

# Joseph Plaster

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## EMPLOYMENT

- **Curator in Public Humanities and Director**, Winston Tabb Special Collections Research Center, Sheridan Libraries, Johns Hopkins University, Oct 2020-present
  - **Lecturer**, Program for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins University, Nov 2022-present
  - **Lecturer**, Program in Museums and Society, Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins University, Aug 2019-present
  - **Assistant Research Scholar**, Alexander Grass Humanities Institute, Johns Hopkins University, Jan 2019-present
- **Curator in Public Humanities**, Sheridan Libraries and Museums, Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins University, July 2018-Oct 2020
- **Digital Humanities Fellow**, Digital Humanities Lab, Yale University, Spring 2018
- **Lecturer**, Department of American Studies, Yale University, Fall 2016-Spring 2017
- **Public Humanities Director**, GLBT Historical Society, San Francisco, 2005-2011

## EDUCATION

- **Yale University, PhD** in American Studies, May 2018
  - Certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, May 2018
- **Yale University, M.A. and M.Phil** in American Studies, 2013
- **Oberlin College, B.A.** in History, Oberlin, OH, Jan 2001

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### Books

- *Kids on the Street: Queer Kinship and Religion in San Francisco's Tenderloin*, Feb 2023, Duke University Press

### Articles and Book Chapters

- "Homosexuals in Adolescent Rebellion: Central City Uprisings during the Long Sixties," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, April 2023
- "Race, Sexuality, and U.S. Culture Wars," *Public History Weekly*, Open Peer Review, Nov 2022

- “The Category Is: Opulence! Performing Black Queer History in Baltimore’s ‘Cathedral of Books,’” *Kalfou: A Journal of Comparative and Relational Ethnic Studies*, Nov 2020
- “Safe for Whom? And Whose Families? Narrative, Urban Neoliberalism, and Queer Oral Histories on San Francisco’s Polk Street,” *The Public Historian*, Aug 2020
- “Black Queer Performance in Baltimore’s ‘Cathedral of Books,’” The Abusable Past, digital venue for the *Radical History Review*, Oct 2019
- “The Peabody Ballroom Experience,” International Work, USA, *Oral History*, Autumn 2019
- “Imagined Conversations and Activist Lineages: Public Histories of Queer Homeless Youth Organizing in San Francisco’s Tenderloin,” *Radical History Review* Issue 113, May 2012
- “Polk Street: Lives in Transition,” commissioned by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York’s OutHistory Project, published online, Apr 2009
- “Behind the Masks: GLBT Life at Oberlin College,” thesis-length historical narrative written under the direction of Prof. Carol Lasser, 2001, revised 2007
- “LGBT Pride Parade: A History,” commissioned by the University of California’s Calisphere Project, published online, 2011
- “The Rise and Fall of a Polk Street Hustler,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian* cover story, Mar 18, 2009
- “Importing Injustice: Deregulation and the Port of Oakland’s Neighbors,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian* cover story, July 18, 2007
- “The Ruckus Society at a Crossroads,” *Z Magazine*, Feb 12, 2004
- Editor, *Undisclosed Recipients*, student publication addressing intersections of race, class, and gender within queer communities, Oberlin College, Feb-May 1999

## **AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS**

- National Council on Public History, Outstanding Public History Project Award, Peabody Ballroom Experience, 2023
- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation “Just Futures” grant, “Inheritance Baltimore: Humanities and Arts Education for Black Liberation,” 2021
- MAP Fund grant, The Peabody Ballroom Experience, 2020
- American Historical Association’s Allan Bérubé Prize for outstanding work in public GLBT history, 2010
- National Council for Public History, Outstanding Public History Project Award, Honorable Mention, Polk Street: Lives in Transition, 2011
- California Council for the Humanities “Humanities for All” grant, ACT UP San Francisco Oral History Project, 2017
- Yale University Fund for Lesbian and Gay Studies Award, Fall 2011 and Summer 2014

- Martin Duberman Visiting Scholar, New York Public Library, New York, NY, 2011
- California Council for the Humanities “Stories Grant,” Tenderloin: Stories of Transformation, 2010
- National Endowment for the Arts, Polk Street Stories Radio Hour, distributed nationally through NPR’s Hearing Voices, 2010
- Human Rights Campaign Religion and Faith Program, Tenderloin: Stories of Transformation project, 2010
- Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, funding traveling exhibit and national speaking tour, Tenderloin: Stories of Transformation project, 2010-2011
- Horizons Foundation, funding archival research and public history programming, Tenderloin: Stories of Transformation project, 2010
- San Francisco Foundation grant, Tenderloin: Stories of Transformation, 2010
- OutHistory Fellowship, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, 2008
- San Francisco Board of Supervisors Commendation, 2009
- Rainbow Endowment, funding Polk Street: Lives in Transition, 2009
- California Council for the Humanities “Stories Grant,” funding multimedia exhibit and oral history collection, Polk Street: Lives in Transition, 2008
- Andy Cemelli Student Research Grant, Oberlin College LGBT History Project, 2000

## **PRESENTATIONS, CONFERENCES, AND LECTURES**

### **Invited Talks**

- “Kids on the Street: Queer Kinship and Religion in San Francisco’s Tenderloin,” San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA, March 15, 2023
- “Mutual Aid in Zones of Abandonment,” University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA, Mar 2, 2023
- Book release and panel discussion, *Kids on the Street: Queer Kinship and Religion in San Francisco’s Tenderloin*, with Kevin Murphy, Ann Cvetkovich, Jules Gill-Peterson, and Alaa Saad, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, Feb 15, 2023
- “Queer Publics, Queer Histories,” Yale University Public Humanities, New Haven, CT, Feb 9, 2023
- “Archives, Performance, and Knowledge,” Community College of Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD, June 21, 2022
- “Listening to the City: Hearing, Interpreting, and Presenting Urban Experiences Mediated Through Life-Stories,” Malmö University, Malmö, Sweden, Sept 29, 2021
- “Performing Black Queer History in Baltimore’s ‘Cathedral of Books,’” Columbia University Oral History Master of Arts Workshop Series, New York, NY, Mar 2021

- “Black Queer Performance in Baltimore’s Cathedral of Books,” Johns Hopkins University Tabb Center Speaker Series, Baltimore, MD, Oct 15, 2019
- “Sharing Authorities,” Oral History Practicum Graduate Seminar, UC Riverside Department of History, Riverside, CA, Jan 31, 2019
- “Facilitating Bridge-Building through Oral History,” Concordia University Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, Montreal, Canada, Mar 19, 2014
- “Behind the Masks: GLBT Life at Oberlin College,” Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH, Sept 22, 2012
- “Queer Public Histories of the Tenderloin,” Sonoma State University Queer Studies Lecture Series, Sonoma, CA, Feb 16, 2010
- “Polk Street: Lives in Transition,” City University of New York, Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, New York, NY, May 8, 2009

### **Conferences**

- “Oral History and the Peabody Ballroom Experience,” International Oral History Association, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, July 25-28, 2023
- “Street Churches: Queer Religions and Moral Economy,” Conference on Queer and Transgender Studies in Religion, University of California, Riverside, Feb 17-19, 2023.
- Chair and Commentator, “Collecting, Archiving and Sharing LGBTQ+ Histories in Rural and Semi-Rural Communities,” Annual Meeting of the Oral History Association, Baltimore, Maryland, Oct 24, 2020
- “New Directions in Queer Public History” Roundtable, Queer History Conference 2019 (QHC 19), San Francisco, California, June 17, 2019
- “The Compton’s Cafeteria Riot at 50,” Annual Meeting of the American Studies Association, Denver, Colorado, Nov 17-20, 2016
- “‘Living in Her Memory:’ Queer Kinship and Survival through Sylvia Rivera’s Ashes,” Annual Meeting of the American Studies Association, Denver, Colorado, Nov 17-20, 2016
- “Exceeding Analysis: Grappling with Queer Histories of Trauma,” Oral History Association Annual Meeting, Long Beach, California, Oct 12-16, 2016
- “Saint Sylvia’s Ashes: Queer Solidarities through the Dead,” Solidarit(i)es, CASCA & SANA annual conference, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, May 11, 2016
- “Roundtable: Solidarity in Oral History and Anthropology,” Solidarit(i)es, CASCA & SANA annual conference, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, May 15, 2016
- Respondent, “Memorials and Traumas of Nationhood,” Farewell Performances: A Conference of Interdisciplinary Performance Studies at Yale, Whitney Humanities Center, Yale University, Apr 18, 2015

- “Idealists of the Slums:’ Queer Intimacies and the Ambivalence of the Sacred in San Francisco’s Tenderloin,” European Social Science History Conference, Vienna, Austria, Apr 26, 2014
- “Representing ‘Trauma:’ Music, Sound, and Oral History,” Symposium for Emerging Scholars in Oral, Digital, and Public History, Concordia University Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, Montreal, Canada, Mar 21, 2014
- “Idealists of the Slums:’ Queer Intimacies and the Ambivalence of the Sacred in San Francisco’s Tenderloin,” American Historical Association Annual Conference, Washington D.C., Jan 4, 2014
- “Pubic History Exhibits: Institutions, Communities and Curators Collaborate,” Annual Meeting, American Alliance of Museums, Baltimore, MA, May 20, 2013
- Organizer, Groundswell Oral History and Social Justice Gathering, Ossining, NY, May 17-19, 2013
- “Movement Stories: Oral History and Movement Building,” Groundswell Oral History for Social Change Gathering, Ossining, NY, May 17-19, 2013
- “The Pleasures and Perils of LGBTQ Public History,” American Historical Association Annual Conference, Chicago, IL, Jan 8, 2012
- “Oral History for Social Justice,” Groundswell Oral History for Social Change Gathering, Briarcliff Manor, NY, Sept 15-16, 2012

### **Working Groups and Public Presentations**

- “Queer Tenderloin Histories” with Susan Stryker, Cecilia Chung, and Anthony Cabello, The Tenderloin Museum, San Francisco, CA, Mar 16, 2023
- “Co-Performing Queer Histories in San Francisco’s Tenderloin,” Yale University Performance Studies Working Group, New Haven, CT, Jan 29, 2013
- “Vanguard Revisited: Religious Ritual and Queer World Making in San Francisco’s Tenderloin, 1960s-Present,” Yale University American Religious History Working Group, New Haven, CT, Oct 8, 2012
- Oral History Methods and Practice Workshop, Yale University Public Humanities Working Group, New Haven, CT, Feb 28, 2012
- Oral History Methods and Practice Workshop, California College for the Arts, San Francisco, CA Feb 2011
- “‘Turn Yourself Inside Out and See with New Eyes’: Homeless GLBT Youth Organizing, 1960s and Today,” Speaking Tour May-Jun 2011:
  - New York, May 27-30: Trinity Lutheran Church of Manhattan and MCCNY Homeless Youth Services: Sylvia’s Place
  - Los Angeles, Jun. 10-11: The Gay & Lesbian Center’s Kruks-Tilsner Transitional Living Program for Youth
  - Portland, Jun. 17-18: Central Lutheran Church and New Avenues for Youth
  - San Francisco, Jun. 23: GLBT Historical Society Museum

- “Street Power: the Story of San Francisco’s Vanguard,” National Queer Arts Festival, San Francisco, Jun 14, 2010
- “Vanguard Revisited, Continuing Legacy,” California College for the Arts, San Francisco, Feb 8, 2010
- “Reconstructing Polk Street,” Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society, San Francisco, CA, May 19, 2009
- “Polk Street: Lives in Transition Listening Party,” Lush Lounge, San Francisco, Jun 18, 2009
- “Homelessness and History: Polk Street Stories Project,” California Historical Society, San Francisco, Mar 18, 2009
- “Uncovering Oberlin’s Queer Past,” Oberlin College History Department, Oct 5, 2007

## TEACHING

- Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, Program in Museums and Society, “Public Humanities and Social Justice,” Fall 2023
- Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, Program for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, “Queer Performativity,” Spring 2023
- Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, Program in Museums and Society, “Queer Oral History,” Spring 2022
- Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, Program in Museums and Society, “Queer Sixties,” Fall 2021
- Instructor, “Baltimore’s Black Arts District: A Creative Archive,” Spring 2020
- Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, Program in Museums and Society, “Queer & Trans Public History,” Spring 2020
- Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, Program in Museums and Society, “Participatory Archives, Collaborative Oral History, and Social Justice,” Fall 2019
- Lecturer, Yale University American Studies Department, “Interdisciplinary Approaches to Oral History Narrative,” Fall 2016
- Lecturer, Yale University American Studies Department, “Public Humanities and Social Justice,” Spring 2017
- Lecturer, Yale University American Studies Department, “Queer/Trans Performativity,” Spring 2017
- Teaching Fellow, “Race, Class, and Gender in American Cities,” Yale University, Fall 2017
- Teaching Fellow, “Formation of Modern American Culture,” Yale University, Spring 2015
- Teaching Fellow, “Women, Food, and Culture,” Yale University, Fall 2014
- Teaching Fellow, “U.S. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Hollywood Film,” Yale University, Spring 2014

- Teaching Fellow, “U.S. Lesbian and Gay History,” Yale University, Fall 2013
- Instructor, “Vanguard Revisited” workshops, Jan 2010-June 2011

## **PUBLIC HUMANITIES**

- Director, Winston Tabb Special Collections Research Center, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, Oct 2020-present
  - Advancing original research and public humanities scholarship by connecting faculty, students, staff, and the larger Baltimore community to the Sheridan Libraries’ special collections of rare books, manuscripts, and archives
- Faculty Team, Inheritance Baltimore: Humanities and Arts Education for Black Liberation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, June 2021-present
  - Support individuals and institutions in recording, archiving, and interpreting under-documented histories in Baltimore, with a focus on Black history
- Director, Peabody Ballroom Experience, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, Oct 2018-present
  - Launched public humanities collaboration between Johns Hopkins University and Baltimore’s LGBTQ ballroom scene
  - Public workshops with special collections materials, film screenings, panel discussions, and dance workshops; oral history interviews; documentary short film; ball competition at the George Peabody Library
- Director, San Francisco ACT UP Oral History Project, GLBT Historical Society, San Francisco, CA, July 2017-July 2018
  - Designed project chronicling San Francisco’s AIDS direct action movement
  - Outcomes to include oral histories with at least 40 ACT UP veterans; exhibition at the GLBT History Museum; multimedia Internet presence
  - Trained youth volunteers in collaboration with the GLBT Historical Society
- Director, Vanguard Revisited, GLBT Historical Society, San Francisco, CA, Jan 2010-June 2011
  - Won funding from major foundations; collaborated with five non-profit, social service, and faith-based organizations
  - Designed public history project through which homeless LGBTQ youth documented and interpreted the legacy of 1960s street youth organizing
  - Outcomes: youth-produced historical magazine; historical walking tours; street theater reenactments; intergenerational discussion groups; national speaking tour of GLBT homeless youth shelters and faith communities
- Director, Polk Street: Lives in Transition, GLBT Historical Society, San Francisco, CA, Oct 2007-Dec 2009
  - Interpreted more than seventy oral histories and archival research in relation to gentrification and conflict on San Francisco’s Polk Street
  - Outcomes: historical narrative commissioned by the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at CUNY; multimedia exhibit; professionally mediated

- neighborhood dialogues; oral history “listening parties” and other public events; hour-long radio documentary distributed nationally via NPR
  - Awarded the American Historical Association’s Allan Bérubé Prize for outstanding work in public GLBT history
- Director, Oberlin College LGBT Community History Project, Oberlin, OH, 1999-2007
  - Interpreted more than seventy oral histories and archival research through thesis-length paper and multimedia archive
  - Developed a website that was maintained by Oberlin College and used as a teaching resource from 2006-2020

## SERVICE

- OutHistory Advisory Board, City of New York, Feb 2023-present
- Selection Committee, Society of Fellows in the Humanities, Johns Hopkins University, 2023
- International Advisory Board, Modern Literature and Culture Research Centre, Toronto Metropolitan University, Sept 2022-present
- Program Committee, Oral History Association 2023 annual meeting, Baltimore MD
- International Advisory Board, Malmö Life Stories, Nov 2021-present
- Faculty Board, Alexander Grass Humanities Institute, Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins University, Jan 2019-present
- Peer Reviewer for *The Public Historian*, 2021
- Peer Reviewer for *The Oral Historian*, 2019
- Coordinator, Yale Ethnography and Oral History Initiative, 2016-2019
- Board Member, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Historical Society, 2015-2016
- Allan Bérubé Prize committee member, Committee on LGBT History of the American Historical Association, 2012
- Core Working Group, Groundswell: Oral History for Social Change, 2012-2013. Organized first Groundswell Oral History and Social Justice Gathering, Ossining, NY, May 17-19, 2013
- Co-Chair, Yale Public Humanities Working Group, 2012-2014. Organized speaker series on cross-pollination between academic research and social justice organizing
- Advisor, “Voices of Fair Haven,” Yale University Public Humanities M.A. project, Spring 2012

## EXHIBITION CURATION

- Curator, *Reigning Queens: Rox Joseph's Lost Photos*, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society Museum, San Francisco, Oct 2015-Feb 2016



- Curator, *Our Vast Queer Past: Celebrating GLBT History*, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society Museum, San Francisco, Aug 2010
- Curator, *Forty Years of Pride*. Contractor with the San Francisco Pride Committee, Apr 2010
- Curator, *Polk Street: Lives in Transition*, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society main gallery, San Francisco, Jan 2009-Aug 2009
- Curator, *Passionate Struggle: Dynamics of San Francisco's GLBT History*, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society Museum, San Francisco, 2008

## **RADIO DOCUMENTARY AND AUDIO PORTRAITS**

- “Re-Interviewing the San Francisco Street Patrol,” audio piece commissioned by “OUT/LOOK & The Birth of The Queer: Today’s Artists and Writers Respond,” University of California Santa Cruz Arts Research Institute, Fall 2017
- “Polk Street Stories,” hour-long oral history piece distributed nationally via NPR’s HearingVoices, Jun. 21, 2010. Adapted for the stage and produced by Georgetown University’s Mask and Bauble Dramatic Society in 2013
- San Francisco Night Ministry 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Audio Project, Summer 2013. Commissioned to create seven audio portraits profiling Night Ministry staff
- Brooklyn Historical Society, Brooklyn School of Inquiry Project, Jan 2012-present. For three successive years, recorded “life histories” from roughly three hundred precocious six-year-olds
- LGBT Family Histories Project, Yale Research Initiative on the History of Sexualities, Summer 2012. Conducted oral histories with leaders of the GLBT families movement in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco
- “Growing Home Community Garden,” Project Homeless Connect, San Francisco, 2011. Commissioned to create audio portraits of six homeless participants
- “Polk Gulch: the Story of Corey Longseeker,” radio documentary distributed via KALW’s *Crosscurrents*, Oct 1, 2009

## **CONSULTANT AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE**

- Researcher, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum’s Contagious Cities project, 2018
- Research Assistant, *My Desire for History: Essays in Gay, Community, and Labor History*, Allan Bérubé (UNC Press, 2011)
- Historical consultant, feature film *Transgender Tuesdays: A Clinic In the Tenderloin*, 2012
- Historical consultant, feature film *We Were Here*, 2010
- Historical consultant, feature film *Beginners*, 2010
- Historical consultant, Polk Street Mural Project, Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development, San Francisco, 2011

- Researcher/interviewer, Institute for Scientific Analysis, sociological study of Asian American gay club culture and drug use, San Francisco, Mar. 2010-Jun. 2011
- Editor, *Undisclosed Recipients*, Oberlin, OH, Feb.-May 1999
- Intern, *The Nation*, New York, NY, May-Aug 2000

## SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

- J.P. Der Boghossian, “7 Minutes in Book Heaven with Joseph Plaster and Kids on the Street,” This Queer Book Saved My Life podcast, Apr 25, 2023
- John-John Williams IV, “Posing at the Library: Baltimore’s Ballroom Scene Werks the Peabody Again,” *Baltimore Banner*, Apr 14, 2023
- Cara Ober, “The Library is Open: Baltimore Ballroom at Peabody,” *BMore Art Magazine*, Apr 21, 2023
- Hub staff reporter, “Joseph Plaster of Sheridan Libraries & University Museums recognized by National Council on Public History,” *The Hub*, Feb 22, 2023
- Marke B., “On Polk Street and in the Tenderloin, a Family of Hustlers and Priests,” *48 Hills*, March 15, 2023
- Laura Moreno, “‘Kids on the Street’: Joseph Plaster’s Queer Tenderloin History,” *Bay Area Reporter*, February 28, 2023
- Rose Wagner, “Baltimore Was One of the First Cities to Celebrate Drag Culture,” *Washington Post*, June 2021
- Bret McCabe, “Ballroom Blitz,” Johns Hopkins HUB, Oct 15, 2019
- Cara Ober, “No Glitter Allowed: Ballroom 101,” *Bmore Art*, Apr 18, 2019
- “Saving the Stories of San Francisco’s ACT UP Heroes,” *The Advocate*, Aug 18, 2017
- “A ‘Golden’ Photographic Treasury of 1970s Gay Scene,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 21, 2016
- “See Roz Joseph’s Lost Photos of the Early San Francisco Drag Scene,” *New York Magazine’s The Cut*, Oct. 27, 2015
- “Erasing Gay and Transgender History,” Huffington Post, Feb. 6, 2013
- “Interdisciplinary Performance Studies Grow,” *Yale Daily News*, Dec. 6, 2012
- “Making History: ‘Vanguard Revisited’ Has a Conversation with the Past,” *Inside Stories*, Mar. 20, 2011
- “Political Notebook: Queer Youth Revive 1960s Magazine,” *San Francisco Bay Area Reporter*, Feb. 3, 2011
- *Talking History*, University at Albany, State University of New York-based oral history informational center, podcast Sept. 30, 2010
- “Oral Histories Tell Polk Street’s Story,” *San Francisco Chronicle* feature article, page E-1, Aug 8, 2009

- “Profile in Ministry: Expanding the Definition of an LGBT Advocate,” *Human Rights Campaign Newsletter*, March 4, 2009
- “Polk Street profiles,” KALW’s *Crosscurrents* radio program, Jun 24, 2009
- “The Life and Death of a Polk Street Hustler,” *One In Ten* radio program, Mar. 22, 2009
- “The Changing Face of Polk Street, Pictured,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, Dec. 30, 2008
- “Out of the Past: Oberlin Graduate Joey Plaster takes Steps to Record and Preserve Oberlin’s LGBT History,” *Oberlin Alumni Magazine*, Winter 2008