Dear Friends:

This month we celebrate Pride Month, take part in the Museum Mile Festival, and welcome summer. Read on for highlights from our collections related to LGBTQ+ history, activism and health. In the spirit of accountability and consistency with NYAM’s health equity mission, we begin with an important look back at a 1960s Academy publication that the organization now acknowledges was wrong.

From the Blog:
“The Academy’s 1964 Report on Homosexuality”
In July 2021, the Academy’s Committee on Public Health published a report on homosexuality, calling it “an illness” and recommending psychotherapy and increased educational interventions. The report earned immediate criticism from gay rights groups, notably the Daughters of Bilitis. On June 12, 2021, NYAM formally disavowed and apologized for this report.

Virtual Visit: From the LGBTQ+ Archives
In honor of Pride Month, this virtual visit features NYAM’s work on LGBTQ+ issues from the 1930s to the present, as reflected in our archives and the collections.

From the Collections: The Ladder
The Ladder was a magazine published between 1955 and 1970 by the Daughters of Bilitis, a San Francisco-based organization promoting civil rights for lesbians. Conceived amidst the social repression of the 1950s, the organization’s aims were picked up by more activist groups, and it disbanded in 1971. The publications continued another two years.

Noted Elsewhere: “Pool: A Social History of Segregation”
As summer brings thoughts of swimming, Philadelphia’s Fairmount Water Works presents “Pool: A Social History of Segregation.” Lying at the intersection of “water, social justice, and public health,” swimming pools were contested territory, with effects lasting to this day. See the exhibit online or in person; historian Janet Golden reviews it in Public Seminar: “Everyone in the Pool? No—Not Everyone.”

The Library is open to readers and classes by appointment. All visitors must show proof of vaccination against COVID-19 and will need to be masked and socially distanced. For details, see our guide to visiting the Library. For more ways to connect with our resources and services, check out the Quick Connections page.

NYAM’s work to ensure health for all is more critical than ever. Your support helps us preserve the Library’s treasures, share them with researchers and the public, and safeguard the history of medicine to inform the future of health. DONATE NOW

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