



June 2025 Spotlight

Mandy Carter: Lifetime of Activism



In honor of Gay Pride month and Juneteenth, we celebrate Mandy Carter, legendary “scientist of activism,” and her fifty-five years of activism as a Southern, African American, lesbian activist, organizing for social and racial justice. Raised in two orphanages and a foster home for her first eighteen years, she attributes the influences of the Quaker-based American Friends Service Committee, the former Institute for the Study of Nonviolence, and the pacifist-based War Resisters League for her sustained multiracial and multi-issue, intersectional organizing.

She was inspired by the heady cross-currents of the sixties, moving directly from high school graduation in 1966 to the protest movements. She was arrested for protesting the Vietnam War in 1967, and she got her first job, at the War Resister’s League in San Francisco in 1969. Soon she settled in Durham, North Carolina, becoming a crucial part of the lesbian-feminist movement and so much of the organizing there. You will read about her involvement in Ladyslipper Music and later in the birth of Rhythm Fest in 1990. Rhythm Fest was genuinely new, something that deliberately combined politics and culture.

Mandy Carter was one of the six cofounders of SONG, Southerners On New Ground, formed in North Carolina starting in 1993, in response to the anti-Southern bias in the larger gay and lesbian movement. See our coverage of SONG [here](#). It was intentionally created by three Black and three white Southern lesbian activists, and it was intentionally intersectional.

Mandy Carter highlights the importance of allies, and she spreads a message of hope that is deeply important in our lives today.

Announcing the Herstory Project Annual Meeting

**Sunday, July 13, at 7 pm EST
(6 pm Central) on Zoom**

If you have not been to our planning zooms, and you would like to join us for the Annual Meeting, please contact SLFAHerstoryProject@gmail.com.

Meet our summer intern, a PhD candidate who will be working on posting video interviews to our YouTube channel, among many other helpful things.

View our video project in progress

Discover Opportunities to Contribute

- Collaborate on YouTube videos. Learn basic video editing and YouTube.
- Write a tribute to Minnie Bruce Pratt for our new [Remembrances page](#).
- Write a tribute for another lesbian you know who has passed away.

Join us!



Juneteenth National Independence Day became a federal holiday on June 17, 2021, following its recognition by all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Juneteenth commemorates the day when, in 1865, enslaved people finally received word from the U.S. Government that they were freed. On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas to announce the end of the Civil War and the end of slavery in the Confederacy. By December of that year, slavery was abolished in all states, with the adoption of the 13th Amendment.

Although the Emancipation Proclamation came two and one-half years earlier on January 1, 1863, many enslavers continued to hold enslaved Black people in captivity after the announcement. Thus, Juneteenth became a symbolic date representing African American freedom and joy.

You are invited to participate:

**Who inspired you to lesbian feminism?
Send us the name of your most significant Shero
with a brief reason why she inspires you.**

Both she and you can remain anonymous if you want (just say so) since we will PUBLISH these here on our SLFAHP website.

Send submissions today to: slfainspired@gmail.com. Here's an example:

Rose Norman got her inspiration from Nancy Finley. "At the time, Nancy Finley was the chair of the Sociology Department at my university. She said, 'Let's see who might be interested in starting a women's studies program.'

"She made feminism seductive, and she opened my eyes to structural causes of oppression. She walks the talk in all aspects of her life."

The Southern Lesbian Feminist Activist Herstory Project

We collect, archive, and celebrate oral and written stories of unsung, Southern, lesbian-feminist activists during the second half of the twentieth century. We are proud of our contributions to lesbian culture, strengthened by our collective voices.

Many of us recognized that the lesbian-feminist voices of Southern lesbians had been omitted or marginalized in mainstream literature of the LGBTQ movement as well as from feminist history. We are the antidote to this omission. We worked with Duke University to set up archives, did interviews all over the south, and eventually collaborated with Julie Enszer to publish 6 issues of Sinister Wisdom, full of all our stories. Now we maintain our website and update it monthly, as you hear about through this newsletter. We are still gathering more Southern lesbian stories, interviewing, writing, editing, tracking, and networking.

We are always ready to welcome new collaborators! If you would like to join the SLFAHP group, email us at SLFAHerstoryProject@gmail.com.

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