

Before there was the internet, there was Gayline:

A History of the Lesbian/Gayline in Hamilton, 1975-1994

Amanda Ayer

English 6QA3: Queerness in the Archives

Dr. Amber Dean

January 5, 2023

Sources

To reconstruct a history of the Hamilton United Gay Society's Lesbian/Gayline, I relied mostly on primary sources from the Michael Johnstone fonds held at the Hamilton Public Library's Local History and Archives. These included the finding aid, Lesbian/Gayline call sheets/logs from as early as November 1978 and as late as August 1994, Gayline statistics, communication books that were used by Gayline counsellors between November 1988 and August 1994, procedure, policy and training documents for counsellors, resource and referral manuals, HUGS/HGALA meeting minutes and correspondence, Gayline national conference proceedings, *Gay Phoenix* newsletters, and photographs. I also relied on recent interviews with Diane, Susie, and Mary Cahill, three former Gayline counsellors, that were conducted for the 2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project. Secondary sources on Gaylines in Canada were difficult to find. Donald W. Mcleod's *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada: A Selected Annotated Chronology, 1964-1975* provided a greater historical context of Gaylines in Canada, which was important when considering Hamilton's place in Canada's history of gay and lesbian liberation.

Limitations

While the Michael Johnstone fonds contain a variety of Gayline materials spanning almost 20 years, they pose some limitations. Perhaps the greatest limitation is the absence of Gayline call reports and statistics for the periods of January to August 1988 and April 1990 to September 1992 due to two separate office break-ins in August 1988 and on September 22 and September 23, 1992. It does not appear that these Gayline documents were ever returned. In the minutes of a special planning committee meeting that was held on September 25, 1992, presumably in response to the second break-in, Luce Luciano, then Director of Lesbian/Gayline, informed the committee that even though the call reports were missing, the volunteer list was not taken (HGALA Planning

Committee Meeting Minutes (1992-1993)). Call reports included only a caller's first name and the odd phone number. Consequently, the committee did not seem concerned about breaches of confidentiality.

Another limitation of research is the absence of Hamilton-McMaster Gay Liberation Movement, Hamilton-McMaster Homophile Association and HGALA materials from 1994 onwards. Since the contents of the fonds were provided by Michael Johnstone, it makes sense that materials from the McMaster associations would be sparse as Gayline did not exist when Michael attended the university. HGALA documents, including Lesbian/Gayline documents, also decrease beginning in the 1990s. For example, HGALA meeting minutes end in 1993. Does this mean that Michael Johnstone stopped attending planning committee meetings after 1993? Or did he step away from HGALA at that time? The finding aid does not answer these questions, only that HGALA operated until 1998 (Martin, 2020).

What is clear from hours of exploring these fonds is that Michael was a prolific collector. In fact, when I was struggling to find HGALA meeting minutes from 1994 onwards, the librarian responded, "but Michael kept everything!" Nevertheless, when using any archive, one must always ask the question, what is missing? In his resignation letter, former Gayline director, Johanthan Lynch, shares these concerns when he says, "Although these words may never make the official minutes, may be misquoted, or be struck altogether as never being expressed..." (HGALA Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (1992-1993), August 13, 1992). To Michael's credit, however, he included this resignation letter in the archive, despite it containing Johanthan's criticisms of HGALA.

A Brief History of Gaylines in Canada

Gayline was Hamilton's first telephone counselling service for the gay and lesbian communities. When it opened in 1975, there were already phone lines for the gay and lesbian communities operating in Vancouver, Toronto, Regina, Edmonton, Windsor, Winnipeg, Halifax, and Calgary (McLeod, 1996). These counselling lines were often priorities of newly established gay liberation organizations. For example, not even one month after the Community Homophile Association of Toronto (CHAT) formed, they launched their counselling/distress phone line on January 3, 1971 (McLeod, 1996). Similarly, GAELine, a telephone counselling service, was established in 1972 by Halifax's Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE) in the first few months of their existence (McLeod, 1996). Gaylines were a crucial service for the LGBTQIA+ communities in Canada, especially since there was no internet, minimal queer education and widespread homophobia. Their proliferation from coast to coast demonstrates the importance of confidential information sharing and support?  society where gay and lesbian experiences were silenced and criminalized.

In February 1994, "Now We Can Talk About AIDS," the first, and potentially only, national conference for Gaylines in Canada was hosted in Ottawa. Included in the Michael Johnstone fonds are the conference proceedings, which provide some insight into the history of Gaylines in Canada. In this document, the conference organizers explain that "since the beginning of [the] modern gay liberation movement, Gaylines have played a central role in breaking down isolation, building gay and lesbian communities, and support[ing] individual gay men, lesbians and bisexual...Often that first tentative call to a Gayline is the first step into community and wholeness that gay, lesbian and bisexual persons intuitively seek" (Pink Triangle Services, 1994, p.4). The exclusion of transgender individuals from this statement must be noted, especially as trans callers made up a significant segment of Hamilton's caller base. For transgender and

cisgender folks alike, Gaylines were often the only place a person could be completely honest about their identity and receive no judgement. For many callers, that initial call to a Gayline was the first time they spoke those words, “I think I am gay.”

While Hamilton’s Lesbian/Gayline appears to have closed in 1994 (see section on Chronology of Hamilton’s Lesbian/Gayline), mere months after this national conference, its closure should not automatically be understood as a reflection of a decreased national demand for such a service. In attendance at “Now We Can Talk About AIDS” were over 42 different Gaylines from Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, the Prairies, and the Atlantic provinces. Based on data collected for the conference, in 1994, 1476 calls were received each week across the 42 Gaylines, totalling 76,440 calls annually (Pink Triangle Services, 1994). By 1994, Gaylines in Canada had served an estimated 2.5 to 5 million callers, a range that, while broad, demonstrates the importance of this service to the LGBTQIA+ communities in Canada (Pink Triangle Services, 1994). Despite their indisputable importance, Gaylines were often self-funded and run by volunteers. In fact, across the 42 Gaylines, only 7 paid staff were identified and only 40% received funding, meaning that “volunteers, aside from providing telephone counselling, also [took] responsibility for funding the operations of services” (Pink Triangle Services, 1994, p.35). As will be later discussed, this dependence on volunteers to run Hamilton’s Lesbian/Gayline, and the physical and emotional toll of such an undertaking, may be one of the main reasons for its estimated closure in 1994. Even with Hamilton’s dissolution of service, there were still potentially 41 Gaylines in operation across Canada after 1994. While such research could not be achieved for the purposes of this paper, an area of future research would be an exploration of the suspension and transformation of Gaylines in Canada in the mid-1990s onward. I predict that many of these phone counselling services either closed or transformed into online services once access to internet resources became more

widespread. For example, a preliminary online search reveals the existence of LGBT Youthline, a live online chat service that launched in May 2009 in response to changing technology and a declining number of calls to their original Lesbian Gay Bi Youth Line (LGBT YouthLine, 2021).

A Chronology of the Lesbian/Gayline in Hamilton

In March 1975, Gayline, or the Gayline Distress Service, began operations in Hamilton under the leadership of the Hamilton-McMaster Gay Liberation Movement (GLM) (McLeod, 1996). The announcement of its launch was made in *Dialogue*, a publication of the Hamilton-McMaster GLM (McLeod, 1996). Unfortunately, this issue of *Dialogue* is not in the Michael Johnstone fonds or available through the Archives of Sexuality and Gender. It is mentioned in Donald W. McLeod's *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada: A Selected Annotated Chronology, 1964-1975*. The earliest mention of Gayline I located in primary sources was in the November 1975 issue of *Dialogue*, which is the only issue of *Dialogue* from 1975 available.

A PUBLICATION OF THE HAMILTON-McMASTER HOMOPHILE ASSOCIATION

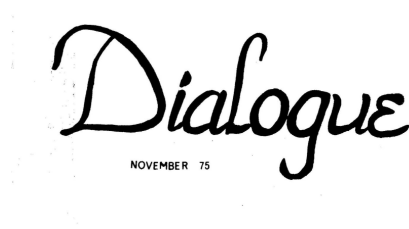


Figure 1: Hamilton-McMaster Homophile Association. November 1975.

Sometime in 1975, the Hamilton-McMaster GLM had been renamed the Hamilton-McMaster Homophile Association (MHA). By 1969, Michael Johnstone had already graduated from McMaster University (Martin, 2020). This biographical detail helps to explain why there are such limited GLM and MHA materials found in his fonds. In fact, a note by Michael Johnstone found in the 1979 Phone Record notebook seems to imply that he also was unfamiliar with the early history of Gayline, as indicated by the question marks above Rob and Jim's names.

Gayline as operated by short
lived Gay Peoples Alliance
run by Rob + Jim? between
demise of old Mac H.A in June 78
+ rise of HUGS - in 1980 Fall/Winter -

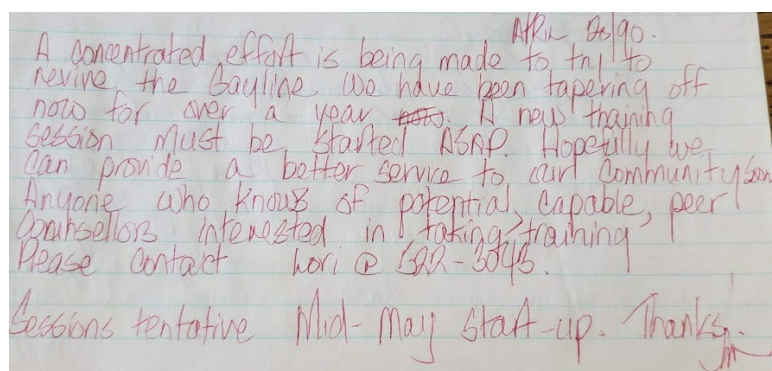
Figure 2: Gayline Call Summary Log (1979-1980).

In the Fall of 1980, members of the MHA, with the goal of expanding outside of the McMaster community, formed the Hamilton United Gay Societies (HUGS) (Martin, 2020). In 1980, Gayline was continued by HUGS, and since Michael Johnstone was a founding member of HUGS, the records of Gayline become more robust from 1980 onwards.

Until its estimated conclusion in 1994, Gayline would continue under the direction of HUGS, which was renamed the Hamilton Gay and Lesbian Alliance (HGALA) on April 1, 1992 (HGALA Planning Committee, 1992). In February 1991, Gayline also became Lesbian/Gayline, a decision that counsellor and former Gayline director Lori Morton described as “the latest in our efforts to become ‘politically correct’” (Gayline Communication Books, February 15, 1991). In an interview for the 2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project, Susie, a former counsellor with Gayline, described a lack of lesbian recognition in HUGS: “I never called myself gay, I always said I was a lesbian...I wouldn’t say there was a lesbian community. We were all part of HUGS...The only thing that was specific just for lesbians was the [Lesbian Support Group] ...and no women in Hamilton ever said they were lesbians” (2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project, 2:00-7:21). While the change in name of both HUGS and Gayline could be understood as a move toward “political correctness,” one should also question if it was a push by lesbians for recognition in the Hamilton 2SLGBTQ+ community. Throughout the history of gay and lesbian liberation in

Canada there has been a push for both lesbian visibility and the recognition that women in the 2SLGBTQ+ community, especially trans women, face forms of societal oppression that gay men do not. Mary Cahill, former Gayline counsellor and president of HGALA, suggests that HUGS/HGALA lost many female volunteers to the feminist movement (2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project). Diane, another former counsellor with Gayline, reveals in her interview that while volunteering in Hamilton she witnessed gay men acting “quite derogatory...to the lesbian. There were riffs, serious riffs” (2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project, 1:47). It is unclear if she is referring to HUGS in this statement, however, she does go on to mention that in 1991, “things [in HUGS] changed and...my understanding was, it was not very cohesive, there were a lot of people coming and going” (2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project, 5:23). These changes in HUGS and issues of volunteer retention may help explain the conclusion of Gayline.

By August 1988, it becomes apparent that there are not enough counsellors volunteering with Gayline. For example, on November 30, 1988, Lori Morton, former Director of Gayline, writes, “During the three month period following [the August 1988 break-in], Gayline experienced some difficulties, particularly in the area of manpower. The counsellor list reached an all time low of seven.” (Gayline Reports (1988-1989)). Under-staffing persists into 1990, as reflected by Lori Morton’s note on April 28, 1990:



A concentrated effort is being made to try to revive the Gayline. We have been tapering off now for over a year now. A new training session must be started ASAP. Hopefully we can provide a better service to our community. Anyone who knows of potential, capable, peer counsellors interested in taking training please contact Lori @ 688-3046. Sessions tentative Mid-May start-up. Thanks. jm

Figure 3: Gayline Communication Books. April 28, 1990.

Gayline had been “tapering off now for over a year.” While it is unclear if Lori is referring to a decreased demand for the service, or an inability to offer the service, it is clear that “a fair # of counsellors [took] temporary or permanent leave,” which put increased pressure on existing volunteers to pick up more shifts (Gayline Communication Books, September 1990). In his letter of resignation, dated August 13, 1992, Johanthan Lynch, former Director of Lesbian/Gayline, provides some insight into the reasons for these shortages:

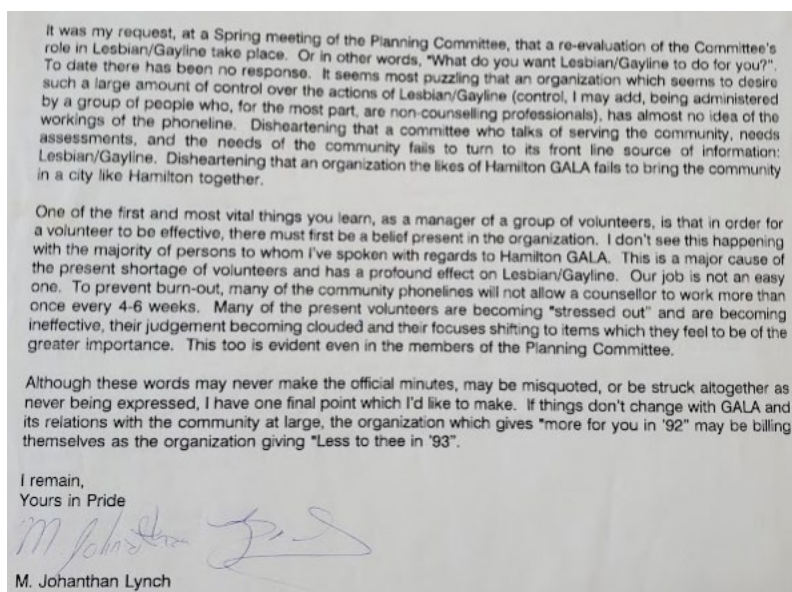
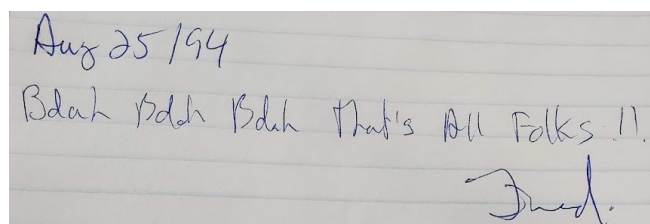


Figure 4: HGALA Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (1992-1993), August 13, 1992

One should not automatically assume this letter reflects the sentiments of all Lesbian/Gayline counsellors, however, it is still important to consider Johanthan's arguments in an investigation of the closure of Lesbian/Gayline. First, he claims HGALA holds a lot of control over the phonenumber but makes little effort to understand how it operates. Second, he argues that there is a shortage of volunteers due to a decreased belief in HGALA. Third, he has witnessed counsellor burn-out, which has led to ineffective counselling, poor judgement on the line and counsellors prioritizing other causes. While it is difficult to confirm whether Johanthan's arguments are warranted, especially his second argument about a lack of belief in HGALA, I have

already demonstrated that the understaffing of Lesbian/Gayline is apparent in numerous sources. The HGALA Planning Committee responded to Johanthan on August 24, 1992. In their response, they fail to address counsellor burnout and instead claim that “past volunteers return to offer their support and assistance” (HGALA Planning Committee, 1992). This retention may have been true of some volunteers, however, HGALA meeting minutes of the Board of Directors from December 14, 1992 reveal that training for new volunteers was ongoing and not all volunteers were members of HGALA (HGALA Planning Committee, 1992). Non-membership may be explained due to a variety of reasons, such as a volunteer’s inability to pay the membership fees, but the fact that it was brought up at meeting of the Board of Directors suggests that the Board was concerned. Were some counsellors not members of HGALA because of Johanthan’s argument that they did not believe in the organization? This question remains unanswered without contacting former counsellors of Lesbian/Gayline during this period.

Another question that remains unanswered is: When did Lesbian/Gayline definitively close? Based on my research, my estimate is sometime near August 25, 1994, as that is the date of the final known entry of both the call sheets and the counsellor communications book. Unfortunately, the Michael Johnstone fonds only contain HGALA Planning Committee Meeting Minutes up until 1993, so there is no way to cross-reference. A possibility for future research could be an exploration of the classifieds in *The Silhouette* or the *Hamilton Spectator* to determine when the Lesbian/Gayline stopped being advertised. Until then, we must rely on the famous words of Porky the Pig, which acted as a farewell in the last known entry in the communications book:



Aug 25/94
Bdah Bdah Bdah That's All Folks!!
Jmed.

Figure 5: Gayline Communication Books. August 25, 1994.

Advertisements

Gayline was advertised to clients in many ways. One of the main forms of advertising was in Hamilton newspaper classifieds in the *Hamilton Spectator*, *The Silhouette* at McMaster, and the *Mohawk Satellite*. Public service announcements, such as the one for Channel 23 below, were also aired on local television stations, such as Channel 23 and Channel 14.

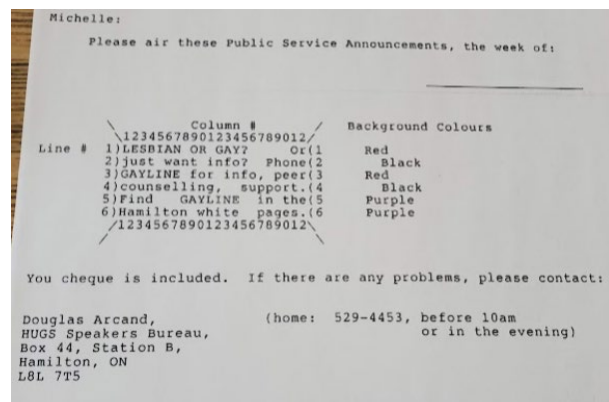


Figure 6: HUGS – Correspondence regarding Gayline Advertising (1990)

HUGS/HGALA had to be cautious about who they advertised with. In the Michael Johnstone fonds is a list of potential advertisers, including newspapers, radio stations and social service agencies. Beside some of these names are the letters ‘G’ meaning “Good – usually put in our PSA,” or ‘B’ meaning “Bad – very homophobic” (HUGS – Correspondence regarding Gayline Advertising (1990)). Examples of good places to advertise were Xtra! Calendar, the *Burlington Post*, and the *Hamilton Spectator*. Bad examples included CHML/CKDS radio stations and the *Haldimand Press*. It is unclear if certain advertisers were considered bad based on reputation or personal experience. It is also unknown how effective these advertisements were. Starting in 1992, call sheets included a section called “Heard about Lesbian/Gayline from...” as shown below. Unfortunately, many of these call sheets were taken in the 1992 office break-in.

The Spectator	Unknown
Phonebook	The Hamilton Phoenix
Referral from Agency	Friend
Other (be specific)	Ad (Radio, TV, Newspaper)

Figure 7: Lesbian/Gayline Call Sheets (Sept-Dec 1992).

The Office

While I could not determine where Gayline operated whilst under the direction of HMGLM and HMHA, numerous sources confirm that between early 1980 and April 1982, HUGS and Gayline operated out of Michael Bazinet's house on Jackson Street West (below). In her interview, Susie describes the first time she went to Michael's house on April 30, 1981: "Back then it was just in a person's house. There was no office space ready" (2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project, 4:00). It appears HUGS invested in a call forwarding service that would have allowed counsellors to take calls from their home, however, this was discontinued in June 1984 "because it [was] not needed" (HUGS – Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (1982-1985), June 19, 1984).



Figure 8 (left) 273 Jackson Street West; Figure 9 (middle): Note on back of Jackson Street St W photo

In April 1982, HUGS opened their community centre at 41 King William Street (below). It was at this location where there were the office break-ins, cockroach infestations, and unwelcome guests. While cockroach infestations send a shiver down the spine, the call reports of unwanted visitors at the office were the most frightening to read. On Christmas Day 1992, Sandy

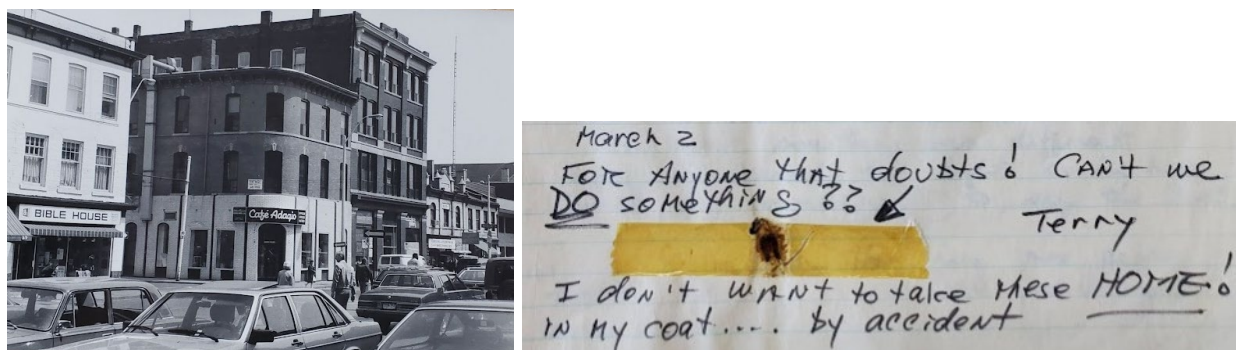


Figure 10 (right): 41 King William Street; Figure 11: Cockroach in communications book, March 2, 1989.

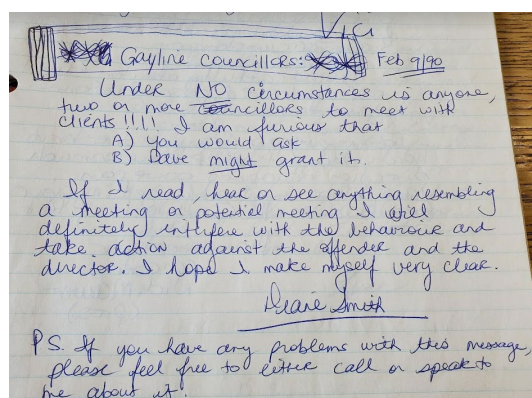
fielded repeat calls from a male caller who wanted to meet her at the office. She declined and told him she was at home. He “called again, said he had been by and lights were on in the office so he knew I was there. Tad nervous but Janise and friend are coming over so we’ll all leave at once” (Lesbian/Gayline Call Sheets (Sept-Dec 1992), December 25, 1992). Concerns for Lesbian/Gayline counsellor safety were one of the priorities when HGALA started to look for a new office. There was mention of a new office space as early as March 1991 in the counsellors’ communication book, however, a review of the *Gay Phoenix* directories reveals that HGALA did not move to the Rotary Club of Hamilton Self Help Center at West Avenue North and Barton Street until July 1993. This would be the final resting place of Lesbian/Gayline in Hamilton.

Policies and Procedures

Throughout its history, Lesbian/Gayline was guided by consistent principles of operation. Anonymity, of both the caller and the counsellor, was paramount. Counsellors were prohibited from providing their last name or any other identifying features. Under HUGS/HGALA, counsellors were also encouraged to use aliases, which sometimes made tracking volunteers difficult as they would alternate between their real name and alias in call reports. Anonymity was also required at HUGS meetings. If a counsellor revealed that they worked on Gayline at a meeting, they could be removed from the line. While caller information was collected, it was limited to

gender and age for the purpose of both statistics and applying special rules for counselling young people. In a Lesbian/Gayline Policies and Procedures document from 1991, counsellors were warned that “giving specific information about sexual practices to those under 18 years, may be a violation of the law” (Lesbian/Gayline Policies and Procedures (1991-1992)). Counsellors did not need to receive parental consent to speak to a minor, however, there were restrictions on what they could talk about.

Confidentiality was also prioritized. Since many callers were not out in their communities, they needed to ensure that what they shared on the line would not be repeated elsewhere, as it could have serious repercussions in their lives. Counsellors were also prohibited, in most cases, from meeting with callers due to risks of assault, entrapment and the development of dependent relationships. The specifics of this policy changed throughout Gayline’s history. For example, in the May 15, 1985 planning committee meeting minutes, the rare occasion where two counsellors meet someone in a public spot was confirmed as policy (HUGS – Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (1982-1985)). On February 9, 1990, Diane Smith, wrote a strongly worded message in the counsellor communication book, presumably in response to a counsellor’s request to meet with a caller:



Gayline Counsellors: ~~XXXX~~ Feb 9/90

Under NO circumstances is anyone, two or more counsellors to meet with clients!!! I am furious that

A) you would ask
B) Dave might grant it.

If I read, hear or see anything resembling a meeting or potential meeting I will definitely interfere with the behaviour and take action against the offender and the director. I hope I make myself very clear.

Diane Smith

P.S. If you have any problems with this message, please feel free to either call or speak to me about it.

Figure 12: Gayline Communication Books. February 9, 1990.

In her message, Diane is very clear that there is no exception to the policy. It is unclear who Diane Smith is (is she the Diane who was interviewed?), although the tone of her message suggests some authority. This strict policy remained intact until Lesbian/Gayline dissolved.

When I initially browsed the call reports, I noticed numerous masturbation calls. I questioned whether these types of calls were tolerated by Gayline counsellors as the crisis line I volunteered for had a strict no-tolerance policy of such a thing. Various Gayline training documents dictate: "The volunteer must follow his/her own feelings about handling these calls. Remember, you also have dignity and, if these offend you, inform the person that you are unable to help." Not all volunteers condoned this type of call, especially when someone would call to masturbate multiple times in one shift. One such caller was Pete, "The Masturbator" or "Resident Masturbator," as he was nicknamed by many counsellors. On February 21, 1985, counsellor Judy asked Pete why he always called the line to masturbate: "He said he feels he is not hiding what he is doing and can say things that he is feeling. I assured him that his masturbating was not wrong, but that calling the line constantly was" (Gayline Reports (1984-1985)). Since there was only one person on the line during a shift, repeat calls, especially repeat crank calls, prevented those with legitimate concerns and inquiries from receiving support. Gayline also only operated from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., Wednesday to Friday, so opportunities to reach a counsellor were limited. This limited service could be especially problematic for callers that were in crisis. While rare, Gayline counsellors received calls from people experiencing mental health crises and drug overdoses. Most volunteers were non-professionals, and it is unclear if they received sufficient training for these types of situations. Various policy documents include brief sections on crisis calls. A Lesbian/Gayline Training Programme Agenda also reveals that counsellors were trained for a total of 12 hours. This was a time before cell phones and the internet, a reality that makes one wonder

how overwhelming it would have been to receive a crisis call, especially if the counsellor was in the office alone with only one phone.

AIDS

By 1984, Gayline reports start to include calls about AIDS. Callers inquired about transmission, symptoms, how to get tested, how to have safe sex, with many callers refraining from having sex altogether due to their fear of transmission. Counsellors frequently received calls from individuals who were completely unaware of how AIDS spread. During many of these calls, the counsellor would be the one to bring up the risk of AIDS. On November 13, 1985, Susie expressed her concern, “It is frightening to me to hear how uneducated people are about this disease” (Gayline Reports (1984-1985)). This ignorance can be attributed in part to a lack of available resources on AIDS during this time, but Susie also points out in an interview that based on her experience on Gayline “it [didn’t] seem like guys in this area [were] very concerned about getting sick” (2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project, 9:32). This observation was one of the catalysts for Gayline counsellors Susie, Michael Johnstone, and John Vogal to start the AIDS Network in Hamilton in 1986!

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to reconstruct a partial history of Hamilton’s Lesbian/Gayline. Included in the Michael Johnstone fonds were Lesbian/Gayline statistics that clearly show how widely this service was used for a variety of reasons. While crank calls and hang-ups made up a large, and presumably annoying, percentage of calls, it is undeniable that Gayline provided support and information to the LGBTQIA+ communities during a time when isolation, homophobia and

the criminalization of homosexuality was unchecked in Canada. I conclude with the words of Diane, former Gayline counsellor, who explains the importance of this service:

We people did a lot of work to, to give the community safe places to go and to put it all together. And we were very grateful for that. And, you know, by the end, you're crossing out a new bar crossing out new restaurants. So it was a work in progress all the time. But it was good. It was good. It was much needed and really helped a lot of people. I'm sure it saved a lot of people's lives as well. (2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project, 10:55)

Appendix I – Lesbian/Gayline Statistics 1981-1993

Contained in the Michael Johnstone fonds are over 50 pages of Lesbian/Gayline statistics. Since these statistics are spread throughout the fonds and are quite difficult to analyze separately, I thought it would be beneficial to future researchers to compile a table that includes all available statistics on reasons for calling and caller info, specifically caller gender. When using this table, please consider the following:

NOTES

n/a = category was not captured that year/month

0 = category was specifically noted to have no callers

"-" = no data available at all for this period

1985 onward: data available monthly

MISSING DATA – consider the office break-ins in 1988 and 1992

1985: Missing January

1986: Missing December, and April may be incomplete (much lower volume of calls)

1988: Only Sept-Dec available

1992: Only Sept-Dec available

1993: Only Jan, Feb, Mar, Sept, Oct available

No data at all for 1987, 1990, 1991

LIMITATIONS

- Unclear whether each call was only entered once (e.g., one reason per call) or if one call could be listed under multiple reasons.
- Relying on the data entry of a variety of people over many years - means data is likely incomplete and based on a variety of interpretations.
- Categories shift over time and are not mutually exclusive (e.g., "coming out" not captured after 1984, but coming out may have been captured under "coping with being gay" after that).
- Some notes capture callers of unknown gender, some do not; some notes capture total number of calls, some do not.

Reasons for Calling

Reason for call / Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	TOTAL
Hang ups	n/a	n/a	1415	548	846	485	-	192	522	-	-	90	113	4211
Cranks	281	352	1380	313	359	182	-	40	46	-	-	7	3	2963
General information	217	312	442	438	346	221	-	132	413	-	-	65	106	2692
"Am I gay?"/Questioning sexuality	13	65	232	127	68	56	-	27	77	-	-	8	24	697
Wrong #	40	109	217	81	99	78	-			-	-	8	20	652
Chat/Just to talk	66	35	132	85	43	54	-	41	123	-	-	n/a	25	604
Masturbation	43	39	167	132	57	28	-	16	42	-	-	6	5	535
Coping with being gay	n/a	62	51	69	113	82	-	15	40	-	-	9	12	453
Call back for volunteer of same gender	41	66	109	89	66	24	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	395
Billies only	n/a	30	125	90	98	46	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	389
Info on specific sexual methods	n/a	26	116	117	26	39	-	n/a	7	-	-	4	7	342
Baths/sex	n/a	44	152	60	37	29	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	322
AIDS/safe sex	n/a	n/a	n/a	43	39	79	-	32	87	-	-	10	12	302
Married/gay experience	n/a	14	97	66	34	34	-	11	32	-	-	n/a	1	289
Coming out	24	87	55	96	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	262
Physical/medical	16	4	70	89	35	15	-	6	12	-	-	1	12	260
Transvestite/transsexual	31	17	31	72	19	15	-	18	31	-	-	2	10	246
Dating line/asking counsellor out	n/a	11	153	81	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	245
Gay friends/relatives	24	16	69	37	14	10	-	5	1	-	-	n/a	1	177
Relationship problems	n/a	15	90	19	20	21	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	165
Straight caller	5	15	14	29	32	16	-	13	22	-	-	3	4	153
Research/speakers bureau	n/a	4	73	54	4	1	-	2	5	-	-	1	4	148
Legal	5	3	12	21	14	14	-	3	15	-	-	1	2	90
Religion	n/a	4	33	7	5	3	-	n/a	2	-	-	n/a	n/a	54
Silent calls	11	7	35	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	53
Depression/self-oppression	32	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	32
Out of town visitors	25	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	25
Bisexual	24	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	24
Married	20	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	20

Sexual confusion/hesitation to act	19	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	19
Straight but curious	13	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	13
Call back the same night	11	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	11
Dates	11	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	11
Just moved here	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	10
How to...	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	10
Break-up	9	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	9
Gay fathers	8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	8
Paranoia	7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	7
Guilt	7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	7
Fetishes	7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	7
Referrals for professionals	n/a	6	0	0	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	6
Closet calls	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	5
Condemnations (homophobic?)	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	5
Research calls	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	5
Personal (other than counselling)	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	5
Counsellors meeting callers	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	5
Victimized	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	4
Phone rings once	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	4
Specified have had no gay sex	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	3
Criticism of Hamilton gay scene	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	3
Wants to get involved	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	3
Speaking engagements	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	3
Gay mothers	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	2
Teachers	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	2
Religious discussion	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	2
Seeking religious counselling	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	2
Moving out of town	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1
Positive action taken	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1
Vocal support of Gayline	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1
Unsure of present relationship	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1
Information for Archives	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1

Referred by Telecare	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1
Bomb threat to CHCH-TV	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1
April Fools	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a	1

Caller Info

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Male	345	537	795	478	571	490	-	229	736	-	-	122	153
Female	77	163	218	154	118	112	-	68	138	-	-	31	42
Unknown	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	187	103	-	n/a	n/a	-	-	n/a	n/a

Reference List

- Dialogue*: A Publication of the Hamilton-McMaster Homophile Association. (1975, November).
- [Gayline Call Statistics (1985-1986)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 10, Folder 5). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Gayline Call Summary Log (1979-1980)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 10, Folder 1). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Gayline Reports (1981-1984)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 10, Folder 2). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Gayline Reports (1984-1985)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 10, Folder 3). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Gayline Reports (1988-1989)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 10, Folder 7). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Gayline Communication Books (1988-1994)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 11, Folder 2). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Gay Phoenix]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 11, Folder 9). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- Hamilton Gay and Lesbian Alliance. [HGALA Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (1992-1993)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 13, Folder 41). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- Hamilton United Gay Societies. [HUGS – Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (1982-1985)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 6, Folder 20). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- Hamilton United Gay Societies. [HGALA Planning Committee Meeting Minutes (1992-1993)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 13, Folder 41). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Lesbian/Gayline Call Sheets (Sept-Dec 1992)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 10, Folder 9). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.
- [Lesbian/Gayline Call Sheets (1993)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 10, Folder 10). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

[Lesbian/Gayline Policies and Procedures (1991-1992)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 11, Folder 3). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

Martin, Stefanie. (2020). [Description & Finding Aid]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

McLeod, D. W. (1996). *Lesbian and Gay Liberation in Canada: A Selected Annotated Chronology, 1964-1975*. Homewood Books.

[Photographs – Meetings and Locations]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 25, Envelope 235). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

Pink Triangle Services. (1994, February). [Now we can talk about AIDS: A First National Conference for Gaylines in Canada (Conference Proceedings)]. Michael Johnstone Fonds (Accession #01179, Box 11, Folder 7). LGBT2SQ+ Community Archive, Hamilton Public Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

Who We Are: History. LGBT YouthLine. (2021, August 3). Retrieved January 1, 2023, from <https://www.youthline.ca/who-we-are/history/>

2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project. *Diane*.

2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project. *Mary Cahill*.

2SLGBTQ+ Archive/Documentary Project. *Susie*.