couple things. One is that you present history as ideas and Harry had this idea. I think it's the actions. A lot of people had ideas of gay liberation that we could come out. I could find writings, but it was people coming together and making our experiences as faeries. When you go back and you look at what happen during that period. The people who start things are not organizations; they don't start movement. My point is that there was a

movement that was almost identical to what we had today. It was open-ended. We had talking circles. We had rituals. We did those things that were then done at the conference and the people at the conference knew about them and had to know about them. So I don't think you say we were one of many things that led to this conference that did everything. I think the conference was really important; it brought me in. I don't want to minimize anyone's work on this, I just don't want to minimize my work and say oh it was just one thing. We were the faeries and Radical Faeries came and we had something separate. I don't see history as ideas but people acting and changing their realities. Ideas are part of the things that guide us. Ideas are in books, gay liberation, our lives, how we connect. That is the theory and practice.

JC: I don't disagree. I said it was about people taking action.

Tiff: I don't want to talk long, I am trying to enjoy this weekend and not do too much activism and politics. It is important for me to come into community and heal. I just want you to know that synergy is happening and there is opportunity to be involved today and we are calling things into action. There is a new thing, the pledge for full LGBT equality that has just been made among the grassroots. We are happy that the sister of perpetual indulgence of San Francisco have endorsed it. The idea is that we are going to have full equality by 2014. The concept is to create an intention and amass the energy that is going to take to make sure that our issues are top priority for the next congress. We need more faeries, creative, and active in your face movement. We need to make our equality a priority. Find me or get yourself to the listserv.

Eldritch, DC Radical Faeries: My name is Eldritch of the DC Radical Faeries and I came to know the faeries through *RFD* magazine. I can't say how important it is to find a piece of paper when you are at a friend's house and they are going through the end stages of HIV and you are looking for something to read. And then you are like, "Oh my God, these are my people," and you find that home. We all find the faeries in some way. The dialectic about who and how and all that is important, but all social movements and everything that comes from our life come from a need that allows us to manifest something. I think this dialectic is great and is a part of social movements. It's how ideas happen. Our thing will happen because our's is an internal need- a need for tribe and community. When we do the anti-thesis work and separate ourselves

and say we are different. When we come together like this we are doing thesis work and learning our history is that thesis work. Without that the younger generation gets divorced from our history. I also have a need and frustration as I hear the struggles in DC to have a homo-home or the Philly faeries. All of those needs and frustrations can manifest when we engage ourselves. That's us in 20 or 30 years and we are part of an on-going-ness and we will shake off whatever these individual things are. One of the things I look for and have a need for is ritual and more things that allow us to come together and magically be together so that a new vision can come out. And I understand where Arthur Evans gets stuck because Wicca is so lord-lady, god-goddess, so dichotomous. In the DC Faeries, we call the divinity male-female-both-and-neither because that is what we see around us. If we could shake off those things and do vision work, heart circles it will allow us to see what the next thing is. And if we want a community center in every major city where the faeries are, but of our need and frustration can we make that a manifestation, but out of our need and joy, we can make all of that happen.

ME: I agree with you. This is a small thing and I have feelings. The bigger thing that I want to add is that when I did a lot of those things I did them from here (pointing at heart), I had a lot of times when I didn't see the point of it and when it didn't seem to be going anywhere. And I can't tell you the number of groups that died in my lifetime. I didn't know I would be here telling you all. Like Joe Cramer told me that the stuff I did at the baths really inspired what he was doing with body electric. The things do now you don't know where they are going. I encourage you to do things and you will be talking about it someday.

Speck of the Cosmos: I have doing research on my own and I hadn't realized there were so many people doing research on the history of the faeries. I think it feels like the faeries through history have been somewhat secretive about not publishing or putting stuff online about what happens at sanctuaries. There is a resistance to putting *RFD* online and keeping it safe and not exposing that the faeries are everywhere. It seems similar to our discussion of urban sanctuaries where we let people come to us and we don't recruit. I wonder if the faeries have become more active in times of crisis when things are in turmoil in the country or the world, like during the aids crisis and civil rights movement and now in the financial crisis. I wonder if you all have

anything to say about that. If we are responding to a new crisis now, is this a time to not be so safe and secretive for safety reasons. In Atlanta we are putting on events where we invite the entire community to come. It's not a faerie dance, but a dance we put on.

JC: In San Francisco, we have a lot of energy coming out of the Comfort and Joy community which is the gay camp at Burning Man, so there is a lot of synergistic energy between those two communities. In a way, it is almost hard to tell them apart. In a way that is a new direction for folks. It is much more public. It will be up to each community to decide what each community is able to do. I also always recommend the other gay male groups of spirit, that's like the bear and leather community. There are other communities that fulfill a lot of the same functions we do they just dress differently and some of us are members of those communities. As far as the AIDS crisis, what is called the Radical Faeries came into being during the AIDS crisis. This national affinity came into being co-existingly with the AIDS crisis. And in a way our cycles in the gay community where we can get really vapid and shallow and the culture of the 1970s was incredibly vapid and shallow. And at the same time as the faeries were being formed, they were addressing that vapidness and shallowness, the whole community was hit with the AIDS crisis, which just cause us to suddenly really start taking care of each other and taking actions to feed people and take care of pets. It was a real devastating, but incredibly inspiration period of time. To see what we could do- more than just have good dances more that good design. We took care of each other in ways we never have before. We have lost that in the last ten years, even in the faeries to some extent. I think with the coming economic inequality as it is called things are going to be getting much rougher than they are. Hopefully we have out shit together and we can align with those forces who are essentially fighting the class inequality going on now.

Peter "speck" Lien: My experience with the faeries started when... I came to Philadelphia and I wanted community and I didn't get any in the bars. I wanted something more engaging and so I got involved with every [AIDS and Queer non profit] agency to make queer life my life. I was an organizer for the coming out thing, the block party, the music festival down at Penn's Landing and all these things. And before long I

started intersecting with people [on the street] with my clipboard and Earth came by and glittered me and before I know I was in an orgy back at their apartment. That was my first sexual experience with faeries and that was in 1992 or 1991. I was involved in the 1993 march on Washington; I [helped design] photographed the poster. My lover at the time was Kevin Kendall Norris. He sucked me into the faeries by inviting all these people who were crashing at his house in DC, like this weekend [gathering]. It involved many people like Harry Hay and people from Short Mountain. That's how I met Harry. I saw him naked in a bathtub with rats running under the floorboards. It was fantastic. It was on Ridge St. [near the current day MCC church]. These faeries seemed weird and crazy.

It just so happened that there was this Short Mountain thing [gathering in Tennessee] right away and I ended up getting there somehow. I was busy but I made time. I showed up when the [Beltane] ribbons were [being strung] up. I remember taking off all my clothes and running into the ribbons and feeling completely at home. I remember sucking Leopard's cock on the knoll and other fabulous things I would have never done. In response to your private/public thing, I think faeries from my experience at that time especially [during the early] AIDS crisis... (many of us were activists that created structures and institutions that still exist today and in that way faeries do and have changed the world. We changed the face of health care, which is where I want to push on now.)... On the private/public thing, I was [we all were] in shell shock I had just gone through 1994, a genocide in more ways than one. Genocides happen in April evidently. At the same time [as the genocide was happening in Rwanda] all my friends are dying, my lover is dying and I know he introduced me to the faeries for me to have a place where I could be. So that's what it was. It was coming out in this pain. [That coming out is very much a public/private ritual] It [the pain and trauma] still comes up inside of me. And I am so thankful and grateful for the faeries who were there. Kevin died a few months after that [first Beltane gathering in October 1993] and you know the faeries saved my life.

So I totally get the public/private thing... it's a sacred space. As a photographer it's hard for me to tell when to record and what not to [record], and how to be in these worlds. And what I've learned as a faerie is that all these worlds are collapsed [especially when we gather]

and it's a thing we have to dance in. It's not this history; it's the time between. And we get to be on the space [sacred land/spiritual plane] and you cannot publicize that, you cannot describe it. It's indescribable. It's more than magic- it's where all possible realities exist in the same time and place. I don't know if you saw the short video about the [Big] dress? For me what surmises it [faerie experience] is that dress, ...five uncompromising queens in a dress having to get somewhere... for me the chaotic-ness of that dress which is almost 20 years old, and is a historical icon of this [Philadelphia] circle; It sums up faerie history, her-story, us-tory, and they-story.

For me it's an emotional and personal thing that is sometimes public and sometimes private. And it's hard to say where they all are [the line between the public plane and the private or spiritual], but we all sort of know where they are. We all seem to just know when it is okay to tape something because it is faestory in the future. I think when we talk about it, the story, the narrative that we are creating, that it is important to recognize that there are a lot of people that we don't have time to talk about because we are inconsiderate or don't have time. But all of those places and times are here [in the present], because when we call our ancestors into the room it is so important to remember them, maybe we don't have time to call out every one of them. But maybe we could remember them for an instant, for a microsecond and bring them in with us. For me, that's our story.

AdG: I was there when you came Peter. At Short Mountain, someone showed a film to see if anyone would be offended and the people who lived there just went crazy on this filmmaker who was making this beautiful film. He had said why he was screenings it. But they wanted everything deleted that was at Short Mountain, all the rituals, even if you couldn't tell who was in it. It was shocking to hear this. They said we don't feel safe, you're taking away our privacy, we're going to be invaded. The police will come. They were screaming at him and saying nothing about the artistic quality of the film. Then I'm on, well I'm one of these people, you know how you hear things that were not meant for your ears. This guy arrived and he said I just arrived at the gathering does anyone know what is going on. He said I don't need to know what's going on it's all on facebook. So everything had been posted to facebook. In the mean time they are like no photography, no camera. But he didn't have to catch up because it was on facebook, so it's like no matter how

much control you are trying to squeeze into this thing. The universe will not stop stinging and producing. What I think is interesting is that no one is discussing these things and the minute you open your mouth it was like...I hadn't heard anyone talk about it or question it. Even if you don't decide on anything, there should be an ongoing dialogue on it. Because we do need to record it. So he records us, who is it for, for us, our friends, private showings. Then we are all gone and someone digs through his archives and tries to put together this thing that happened this weekend. So it has value. I'm in the middle. I don't live at a sanctuary but I feel like screening at a filmmaker is not the way. Someone who is a faerie not just someone coming in from outside.

JC: Did he get permission to film?

AdG: Ya, but trying to deal with a May Day event and he was handing out stuff and people were like hi and they were giving it back. He was like I can't get releases signed. So his idea was to bring the raw footage even though all the people there were not there. Finally, he just dumped it. The film was fine without it. In the mean time, before they band video it was everywhere. But there was this incident, at a May Day the Nashville commercial NBC station tried to get on the land cause they heard there was this thing and they wanted scandal. They were not trying to cover a festival, but were looking for a big story, like nude children or pornography. They were turned away and of course you can have your camera turned on the whole time at your side so they were filming and so they went back into the woods and snuck in. They went through these high-powered cameras and got some shots, but not what they wanted. They got some nude men, but that's not a big deal. They went to the local sheriff and said, "What do you know about these people?" It's Tennessee so the sheriff said, "they don't bother me. They don't seem to have problems." They couldn't get a story out of it. After that everyone was like completely "no more video" "no more taking pictures" it went into this crazy thing. It shouldn't be "this is it." It should be questioned.

SotC: This comes from a media studies place, but the idea that you can shut down a story through no video or camera. We are just going to stop telling the story so it won't get twisted. It falls on its face all the time. The only way to combat that is to tell your own story and to come up

with it yourself. The best way is to invite a faerie to shoot our own film and show them who we are.

P: I deal with this a lot. There are a lot of times that I don't want to pick up my camera because I want to actually experience things like without this in my face. It's a different experience in my face.

JC: Just turn it of. Shut it down. Turn it off.

PSL: No, because I made a commitment to get everyone's point-of-view.

JC: Don't turn it on yourself, just shut it down.

E: I come from a community, not a faerie community, but a landed community. And it happens when you build city spaces. You have to know the neighbors, the cops, the people running for election. You are not separate and people can lose their land. It's one thing for someone to go to jail for a day or week. But you could lose thousands and thousands of dollars on fighting court battles about nothing. So there's a preciousness about being a Radical Faerie, we are creating a subculture within a subculture. There is deliciousness around people not knowing who we are. There are some events where radical faeries go to the Millennium March to be the anti-thesis and say this isn't who we are. Then there are these groups where we do the mystery cult when we come together for these works. This is our thesis work. We get to be together and be just us. No interlopers and after that we do synthesis and that happens in our personal lives and groups lives. And this push and pull from the mountain, I understand because you could lose thirty years of history by letting someone make a film and drawing undue attention to a relatively small group. We could go back underground. When we do public stuff we have to be important.

Anon1: Just a point to make, you are speaking about Short Mountain as if people own it and no one own it. It is a sanctuary; it is a place. Just so everyone knows and this myth isn't perpetuated, it belongs to everyone. There are people who would lose investments of time, but it belongs to everyone.

E: As a community we would lose it.

SOTC: What could be gained if a film was made about the Radical Faeries that would reach hundreds of thousands of people?

E: We could be commodified? We could become a fad or reality show TV series? We could become a t-shirt design that somebody gets money from without giving anything to us. It's more than just promoting. This is life and tribe and living with each other and trying to survive.

P: I have learned in studying LGBT History that there are two ways to destroy a people and that is to destroy its history and destroy its culture. For example in movie codes of the 1920s and 1930s erased homosexual people from the screen. I think it is a delicate balance between invading a private ritual and keeping a historic record. I think historical records are invaluable so people don't keep starting at point one. And we can continue to learn from the past. The past is not the past, only if you want it to be. I would like other people, in the future or people not here, to see what has been recorded here and said. It will spark new ideas.

Anon2: I came in late. But I do history and when I go into my storage rooms with cups and cell phones and pillows and socks and all the stuff that is left over when people are not there and then their papers and photographs and diaries. Those are the touchstones in history. We don't know what went on in history. We just have these little bits. This is why we have a history filled with important men because the other history, you didn't know anything. When you find something about an individual, a common person, you suddenly have something from this voiceless group, which is huge. So it's just because someone saved grandpa or grandmas things. That's the only way that things are remembered. What we can do is put things in time capsules for the future. Those little packages, like this video, which will be watched for a few months than put on a shelf and not watched forever until maybe it will be pulled out. People don't want to give things to institutions. They want to keep things in their closets; well no one knows what is in your closets. And when you die that gets garbaged, this precious thing we saved for so long. We need to think about what we want to preserve and where we want to put it. That is a format where someone could be accessed. I know this will go upstairs. Or we could put it online.

Anon3: Just to bring in Foucault. There are things and then there are symbols of things that is the next tier and then there is commentary on the symbols. Commentary is the most specious, the most moralistic and the most where you give away your power. It's always tempting to go to

the next level. But the first thing, the closest thing to our experience, I think it relates most with subject-subject consciousness. Every level out becomes in your control and who controls the thing. My focus and caution it to live this and document it as sparsely and eloquently and poetically with a few amazing performances and pictures. We got to get to the kernel. The simplest and most honest thing we can do with each other. Everyone is so caught up in commentary. Someone will do the commentary view and do it awesomely, because they appreciate who we are.

Anon4: I just want to say that there is a gathering that has been going on. It's probably the longest continuous faerie gathering that has been going on since 1979 on Labor Day week. That's Blue Heron in upstate New York. The beauty is that it preserves the faeries as I had remembered them from the past. Simple ritual and heart circle that takes place everyday. I don't know how much longer this gathering will take place. But I think it is a valuable place to experience. It transformed my life. My first Gathering was in 1986 and it had been going on since 1979. It started off not from Hay's call but one of the other peripheral things going on, a gathering of rural men. And then Hay's call was discovered and it gave impetus to continue it. It's not on a website. It's pretty much off the grid. There is no electric besides solar and hydropower and it lasts a week. I don't know if people have heard of it. Brian and Gary who I am very close to mentioned that there is very little call from people outside the continuous call that takes place with people who had been there the year before. If you want to know anything about it talk to me. It's near Watertown, NY.

JC: I have an idea. I don't know if people want to wind down. Actually could you not film me. I've decided to be the anti-film queen. I would love to have dinner to meet with people who do faerie history. Folks who haven't talked yet... no?

THE END.