

Pride, Resistance, Joy: Teaching Intersectional LGBTQ+ Stories of California and Beyond

**Lesson Plans for K-12 Teachers
aligned to California's History-Social Science Framework
in implementation of the FAIR Education Act**

Inquiry Question: How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

12th Grade U.S. Government



Pride, Resistance, Joy: **Teaching Intersectional LGBTQ+ Stories of California and Beyond**



“Richard Adams and Anthony Sullivan,” May 1984. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.

Inquiry Question: *How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?*

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California History-Social Science Content Standards (1998):

- HSS-PoAD-12.2: Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.
 - 12.2.5. Describe the reciprocity between rights and obligations; that is, why enjoyment of one's rights entails respect for the rights of others.
 - 12.2.6. Explain how one becomes a citizen of the United States, including the process of naturalization (e.g., literacy, language, and other requirements).
- HSS-PoAD-12.4: Students analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the U.S. Constitution.
- HSS-PoAD-12.5: Students summarize landmark U.S. Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and its amendments.
 - 12.5.1: Understand the changing interpretations of the Bill of Rights over time, including interpretations of the basic freedoms (religion, speech, press, petition, and assembly) articulated in the First Amendment and the due process and equal-protection-of-the-law clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.
 - 12.5.4: Explain the controversies that have resulted over changing interpretations of civil rights...

California Common Core State Standards (2014):

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1: Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.8: Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

California History-Social Science Framework Connections (2016):

“Whenever possible, students should learn through illustrations of the kinds of controversies that have arisen because of challenges or differing interpretations of the Bill of Rights... Supreme Court and other federal court decisions may be debated or simulated in the classroom, following readings of original source materials... These cases... reflect tensions between individual rights and societal interests; they also illustrate how each case involved real people and how the present laws resulted from the debates, trials, and sacrifices of ordinary people...” (Ch. 17, p. 443).

“Students... discuss, analyze, and construct writings on contemporary local, national, and international issues... Topics for discussion may include... human rights (such as the use of torture, or immigration and refugee policies)... [and] the law (such as... discrimination against members of the LGBT community...)” (Ch. 17, p. 454-454).

Overview of Lesson:

In this lesson, students will explore various sources related to *Anthony Sullivan vs. Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS)* (1985), one of the first legal battles for the federal recognition of same-sex marriage rights in the United States. After legally marrying Richard Adams in Colorado in 1975, Sullivan— an Australian immigrant— petitioned Immigration and Naturalization Services for permanent residency, which was afforded to the legally-married spouses of U.S. citizens, launching a decade of litigation. Sources include interviews, fliers, excerpts from the court proceedings, and news articles about the lives and legal battle of both Sullivan and Adams, primarily from the 1970s and 1980s.

Students will be assessed by writing a short constructed response— referred to as Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) in the lesson— evaluating and answering the inquiry question: *How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?* Furthermore, students will apply their learning to a small research task on current issues LGBTQ+ people experience while attempting to immigrate as well as their political and legal challenges to discriminatory policies.

Materials:

- [Slide Deck](#) (p. 6-17)
- [Video](#): "Richard Adams and Tony Sullivan Gay Marriage Case" (1979) from KTLA News
- Handout 1a: INS Criteria for "Inadmissible Aliens," 1952 (p. 18)
- Handout 1b: The Story of Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams (p. 19-20)
- Sources A-F (p. 21-29)
- Handout 2: Graphic Organizer for Document Analysis (p. 30-31)
- [Video](#): "Obergefell v. Hodges — Background" from C-SPAN
- [Video](#): "Same-Sex Marriage Becomes Legal | *Obergefell v. Hodges*" by Mr. Beat
- Handout 3: Claim, Evidence, Reasoning Graphic Organizer (p. 32-33)
- Additional Background Reading

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Sources:

- A. Pat Rocco, “Morris Kight and others protest Sullivan deportation hearings,” 1979. Pat Rocco photographs and papers, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries; and “Kepner and Troy Perry attending Sullivan picket demonstration,” 1984. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.
- B. United States Department of Justice, “Immigration and Naturalization Service letter to Richard Adams,” December 1975. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.
- C. March Committee for Lesbian Gay Rights/Los Angeles, “Your Presence Counts: Demonstrate for the Revision of Immigration Laws Affecting Lesbians and Gays,” February 1980. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.
- D. Anthony Sullivan Defense Fund, “S.O.S. Do you feel safe loving a gay person in America?,” c. 1980s. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.
- E. Anthony Corbett Sullivan, “*Immigration Information (First Draft), Prepared for Rev. Troy D. Perry*,” 1977. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.
- F. March Committee for Lesbian and Gay Rights, “Petition to change immigration laws that are discriminatory against lesbians and gay men,” c. 1975-1980. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.

Procedures:

1. Introduction:

- a. Teacher poses the following questions for students: *Why do you believe people immigrate to the United States? What factors lead people to want to immigrate? What do you know about immigration law in the United States? What do you know about immigrant experiences in the United States?*
- b. Teacher informs students that the lesson focuses on an immigration case that was highly contested for over 45 years. A gay couple fought against discriminatory immigration laws to help themselves, and others, secure their rights to marry and seek naturalization as provided by rights in the U.S. Constitution. Students will explore various archival and media sources to understand how the couple fought for their rights and how they created a movement through solidarity with other marginalized groups of people.
- c. Teacher introduces the inquiry question and supporting question:
 - i. How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?
 - ii. What can we learn about the Anthony Sullivan case that helps continue advocacy for more inclusive immigrant policies for LGBTQ+ people (trans, HIV+, asylum seekers, etc.)?

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

2. Background on Sullivan Case:

- a. Teacher plays the [video](#) “Richard Adams and Tony Sullivan gay marriage case” from KTLA.
- b. As students watch the clips, they take notes keeping in mind the following questions:
Why was Sullivan denied citizenship status? What were Sullivan and his lawyer arguing? What implications could this denial of citizenship have for other people?
- c. After viewing the clip, teacher leads students in a think-pair-share about their initial impression of the case and asks students: *What did Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams want to accomplish? What can we understand about immigration law from their situation? What implications could this denial of citizenship have for other people?*
- d. Teacher provides notes on *Boutilier vs INS* (1967). The case is used by the INS as precedent for their decision on the Anthony Sullivan legal status petition, insisting that homosexuality is a “psychopathic personality” and the initial cause for denial. This is also later used to explain why a marriage between two men cannot be considered a “real” marriage.

3. Background Readings:

- a. Handout 1a: Teacher provides students the INS “inadmissible aliens” criteria from 1952. As students read through the statute that the U.S. uses to decide legal admission for immigrants*, teacher asks students: *What can we learn about US sentiments towards immigrants and what makes them “inadmissible”? Where in the INS Criteria does one see the exclusion for sexual orientation? What does this short petition argue about how the US “should” determine if someone is a homosexual?*

*At the time, the only way to verify if someone was indeed a homosexual was for the person to confess during their immigration interview or for them to have been charged with a crime (like the *Boutilier* case).

- b. Handout 1b: Teacher provides students with an article detailing the life of Richard Adams and Anthony Sullivan. The article goes into the meeting of Adams and Sullivan in Los Angeles, the events that transpired after they fell in love and legally married in Colorado, and the eventual result of their 45 year struggle to gain legal immigration status and recognition of their marriage under federal law.

4. Document Analysis: Students examine sources A-F, and answer questions on the graphic organizer (Handout 2) to support their analysis of the sources.

Formative Assessment

5. Students write (Handout 3) a short constructed response* (about 7-10 sentences), answering the question: *How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?*

*The short constructed response created in this lesson is meant to help students analyze the various ways in which communities come together to advocate for a common goal. This case study allows for the students to take a deep look at a personal account and how governmental laws can be discriminatory, yet it also allows them to consider that their rights and duties as

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

people in this country is to petition the government to uphold the ideals with which it was founded.

6. **Transition Activity:** Teacher provides context around the Defense of Marriage Act (1996), and plays a [short clip](#) of Jim Obergefell discussing the background of his case via C-SPAN. Teachers can also choose to incorporate an additional [video](#): “Same-Sex Marriage Becomes Legal | *Obergefell v. Hodges*” by Mr.Beat.
7. **Extension Activity:** Students engage in a short discussion about what they learned about immigration and marriage rights from the lesson. Discuss: *What methods can we use in order to petition the government? In what ways have lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Americans issues and issues pertaining to undocumented immigrants changed or remained the same over time? What work do you believe still has to be done in order to create more equitable policy for LGBTQ+ people and immigrants?*

Summative Assessment:

8. In the Slide Deck, students will find a gallery of links to five current issues that contemporary LGBTQ+ people face when immigrating to the United States. Students will engage in research to share with their classmates how the legal struggles for equality and representation continues for LGBTQ+ people, with particular attention to transgender and HIV+ people. U.S. immigration law continues to shift; therefore, students should focus on how the *Sullivan* case sets precedent for how current LGBTQ+ immigrants continue their political and legal advocacy.

Final presentations should include:

- a. Background/Context for immigration issue, including summaries of narratives found during research
- b. Laws that set precedent for current policies
- c. Explanation as to how these laws are used to justify discrimination
- d. Explanation as to why this issue is important to discuss
- e. Ways community is fighting/ pushing for inclusion
- f. Connections found between current immigration issue and the *Sullivan* case
- g. Reflection on issues currently facing LGBTQ+ immigrants
- h. Works cited

Further Resources:

- Hasalyn Modine, “[A Short History of LGBTQ Immigration Policy](#),” from Boundless, Sep. 2024.
- Jessie Kratz, “[Immigrating While Queer: Part I](#),” from National Archives, June 2021.
- Jessie Kratz, “[Immigrating While Queer: Part II, The Fight Ahead](#),” From National Archives, June 2021.
- Julio Capo, Jr., “[Queer Border Crossings](#),” from *Modern American History*, 2019.
- Julio Capo, Jr., “[There’s no LGBTQ Pride without immigrants](#),” from *The Washington Post*, June 2021.
- Marc Stein, “[Introduction: Boutilier v. Immigration and Naturalization Service \(1967\)](#),” from OutHistory, May 2017.

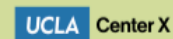
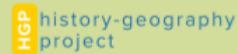
How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

- Susannah Hermszewska et al., “[Lived experiences of transgender forced migrants and their mental health outcomes: systematic review and meta-ethnography](#),” from BJPsych Open, May 2022.
- Sydney Randall, “[For trans migrants forced to flee their homes, the violence continues at our border](#),” from Human Rights First, March 2024.

Slide Deck

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

The Case of Anthony Corbett
Sullivan v. Immigration and
Naturalization Services (1985)



Created by Carla Ayala; MSTMA at Roosevelt High School

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Research Topics: LGBTQ+ Immigration Issues



Anthony Sullivan v. INS (1985)

The case follows Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams as they fought against discriminatory immigration laws, a fight that would last over 45 years.

The couple fights to get their marriage recognized by INS after being married in Colorado in 1975. The couple filed a lawsuit in the Federal District Court of Los Angeles in order to help Sullivan gain Legal Permanent Residency as the spouse of a US Citizen.

Fundamentally, all that was required to obtain a marriage visa, was a legal marriage certificate, which the couple had.

So, why was Sullivan denied this right?



Think-Pair-Share

1. What did Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams want to accomplish?
2. What can we understand about immigration law from their situation?



What laws did Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) use to deny Sullivan's residency petition?

Boutilier v INS (1967)

Context:

- Clive Michael Boutilier, a man from Canada, applied to move to the US and wanted a visa.
- US immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) rejected the application.
- The INS stated he couldn't enter because they considered Boutilier a "psychopathic personality"

Young Clive (right)



Clive's brother Andrew (left)
and Clive, Nova Scotia, 1968.



Reasons for Denial

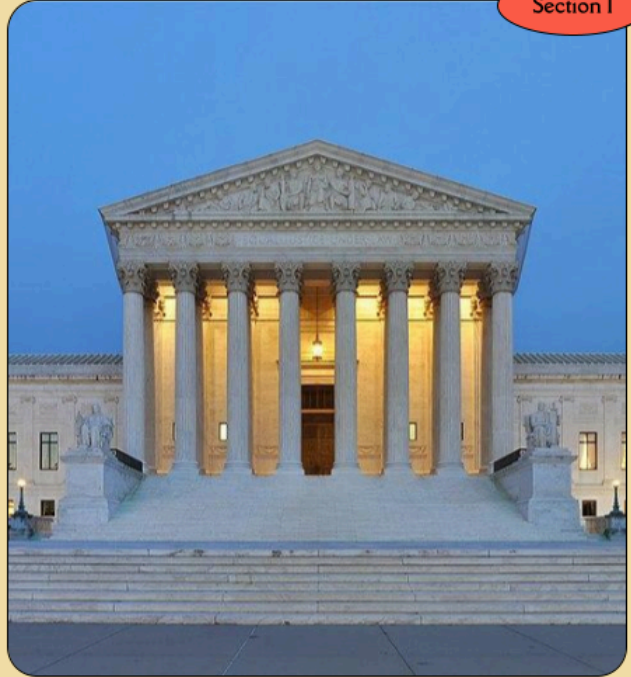
- The INS thought his sexual orientation made him a “psychopathic personality” under the US immigration law.
- The law AT THE TIME allowed the U.S. to deny entry of people with “psychopathic personalities,” even though there was no clear medical definition.

Use of “Psychopathic Personality”

- Legal term used to exclude people who were seen as “morally deviant” according to the *social views* of the 1950–60s.
- At the time, homosexuality was stigmatized (being gay was medically-classified as a mental illness).
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Today, homosexuality is not medically-classified as a mental illness.

Supreme Court Ruling

- Ruled against Clive, in favor of INS
- Law could be interpreted to exclude individuals like Boutilier
- Based in INS judgement only
- Court said the language used was *vague enough* to allow this exclusion, even though the term “psychopathic personality” was not defined



Impact of Case

Clive and his partner Eugene, New York City, early 1960s.

- The decision reflected social prejudices and misunderstandings about mental health and sexuality in the 1960s.
- Homosexuality, and sexual orientation, are no longer considered a mental illness (removed from DSM in 1973).
- This case is an example of how discriminatory laws and attitudes were used to justify immigrant exclusion based on sexual orientation.



Discuss:

What is our understanding of the purpose of marriage?

Handout 1a

Immigration and Naturalization Services: Criteria for Inadmissible Aliens (1952)

A reading of the applicable portions of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and corresponding legislative history, indicates the intent of Congress that homosexuality be a medical exclusion, and that therefore a medical certificate is required to exclude a homosexual from entry into the United States. The excludable aliens statute places persons afflicted with a psychopathic personality, sexual deviation, or a mental defect among six other classes of aliens excludable for medical reasons. ^{5/} The statutes governing the detention, observation

^{5/} 8 U.S.C. § 1182(c) (1) Aliens who are mentally retarded;
(2) Aliens who are insane;
(3) Aliens who have had one or more attacks of insanity;
(4) Aliens afflicted with psychopathic personality, or sexual deviations or a mental defect;
(5) Aliens who are narcotic drug addicts or chronic alcoholics;
(6) Aliens who are afflicted with any dangerous contagious disease;
(7) Aliens not comprehended within any of the foregoing classes who are certified by the examining surgeon as having a physical defect, disease, or disability . . . of such a nature that it may affect the ability of the alien to earn a living.

Section 1182(a) then proceeds to enumerate 26 other classes of excludable aliens none of which constitute medical grounds for exclusion, i.e., paupers (1182(a)(8)), anarchists (1182(a)(28)(A)), etc.

In federal U.S Immigration law, there is a set of statutes that describe who, or what kind of, people can be denied entry.

These rules are constantly shifting. The criteria you have is from 1952.

As you read, keep in mind the following:

What can we learn about US sentiments towards immigrants and what makes them "inadmissible"? Where in the INS Criteria does one see the exclusion for sexual orientation?

Discussion:

What does this short petition argue about how the U.S. should determine if someone is a homosexual?

Handout 1b

In 2021, *Esquire* published an article detailing the life of Richard Adams and Anthony Sullivan. The article goes into the meeting of Adams and Sullivan, the events that transpired after they fell in love and married, and the eventual result of their 45-year struggle to gain citizenship and, most importantly, recognition of their marriage in the eyes of the law.

The Story of Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams



Tony Sullivan and Richard Adams in 2010.

Handout 2

Document Analysis: A-F

Begin to read Documents A-F. As you work through all of these documents, you should fill out their graphic organizer with the following:

1. **What kind of source am I looking at? (newspaper, flier, photograph, letter, etc)**
2. **Who is the intended audience of this source?**
3. **What is the purpose of this source?**
4. **How does this source help me answer the inquiry question?**



Handout 3

C-E-R

Write a short constructed response (about 7-10 sentences), answering the question:

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?



Defense of Marriage Act

- The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), 1996 (Pres. Clinton)
- Defined marriage as the union between one man and one woman for federal purposes (i.e. taxes, immigration, military benefits)
- Allowed states to refuse recognition of same-sex marriages
- Parts of DOMA were struck down in 2013 in *US v. Windsor*
 - It is unconstitutional to deny federal benefits to legally married same-sex couples.
- The protections of *US v. Windsor* were made federal law by the Respect for Marriage Act, signed by Pres. Biden in December 2022

If denying same-sex couples federal benefits was unconstitutional in 2013, then didn't that mean *ALL* of the US had to recognize same-sex marriage?

Obergefell v. Hodges

In 2015, the US Supreme Court ruled that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right. This required ALL STATES to recognize and allow such marriages, including California, where same-sex marriage was banned by a statewide vote in 2008. The decision was based on the principles of equal protection and due process as seen in the 14th amendment.



Topics for Research

1

[Asylum and Refugee Status](#)

2

[Family Reunification](#)

3

[Visa Discrimination](#)

4

[Protection for Transgender Immigrants](#)

5

[Deportation to Unsafe Countries](#)

Final Project Criteria

1

Background/Context on Immigration Issue

2

Legal Precedents

3

How Laws Justify Discrimination

4

Importance of Issue

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Community Response/Activism

Final Project Criteria (cont'd)

6

Connections to *Sullivan* Case

7

Reflection

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Works Cited

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Topics for Research:

1. **Asylum and Refugee Status:** Ari Shaw and Namrata Verghese, “[LGBTQI+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers: A Review of Research and Data Needs](#),” from Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law, July 2022.
2. **Family Reunification:** International Refugee Assistance Project and Immigration Equality, “[Marriage-Based Family Reunification for LGBTQ Couples](#),” July 2024.
3. **Visa Discrimination:** Immigrant Learning Center, “[LGBTQ+ Immigrants: Challenges and Contributions](#).”
4. **Protection for Transgender Immigrants:** Human Rights Campaign, “[The Precarious Position of Transgender Immigrants and Asylum Seekers](#),” Jan. 2019.
5. **Deportation to Unsafe Countries:** Raymond G. Lahoud, “[‘If I’m Deported, I Won’t Survive’: Immigration Challenges Faced by the LGBTQ+ Community](#),” from Norris McLaughlin Attorneys at Law.

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Handout 1a: INS Criteria for “Inadmissible Aliens,” 1952

Source: United States District Court, N.D. California (modified by Carla Ayala), Excerpt from “Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Committee, Inc. v. United States Immigration & Naturalization Service,” June 1982. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.

Background: Prior *Lesbian/Gay Freedom Foundation, Inc. v. U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service* (1989), immigrants could be and were denied legal status in the United States on the basis of their sexual orientation, in accordance with the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, which was enacted during the federal government’s McCarthy-era crackdowns on homosexuals. The *Lesbian/Gay Freedom Foundation* case established that sexual orientation itself was not a medical defect or mental illness and could not be considered as a factor for determining “inadmissible aliens.”

A reading of the applicable portions of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and corresponding legislative history, indicates the intent of Congress that homosexuality be a medical exclusion, and that therefore a medical certificate is required to exclude a homosexual from entry into the United States. The excludable aliens statute places persons afflicted with a psychopathic personality, sexual deviation, or a mental defect among six other classes of aliens excludable for medical reasons.^{5/} The statutes governing the detention, observation and

GENERAL CLASSES OF ALIENS INELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE VISAS AND EXCLUDED FROM ADMISSION

5/

- 8 U.S.C. § 1182(c)(1) Aliens who have intellectual disabilities;
- (2) Aliens who are insane;
 - (3) Aliens who have had one or more attacks of insanity;
 - (4) Aliens afflicted with psychopathic personality, or sexual deviations or a mental defect;
 - (5) Aliens who are narcotic drug addicts or chronic alcoholics;
 - (6) Aliens who are afflicted with any dangerous contagious disease;
 - (7) Aliens not comprehended within any of the foregoing classes who are certified by the examining surgeon as having a physical defect, disease, or disability ... of such a nature that it may affect the ability of the alien to earn a living.

Section 1182(a) then proceeds to enumerate 26 other classes of excludable aliens none of which constitute medical grounds for exclusion, i.e., paupers (1182(a)(8)), anarchists (1182(a)(28)(A)), etc.

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Handout 1b: The Story of Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams

Source: P.J. Caña, “[Remembering Richard Adams, Filipino-American Gay Rights Activist](#),” from *Esquire*, Dec. 2021.



History is filled with brave men and women who challenged norms and stood up to bigotry and hate. One of them is Richard Adams, a Filipino-American activist who, together with his partner, was one of the first-ever same-sex couples granted a marriage license in the U.S. He spent the rest of his life fighting for that marriage to be recognized. He died on this day (December 17) in 2012 and it's only right we look back and pay tribute to his extraordinary life.

Adams later moved to Los Angeles, California where he worked as an agent for car rental company Avis. It was in 1971, during a Cinco De

Mayo event at a gay bar called Closet, when he met Anthony Sullivan. The two eventually fell in love and began a relationship. However, Sullivan was an Australian who was in the U.S. on a tourist visa. There was no way for him to remain in the U.S. and be with Adams. Unless the two got married. But this was the middle of the 1970s. It was decades before the U.S. or any other country in the world had explicit laws that gave same-sex couples the right to get married and enjoy the same privileges as straight couples. The couple then heard about a clerk in Boulder, Colorado who had issued a marriage license to two men after she consulted a local district attorney. She reasoned that there was actually no law that prevented her from issuing the license to two men. And so she did.

Getting married in Boulder

Adams and Sullivan traveled to Colorado and got married in Boulder County on April 21, 1975. They were one of the first six same-sex couples that were issued a marriage license in the country. As one could imagine, the news that half a dozen same-sex couples were issued marriage licenses sparked an uproar not just in Colorado but across the U.S. According to the *New York Times*, Boulder County stopped issuing the licenses almost immediately soon after.

Meanwhile, with marriage license in hand, Adams and Sullivan filed a petition with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) seeking permanent residency for Sullivan because he was the spouse of a U.S. citizen. The couple received an extremely offensive reply from the INS, which no doubt fueled their desire to fight for gay rights: “You have failed to establish that a bona fide marital relationship can exist between two [slur redacted],” the reply read. The INS later sent a revised letter, insisting that “[a] marriage between two males is invalid for immigration purposes and cannot be considered a bona fide marital relationship since neither party to the marriage can perform the *female functions* in marriage.”

After their petition was ultimately denied, the couple sued the INS, claiming that their marriage was valid both in Colorado and immigration law. But a federal judge in Los Angeles upheld the decision of the INS (1985).

Extreme hardship

With options limited, Sullivan filed an appeal that sought to stop the impending deportation, claiming that it would cause him “extreme hardship.” But a court ultimately denied that petition as well. By that point, the couple and their case were all over the news. There were constant interviews and the case was discussed on late night talk shows.

“My belief was if the press knew what we were doing—if we got in the press and stayed in the press—that gave us a measure of safety from the government,” Sullivan told *The Washington Post*. “And I think one of the reasons the press decided to be nice to us was because we were so honest.”

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

As an alternative, Adams attempted to apply for residency in Australia instead, but that, too, was rejected by the Australian government. So, in 1985, they left the U.S. and traveled around Europe for a year.

The couple returned to the U.S. via Mexico in 1986.. Eventually, the couple began making appearances at public events and advocating for equal rights for same-sex couples.

As the '90s and the 2000s rolled around, same-sex marriage began to pick up support across the U.S., with Massachusetts becoming the first state to legalize it in 2004. According to the *Post*, the couple's attorney asked them if they wanted to take advantage of the changing attitudes about the issue to finally, unequivocally, get married. But they refused.

"Richard and I have never budged on the concept that the Boulder marriage was legitimate—it's still in the books," Sullivan told the *Post*.

But in December 2012, Adams was battling cancer, and the attorney advised them to go up to Washington State and get married there. The couple reluctantly agreed. They made the trip with a filmmaker, who was supposed to capture the moment.

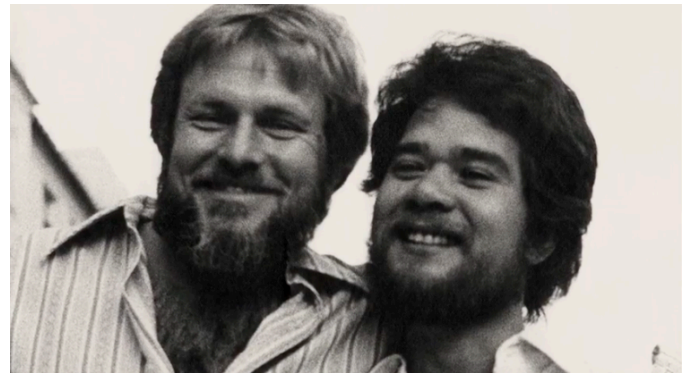
Sadly, the wedding never happened as Adams passed away the very next day.

A long-delayed apology

In the days and weeks after Adams' death, Sullivan received a work permit from the government, and, afterwards, a letter from the CIS. He had written to then-President Barack Obama asking for a formal apology for the "[slur]" letter. It was the director of the CIS who responded.

"This agency should never treat any individual with the disrespect shown toward you and Mr. Adams," the director, Leon Rodriguez, wrote.

"You have my sincerest apology for the years of hurt caused by the deeply offensive and hateful language used in the November 24, 1975, decision and my deepest condolences on your loss."

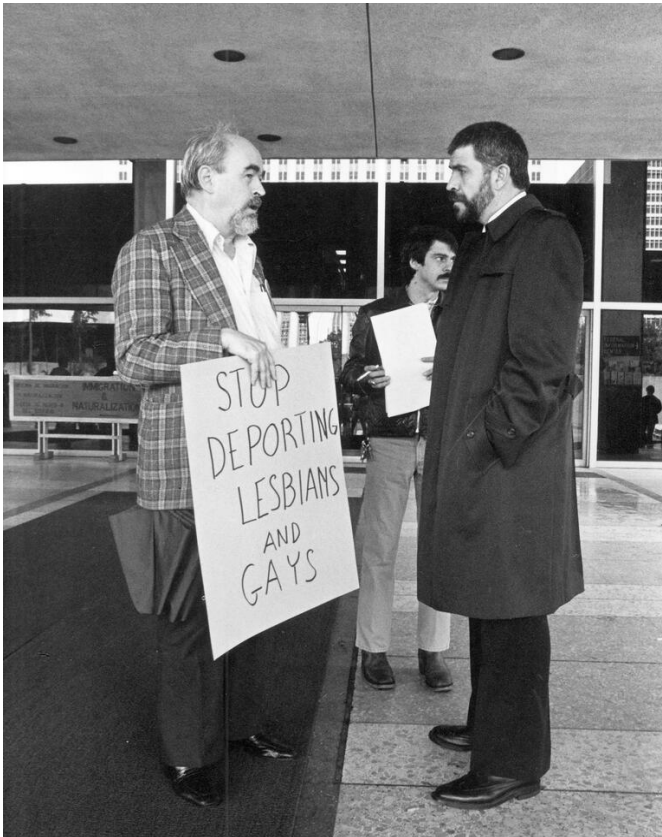


Sullivan later requested the formal acknowledgment that his marriage to Adams was legitimate, which the U.S. government granted. He also finally got his Green card, which came 45 years since his wedding to Adams in Boulder. Sullivan himself passed away in November 2020, eight years after his beloved Richard. Their story has since been told in a documentary entitled *Limited Partnership*.

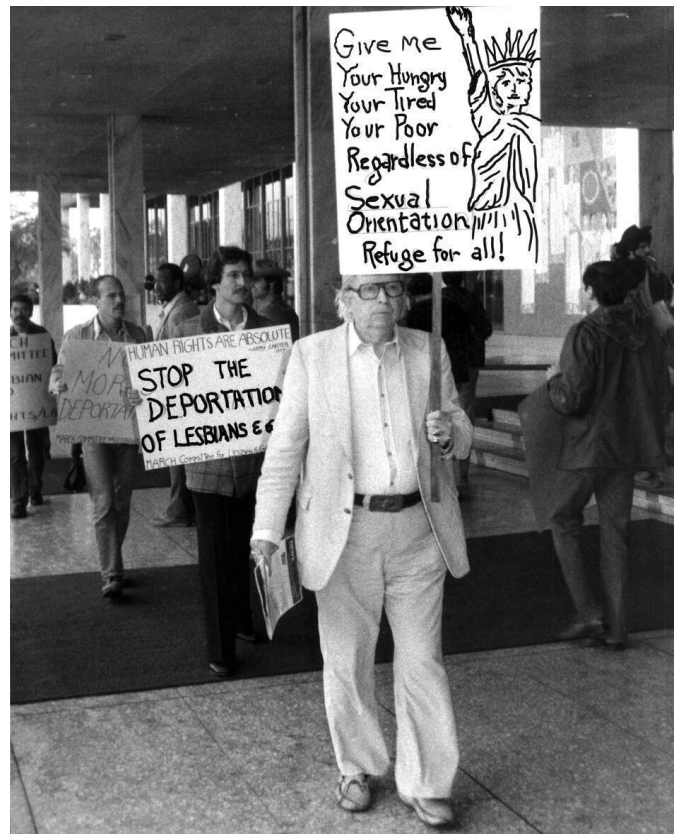
If you or someone you know is a member of the LGBT community, spare a thought for Adams and Sullivan, who showed the world the power of love, no matter your gender or sexual orientation.

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Source A: “Kepner and Troy Perry attending Sullivan picket demonstration,” 1984. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries; and Pat Rocco, “Morris Kight and others protest Sullivan deportation hearings,” 1979. Pat Rocco photographs and papers, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.



Jim Kepner (left), and Troy Perry (right), attending a picket demonstration at the Los Angeles Federal Office Building for the Anthony (Tony) Corbett Sullivan marriage immigration case. 1984.



Morris Kight and other gay and lesbian activists protest the deportation hearings of Anthony (Tony) Corbett Sullivan and Richard Frank Adams. 1979.

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Source B: United States Department of Justice, "Immigration and Naturalization Service letter to Richard Adams," December 1975. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Immigration and Naturalization Service
300 North Los Angeles Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

REFER TO THIS FILE NO.
A 20 537 540 DIATY/DITRA

Date: December 2, 1975

Mr. Richard Frank Adams
10265 Tujunga Canyon Boulevard - Apt. 1
Tujunga, California 91042

DECISION

Upon consideration, it is ordered that the decision of November 24, 1975: denying the visa petition you filed on April 28, 1975, for classification of Anthony Corbett Sullivan as the spouse of a United States citizen, is hereby withdrawn in that it is grounded on a legally insufficient basis. The following decision is substituted in its place: It is ordered that the visa petition filed on April 28, 1975, for classification of Anthony Corbett Sullivan as the spouse of a United States citizen, be denied for the following reasons:

A marriage between two males is invalid for immigration purposes and cannot be considered a bona fide marital relationship since neither party to the marriage can perform the female functions in marriage. Black's Law Dictionary defines marriage as, "the civil status, condition or relation of one man and one woman united in law for life, for the discharge to each other and the community of the duties legally incumbent upon those whose association is founded on the distinction of sex. "

Even if there is no prohibition to the issuance of a license to and a marriage between two persons of the same sex in the state where the marriage is performed, the fact remains that a marriage is and always has been a contract between a man and woman. A union between two males does not create a marriage contract. Baker v. Nelson, 191 N.H. 2d 185 (Minn.); Jones v. Hallahan, 501 S.W. 2d 588 (KY).

One of the parties to this union may function as a female in other relationships and situations, but cannot function as a wife by assuming *female duties* and obligations inherent in the marital

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

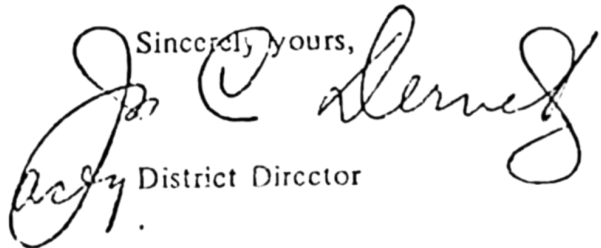
relationship. A union of this sort was never intended by Congress to form a basis of a visa petition.

If you desire to appeal this decision, you may do so. Your notice of appeal must be filed within 15 days from the date of this notice. If no appeal is filed within the time allowed, this decision is final. Appeal in your case may be made to:

- ☐ Board of Immigration Appeals in Washington, D. C., on the enclosed Forms 1-290 A.
- ☐ Regional Commissioner on the enclosed Form I-290 B.

If an appeal is desired, the Notice of Appeal shall be executed and filed with this office, together with a fee of \$25. A brief or other written statement in support of your appeal may be submitted with the Notice of Appeal.

Any question which you may have will be answered by the local immigration office nearest your residence, or at the address shown in the heading to this letter.

Sincerely yours,

District Director

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?


Source C: March Committee for Lesbian Gay Rights/Los Angeles, "Your Presence Counts: Demonstrate for the Revision of Immigration Laws Affecting Lesbians and Gays," February 1980. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.*

Your Presence Counts

Demonstrate for the Revision of Immigration Laws Affecting Lesbians and Gays

9:30 A.M. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21st

At 9:30 A.M. Thursday, February 21st, at 300 N. Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles, Anthony Corbett Sullivan will be put on trial by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) because he loves Richard Adams.



STORY

Anthony Sullivan came to the U.S. from Australia in March of 1971. At that time, he met Richard Frank Adams—they fell in love. In April 1972, he returned to the U.S. to be with Richard. They were married at a legal same-sex marriage ceremony at Boulder, Colorado, in 1975. For eight years they have almost single-handedly fought to change U.S. law—to establish the rights of Lesbians and Gays to immigrate to the U.S. They have fought to have Lesbian and Gay relationships treated with dignity. At great personal sacrifice, they declined an offer by INS to discuss the possibility of political asylum. For their courage, they were officially instructed by INS that "A BONA FIDE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP CAN[NOT] EXIST BETWEEN TWO FAGGOTS." As INS stated to Tony and Richard at their most recent Los Angeles Federal Court appearance, THEY ARE NOT BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE THEY ARE MALES. THEY ARE BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE THEY HAPPEN TO BE HOMOSEXUAL.

LAW

Only Congress has the power to change immigration laws. United States Immigration classifies homosexuals as psychopathic personalities, sexual deviants, or mental defectives. Therefore, homosexuals cannot legally immigrate to the United States.

Not all countries are as backward. For example, Sweden recognizes the rights of Lesbian and Gay couples "living together as if they were married" to immigrate on the same priority basis as other couples, without the requirement of marriage.

Federal courts have recognized the right of transsexuals to legally marry. If Anthony or Richard had an operation, their legal status might be respected. This is a travesty of basic human rights.

It is important to realize that Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams are only the focus for this demonstration. They are one of the most blatant examples of U.S. discrimination against Lesbians and Gays. These laws continue to affect thousands of others and through them affect all of us.

ACTION

We *must* make Congress listen! A Presidential Commission is at this moment undertaking a revision of the immigration codes. At 9:30 A.M. February 21st at 300 N. Los Angeles Street, Lesbian and Gay supporters of Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams who wish to make a statement to the courts and Congress on changing the immigration laws will be demonstrating. *BE THERE*. If you cannot personally be present, write your representative.

You are the difference.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, DIAL
(213) G-O-M-A-R-C-H
HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN**

☐ Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____. Please make check or money order payable to Los Angeles March on Sacramento Committee.

☐ I want to volunteer. I am interested in:

<input type="checkbox"/> Outreach	<input type="checkbox"/> Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> I will be there.				

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please mail to:

March Committee for Lesbian and Gay Rights/Los Angeles
c/o West Hollywood Services • 7985 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 109 • West Hollywood, CA 90046

Tu Presencia Cuenta

DEMOSTRACION PARA LA REVISION DE LEYES
DE INMIGRACION QUE AFECTAN A LESBIANAS Y HOMOSEXUALES

9:30 a.m. jueves, 21 de Febrero

A las 9:00 A.M. del jueves, 21 de febrero, en el 300 N. Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles. Anthony Corbett Sullivan, será puesto en juicio por Inmigración y Naturalización de los Estados Unidos (INS), por amar a Richard Adams.



historia

Anthony Sullivan vino de Australia, a los E.U. en Marzo de 1971. En ese tiempo conoció a Richard Frank Adams — se enamoraron. En Abril de 1972, regresó a los E.U. para estar con Richard. Fueron casados en una ceremonia de matrimonio legal del mismo sexo en Boulder, Colorado, en 1975. Por ocho años y por sí mismos han tratado de cambiar la ley de los E.U. — para establecer el derecho de inmigrar Lesbianas y Homosexuales (Gays) a los Estados Unidos. Han peleado para que las relaciones entre Lesbianas y Homosexuales (Gays) sean tratadas con dignidad. Con un gran sacrificio personal, rechazaron una oferta hecha por INS para discutir la posibilidad de asilo político. Por su valentía, fueron informados oficialmente por INS, "que una relación legal matrimonial entre dos maricones no puede existir." INS declaró a Tony y Richard en su más reciente aparición en la Corte Federal de Los Angeles, **NO ESTAN SIENDO DISCRIMINADOS EN CONTRA POR SER HOMBRES, ESTAN SIENDO DISCRIMINADOS EN CONTRA POR SER HOMOSEXUALES.**

ley

Solamente el Congreso tiene el poder de cambiar las leyes de inmigración. Inmigración y Naturalización de los E.U. clasifica a los homosexuales como personas psicopatas, desviados sexuales, y / o mentalmente defectuosos. Por lo consiguiente, homosexuales no pueden inmigrar legalmente a los E.U.

No todos los países están tan atrasados. Por ejemplo, Suecia reconoce los derechos de parejas Lesbiana y Gays, "viviendo juntas como si estuvieran casados."

Los Cortes Federales han reconocido el derecho a los transexuales de casarse legalmente. Si Anthony o Richard se operaran, sus derechos legales podrían ser respetados. Esta es una violación de los básicos derechos humanos.

Es importante reconocer que Anthony y Richard son el motivo único de esta manifestación. Ellos son uno de los más notorios ejemplos de discriminación de los E.U. en contra de Lesbianas y Gays. Estas leyes siguen afectando a otros miles y por lo consiguiente nos afectan a todos nosotros.

acción

Debemos hacer que el congreso nos escuche! Una Comisión Presidencial está revisando los artículos de Inmigración. A las 9:30 A.M., Febrero 21, en el 300 N. Los Angeles Street, Lesbianas y Gays en apoyo de Anthony Sullivan y Richard Adams que desean hacer manifiesto en el Congreso y Cortes en cambiar las leyes de inmigración, estarán demostrando. **ESTEMOS PRESENTES.** Si no puede estar en persona, escribe a tu representante.

Tu haces la diferencia

PARA FUTURA INFORMACION, MARCA
(213) 466-2724 / (213) G-O-M-A-R-C-H
AYUDA A HACERLO POSIBLE

Dentro esta mi contribución de \$ _____ favor de hacer cheques y giros a nombre de Los Angeles March Committee.

Deseo ser voluntario. Estoy interesado en:

Reclutamiento Media Colecta Otro
Estaré Presente

Nombre _____ Teléfono _____

Dirección _____

Ciudad _____ Estado _____ Zona _____

Favor de mandar a:

MARCH COMMITTEE FOR LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS / LOS ANGELES
7985 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 109, West Hollywood, CA 90046

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Source D: Anthony Sullivan Defense Fund, "S.O.S. Do you feel safe loving a gay person in America?," c. 1980s. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.

S.O.S.

DO YOU FEEL SAFE LOVING A GAY PERSON IN AMERICA??

WE DID....

Our relationship has lasted 13 years despite every attempt to break us up.
But in the eyes of the government our relationships don't mean a damn thing!

DOES THIS BOTHER YOU?

IS THIS RIGHT??

IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE THIS---HELP US---NOW.

We've fought every way we can...in the courts...in the press...and in the community.

WE'VE LOST ON ALL FRONTS.... THE RESULT IS WE ARE ABOUT TO BE DEPORTED!

This case has personally cost us close to \$30,000 and has wiped out our assets. We've done everything we can do.

NOW THERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN DO!

We need money to fight to the very end. Please send whatever you can to:

Anthony Sullivan Defense Fund
c/o MCC
Attention: Frank Zerilli
5300 Santa Monica Blvd. #304
Los Angeles, CA 90029

The law can be changed if your voice is heard. Write to your representatives in Washington, urging them to change immigration laws that discriminate against gays and lesbians.

THANK YOU

Tony & Richard.

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Source E: Anthony Corbett Sullivan, "Immigration Information (First Draft), Prepared for Rev. Troy D. Perry," 1977. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.

Official Attitude of the Immigration Department Toward Homosexual Aliens

The attitude of the Immigration Department toward homosexual aliens has been to deport them and to exclude them from the United States. [In the past the justification] used for such deportation and exclusion has been Section 1182 and Section 1251 of Title VIII of the U.S. Code, permitting the exclusion of those "afflicted with psychopathic personality or sexual deviation or mental defect."

In July of 1974, [various gay rights groups] and the American Psychiatric Association-communicated with Leonard F. Chapman, Jr., Director, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services, (Washington D.C.). The purpose of the communication was to let Mr. Chapman know that on December 15, 1973, the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association voted to remove homosexuality from the list of sexual deviations and mental disorders included in its official diagnostic and statistical manual of psychiatric disorder, and, that some years previous, homosexuality was removed from the category of psychopathic personality.

On August 8, 1974, Mr. Chapman's counsel replied to Dr. Bruce Voeller. From this letter I make the following statements:

1. If someone has serious mental health issues or abnormal sexual behavior, they can be denied entry into the U.S. under immigration laws.
2. A person can be deported if, at the time they entered the U.S., they belonged to a group of people not allowed to enter according to the laws at that time.
3. To become a U.S. citizen, a person must prove they have been of good moral character for a certain amount of time before applying.
4. According to U.S. health guidelines, someone diagnosed with a personality disorder, like sexual behavior issues, is considered to have a "psychopathic personality" under the law.
5. Being a homosexual is not enough to say someone lacks good moral character. However, if someone has committed a crime related to homosexuality (like involving minors, fraud, or public acts), it could affect their moral character and prevent them from becoming a U.S. citizen.

The letter continues: The United States Supreme Court, in the case *Boutlier vs INS* (1967), explained that when Congress used the term

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

"psychopathic personality," it was not referring to the clinical meaning. Instead, they used it to specifically keep out people who are homosexual or have other sexual behaviors that society considered unacceptable at the time.

Becoming a U.S. citizen, as you probably know, is a legal process. However, the official view is that a person who is or has been homosexual during the required time period cannot prove they have the good moral character needed to become a citizen.

This letter was signed: Sincerely, for the Commissioner, Sam Berson, Acting Attorney General Counsel.

The policy detailed in point number five of the letter was officially integrated into the INS in 1976.

The part of the new policy I primarily wish to deal with is the part that says that if a gay person is convicted of, or admits to, a homosexual act in a place where it's illegal, the Immigration Department will exclude them. This is still anti-gay discrimination. Anyone who thinks laws against gay people are unfair should realize that the Immigration Department did not make the laws itself, yet is supporting and enforcing this discrimination.

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Source F: March Committee for Lesbian and Gay Rights, "Petition to change immigration laws that are discriminatory against lesbians and gay men," c. 1975-1980. Sullivan (Anthony Corbett) v. Immigration and Naturalization Service legal records, ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.

PETITION

We the undersigned demand that the President and Congress of the United States revise the immigration laws which currently discriminate against Lesbians and Gay Men.

The current laws deny Lesbians and Gay Men entry, residence and naturalization in the United States.

We are particularly concerned with two current injustices involving (1) Anthony Sullivan, an Australian, who is under order of deportation and is thus being denied intimate association with his American lover, and (2) Zenida Porte Rebultan, a Filipino Lesbian, who is being denied entry to be with her mother who is gravely ill.

- | | NAME | STREET | CITY | STATE |
|-----|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | DAVID MATHIEU | 1654 Hudson St | Hwd | Cal. 464-996 |
| 2. | Joe Barton | 101 CUBHOUSE #4 | VENICE | CA 90291 |
| 3. | Jeff Halls | 7051 1/2 Lanewood Ave. | Hwd | CA 90028 |
| 4. | ADAM FABIAN | 7051 1/2 LANEWOOD AVE. | L.A. | CA 90028 |
| 5. | George Marshall | 7645 Jewel Canyon Bl. | No. Hollywood | Ca 91605 |
| 6. | Carl H. Goodman, Jr. | 1750 Valdez Dr. | La Jolla | CA 92037 |
| 7. | Ed Stoll | 1750 Valdez Dr. | La Jolla, Calif. | 92037 |
| 8. | Marten Muis | Willemsstraat 170hs | Amsterdam | Holland. |
| 9. | Bradley Pruitt | 140 N. Mountain Ave. | Claremont | CA 91711 |
| 10. | Kathryn Rose | 140 N Mountain Ave. | Claremont | CA 91711 |
| 11. | Jay Holmes | 1603 Gramercy | Hollywood | 90028 |
| 12. | STU SZIDAK | 2424 ARGOSY WAY | L.A. | 90068 |
| 13. | Melinda Napier | 518 Clayton St. | San Francisco | 94117 |
| 14. | Michael Nichey | 320 N. Orange Grove | L.A. | 90036 |
| 15. | Russell Castanguay | 383 | | |
| 16. | Michael Rossell | 821 1/2 S. Kenmore Ave | L.A. | 90005 |
| 17. | J. Clark Herley | 7652 Sunset Blvd | LA | 90046 |
| 18. | Huier Sommer | Ruivapp. P/4A | A-1020 | VIETNAM-AUSTRIA |
| 19. | Mike Varady | 4318 Sunset Drive | L.A. | CA 90027 |
| 20. | Edmond H. Hammar | 10 BR. P.R. MYER 2506 Anacapa St. | S.B. | CA 90105 |
| 21. | CHARLES SMITZ | 3071 6th AVENUE | LA Calif | 90018 |
| 22. | Hal Albertson | 1215 N. Olive | LA | CA 90067 |
| 23. | | | | |
| 24. | | | | |
| 25. | | | | |

MARCH COMMITTEE FOR LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS
7985 Santa Monica Blvd. #109
Los Angeles, CA 90046

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Handout 2: Graphic Organizer for Document Analysis

Sources	What kind of source are we looking at (newspaper, flier, photograph, letter, etc)? Provide a 1-2 sentence description of the content of the source.	Who is the intended audience of this source?	What is the purpose of this source?	How does this source help us answer our inquiry question?
A. Photographs of protest outside Los Angeles Federal Building				
B INS letter to Anthony Sullivan and Richard Adams				
C Your Presence Counts				

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

D S.O.S Flier for Donation				
E Immigration Information (First Draft)				
F Petition				

Reflection Questions

1. Which document was the most interesting? Why?
2. What new insights did you learn about the immigration challenges of LGBTQ+ people from these documents?

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Handout 3: Claim, Evidence, Reasoning

Directions: Write a C-E-R paragraph answering the question: *How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?* Your response should contain 7-10 sentences and at least two citations from sources A-F.

Claim	Reason #1	Evidence #1	
Write your claim here:	What is one point that supports your claim?	One piece of Text-Based Evidence	
		Justification #1	
	What is one point that supports your claim?	How does your evidence support your claim?	
		Reason #2	Evidence #2
		What is one point that supports your claim?	One piece of Text-Based Evidence
			Justification #2
What is one point that supports your claim?	How does your evidence support your claim?		

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

Final C-E-R:

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features 20 evenly spaced horizontal black lines across the entire page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The lines are uniform in thickness and extend from the left edge to the right edge of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

Additional Background Reading

Source: Willa McDonald (modified by Carla Ayala), "[*In pursuit of love. Australian same-sex marriage pioneer changed the course of history*](#)," from *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Dec. 2020.

In Pursuit of love, Australian same-sex marriage pioneer changed the course of history



Anthony Sullivan, the Australian man who fought for more than 40 years for same-gender marriage rights in the USA, has died at his home in Hollywood, California. His marriage in 1975 to his Filipino-American partner, Richard Adams, was groundbreaking and triggered the first case that asked a US federal court to recognize a same-gender marriage.

Tony's and Richard's story began when they met at a gay bar called the Closet in downtown Los Angeles in 1971. Tony was in LA on holiday at the time. They agreed to meet the next day at Greta Garbo's Hollywood Walk of Fame star on Hollywood Boulevard and were rarely apart from then on. It was a love

affair that would last until Richard died from cancer in 2012.

The first problem the couple faced was Sullivan's tourist status. He initially managed this by traveling occasionally to Mexico and then re-entering the country, but the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) soon caught on and the couple had to find another solution. In 1975, they heard a courageous county court clerk, Clela Rorex, was issuing marriage licenses to same-gender couples. Their plan was to marry so that Tony could stay in the United States as Adam's legal spouse.

The 1970s were a time of intense discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. Across the decade, Anita Bryant was in the news for her national crusade against gay rights; California was debating whether gays and lesbians could teach in public schools; the US Supreme Court ruled homosexual acts were illegal; and the activist Harvey Milk was assassinated in San Francisco.

Rorex, a single mother and feminist, stated she could find no moral or legal reason to prevent the marriages. She issued Sullivan and Adams their license and they were married the same day in a gay-friendly church. Rorex issued a total of five licenses to same-gender couples before she was pressured to stop by Colorado's Attorney General.

When the newlyweds returned to Los Angeles following the wedding, Adams applied for a green card for his husband. If they had been a heterosexual couple, it would have been a relatively smooth process. Instead, they received an extraordinary letter from a hostile INS saying: "You have failed to establish that a bona fide marital relationship can exist between two [slur redacted]."

Media backlash and protests eventually provoked the government to withdraw the letter, but a ten-year court battle followed against the INS (now called United States Citizenship and Immigration Services—USCIS). They were the first gay couple to sue the United States government to legally recognise a same-gender relationship in their quest to prevent Sullivan's deportation. They lost in the District court. In 1982, the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal. They then pursued another immigration hearing, which they also lost. In 1984, they took that decision to the Federal Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. There, they lost again.

Sullivan couldn't avoid being forced to leave the country. If they wanted to stay together, they would both have to leave. The couple traveled to Europe, and lived for a time in Northern Ireland, but they were homesick. Sullivan's mother in Australia had disowned him. Most of their close friends, and Adam's family, were in Hollywood. In 1986, they flew back, crossing the border from Mexico by car,

How did LGBTQ+ immigrants push for more inclusive immigration policies in the 1970s and 1980s?

luckily without being challenged. They resumed their life in Los Angeles as a gay couple but in what Sullivan called the “immigration closet”.

What followed was a time of increasing difficulty. The AIDS crisis took its toll through the late '80s and early '90s, leaving them grieving and increasingly isolated, hiding for fear Sullivan would be deported again.

It wouldn't be until 2011 – a year before Adam's death – that they would have some security, after a ruling by the Obama administration protected low-risk relatives of US citizens from deportation, including same-gender spouses. After Adams died, and on Sullivan's request, the Obama administration would also direct the USCIS director to provide a formal apology for the letter.

Throughout the early 2000s, discrimination against same-gender couples in the United States seemed entrenched. Although community attitudes were changing and piecemeal reforms to recognise gay rights were emerging, the debate on same-sex marriage was in full swing, causing a strong backlash. A campaign to boost evangelical Christian turnout in the 2004 election, won by George W Bush, saw eleven states ban gay marriage. By 2012, around the time Adams passed away, this had increased to 30 states.

Yet, only three years later, the situation changed again with a landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court. Justice Anthony Kennedy, writing for the majority in *Obergefell v Hodges*, ruled that same-gender marriages were protected by the United States Constitution.

He wrote: “Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization's oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them that right.” In a strange twist, Kennedy had been on the three-person Federal Circuit Court appeals panel thirty years earlier that ruled in favor of Sullivan's deportation.

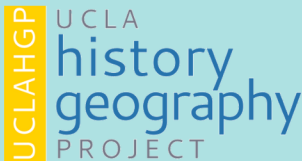
Once same-gender marriages were protected by the Supreme Court, Sullivan sought again to have USCIS recognise his marriage to Adams and provide him, as the widower of a US citizen, with a green card. And this time he won. On the 41st anniversary of their wedding, Sullivan was issued with the permit. With recognition of the validity of their 1975 wedding in Boulder, Colorado, theirs became one of the first same-gender marriages in the Western world. For Sullivan, it was a bittersweet victory. In an interview for Los Angeles' *The Pride* in 2015, he said: “I desperately wish Richard was here with me for this.”

Tony Sullivan passed away suddenly at his home in Hollywood on November 10. He is survived by his Australian half-brother Peter Sullivan and his close American family, including Richard's five siblings.



One Institute is the oldest active LGBTQ+ organization in the United States, dedicated to telling the history and stories of queer and trans community and culture through K-12 educational initiatives, public exhibitions, and community engagement programs.

oneinstitute.org



The UCLA History-Geography Project (UCLA HGP) is a professional learning community that supports History-Social Science and Ethnic Studies educators. As a regional site of the California History-Social Science Project and part of UCLA's Center X, we work with teachers, schools, and organizations to make K-12 classrooms more inquiry-driven, culturally responsive, and civically engaged.

centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/history-geography



The Los Angeles LGBT Center's OUT for Safe Schools® program transforms school campuses into communities of support and safety for LGBTQ+ students.

schools.lalgbtcenter.org/out-for-safe-schools

ONE Archives at
the **USC** Libraries

ONE Archives at the USC Libraries is the largest repository of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) materials in the world.

one.usc.edu

This lesson plan was created by a Los Angeles teacher partner as part of “Pride, Resistance, Joy: Teaching Intersectional LGBTQ+ Stories of California and Beyond,” a K-12 LGBTQ+ History Teacher Symposium in July 2024, organized by One Institute, the UCLA History Geography Project, OUT for Safe Schools® at the LA LGBT Center, and ONE Archives at the USC Libraries.