OUT OF THE PAST

Gay and Lesbian History from 1869 to the Present

by Neil Miller

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For Jane and Rob

CHAPTER 27

The 1980s: The Age of AIDS

THE FIRST INDICATIONS that something was wrong came in January 1981, when a thirty-one-year-old gay man arrived at the emergency room at UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles with a fungal infection in his throat that almost completely blocked his esophagus. Two weeks later he developed *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia (PCP), a lung infection previously seen almost exclusively in cancer or transplant patients. Immunologist Dr. **Michael Gottlieb** was mystified. At about the same time, Dr. **Alvin Friedman-Kien,** a New York University dermatologist, was examining a gay man for Hodgkin's disease and noted some unusual purplish-red spots on the man's legs. Other physicians dismissed them as bruises, but to Friedman-Kien, they appeared to be Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), a rare form of skin cancer usually found in older men of Mediterranean ancestry. Two weeks later, Friedman-Kien saw another similar case, again in a gay man. He telephoned a colleague in San Francisco, who reported that he had encountered two such cases among gay men there. In the summer of 1981, Gottlieb and Friedman-Kien detailed their findings in an article in the Centers for Disease Control's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.* Whether the patients in question had PCP or Kaposi's sarcoma or both, the physicians noted that they all showed an unexplained lowering of immune function.

At first no one quite knew what to make of the new disease—or even what to call it. Was it perhaps, as some physicians suggested, the result of using amyl nitrates ("poppers"), the sexually stimulating inhalants popular among many gay men? Or was the new disease the result of "immune overload," in which the body was exposed to so many kinds of diseases—syphilis, gonorrhea, hepatitis, for example—that the immune system simply collapsed? Was it caused by a virus? And if so, were there perhaps one or more cofactors needed to trigger its effects? Was it transmitted sexually or could it be spread by casual contact as well? How long was the incubation period? And was it always fatal?

The new disease was dubbed the "gay cancer"; it was called

CHAPTER 24

The 1970s: The Times of Harvey Milk and Anita Bryant

NINETEEN SEVENTY-FIVE was a very good year for the burgeoning gay and lesbian movement in the United States. After Frank Kameny's eighteen-year crusade, the U.S. Civil Service Commission announced it would no longer exclude homosexuals from federal employment. **Elaine Noble** took her seat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives as the nation's first openly gay legislator. In Minnesota, first-term State Senator **Allen Spear,** a former history professor, announced his homosexuality in a newspaper interview. Air Force Technical Sergeant **Leonard Matlovich** handed a letter to his captain announcing that he was gay and launching the effort to overturn the ban on homosexuals in the U.S. military. (See "In the Statehouse: Representative Elaine Noble and Senator Allen Spear," p. 415, and "Leonard Matlovich," page 411.) And former National Football League running back **Dave Kopay** revealed his homosexuality, confounding stereotypes.

It was a particularly good year in the state of California. The state legislature voted to repeal the hundred-year-old statute that made "crimes against nature" a felony offense (although the lieutenant governor, **Mervyn Dymally,** had to be called in to break a 20–20 tie in the state senate). In the San Francisco municipal elections, Senate Majority Leader **George Moscone,** who had been instrumental in the repeal of the "crimes against nature" law, won the post of mayor; pro-gay candidates were elected sheriff and district attorney in a city where law enforcement officials had traditionally been implacable foes of gays and lesbians. Meanwhile, a Castro Street camera store owner and openly gay newcomer named **Harvey Milk** ran a strong seventh in the race for six seats on the board of supervisors (the city council). Throughout the country, progress on gay and lesbian rights looked unstoppable; no meaningful organized opposition had yet emerged. And nowhere did it seem more unstoppable than in San Francisco.

Within a few short years, San Francisco had become the unquestioned gay capital of the United States. In the post-Stonewall atmosphere, increasing numbers of gays and lesbians felt comfortable coming out, although often not in their hometowns. The traditional pattern of gay migration out of uncongenial smaller cities and towns into large urban areas was becoming a flood. By the middle of the decade, police estimated that there were 140,000 gays in San Francisco—one-fifth of the population—and that the numbers were growing by some eighty a week.

This second wave of gay migration (the first one had followed World War II) was not entirely surprising. In the 1960s, the leadership of Mayor **Joseph Alioto** had transformed a blue-collar manufacturing city into a tourist center and a headquarters for banks and corporations. The new San Francisco needed mobile young people with college educations, and white middle-class gay men fit the bill perfectly. As previously noted, mainstream gay political activity had deeper roots in San Francisco than in any American city, including New York, starting with the establishment of the Society for Individual Rights (SIR) in the early 1960s.

In 1971, gay activist **Jim Foster** organized SIR's political committee into the Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club. The following year was a presidential election year, and Senator **George McGovern** was running for the Democratic Party's nomination. The liberal South Dakota senator issued a seven-point plank supporting gay rights. California, with its large block of delegates and tradition of progressive politics, would be a key primary for McGovern. In California, the candidate who was first in delivering all his nominating petitions to the Secretary of State's office had his name listed first on the ballot—a major advantage. In a well-organized lightning strike, Foster's gay legions were able to gather one-third of all the Northern California signatures that McGovern needed, ensuring that the senator's name would be the first that voters saw when they entered the polling booth.

At the Democratic Party's national convention in Miami Beach, Foster received his reward: permission to give a nationally televised speech to the convention on the same night that McGovern would accept his party's nomination. "We do not come to you pleading your understanding or begging your tolerance," Foster began. "We come to you affirming our pride in our life-style, affirming the validity to seek and maintain meaningful emotional relationships and affirming our right to participate in the life of this country on an equal basis with every citizen." It was an astounding moment, although one that may not have helped a nominee already disparagingly dubbed the candidate of "acid, amnesty, and abortion."

Among the new migrants to San Francisco in those years was Harvey Milk (1930–77). Milk was older than most of the other gay newcomers—by the time he settled permanently in San Francisco, he was in his forties. He had grown up in a middle-class, Jewish family in Woodmere, New York, one of the affluent "five towns" of Long Island. As Randy Shilts relates in his biography, *The Mayor of Castro Street,* Milk lived a comfortable if closeted life in New York City in the 1950s and '60s: He worked as a financial analyst, went to the opera, and supported **Barry Goldwater** for president. Among his gay relationships was one with activist Craig Rodwell, although it seemed to have had little impact on the then-apolitical Milk. By the end of the 1960s, he was moving in avant-garde theater circles, and had become a friend of **Tom O'Horgan,** director of the musical *Hair*. Eventually, the counterculture worked its effect on him: He grew his hair long, burned his Bank Americard, and, with his boyfriend of the time, lit out in 1972 for the West Coast.

When he arrived in San Francisco, Milk settled in the Castro neighborhood, at that time a run-down, largely Irish part of town, with a couple of gay bars that catered to hippies from the nearby Haight-Ashbury. After a roll of film he brought in to be developed was ruined, the impulsive Milk decided to open a camera store. According to Shilts, it was after a state bureaucrat arrived at his store demanding a one-hundred-dollar deposit against sales taxes that Milk decided to run for the board of supervisors. He announced his candidacy in the summer of 1973 from a soapbox in a small plaza on Castro Street. (A friend had painted the word *soap* on the side of a crate.)

It didn't take long before the ponytailed political novice ran smack into the opposition of the city's gay establishment, led by Jim Foster, fresh from his triumph at the Democratic National Convention the year before. "We're like the Catholic Church," Foster informed Milk. "We take converts, but we don't make them Pope the same day." Foster believed that San Francisco wasn't ready for a gay supervisor. Characteristically, Milk wouldn't defer to Foster's wisdom—or seniority. Despite the opposition of Foster and the rest of the city's gay political leadership, he ran a surprisingly strong campaign, coming in tenth out of a field of thirty-two and poll-

ing seventeen thousand votes. Milk spent the next two years forging political alliances. Endorsing a boycott of Coors beer, he made friends with a Teamster leader (who in exchange promised him slots for gay men as beer truck drivers). He established the Castro Village Association, a group of gay merchants that in the summer of 1974 organized the area's first street fair. His camera shop on the Castro quickly became what Shilts called a "vest-pocket city hall." He had become the mayor of Castro Street.

When the 1975 elections came along, Milk was in a much improved position. But he still faced a major hurdle: All six incumbent supervisors were running for the six at-large seats. He cut off his ponytail and ran a populist campaign, casting himself as the neighborhood candidate in opposition to downtown corporate interests.

San Francisco city supervisor Harvey Milk (left) and journalist Randy Shilts (right) celebrate on election night 1978, a few weeks before Milk's assassination. *(© Steve Savage)*

He gained the endorsements of three of the toughest unions in the city—the Teamsters, firemen, and hard hats. The cigar-chomping labor boss **George Evankovich** became one of his biggest boosters. "That guy has charisma," Shilts quoted Evankovich as saying. "A lot of our guys think gays are little leprechauns tip-toeing to florist shops, but Harvey can sit on a steel beam and talk to some ironworker who is a mean sonuvabitch and probably beats his wife when he has a few too many beers, but who would sit there and talk to Harvey like they knew each other for years." When the election results were tallied, Milk came close, finishing just behind the six incumbents.

In recognition of Milk's strong showing, Mayor Moscone named him to the Board of Permit Appeals. The mayor also broke new ground, naming lesbian activists **Jo Daly** and Phyllis Lyon to the city's Human Rights Commission and Del Martin to the Commission on the Status of Women. (Lyon and Martin cofounded the Daughters of Bilitis.)

By the time Milk ran for supervisor a second time, the dilapidated Castro neighborhood that he and a few other gay hippies had "discovered" three years before was transforming itself into Gay Main Street, U.S.A. As gay refugees poured into San Francisco, street after street of genteel Victorian houses were gentrified, a pattern that was to repeat itself across the country in cities from Boston to Louisville to Key West. Property values increased five-fold in some cases, and many of the older people in the neighborhood couldn't afford *not* to sell. The Castro was fast becoming a ghetto of white middle-class gay men.

With the gay influx a new type of male homosexual emerged, dubbed the "Castro Street clone." The gentle, long-haired gay hippie of the early seventies was mostly a thing of the past. Another kind of conformity was "in": It was the era of the flannel shirt, tight jeans, hair cut short, the clipped mustache, and the muscular body. A gym membership was as essential in the new gay culture as a collection of Judy Garland records had been a decade earlier. Almost everyone looked like a cowboy or a construction worker—or tried to. In the process, the Castro was becoming a sexual supermarket, the most active cruising strip west of Christopher Street. In its public face, the Castro was an all-male world: The new lesbian migrants—eager to create their own institutions and influenced by the currents of separatism—frequently bypassed San Francisco altogether, preferring nearby Oakland or Berkeley or communes in northern Cal-

ifornia and southern Oregon. Those who did settle in San Francisco were relatively invisible.

A gay community with its own businesses and institutions was coming to the fore in the Castro. Increasingly, it was no longer a poor neighborhood. While Milk emphasized populism and presented homosexuals as another of San Francisco's downtrodden minorities, in fact the majority weren't poor and didn't have much in common with other oppressed groups. Frances FitzGerald caught the contradictions in her essay on the Castro in her book *Cities on a Hill*:

> *[The new gay migrants] might be refugees from oppression, but they were also, by and large, young white men who had arrived in town at the very moment to begin careers. In practice they were taking professional and managerial jobs, or they were staffing the numerous new service industries, or they were starting businesses of their own. In many ways they were proving a boon to the city. . . . But in settling the poor neighborhoods, they were pushing up real-estate prices and pushing out black and Hispanic families.*

After an abortive run for the state assembly, Milk ran for city supervisor a third time in 1977. The year before, the method of choosing the board of supervisors had been changed to reflect the concerns of San Francisco's neighborhoods: Elections were now on a district, as opposed to a citywide, basis. This made Milk's task easier. But he still had to vanquish **Rick Stokes,** the candidate of the city's gay establishment. Milk ran first in a sixteen-person field, winning 30 percent of the vote. It was in that race that Milk developed what his aides called "The Hope Speech," one that he gave repeatedly during the campaign:

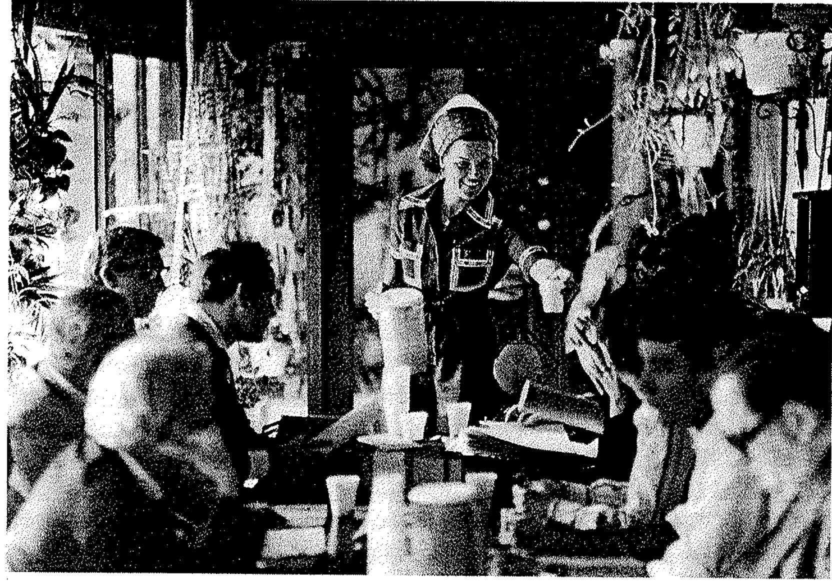
> *And the young gay people in the Altoona, Pennsylvanias and the Richmond, Minnesotas who are coming out and hear [antigay crusader] Anita Bryant on television. . . . The only thing they have to look forward to is hope. And you have to give them hope. . . . Hope that all will be all right. Without hope, not only gays, but the black[s], the seniors, the handicapped, the us'es, the us'es will give up.*

In the same election, a police officer and firefighter named **Dan White,** representing a conservative, largely Irish working-class district, was elected as city supervisor along with Milk, also for the first time. In a mimeographed sheet distributed at a campaign rally, White declared, "You must realize that there are thousands upon thousands of frustrated, angry people such as yourselves waiting to unleash a fury that can and will eradicate the malignancies which blight our beautiful city. . . . I am not going to be forced out of San Francisco by splinter groups of radicals, social deviates and incorrigibles." His campaign slogan was "Unite and Fight with Dan White." The backlash was beginning in San Francisco.

Milk's election aside, 1977 (and 1978) were not particularly good years for gays and lesbians. The political atmosphere in America was changing. Growing opposition to issues like abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment and increased agitation in favor of school prayer indicated a shift to the right. Television evangelists, tapping into worries about moral decline, were gaining increasing numbers of viewers (and financial contributions) and becoming a social and political force. With the election of **Jimmy Carter** in 1976, America had its first "born again" president, a moderate to liberal one, to be sure, but one whose election underscored the clout of evangelical voters.

Nineteen seventy-seven did get off to an auspicious start, at least. Carter aide **Margaret (Midge) Costanza** welcomed representatives of national gay and lesbian groups at a meeting at the White House, the first time that had ever happened. A national gay rights bill had already been introduced into the House of Representatives with thirty-nine cosponsors. Carter had pledged during the campaign to sign it, and the Costanza meeting raised hopes that the new president could be held to his promise. The antigay governor of New Hampshire, **Meldrim Thomson,** discovered that in signing a package to reform that state's rape laws, he had inadvertently agreed to the elimination of penalties against homosexual acts. Thomson decided not to revive the law, and New Hampshire became one of eighteen states that, by then, had repealed their sodomy statutes. Meanwhile, in January 1977, Miami joined some forty U.S. cities—including Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Minneapolis, and Seattle—in enacting gay rights protections. The vote by the Dade County Commission was 5–3.

In the wake of the commission's vote, Anita Bryant—pop singer, former Miss Oklahoma, publicist for Florida orange juice, and



Anita Bryant pours orange juice for board members of her group "Save Our Children" at her Miami Beach home, in May 1977. *(© UPI/Bettmann)*

born-again Christian—announced that she would lead a campaign to repeal the ordinance. Bryant had testified at commission hearings, claiming that gay rights protections would "violate my rights and the rights of all decent and morally upstanding citizens." (**Alvin Dark,** manager of the San Diego Padres baseball team, also testified against the proposal.) Within six weeks, Bryant's organization, Save Our Children, Inc., had collected sixty-five thousand signatures on a petition to force a county-wide referendum on the ordinance. Suddenly, organized opposition to the gay rights movement had emerged.

The issue quickly gained national attention. As the *Miami Herald* reported, "The campaign is over Gay Rights, and it has all the ingredients—from sex to religion to Anita Bryant bursting into the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic'—for a national media spectacular." Bryant based her campaign on the slogan "Homosexuals cannot reproduce, so they must recruit." If the ordinance remained on the books, she warned, "militant homosexuals" would "influence children to their abnormal way of life." Her support was wide-

ranging—from evangelical Christians to the president of the local B'nai Brith. A state legislator read sections of the book of *Leviticus* aloud on the senate floor in Tallahassee. The moderate Democratic Governor **Reuben Askew** declared that he would not want an open homosexual teaching his children and that he had "never viewed the homosexual lifestyle as something that approached a constitutional right." A letter from the Roman Catholic archbishop calling for repeal was read aloud in Catholic churches on the Sunday preceding the vote. The gay side, led by **Jack Campbell,** head of a national bathhouse chain, centered its strategy on a media campaign that eschewed door-to-door canvasing. Although Bryant talked about a "well-organized, highly financed, and politically militant group of homosexual activists," in an atmosphere inflamed by anxiety about gay men "recruiting" children, supporters of the ordinance never had a chance. On June 7, 1977, Dade County voters repealed the gay rights law by a vote of 202,319 to 89,562. In her victory statement Bryant said, "Tonight the laws of God and the cultural values of man have been vindicated. The people of Dade County—the normal majority—have said, 'Enough, Enough, Enough.' "

The lopsided result in Miami shook gays and lesbians out of their complacency. There were large and angry demonstrations in New York, San Francisco, Boston, and other cities. A campaign was launched to hound Bryant off the stage of American political life through a boycott of Florida citrus products—and through personal ridicule. Two weeks after the Miami vote, a thirty-three-year-old San Francisco gardener, **Robert Hillsborough,** was stabbed fifteen times in the chest and face by a youth shouting, "Faggot, faggot, faggot!" Hillsborough's murder made the front pages of the San Francisco newspapers and the gay press nationwide. Gays and their allies seized upon the death as a symbol of the new and dangerous atmosphere created by Bryant. As Hillsborough's seventy-eight-year-old mother put it, "My son's blood is on her [Bryant's] hands." At the annual San Francisco Gay Freedom Day parade—held five days after Hillsborough's murder—250,000 marched down Market Street. It was the largest crowd ever for a gay and lesbian parade. Marchers carried pictures of Hitler, Stalin, Ugandan dictator Idi Amin—and Anita Bryant.

Despite the crowds on Market Street, opponents of gay rights now had the momentum. The following April, St. Paul, Minnesota, voters repealed that city's gay rights law by a 54,090–31,690 vote.

"Like the Union Army at the second Manassas, the gay-rights movement has been routed anew in its second collision with Christian fundamentalists," exulted columnist **Pat Buchanan.** Voters in Wichita, Kansas, and the liberal college town of Eugene, Oregon, followed suit the following month. The Oklahoma state legislature passed a law dismissing teachers who advocated or "practiced" homosexuality. The argument of the opponents of homosexual rights was always the same: Gay and lesbian civil rights protections meant molestation of children, homosexual "recruitment," and a threat to the already-embattled American family. In California, **John Briggs,** a state senator with aspirations for higher office, garnered enough signatures to put a referendum on the 1978 statewide ballot seeking to bar open homosexuals from teaching in the state's public schools.

The Briggs Initiative—Proposition 6—was the first attempt during this period not merely to roll back gay rights laws but to legally discriminate against homosexuals. If California were to pass such a law statewide, it would be calamitous for the new movement. Two months before the November election, the polls showed Briggs headed for an overwhelming victory. In each discussion on the issue, Briggs would bring up the same dubious (but presumably frightening) statistics—that homosexuals comprised a third of the teachers in San Francisco and 20 percent in Los Angeles. "Most of them are in the closet," he would say, "and frankly, that's where I think they should remain." Briggs's leaflets featured inflammatory newspaper clippings with headlines like TEACHER ACCUSED OF SEX ACTS WITH BOY STUDENTS and FORMER SCOUTMASTER CONVICTED OF HOMOSEXUAL ACTS WITH BOYS. In one speech, the state senator warned, "If you let one homosexual teacher stay, soon there'll be two, then four, then eight, then twenty-five—and before long, the entire school will be taught by homosexuals."

But as the state's political, labor, and religious establishment lined up against Briggs, his early lead began to evaporate. Perhaps the most important endorsement that the anti-Briggs forces received came from former California Governor **Ronald Reagan.** "Whatever else it is, homosexuality is not a contagious disease like measles," said the future president. Former president **Gerald Ford** urged a "no" vote. President Jimmy Carter also came out against Briggs at a rally for Governor **Jerry Brown**—although only after Brown assured him it was "perfectly safe" to do so. In November, Proposition 6 was defeated by a three-to-two margin.

That same day, gay rights forces won another badly needed victory as Seattle voters rejected an attempt to repeal that city's gay rights law by 63 to 37 percent. (Supporters of the Seattle ordinance defined the issue early and successfully as one of privacy, and their campaign poster featured a huge keyhole with an eye peering through it.) The Seattle vote marked the first time a gay rights ordinance had been upheld in a popular vote.

The newly elected San Francisco supervisor Harvey Milk had campaigned hard against the Briggs Initiative. He and Briggs engaged in a number of debates together throughout the state. Shilts relates how, late in the campaign, Briggs invited Milk to a debate on his home turf of conservative Orange County. At the Orange County airport, Milk and campaign aide **Dick Pabich** ran into none other than Briggs himself, his wife, and a state police bodyguard. The five went off to have a cup of coffee in the airport lounge. For half an hour Milk and Briggs swapped stories about the campaign "like two World War II buddies reminiscing about their days in the trenches," Shilts writes. When Briggs departed, Milk said to Pabich, "This really is a big joke to him." But during the debate itself the two men relentlessly attacked each other.

Another opponent of gay rights whom Milk tried to win over was his fellow supervisor Dan White. When Milk and White were both elected to their first terms on the board of supervisors in the fall of 1977, the San Francisco media found these political outsiders and polar opposites—the outspokenly gay Milk and the deeply conservative White—objects of fascination. The two made a number of joint appearances on local talk shows. In conversation with a friend, Milk said, "Dan White is just stupid. He's working class, a Catholic, been brought up with all those prejudices. I'm gonna sit next to him every day and let him know we're not all those bad things he thinks we are."

Initially, Milk's courting of White seemed to have some effect. When Milk introduced a bill banning discrimination against homosexuals in housing and employment, White supported it in committee, relating how his experiences as a paratrooper in Vietnam had taught him that qualities attributed to different groups—whites, blacks, Asians, gays—"just didn't hold up under fire." "It doesn't matter what a person is, what his preferences are," said White. "As long as they respect other people and they abide by

courtesies and values, I think we can all get along." He also backed a resolution honoring Daughters of Bilitis founders Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon on the occasion of their twenty-fifth anniversary. And White did some courting of his own, persuading board of supervisors president Dianne Feinstein to make Milk the chairman of the Streets and Transportation Committee, a position Milk coveted.

Still, their relationship remained uneasy, and when Milk cast the deciding vote in favor of setting up a facility for juvenile offenders in White's district—something that White vehemently opposed—White felt betrayed. The very next week he changed his position on the gay rights bill, becoming the only supervisor to oppose it. White refused to talk to Milk for months; at the same time, Milk became disillusioned by White, increasingly seeing him as a tool of downtown real-estate interests and the police.

In the fall of 1978, White abruptly resigned from the board of supervisors, citing financial pressures. Ten days later, after a meeting with the leaders of the Board of Realtors and the Police Officers' Association, he asked Mayor George Moscone to reinstate him. At first, Moscone was disposed to do so, but under pressure from White's political opponents, including Milk, he changed his mind. On the morning of Monday, November 27, 1978, the day that Moscone was to name someone else to fill White's seat, White packed his .38 caliber Smith & Wesson and headed for City Hall. He walked into Moscone's office and, after the mayor informed him he wasn't going to reappoint him to his seat, shot him four times, including twice in the head. Apparently, no one heard the shots. Then he found Milk, whom he was convinced was the mastermind behind the mayor's failure to reappoint him. He took his fellow supervisor into his recently vacated office—empty save for a desk, two chairs, and a bare metal bookshelf—and closed the door behind them. There, he shot Milk four times as well. After Milk had fallen to the floor, White put his gun almost against Milk's skull and fired off a fifth round.

Dan White went on trial six months later for murder. Defense challenges assured that there were no blacks, Asians, or gays on the jury, which turned out be comprised mostly of white working-class Catholics. "If you had to guess you'd say that only one or two at most might have voted for George Moscone," writer Mike Weiss observed in his book about the assassinations, *Double Play: The San Francisco City Hall Killings*. "They were a pretty representative sample of the new San Francisco working class, a pretty good cross section of the kind of people who felt oppressed and neglected by the political system." Randy Shilts noted ruefully, "Dan White would truly be judged by a jury of his peers."

The defense painted White as the victim of "diminished capacity," a family man who somehow had gone off the rails. "Good people, fine people, with fine backgrounds, simply don't kill people in cold blood," defense lawyer **Doug Schmidt** told the jury in his opening statement. He blamed stress, plus a depressive episode triggered by a chemical change in the body. White was "an idealistic young man, a *working-class* young man," Schmidt declared. "He was deeply endowed with and believed strongly in traditional American values, family and home. . . . Above all else, he was fair, perhaps too fair, for politics in San Francisco. He trusted people. . . ."

During the course of the trial, White's sister—a nurse—and a psychiatrist testified that White had been depressed throughout the summer before the assassinations and had been consuming inordinate quantities of junk food. According to Dr. **Marty Blinder,** junk food could cause extreme variations in blood sugar levels resulting in antisocial behavior—what would later be known as the "Twinkie defense."

For its part, the prosecution's case was poorly argued. Prosecutor **Tom Norman** failed to challenge the defense picture of White's exemplary life; he made no effort to explore the defendant's motivations, neglecting to point out his increasingly rancorous relationship with Milk, for example. Only when City Supervisor **Carol Ruth Silver** took the stand was it revealed that White and Milk's relationship had been less than friendly; and it was Silver who late in the trial had contacted the prosecution, asking that she be allowed to testify, not the prosecution who contacted her. "Without a believable motive, without a demonstration of malice, they could not find Dan White guilty of murder," noted Weiss. "Never once in four hours [of summation] had Tommy Norman said: revenge." When Norman played a tape of White's confession, it wound up creating sympathy for the defendant:

> *I wanted to talk to him [Milk], and, and, and just try to explain to him, you know, I, I didn't agree with him on a lot of things, but I was always honest, you know, and here they were devious and then he started kind of smirking 'cause he knew, he knew*

> *that I wasn't going to be reappointed. And ah . . . it just didn't make any impression on him. I started to say you know how hard I worked for it and what it meant to me and my family and then my reputation as a hard worker, a good honest person and he just kind of smirked at me as if to say, too bad and then and then I just got all flushed and, and hot and I shot him.*

At least three jurors wept openly as they listened to the tape recording.

On Monday, May 21, 1979, the jury announced its verdict: It found White guilty on two counts of voluntary manslaughter. He would receive seven years and eight months in prison, which meant he would most likely be out in five years. Acting Mayor Dianne Feinstein, who was present at City Hall at the time of the shootings, expressed the popular feeling. "As I look at the law," she said, "it was two murders." In the aftermath of the verdict, a large and angry crowd marched on City Hall and virtually besieged the building for three hours, burning a dozen police cars. Later, the police rampaged through the Castro, bursting into one gay bar and attacking virtually everyone in sight. Sixty-one police officers and one hundred gays were hospitalized in what came to be known as the "White Night Riots."

No contemporary American gay leader has yet to achieve in life the stature Milk found in death. A 1984 biographical film, **Robert Epstein's** *The Life and Times of Harvey Milk,* won an Academy Award for best documentary; the assassination and trial inspired a Broadway play and, later, an opera. Mayor Feinstein picked former minister **Harry Britt** to take Milk's place on the board of supervisors, therefore establishing a "gay seat" on the board. However, as Frances FitzGerald wrote, Britt lacked Milk's "extraordinary political energy and his sheer chutzpah." FitzGerald wrote:

> *The Castro mourned Harvey Milk, and yet it could not seem to make him into a living legend—that is, into a legend that would nourish and sustain it. The Castro saw him as martyr but understood his martyrdom as an end rather than a beginning. He had died, and with him a great deal of the Castro's optimism, idealism, and ambition seemed to die as well. The Castro could find no one to take his place in its affections, and possibly it wanted no one.*

In early 1985, Dan White was released from prison. He returned to San Francisco but was unable to find a job and lived in relative obscurity. Before the year was out, he committed suicide by inhaling carbon monoxide fumes in his garage.

Although the assassinations of Moscone and Milk were obviously the acts of a very troubled man, they cannot be understood outside the backlash in American society regarding the new visibility and perceived power of gays and lesbians. In San Francisco, White clearly articulated the feelings of many traditionally minded ethnic groups, of the police, of social and religious conservatives. (His own district was the only one in the city to vote in favor of the Briggs Initiative.) He saw himself as defending his values and his community against social forces he feared and could not understand. Despite the horror of his crimes, White had more support than many in San Francisco wanted to admit.

In much of the rest of the country, the battle lines were drawn somewhat differently: with gays and lesbians on one side and the resurgent Religious Right, typified by **Jerry Falwell's** Moral Majority, on the other. The antigay forces were helped considerably by the election of their ally, Ronald Reagan, as president in 1980. (Despite Reagan's opposition to the Briggs Initiative, he was strongly against gay civil rights protections.) Homosexuality was not the only issue that concerned the Religious Right—abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment, and prayer in the schools were even more important, particularly during this period. But homosexuality could be made to stand for everything that many heterosexual Americans felt was wrong with the country—an increasing sense of social breakdown, growing sexual permissiveness, and the weakening of family and authority structures. The migration of gays into urban centers made them "invisible" in much of the U.S.—and easier to be used as scapegoats. If the gay issue was not *the* major issue for the Religious Right, it did provide a useful "cash cow" for the coffers of various groups. In order to raise money, they didn't hesitate to portray homosexuals and homosexuality in the most inflammatory terms. A 1981 fund-raising letter from Jerry Falwell, echoing Anita Bryant, went, "Please remember, homosexuals do not reproduce! They recruit! And, many of them are out after my children and your children." The Christian Voice orga-

nization put it even more starkly: "Can't let militant gays, ultra liberals, atheists, porno pushers, pressure Congress into passing Satan's agenda instead of God's."

The conflicts between newly visible gay communities and the Religious Right extended to other parts of the English-speaking world as well. In England, in 1976, morality crusader **Mary Whitehouse** managed to get *Gay News,* the British homosexual paper, charged with blasphemy for publishing a poem about Christ. Although no one had been successfully prosecuted under the blasphemy law since 1921, the *Gay News* editor was found guilty, receiving an eighteen-month suspended sentence and a fine of five hundred pounds. (The fine, as well as legal costs to fight the case, marked the beginning of financial problems that were eventually to lead to the newspaper's demise in 1983.) In Canada, evangelicals sponsored Anita Bryant on a national tour in 1978. Two years later, with the defeat of progay candidates in municipal elections and the rise of vocal antigay forces, Toronto police began a series of raids on gay bathhouses, in which more than three hundred people were arrested. In New Zealand, in the mid-1980s, fundamentalist ministers from the United States took part in an unsuccessful effort to oppose repeal of the country's sodomy law. In Australia, the Reverend **Fred Nile,** a fundamentalist minister, became the leading opponent of Sydney's annual gay and lesbian Mardi Gras parade, on one occasion publicly praying for rain to halt the proceedings.

By the end of the 1970s, the backlash had slowed the advance of gay and lesbian rights but had failed to stop it. Interestingly, as Randy Shilts observed in *The Mayor of Castro Street,* the two groups—gays and lesbians and evangelical Christians—seemed well-matched adversaries, with striking similarities. Both gays and evangelicals shared their own particular versions of the "born-again" experience, Shilts noted. For evangelical Christians, it was a theological experience—finding God in a sinful world; for gays it was a social one, "coming out" in a generally hostile heterosexual environment. For both, their new identities frequently meant breaking with the past and starting a new life and a new social network. Both groups, Shilts pointed out, put great emphasis on "testifying" to their experiences—born-again Christians in their rounds of testimony for the Lord, and gays and lesbians by announcing their homosexuality to friends and relatives. Finally, both saw themselves in what they perceived to be an ultimate struggle. The war between gays and the Religious Right was to continue throughout the 1980s,

culminating in the referendum campaigns in Oregon and Colorado in 1992 and the battle over gays in the military.

By the end of the 1970s, gays had begun to establish themselves as a force in mainstream American politics, particularly in large urban areas and in key states like California. But the progress that had seemed so unstoppable just a few years before now faced fierce and committed opponents.

Leonard Matlovich: A Soldier's Story

ON MARCH 6, 1975, Air Force Technical Sergeant Leonard Matlovich (1943–88) walked into the office of his superior, Captain **Dennis Collins,** the officer in charge of race-relations instruction at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia. "I have a letter I'd like for you to read," said Matlovich. After Collins looked over the first few sentences, he slumped into a chair and demanded, "What does this mean?" Matlovich replied, "This means *Brown* versus *The Board of Education.*"

The letter, addressed to the Secretary of the Air Force, began:

> *After some years of uncertainty, I have arrived at the conclusion that my sexual preferences are homosexual as opposed to heterosexual. I have also concluded that my sexual preferences will in no way interfere with my Air Force duties, as my preferences are now open. It is therefore requested that those provisions in AFM-39-12 relating to the discharge of homosexuals be waived in my case. . . .*

It ended:

> *In sum, I consider myself to be a homosexual and fully qualified for military service. My almost twelve years of unblemished service supports this position.*

With Matlovich's letter, the battle to overturn the U.S. military's policy barring gays and lesbians began. The thirty-one-year-old air

force technical sergeant was in many respects the "perfect" test case. He had volunteered for three tours in Vietnam, where he had been awarded a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. He had been awarded the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal for his work as a race-relations instructor—his job at the time he wrote his letter to the Secretary of the Air Force.

Matlovich was the ultimate "straight arrow." His father was a career air force officer, and young Matlovich had grown up on military bases. He enlisted in the air force just out of high school. He had been president of his county's chapter of Young Republicans and had campaigned for Barry Goldwater for president in 1964. Raised as a Roman Catholic, he left the Church because he believed that the reforms of Vatican II were too radical. In the summer of 1968 he became a Mormon, a religion more suited to a worldview that venerated authority and tradition above everything.

"I've always been very conservative," Matlovich told his biographer, Mike Hippler. "And I've always had a military mind. When I graduated from high school, I was reading about the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and I was so afraid that if I didn't hurry up and get over there, it would be over before I had an opportunity to prove my manhood. You see, I had to prove that even though I had strong attractions to other men, I could go to war just like anyone else."

Matlovich was aware of his homosexuality early on but he tried to fight it. His work as a race-relations instructor helped him come to terms with his sexual orientation. It was, in fact, from one of his students that he learned of the existence of the first gay place he ever stepped inside, a restaurant called the Yum Yum Room in Pensacola, Florida. There, at age thirty-one, he met a man with whom he had the first sexual experience of his life. But his race-relations classes had a profound effect on him in other ways. As Randy Shilts notes in his book *Conduct Unbecoming*, "Every day, he reminded his classes of the plea of his new hero, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that they judge people by the 'content of their character,' not by the color of their skin. Slowly, week after week, the words sank in, not only to his students but to Matlovich himself." From there, it was a short distance to confronting the military ban on homosexuals. As it turned out, Matlovich's strongest supporters when he came out were the black airmen at Langley.

Matlovich's was only one of a number of challenges to the mil-

itary ban that began to advance through the legal system in the late 1970s. Another was that of **Vernon "Copy" Berg III,** a naval ensign who decided to fight the navy's decision to discharge him after it was discovered that he was having an affair with a navy civilian instructor. There was Air Force Staff Sergeant **Rudolf "Skip" Keith,** a black man who came out of the closet during a race-relations class at Dover Air Force Base, near Washington. Private First Class **Barbara Randolph** and Private **Debbie Watson** of the Women's Army Corps at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, announced to their commanding officer that they would fight the military exclusion right up to the Supreme Court. Yet another case was that of **Miriam Ben-Shalom,** a single mother and army reserve drill instructor in Milwaukee. When, after reading about Matlovich, Ben-Shalom asked her commander, "Why don't they kick *me* out?" he supposedly replied, "Because you're a good NCO."

Of all these cases, Matlovich's had the highest profile. Six months after his letter to the Secretary of the Air Force, he appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine in uniform—medals and all—with the caption "I Am Homosexual." On the inside pages were photos of him dancing in a gay bar and recovering from wounds in Danang, South Vietnam. It was the *Time* cover that encouraged Ensign "Copy" Berg to fight his discharge from the navy and Miriam Ben-Shalom to tell her commanding officer that she was a lesbian.

In November 1975, the air force discharged Matlovich, and Federal District Court Judge **Gerhard Gesell** refused to overturn his ouster. (Three weeks later, the Mormon Church excommunicated him.) Yet the legal momentum seemed to be working in Matlovich's favor. In December 1978, the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that the discharges of both Matlovich and Ensign Berg were illegal, although it did not order the reinstatement of either man. The court ordered Judge Gesell to reexamine the case. He did. In September 1980, Gesell ordered the air force to reinstate Matlovich by December 5 of that year. Victory, at last, seemed at hand.

In a last-ditch effort to avoid having to take him back, the air force offered Matlovich a cash settlement. No one really expected he would take it. It was clear, however, that whatever Matlovich decided, the air force would appeal the case to the Supreme Court. There, it was also clear that Matlovich would lose, especially now that Ronald Reagan had just been elected president, ensuring a more conservative court for years to come. If he didn't accept a settlement from the air force now, chances were good that he would eventually

lose his case and wind up with nothing. Meanwhile, Matlovich was earning his living at the time selling used cars at a Ford dealership in San Francisco, where he had moved in 1979. (That same year, he had been handed a humiliating defeat in his run for a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, polling only 2 percent in a race won by Harvey Milk's successor, Harry Britt.) So Leonard Matlovich, within days of being reinstated in the air force, agreed to take the tax-free $160,000 offered by the air force and drop his case.

Despite occasionally sympathetic lower-court decisions, the military ban remained in place. Restrictions were toughened during the Reagan-Bush years, a decade when seventeen thousand gays and lesbians were discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces for their sexual orientation. As for Matlovich, he was never quite able to get his life back together. He opened a pizza parlor in the Russian River resort town of Guerneville that soon went out of business; then he moved back East to form a group of gay conservatives (Concerned Americans for Individuals Rights, or CAIR) that never got off the ground due to internal bickering.

In September 1986, Matlovich was diagnosed with AIDS. With his diagnosis, his activism was reborn. Wearing his air force jacket, covered with medals, and carrying an American flag, he was among those arrested blocking traffic in front of the White House at a major AIDS protest in the spring of 1987. He made headlines in October of that year when a Northwest Airlines ticket agent informed him he couldn't fly on the airline to the gay rights march on Washington because he had AIDS. Matlovich summoned the media. After a spate of unfavorable publicity, Northwest revised its policy.

On June 22, 1988, Leonard Matlovich, "arguably the most influential gay activist of his generation," in Randy Shilts's words, died in West Hollywood, California, at age forty-four. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. The inscription on his gravestone reads, "When I was in the military, they gave me a medal for killing two men, and a discharge for loving one."

In the Statehouse: Representative Elaine Noble and Senator Allen Spear

IN 1974, a little-known Boston feminist and community activist named Elaine Noble confounded the political pundits by being elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives as the nation's first openly gay state legislator. Shortly after Noble's election, Allen Spear, a former history professor who had been elected to the Minnesota State Senate in 1972, representing a Minneapolis district, told a newspaper interviewer that he was gay. The fact that two state legislators would voluntarily announce their homosexuality—with Noble doing so *before* she was even elected—was a remarkable development. Soon, Spear and Noble were joined by other openly gay colleagues: **Karen Clark**, in the Minnesota House of Representatives, and **Brian Coyle** and **David Scondras**, in the Minneapolis and Boston city councils, respectively.

While Noble and Spear both came from politically liberal districts with large numbers of gay voters, neither represented their city's "gay ghettos." Spear's Minneapolis district comprised the area around the University of Minnesota campus, as well as some senior-citizen high-rises and ethnic pockets. Noble's district in Boston's Fenway neighborhood was largely composed of elderly and low-income constituents. The legislators' affirmations of their homosexuality did not seem to scare off these voters; Noble easily won a second term, and, a year after he came out, Spear was reelected with a whopping 68 percent of the vote.

Both Spear and Noble worked hard—and unsuccessfully—to get gay rights bills passed in their states. (In 1989, Massachusetts finally became the second state, after Wisconsin, to enact gay rights; Minnesota remains without statewide gay antidiscrimination protections.) But the two didn't spend a majority of their time focusing on gay and lesbian issues. Noble lobbied hard for her elderly constituents. Spear, a member (and later chair) of the Senate Judiciary Committee, spent much of his time on issues such as criminal law, DWI (driving-while-intoxicated), due process for people committed to mental hospitals, and child abuse.

Both legislators eschewed the role of maverick, working hard to be "inside" players. Noble cultivated good relations with the old-time, Irish politicians who dominated the Massachusetts House, gaining the enmity of some in the gay community, who felt that she was "selling out" to the establishment. Spear rose swiftly through the ranks of the Democratic Senate hierarchy. Yet Spear, in particular, stayed close to his progressive roots. One of his proudest moments in politics came when he was chosen to give the eulogy on the floor of the Minnesota Senate for **Elmer Benson,** the populist Farmer Labor party governor of Minnesota in the 1930s.

As much as these politicians tried to be representatives of their district first and gay representatives second, it was difficult. This was especially true for Noble, for whom, as a woman and a lesbian, expectations were extremely high. On the one hand, she faced abuse and threats from homophobes; on the other hand, every gay man and lesbian in Massachusetts—and sometimes, it seemed, in the entire nation—viewed her as their personal legislator. When the Massachusetts House was redistricted in 1978, Noble found herself having to face off in the same district with her political ally, then–State Representative **Barney Frank.** (Frank, who was then in the closet, came out as gay in 1987 during his third term in the U.S. Congress.) Rather than risk an "inter-family" battle with the extremely popular Frank, Noble did not seek a third term. She ran unsuccessfully for the Democratic nomination for U.S. Senate and then served Boston Mayor **Kevin White** as the city's liaison to the state legislature and as head of the Democratic City Committee. She was later defeated twice in elections for city councillor in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Being the "first" had taken its toll on Noble: She never regained her political footing.

Spear, on the other hand, has been able to thrive in the Minnesota legislature, where he still serves today. He has been reelected five times and, in January 1993, was elected president of the Minnesota Senate, the highest position an openly gay person has ever achieved in state government in the United States.

The Man Who Saved the President

ON SEPTEMBER 22, 1975, President Gerald Ford was speaking at a luncheon of the World Affairs Council at the St. Francis Hotel in downtown San Francisco. As the president walked out of the hotel to his limousine, a large crowd began to applaud. In the midst of the crowd, a gray-haired woman in a blue raincoat named **Sara Jane Moore** raised her arm in the direction of the president. A man grabbed Moore's arm and wrestled her to the ground. The gun she was carrying went off and missed Ford by only a few feet.

Oliver W. "Bill" Sipple, a thirty-three-year-old ex-marine who had happened by the St. Francis on his afternoon stroll and found himself standing next to Sara Jane Moore, had saved the president's life. But when the Secret Service and police interviewed Sipple following the assassination attempt, he pleaded with them not to release his name. The police were incredulous. Of course, his name made the papers anyway.

Two days later, **Herb Caen,** the gossip columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle,* offered a different slant on the story:

> *One of the heroes of the day, Oliver "Bill" Sipple, the ex-Marine who grabbed Sara Jane Moore's arm just as her gun was fired and thereby may have saved the President's life, was the center of midnight attention at the Red Lantern, a Golden Gate Ave. bar he favors. The Rev. Ray Broshears, head of the Helping Hands center and Gay Politico Harvey Milk, who claim to be among Sipple's close friends, describe themselves as "proud—maybe this will help break the stereotype." Sipple is among the workers in Milk's campaign for supe [city supervisor].*

Soon enough a number of other newspapers picked up the story, with the *Chicago Sun Times* headlining its article "Homosexual Hero." In *The Mayor of Castro Street,* Randy Shilts claims that it was Harvey Milk who leaked the report of Sipple's homosexuality to the *Chronicle.* Milk had met Sipple ten years before, just after Sipple had left the marines and was hanging out in gay bars in Greenwich Village.

The reason for Sipple's initial reticence was obvious: He wasn't prepared for his homosexuality to be known to millions of people. He was furious at what he considered an invasion of his privacy. A few days later, after a telephone conversation with his mother, he told reporters, "I want you to know that my mother told me today that she can't walk out of her front door, or even go to church, because of the pressures she feels because of the press stories concerning my sexual orientation. My sexual orientation has nothing to do with saving the President's life."

It was a complicated matter. Sipple was living proof that a gay person could perform heroic deeds in a country that wouldn't allow gays and lesbians to serve in its armed forces. In that sense, his sexuality was a legitimate news story, and important in terms of the public image of homosexuals, especially in those early days of the gay rights movement. On the other hand, Sipple certainly had the right to keep his sexuality private, if he wished. He was simply a citizen who had done an exemplary deed—saved the life of the president of the United States—and shouldn't be made to suffer in any way because of it. In this clash of two values, the Sipple case anticipated by more than a decade the controversies of the late 1980s surrounding "outing."

It was weeks before Sipple got even the briefest note of thanks from a pusillanimous White House. He later sued seven newspapers, including the *San Francisco Chronicle,* for $15 million, charging them with invasion of privacy. The judge threw out the case; in his view, once Sipple had thrust himself into the limelight that afternoon in front of the St. Francis, he had become a public figure and thus journalistic "fair game." Oliver W. Sipple died in February 1989 at age forty-seven.

The Rise of the Gay Press

"WHO IS ANITA BRYANT and Why Does She Hate Us?" asked the headline in the *Gay Community News (GCN)* shortly after the singer announced her antigay crusade in Miami in early 1977. The Boston weekly, the closest the early movement came to a newspaper

of record, was one of a number of gay and lesbian publications that established themselves across the United States in the post-Stonewall period. By the middle of the 1970s, virtually every major city boasted its own gay newspaper—the *Washington Blade,* the *Philadelphia Gay News,* San Francisco's *Bay Area Reporter,* Chicago's *Gay Life,* Cleveland's *High Gear.* Even off-the-beaten-path Rochester, New York, had a newsy monthly called *The Empty Closet.* (Curiously, New York City was unable to sustain a gay newspaper during this period, though the *Village Voice* was able to fill the void to some extent; this situation persisted until the *New York Native* came along at the beginning of the eighties.) Most successful of all these publications was the West Coast–based *Advocate,* founded in 1967. *Christopher Street,* a monthly magazine that emphasized fiction and social and cultural criticism, also achieved wide national readership.

The pre-Stonewall gay press—*One, The Ladder, Mattachine Review*—had been characterized by a somewhat apologetic tone, particularly in its early days, sometimes even opening its pages to antigay psychiatric "experts." After Stonewall, broadsheets like New York's *Gay and Come Out!* reflected the euphoria and militancy of the time; in the early seventies, Boston's *Fag Rag* and San Francisco's *Gay Sunshine* offered a sexual liberationist perspective. (*Fag Rag* was famous for treatises like **Charley Shively**'s "Cock-Sucking as an Act of Liberation.") The gay press that emerged toward the middle of the decade tended to reflect the shift of the gay movement toward a more mainstream, civil rights perspective. With the "straight press" still wary of covering gay issues, gay newspapers offered a blend of news, interviews, and book and movie reviews, spiced with advice columns and listings of bar happenings. They were also sold openly on newsstands, a major change from the days before Stonewall.

The gay press reflected the absence of lesbians in the gay political movement of the time. While most publications claimed to provide coverage of both lesbians and gay men, in fact they were largely oriented toward men. Boston's collectively run *Gay Community News* was an exception: It tried to present a balance of gay male and lesbian news and features, and, from its inception, its staff included both men and women. There were few specifically lesbian publications; probably as many lesbians could be found reading feminist newspapers like *Off Our Backs* as the gay press.

Many of these fledgling publications had difficulty supporting themselves financially, often relying on advertisements from gay

bars and marginal gay businesses, as well as personal ads. Nonetheless, the gay media, particularly the nationally circulated *Advocate,* provided an outlet for the marketing of the emerging gay consumer culture. *The Advocate*'s motto was "Touching Your Lifestyle," and its pages were filled with advertisements targeted at gay men; by the end of the decade this had expanded from bars and baths to record and liquor companies. The idea that homosexuals *had* a life-style, one that was both enjoyable and appealing, represented an important development in itself.

This approach had its critics, however. In portraying the homosexual as a "good consumer," Michael Bronski contended *The Advocate* promoted an ethic of "liberation by accumulation" in which "social acceptance and mobility could be achieved by buying the correct accessories." *Advocate* publisher **David B. Goodstein** saw it differently: "I'm trying to reach the gays we don't ordinarily see. I'm convinced that 85 percent of the gays in the United States lead very private lives, don't care about the gay scene and go to bars no more than four times a year. They're just like other suburban couples. *The Advocate* is for middle-class readers—radicals don't read, they don't have the time."

Indeed, gay "radicals" increasingly emerged as Goodstein's bête noire. The *Advocate* publisher became increasingly outspoken (and controversial), criticizing the movement's sexual liberationist wing for allegedly impeding political progress. (*The Advocate* had coined the term "gay destroyers" back in 1973.) By the end of the decade, Goodstein became a disciple of **Werner Erhard's** self-help program, est, which emphasized individual responsibility. Goodstein eventually started his own version of est, called The Advocate Experience, which he marketed around the country (and required his own staff to participate in).

Beyond its role in creating the new gay consumer culture, the gay media played an important role in disseminating the ideas of the movement to a wider homosexual public. A number of gay and lesbian journalists and political leaders got their start in the gay press: author Randy Shilts began his career as a reporter for *The Advocate;* the *Gay Community News* was the starting point for a number of movement leaders, including **Urvashi Vaid,** later head of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; **Kevin Cathcart,** who became the executive director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the national gay legal organization; **Richard Burns,** executive director of New York City's Gay and Lesbian Community

Center; and **Eric Rofes,** former head of San Francisco's Shanti Project.

The gay press was not just an American phenomenon. The Canadian monthly *The Body Politic,* perhaps the most respected of the gay publications, continued to publish throughout the 1970s and '80s (although the Canadian government tried to shut it down after it ran an article on intergenerational sex). The British newspaper *Gay News* started in 1972; in Paris, *Gai Pied* was founded in 1979 and soon became the largest-selling gay newspaper in Europe. (Philosopher Michel Foucault, a founder and contributor, provided the title, a sexual pun.) And the role of the gay media in creating community was underscored when a *Gay Pravda* was published in Amsterdam and circulated in the Soviet Union during the Gorbachev years of *glasnost* and *perestroika.*

and how the great sex researcher conducted his interviews, I recommend Dr. Wordell Pomeroy's *Dr. Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research*. Eric Marcus's *Making History* provides an informative interview with Dr. Evelyn Hooker.

CHAPTER 18—THE AGE OF MCCARTHY: Nicholas von Hoffman's *Citizen Cohn* offers a damning (and gossipy) view of Roy Cohn. I also used the standard biographical works on McCarthy: Richard Rovere's *Senator Joe McCarthy* and Thomas Reeves's *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy*. For the effect of the McCarthy period on gays and lesbians, I recommend D'Emilio's *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, the most thorough account. Also helpful were back issues of *ONE* magazine.

CHAPTER 19—THE STRUGGLE FOR BRITISH LAW REFORM: Stephen Jeffery-Poulter's *Peers, Queers, and Commons* offers a detailed account of the struggle for British law reform. I also found Noel Annan's *Our Age* helpful. Andrew Hodges's biography *Allen Turing* gives a good sense of Britain during the McCarthy era. For Australia in this period, see Garry Wotherspoon's book on Sydney, *City of the Plain;* for Canada's law reform struggle, see Gary Kinsman's *The Regulation of Sexuality*.

CHAPTER 20—THE OTHER SIDE OF THE 1950S: For a literary and biographical examination of the Beats, I recommend John Tytell's *Naked Angels*. Barry Miles's *Allen Ginsberg* offers a good look at the Ginsberg-Orlovsky relationship. The works of the Beats themselves—Kerouac's *On the Road,* Ginsberg's *Howl,* and Burroughs's *Naked Lunch,* among others—are, of course, essential. For a portrait of the Tangier expatriate subculture, Michelle Green's entertaining *The Dream at the End of the World* is the most thorough work so far. Millicent Dillon's biography of Jane Bowles, *A Little Original Sin,* offers another view.

CHAPTER 21—THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FIFTIES, PART II: Lapovsky and Kennedy's examination of the butch/femme subculture in Buffalo, New York, provides a truly fascinating anthropological look at that world. Faderman's *Odd Girls* and her essay "The Return of Butch and Femme" are also illuminating. For the point of view of a black lesbian and also of a woman who felt alienated from the prevailing butch-femme culture, see Audre Lorde's autobiography, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. For a deeply felt but somewhat romanticized view of butch/femme mores and culture, Joan Nestle's *A Restricted Country* is essential. One still awaits a full-scale biography of Lorraine Hansberry that deals forthrightly with her lesbianism.

CHAPTER 22—THE HOMOPHILES: John D'Emilio's superb *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* is the definitive book on the gay movement of the 1950s and '60s. Eric Marcus's *Making History* offers a number of

interesting interviews with fifties and sixties gay and lesbian political figures, using an oral history approach. Katz contains a number of documents in this regard, as well as interviews with lesbian activists Barbara Gittings and Kay Tobin. Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin's *Lesbian Woman* provides an early view of the Daughters of Bilitis by that organization's founders.

CHAPTER 23—STONEWALL AND THE BIRTH OF GAY AND LESBIAN LIBERATION: There are a number of books on this heavily documented period. Martin Duberman's *Stonewall* (1993) provides a close look at the events surrounding the Stonewall riots and the lives of some of the people who participated in them. Donn Teal's *The Gay Militants* presents a detailed account of the first year of gay liberation; Sydney Abbot and Barbara Love's *Sappho Was a Right-On Woman* tells the lesbian side. Dennis Altman's *Homosexual* offers a thoughtful summary of the ideas behind the gay (male) liberation movement; the essays in *Lesbianism and the Women's Movement* do the same for lesbians. Toby Marotta's *The Politics of Homosexuality* takes the story further into the seventies. For the spirit of the early movement, I recommend Arthur Bell's *Dancing the Gay Lib Blues* and Kate Millett's autobiographical *Flying*. The essays in Karla Jay and Allen Young's *Out of the Closet* offer a wide variety of perspectives. For the arrival of gay liberation in London, see Jeffrey Weeks's *Coming Out*. Barry D. Adam's *The Rise of a Lesbian and Gay Movement* puts the gay and lesbian liberation movement in an international perspective.

CHAPTER 24—THE 1970S: THE TIMES OF HARVEY MILK AND ANITA BRYANT: Randy Shilts's *The Mayor of Castro Street* offers an invaluable depiction of the rise of Harvey Milk and gay politics in San Francisco. For an up-close look at Milk, Moscone, and Dan White and the assassinations, I recommend Mike Weiss's *Double Play*. Shilts, in *Conduct Unbecoming,* offers a sympathetic look at military rights pioneer Leonard Matlovich; so does Matlovich's biography, *The Good Soldier,* written by Mike Hippler, with participation (and extensive quotes) from Matlovich. For Oliver Sipple, the man who saved President Ford's life, see Shilts's *The Mayor of Castro Street*.

CHAPTER 25—SEX AND MUSIC IN THE SEVENTIES: Edmund White's *States of Desire* offers a fascinating examination of gay male culture in the decade before AIDS. Dennis Altman's essays in *Coming Out in the Seventies* take a critical look at the effects of sexual liberation. But Andrew Holleran's novel, *Dancer from the Dance,* probably evokes the era better than any other work.

CHAPTER 26—LESBIAN NATION AND WOMEN'S MUSIC: Faderman's *Odd Girls* gives a good perspective on the period, while frequently

taking a critical stance. For the theoretics behind "Lesbian Nation," see Jill Johnston's book of the same name, Rita Mae Brown and Charlotte Bunch's essays, and Adrienne Rich's "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." The material on women's music and its role in creating lesbian culture comes largely from interviews I conducted previously with singer Holly Near and Judy Dlugacz, head of Olivia Records.

CHAPTER 27—THE AGE OF AIDS: As with the years immediately following Stonewall, the Age of AIDS is probably the most documented period in contemporary U.S. gay history. Despite its biases, Randy Shilts's *And the Band Played On* remains the most valuable source on the early days of the epidemic. In view of the role that Larry Kramer played as the catalyst for so much of the decade's AIDS organizing, his collection of essays and speeches, *Reports from the Holocaust,* represents an important record. Frances FitzGerald's *Cities on a Hill* offers a superb journalistic portrait of San Francisco during the early AIDS years; Andrew Holleran's essays in *Ground Zero* provide an inside look at gay New York City. Bruce Nussbaum's *Best Intentions* examines AIDS organizing and the politics of AIDS research. Michaelangelo Signorile's *Queer in America* portrays the radicalism of ACT UP and Queer Nation from the point of view of the leading proponent of "outing." Phyllis Burke's *Family Values* gives a West Coast perspective on Queer Nation. (Burke also provides an engaging account of lesbian parenthood.)

CHAPTER 28—COMMUNISM AND FASCISM: For a look at Communism in the Soviet Union and China and its effect on homosexuals, I drew on newspaper and magazine articles from sources ranging from *Christopher Street* to the *Washington Post.* Bret Hinsch's *Passions of the Cut Sleeve* explores same-sex love in ancient China, although it does not attempt to treat the modern period. For Cuba, Allen Young's *Gays Under the Cuban Revolution* is a good introduction. Cuban novelist Reinaldo Arenas's memoir, *Before Night Falls,* is a vital source, despite its violently anti-Castro tone. Extremely antagonistic to Castro but also important is the 1984 documentary film *Improper Conduct.* For Argentina, I made use of an essay on Argentine gay history by the eminent sociologist Juan José Sebreli, as well as my own reportage in *Out in the World.*

CHAPTER 29—ENGLAND: THE BATTLE OVER CLAUSE 28: Once again, Stephen Jeffery-Poulter's *Peers, Queers, and Commons* documents the period most thoroughly. Peter Jenkins's book *Mrs. Thatcher's Revolution* gives a good picture of the general political background to Clause 28. For the South Africa section, I referred to Mark Gevisser and Edwin Cameron's anthology *Defiant Desire,* as well as my own interviews with Simon Nkoli.

CHAPTER 30—JAPAN: I made use of biographies of Yukio Mishima by Henry Scott-Stokes and John Nathan. Mishima's novel *Forbidden Colors* presents a portrait of gay life in 1950s Japan. For a look at Japanese attitudes toward same-sex love among males in the premodern period, see Gary Leupp's forthcoming *Male Colors.* For the more modern period, see my *Out in the World.*

CHAPTER 31—THE CLINTON YEARS: For my discussion of the battle over gays in the military, I used newspaper coverage, particularly *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post,* as well as magazines ranging from *Newsweek* to *The New Republic* to *The Advocate.* Andrew Kopkind's article "The Gay Moment," published in *The Nation,* provides a good account of the social and cultural changes that marked the first year of the Clinton presidency. For an analysis of gay political failures of the military battle, I recommend Chris Bull's article "And the Ban Played On," in *The Advocate,* and Mark Schoofs's piece, "No Quick Fix," in *Out.*