

Tides of Hate at UA

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Abstract

Few know about the history of UA's queer student group outside of those who built it and those who have been archiving it, putting materials into special collections where it is hidden from plain sight. I took interest in the public hatred put forth by the peers of the group's members for decades. Were they just raised that way or was something threatening them? By looking through most of the materials held within Hoole Special Collections, I found many examples of hatred being hurled at queer people. I discovered that hatred was usually expressed in waves, alongside efforts of the queer community to be legitimized in the eyes of the university.

Methods

Using Miller-Stephens LGBTQ UA Student Organization collection, University of Alabama Libraries Special Collections

- Started off seeking out *Crimson White* letters to the editor and anything else I felt could include public portrayals of hate
- Eventually went through about 12 linear feet of information, as hate is spread throughout many aspects of queer history and UA is not an exception
- Specifically focused on blatant portrayals of hate that were displayed publicly

“First, I feel that it is irresponsible for The *Crimson White* to give front page coverage to 50 flagrant fags....

Incidentally, does anyone on this campus own a pellet gun or what?”

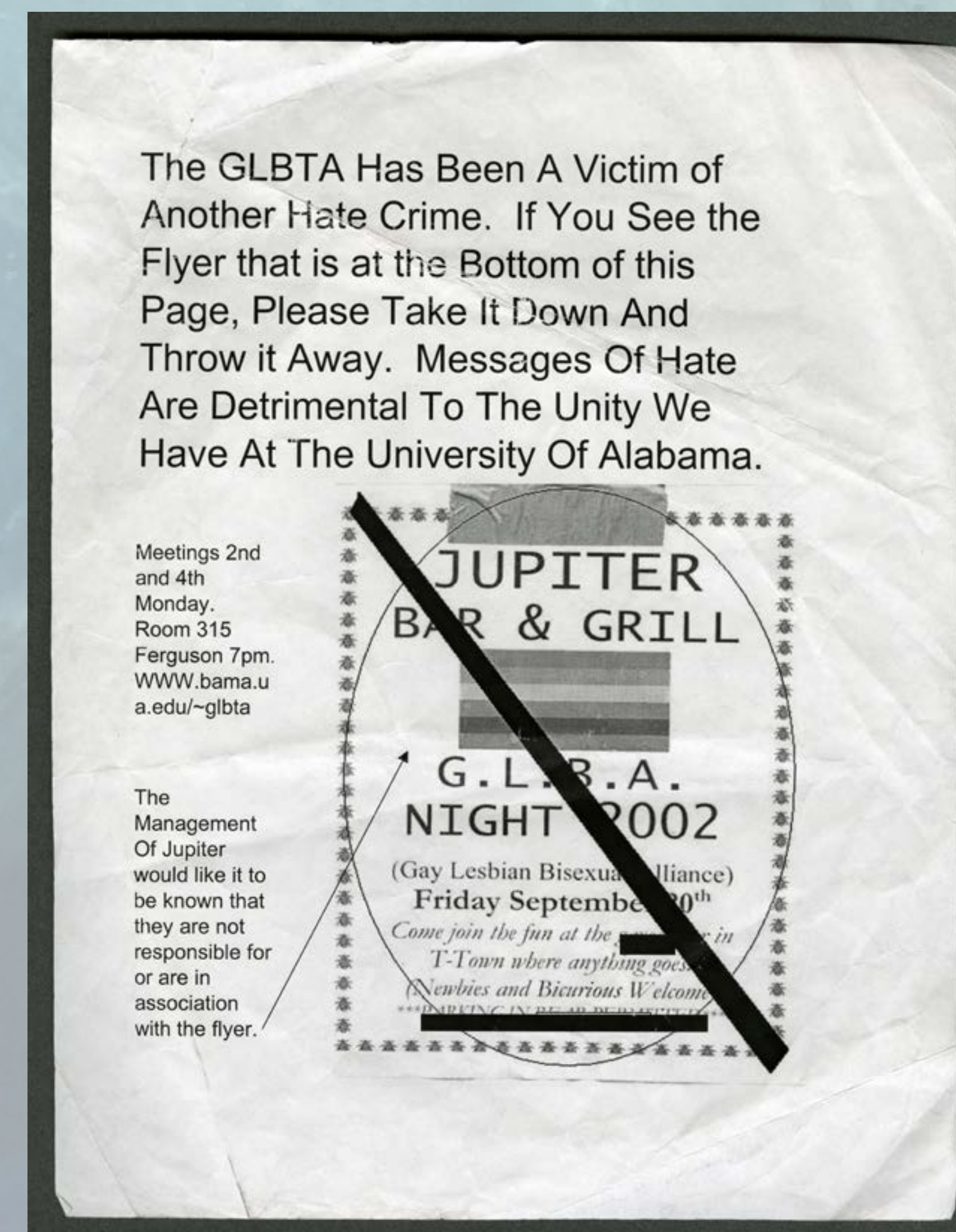
- *Crimson White*, letter to the editor
February 1992, Christopher Villers

“It is very sad that a handful of faggots can scare a whole university into submission”

- *Crimson White*, letter to the editor
February 8, 1996, Jody Stockmon

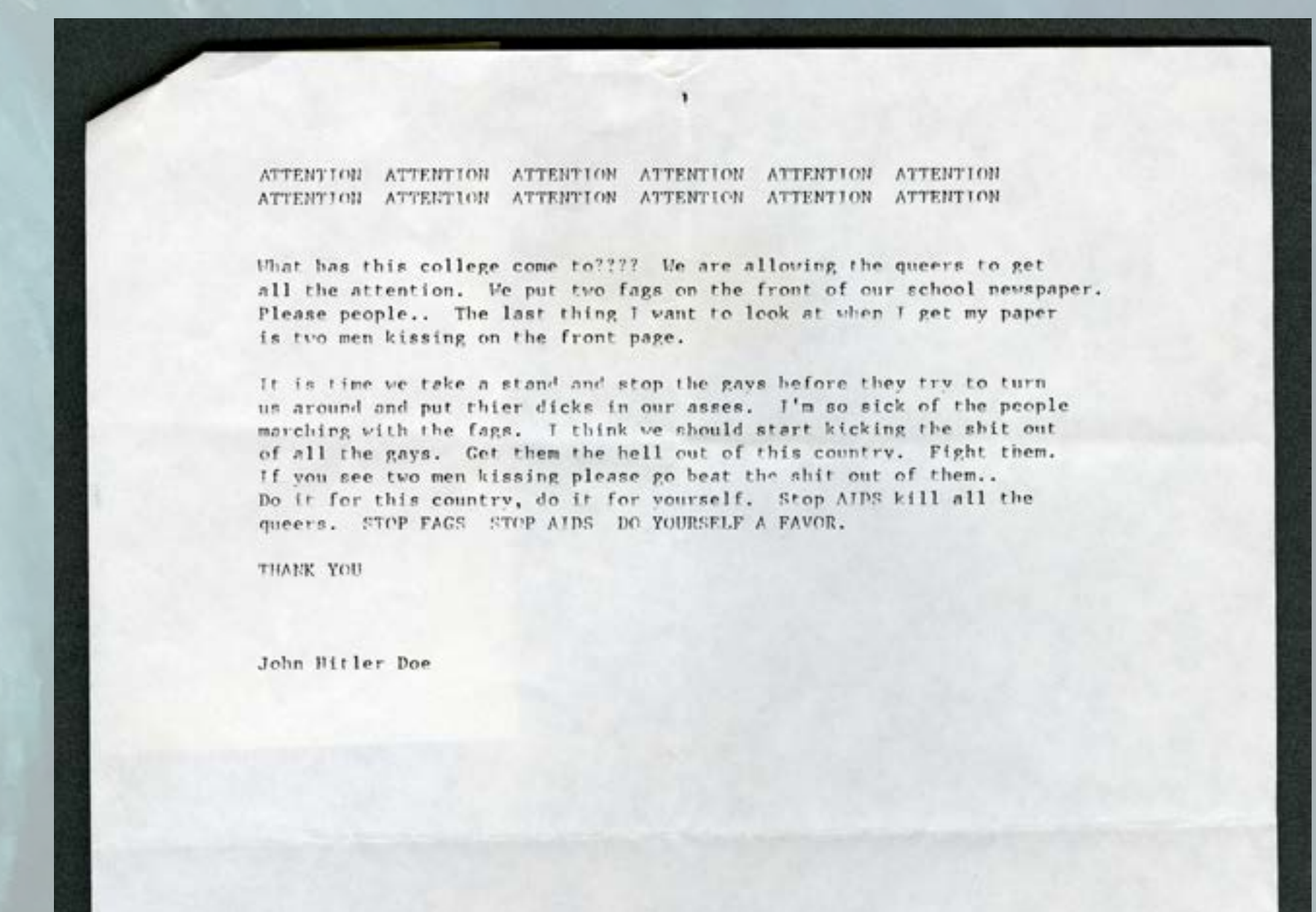
“How does YAF spell relief? AIDS”

- YAF poster for Get on Board Day
1983/84



Conclusions/Significance

- Hate came in waves on campus, generated when queer students pushed aggressively for more visibility, legitimacy, and a larger institutional presence.
- Key causes of expressions of hatred included: formation of the first queer student group, seeking and securing institutional funding, a kiss-in and a picture of two men kissing published on the front page of the *Crimson White*, and state legislation aiming to end the ability for queer groups to form and meet on university campuses.
- It feels that this hatred has been hidden, just as UA's foundation of slavery has been kept out of focus for over a century



“Homosexuality is a blatant form of mental illness at its optimum. It is truly inconceivable to think that such pitiful people are part of the human race. It goes to show you what a sick society we live in.”

- *Crimson White*, letter to the editor
1983/84, Simmons S. Ennis