

Idaho LGBTQ Oral History Project

Jody May Chang



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

ALBERTSONS LIBRARY

Idaho LGBTQ Oral History Project

This Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Oral History Project began as a key component of a cross-listed Boise State University course, Intro to LGBTQ Studies (GEN 380, HIS 381, SOC 497). Dr. Riley Caldwell-O’Keefe taught the course and designed the project as an interactive learning tool to help students understand LGBTQ history, with special emphasis on Idaho history, and the impacts of this history on local individuals. In addition to this history and context, students learned interviewing techniques throughout the semester. We discussed ethical considerations and obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the project. Throughout the process, we worked with Boise State Special Collections and Archives librarians, Alan Virta and Cheryl Oestreicher. The culmination and digital release of the collection would have been impossible without them. We are thrilled and honored to offer these first-person insights which help provide a more well-rounded and comprehensive story of Idaho history.

Name: Jody May-Chang

Biography: Activist and Journalist Jody May-Chang grew up as a secular Jew in southern California. She was born in 1960 and personally experienced anti-Semitism as a child. In college, she had her own radio show called, “Gay and Lesbian Perspectives.” The murder of Harvey Milk became the impetus for becoming an activist for many issues. Her activism has led to a career of journalism and social justice. May-Chang worked on the Idaho Human Rights Act legislation. Outside of the LGBT community, May-Chang is a supporter of the Occupy movement, and the fight for a living wage.

Keywords: Prop 8, Stonewall, Balcony Club, “Add the Words” campaign, Idaho Human Rights Act, Harvey Milk, Brian Fisher, commitment ceremony, separation, sperm donor

Interview date: 12/2/2011

Interviewer: Sarah Podvin

Interview duration: 54:24

City: Boise

Timed Notation:

00:00	Introductions
01:30	Childhood/Religion
06:12	First aware of sexual identity
08:21	Coming Out story
12:53	Relationships, marriage, and family life
21:26	Journalism, blogging, and activism
25:20	LGBTQ activism in Idaho vs. California
26:45	Comfortable vs. uncomfortable places in Boise
30:40	LGBTQ activism history
32:45	Interviewee- Catherine Carlson-Transwoman

36:25	Most important LGBTQ project
37:15	Meeting other LGBTQ people
39:22	Current research project
44:00	Partnership rights in Idaho vs. California
45:44	Having children, parental rights
48:04	Butch/Femme Roles
49:40	LGBTQ books and media
52:13	Final Question
53:22	Jody's closing statement
54:24	End