

glbt HISTORY MONTH

October 2006

JAMES BALDWIN	<i>Author</i>
JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT	<i>Artist</i>
VOLKER BECK	<i>Politician</i>
JOHN BOSWELL	<i>Historian</i>
ELLEN DEGENERES	<i>Entertainer</i>
BARNEY FRANK	<i>Politician</i>
DAVID GEFFEN	<i>Entrepreneur</i>
TIM GILL	<i>Philanthropist</i>
BARBARA GITTINGS	<i>GLBT Activist</i>
KEITH HARING	<i>Artist</i>
JAMES HORMEL	<i>Philanthropist</i>
ELTON JOHN	<i>Entertainer</i>
BARBARA JORDAN	<i>Politician</i>
FATHER MYCHAL JUDGE	<i>Hero</i>
JAMES KOLBE	<i>Politician</i>
LARRY KRAMER	<i>HIV/AIDS Activist</i>
LEONARD MATLOVICH	<i>Veteran</i>
IAN MCKELLEN	<i>Actor</i>
HARVEY MILK	<i>Politician</i>
MARTINA NAVRATLOVA	<i>Athlete</i>
ADRIENNE RICH	<i>Poet</i>
SYLVIA RIVERA	<i>GLBT Activist</i>
BAYARD RUSTIN	<i>Civil Rights Activist</i>
LOWELL SELVIN	<i>Entrepreneur</i>
ANDREW SULLIVAN	<i>Journalist</i>
SHERYL SWOOPES	<i>Athlete</i>
ALAN TURING	<i>Mathematician</i>
LUPE VALDEZ	<i>Sheriff</i>
WALT WHITMAN	<i>Poet</i>
OSCAR WILDE	<i>Playwright</i>
PHILL WILSON	<i>HIV/AIDS Activist</i>



FOREWORD

The establishment of GLBT History Month sends an important message to our nation's teachers, school boards, community leaders and youth about the vital importance of recognizing and exploring the role of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in American history.

Why do we need to know this history? Because we can only understand where we stand today if we understand how we got here. In recent years the United States has embarked on a great moral debate over the rights of GLBT people—their right to marry, to adopt children, to stop hiding who they are in the schools, the Boy Scouts, the church and the military. Ignoring the historical origins and development of this great debate makes it harder to sort out what's at stake in these issues and why they matter so much to so many people. Greater historical knowledge can only strengthen our understanding of the present. Ignorance can only confuse us.

We also need to know GLBT history because our understanding of the past is weakened whenever we ignore the distinctive histories and contributions of any minority group, be they gay people, African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans, or others. It's important to know that part of what inspired the great 19th century American poet Walt Whitman's vigorous defense of democracy and equality was his love for his fellow man. We learn a great deal about the black Civil Rights Movement—and about the forces arrayed against it—when we learn that Martin Luther King's opponents tried to use the homosexuality of Bayard Rustin, one of King's key advisors, to discredit the movement. We learn vital lessons about the growth of freedom in the United States when we study the work of Barbara Gittings and other pioneers in the GLBT civil rights movement.



GLBT History Month builds on the important models of Black History Month and Women's History Month, and serves a similar purpose. Acknowledging the importance of gay people in our past tells gay and non-gay students alike that we value and respect the role of gay people today. No young person should have to grow up thinking otherwise.

GEORGE CHAUNCEY
Professor of History, Yale University

In the 1990s, teachers and community leaders believed a month should be dedicated to the celebration and teaching of GLBT history. They selected October because public schools are in session and existing traditions, such as Coming Out Day (October 11), occur then.

GLBT History Month was endorsed by GLAAD, HRC, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and other national organizations. Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber declared October 1995 to be Lesbian and Gay History Month; and in July 1995, the National Education Association voted to support the concept. In 1996, the governors of Massachusetts and Connecticut and the mayors of Boston and Chicago also proclaimed October GLBT History Month.

In 2006, Equality Forum's Board of Directors and National Board of Governors voted unanimously to coordinate GLBT History Month, modeling it on Black History Month and Women's History Month.

Goals

The goals of GLBT History Month are to teach GLBT history, to provide inspiring role models, and to highlight the GLBT community's important worldwide contributions.

Leader Selection Criteria

Thirty-one GLBT leaders were selected, one for each day of the month. Equality Forum solicited state, national and international leaders for nominations. The nominees comprised individuals, living or dead, who have distinguished themselves within their field of endeavor, as national heroes, or in the GLBT civil rights movement. GLBT History Month National Co-Chairs — the Rev. Nancy Wilson, Moderator, Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC), and Professor Kenji Yoshino, Yale Law School — recommended the 31 leaders from the list of nominees.

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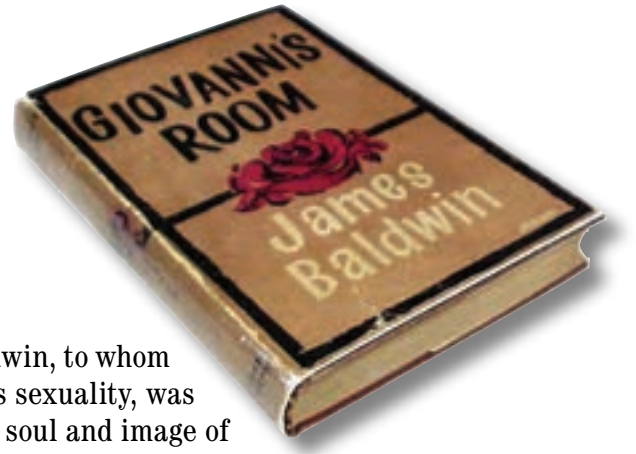
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JAMES BALDWIN

8/2/1924 – 11/30/1987



It is often the outsider who divines truth most clearly. James Baldwin, to whom many doors were closed by virtue of his poverty, his race and his sexuality, was a prophet and truth teller whose writing searingly delineates the soul and image of 20th century America.

In 1953, the publication of *Go Tell It on the Mountain* heralded the debut of a major literary voice. James Baldwin's semi-autobiographical novel depicts much of the writer's painful early life. Like Baldwin, John Grimes—the novel's bright, sensitive protagonist —battles poverty and suffers at the hands of a brutal stepfather in Harlem. Like Baldwin, John Grimes becomes a precocious storefront preacher at the age of 14.

As a gay African-American, Baldwin struggled with his identity in a racist and homophobic society. His disgust with the racial climate in the post-World War II United States impelled him to move to Europe, where he wrote *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953) and his other early major works: the essay collection *Notes of a Native Son* (1955) and the play *The Amen Corner* (1955). His second novel, *Giovanni's Room* (1956), deals explicitly with homosexuality. It was published at a time when few other writers dared to publish gay-themed works.

After Baldwin returned to the United States in 1957, his writings increasingly reflected his engagement in the struggle for black civil rights. He explored black-white relations in a book of essays, *Nobody Knows My Name* (1961), and in his novel *Another Country* (1962). In *The Fire Next Time* (1963), Baldwin declared that blacks and whites must find ways to come to terms with the past and make a future together or face destruction. His incorporation of gay themes evoked savage criticism from the black community.

Following the assassinations of Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X in the late 1960s, Baldwin became increasingly pessimistic about the possibility of a positive relationship between the races. He returned to Europe and lived out his remaining years in the South of France, where he died in 1987.

James Baldwin was a writer whose novels and essays captured the conflicted spirit of late 20th century America.

Baldwin received many awards during his lifetime, including France's highest civilian award, Commander of the Legion of Honor, presented by President François Mitterrand in 1986.

JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT

12/22/1960 – 8/12/1988



In the 1970s, cryptic graffiti messages began appearing in Manhattan signed SAMO©. SAMO© was the pseudonym of the teenaged Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Basquiat grew up in a middle-class environment in Brooklyn, the son of a Haitian father, an accountant, and a Puerto Rican mother. As a teenager, he left home to live in lower Manhattan, selling hand-painted t-shirts and postcards on the street. His work began to attract attention around 1980, after a group of underground artists held a public exhibition, the Times Square Show.

Basquiat's unique visual lexicon compounded of "graffiti symbols and urban rage" (*Publishers Weekly*) challenged accepted notions of art. His

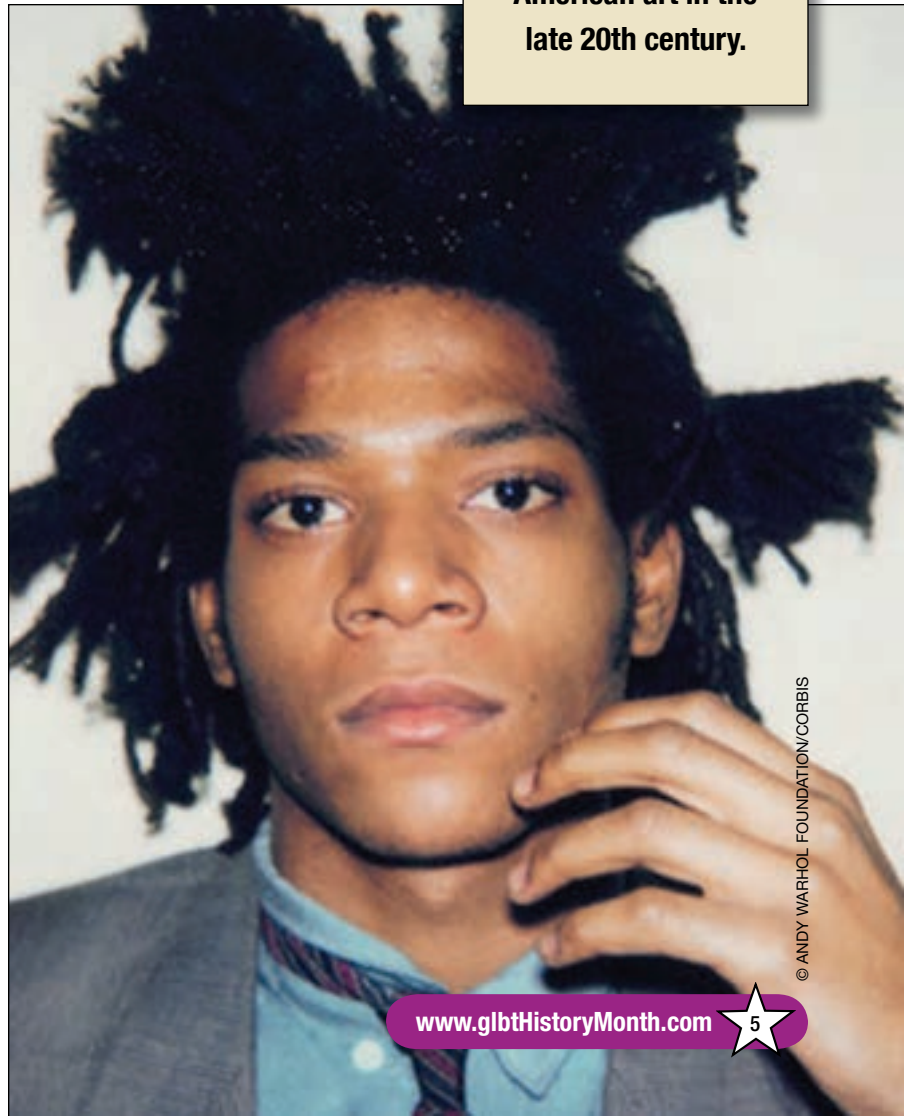
vivid paintings incorporated such diverse images as African masks, quotes from Leonardo da Vinci and Gray's Anatomy, Egyptian murals, pop culture, and jazz. His personal visual vocabulary included three-pronged crowns and the © symbol. Critics called his work "childlike and menacing" and "neo-primitive."

Basquiat associated with other "Neo-Expressionist" artists whose work drew from popular culture, including Andy Warhol, Julian Schnabel and Keith Haring. Haring said of Basquiat's early work: "The stuff I saw on the walls was more poetry than graffiti. They were sort of philosophical poems. ... On the surface they seemed really simple, but the minute I saw them I knew that they were more than that. From the beginning he was my favorite artist."

Embraced by the art world, Basquiat soared to international fame. In 1982, his work was exhibited in New York, Los Angeles, Rome, Rotterdam and Zurich, and he was the youngest artist ever to be included in the prestigious German exhibition, Documenta 7. In 1985, he appeared on the cover of *The New York Times Magazine*.

The artist's close friends became increasingly concerned about his drug use and erratic behavior; Jean-Michel Basquiat died at the age of 27 of a heroin overdose.

Jean-Michel Basquiat was a graffiti artist whose painting became a major force in revitalizing American art in the late 20th century.



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VOLKER BECK

b. 12/12/1960

“Human rights that do not apply to everyone are not human rights at all.”

Prior to becoming politically active in the peace movement in the 1980s, Volker Beck studied at the University of Stuttgart. In 1985, he joined Germany's Green Party. In 1987, he became responsible for GLBT issues in the Green Party caucus in the Bundestag (the German Parliament). From 1991 to 2004, Beck was spokesman for the Lesbian and Gay Association in Germany (LSVD). He is credited with placing the issue of same-gender partnerships and a GLBT anti-discrimination law on the parliamentary agenda.

Beck has represented Cologne in the Bundestag since 1994. He is Green Party Whip for the Alliance 90/Greens caucus, a member of the Greens' party council, and human rights spokesman for the parliamentary group. He was legal affairs spokesman for the Alliance 90/Greens parliamentary group (1994-2002) and political coordinator of the Working Group on Internal and Legal Affairs, Women and Youth within the parliamentary group's executive committee (1998-2002).



Volker Beck believes that Germans must assume responsibility for their history before they can shape a future. He has sought compensation for victims of National Socialism — including financial reparations for people subjected to slave labor under the Nazi regime — and he advocated such acts of remembrance as the construction of a Holocaust memorial. Beck serves as a trustee of several foundations that remember victims.

Since 1992, he has lived with his partner in Cologne, Paris and Berlin.

In May 2006, Beck was attacked and injured by right-wing extremists at Russia's first gay rights rally in Moscow. Images of his bloodied face published in the media evoked strong reactions internationally.

Volker Beck is one of Europe's leading advocates of GLBT rights. A member of Germany's Parliament, the Bundestag, Beck is the father of the German Registered Partnership Act.



JOHN BOSWELL

3/20/1947 – 12/24/1994

John Boswell was an esteemed historian who argued that homosexuality always existed, that it at times enjoyed wide social acceptance, and that the Church historically allowed same-sex unions.

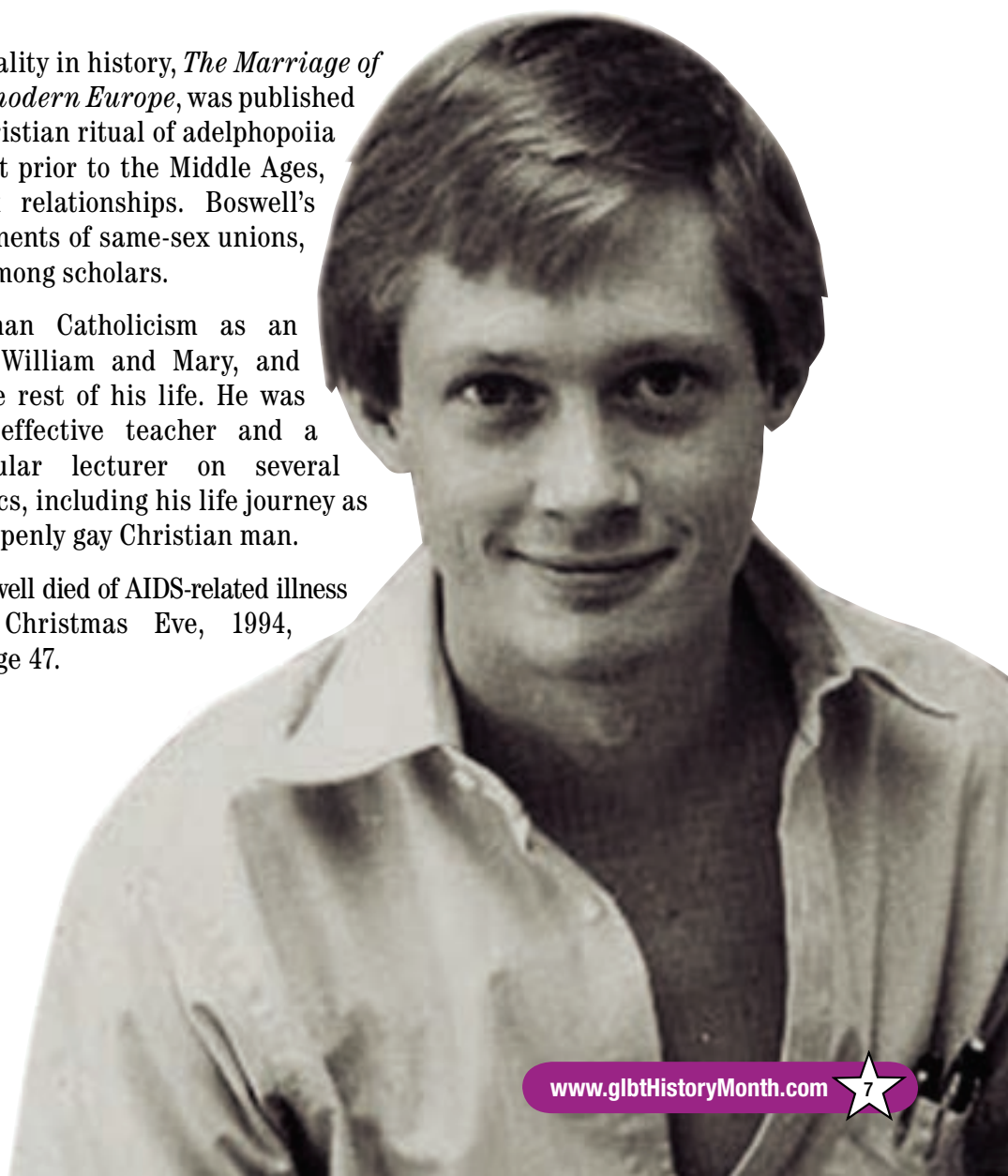
John Boswell was a gifted medieval philologist who read more than 15 ancient and modern languages. After receiving his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1975, he joined the history faculty at Yale University. Boswell was an authority on the history of Jews, Muslims and Christians in medieval Spain. He helped found the Lesbian and Gay Studies Center at Yale in 1987. In 1990, he was named the A. Whitney Griswold Professor of History.

In 1980, Boswell published the book for which he is best known, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century*. In this groundbreaking study, Boswell argued against “the common idea that religious belief — Christian or other — has been the cause of intolerance in regard to gay people.” The book was named one of the 10 best books of 1980 by *The New York Times*, and received both the American Book Award and the Stonewall Book Award in 1981.

Boswell’s second book on homosexuality in history, *The Marriage of Likeness: Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe*, was published in 1994. In it he argues that the Christian ritual of adelphopoia (“brother-making”) is evidence that prior to the Middle Ages, the Church recognized same-sex relationships. Boswell’s thesis has been embraced by proponents of same-sex unions, although it remains controversial among scholars.

John Boswell converted to Roman Catholicism as an undergraduate at the College of William and Mary, and remained a devout Catholic for the rest of his life. He was an effective teacher and a popular lecturer on several topics, including his life journey as an openly gay Christian man.

Boswell died of AIDS-related illness on Christmas Eve, 1994, at age 47.



ELLEN DEGENERES

b. 1/26/1958

“For me, it’s that I contributed ... that my hour of television is positive and upbeat and an antidote for all the negative stuff going on in life.”

In April 1997, Ellen DeGeneres, the star of her own popular sitcom, “Ellen,” took a step that became a turning point in her personal life and her career: she outed herself and her character on prime-time television. Her coming out led to a storm of media attention, including her photo on the cover of *Time Magazine* with the tag, “Yep, I’m gay.” Criticism followed that the show was now “too gay.” For a time after her public declaration, her career suffered from backlash.

DeGeneres returned to the national spotlight when she was chosen to host the Emmy Awards only a few weeks after the September 11 attacks in 2001. At the ceremony she quipped, “We’re told to go on living our lives as usual, because to do otherwise is to let the terrorists win, and really, what would upset the Taliban more than a gay woman wearing a suit in front of a room full of Jews?” She was praised for her poise and decorum as master of ceremonies.

Ellen DeGeneres attended the University of New Orleans and worked at a variety of jobs before she entered stand-up comedy. Her selection by cable channel Showtime as The Funniest Person in America led to opportunities to appear on television. During her first appearance on “The Tonight Show,” DeGeneres became the first female comedian ever invited to sit on the sofa and visit with Johnny Carson. She has been labeled a “female Seinfeld” for her quirky observational humor.

In 2003, she launched her daytime television talk show, “The Ellen DeGeneres Show.” It won 15 Emmy Awards and is the first talk show to win the Emmy for Outstanding Talk Show for its first three seasons.

In 2005, DeGeneres was again selected to host the Emmy Awards, this time just three weeks after Hurricane Katrina. She joked, “You know me, any excuse to put on a dress.”



Popular comedian Ellen DeGeneres was the first openly gay actor to portray a gay character on a leading prime-time television program.

BARNEY FRANK

b. 3/31/1940

“The issue is not that morals be applied to public policy; it’s that conservatives bring public policy to spheres of our lives where it should not enter.”

Congressman Frank is a graduate of Harvard University and Harvard Law School. Prior to entering Congress, he served in state and local government, including eight years as a Massachusetts state representative and three years as Chief Assistant to Boston Mayor Kevin White. During that time, Frank taught at several universities and published articles on politics and public affairs.

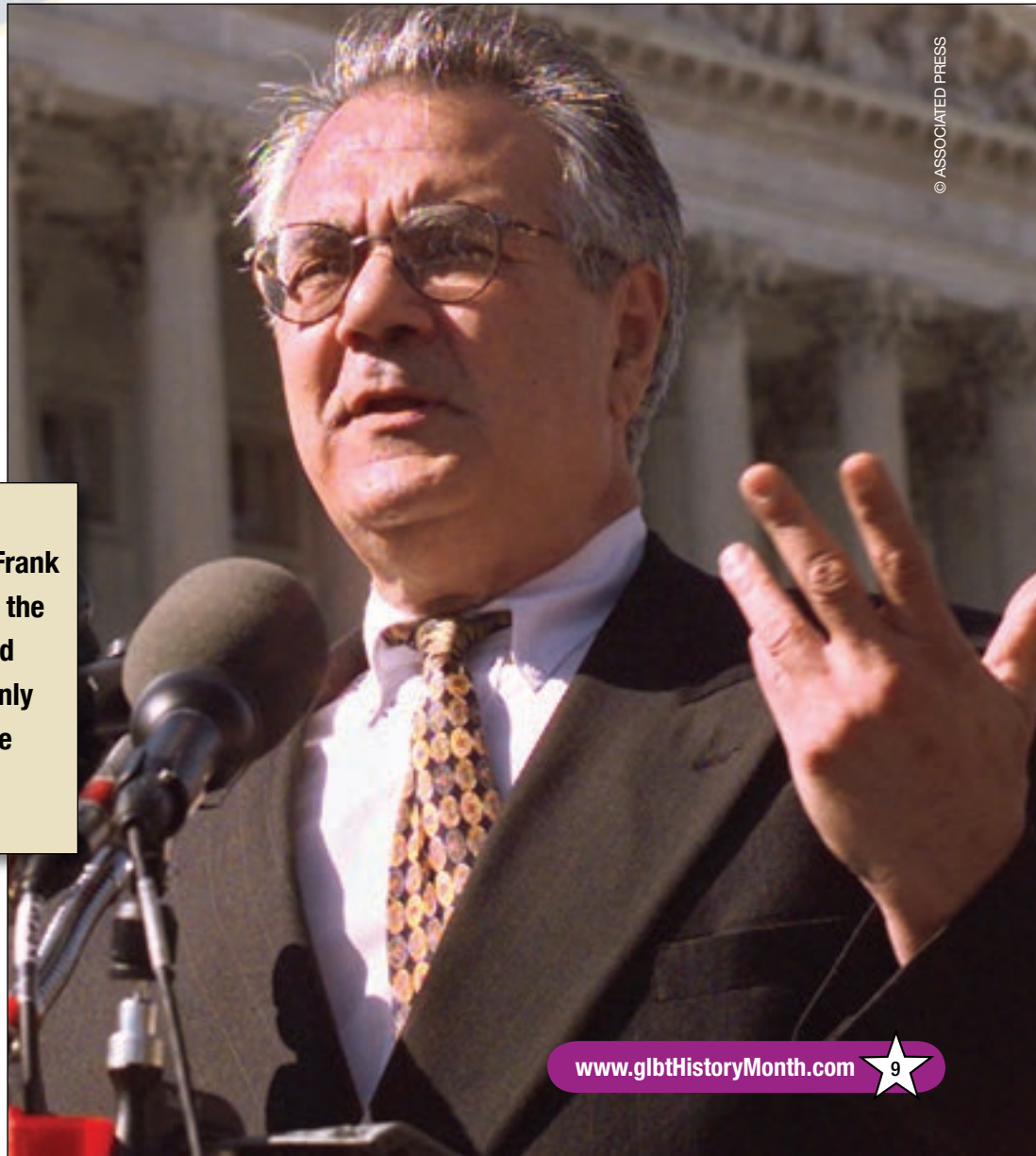
Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1980, Frank is the ranking Democrat on the House Financial Services Committee. *The Almanac of American Politics* has called him “one of the intellectual and political leaders of the Democratic Party in the House, political theorist and pit bull all at the same time.” *Politics in America* has noted his “penchant for trying to match liberalism with hard-nosed pragmatism in order to move the legislative ball.”

In 1987, seven years after he was elected to Congress, Frank disclosed his sexuality. Of this he says, “I tried every which way not to acknowledge publicly that I was gay and I said, ‘This was making me crazy,’ and I decided to acknowledge publicly being gay.”

Frank is outspoken on gay and lesbian rights and on human rights. In 1988, Frank founded the National Stonewall Democrats.

According to Representative Frank, the best perk a member of Congress enjoys is being able, after reading about a problem in the morning newspaper, to go to the office the same day and begin working on a solution.

Congressman Barney Frank (D-Massachusetts) is the highest ranking and longest serving openly gay politician in the United States.



DAVID GEFFEN

b. 2/21/1943



David Geffen has shaped popular culture for more than 30 years by launching the careers of many of the greatest performers of our time. His success in the entertainment business stems from his exceptional ability to spot and develop creative talent. Geffen began his career working in the mailroom at the William Morris Agency, from which he rose rapidly to become an agent. In the 1960s Geffen brokered the deal for Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young to appear at Woodstock.

In 1971, Geffen founded Asylum Records, where he launched the careers of Jackson Browne and The Eagles and produced albums for stars including Bob Dylan, Linda Ronstadt, and Joni Mitchell, whose song “Free Man in Paris” is a tribute to Geffen. In 1980, he formed Geffen Records, producing John Lennon’s last album and fostering the careers of such artists as Cher, Bob Dylan, Ashlee Simpson, Aerosmith, Guns N’ Roses, Nirvana, Weezer, and Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young.

In the 1980s, Geffen was a backer of the musical “Cats,” which has become the longest running show on Broadway. During the same period, he founded the Geffen Film Company, producing films such as “Beetlejuice,” “Little Shop of Horrors,” and “Risky Business,” the film that launched Tom Cruise’s career.

In 1994, Geffen partnered with Steven Spielberg and Jeffrey Katzenberg to create DreamWorks SKG. DreamWorks has won three consecutive best picture Oscars for “American Beauty” (1999), “Gladiator” (2000) and “A Beautiful Mind” (2001). More than 10 DreamWorks films have earned box office grosses totaling over \$100 million.

Geffen is reputedly “one of the most brilliant dealmakers ever to work in Hollywood.” He became a billionaire after selling Geffen Records in 1990 and is listed by *Forbes Magazine* as one of the world’s wealthiest individuals.

Geffen has become known for his support of medical research, AIDS organizations and the arts. His \$200-million unrestricted gift to UCLA Medical School in 2002 was the largest bequest ever given to an American medical school. He has said, “I have no interest in making money anymore. Everything I make in the entertainment business will go to charity.”



David Geffen is a legendary music, theater and film mogul. He supports philanthropic causes through the David Geffen Foundation.

TIM GILL

b. 10/18/1953

“This fight is not just for the long haul. This fight is forever.”

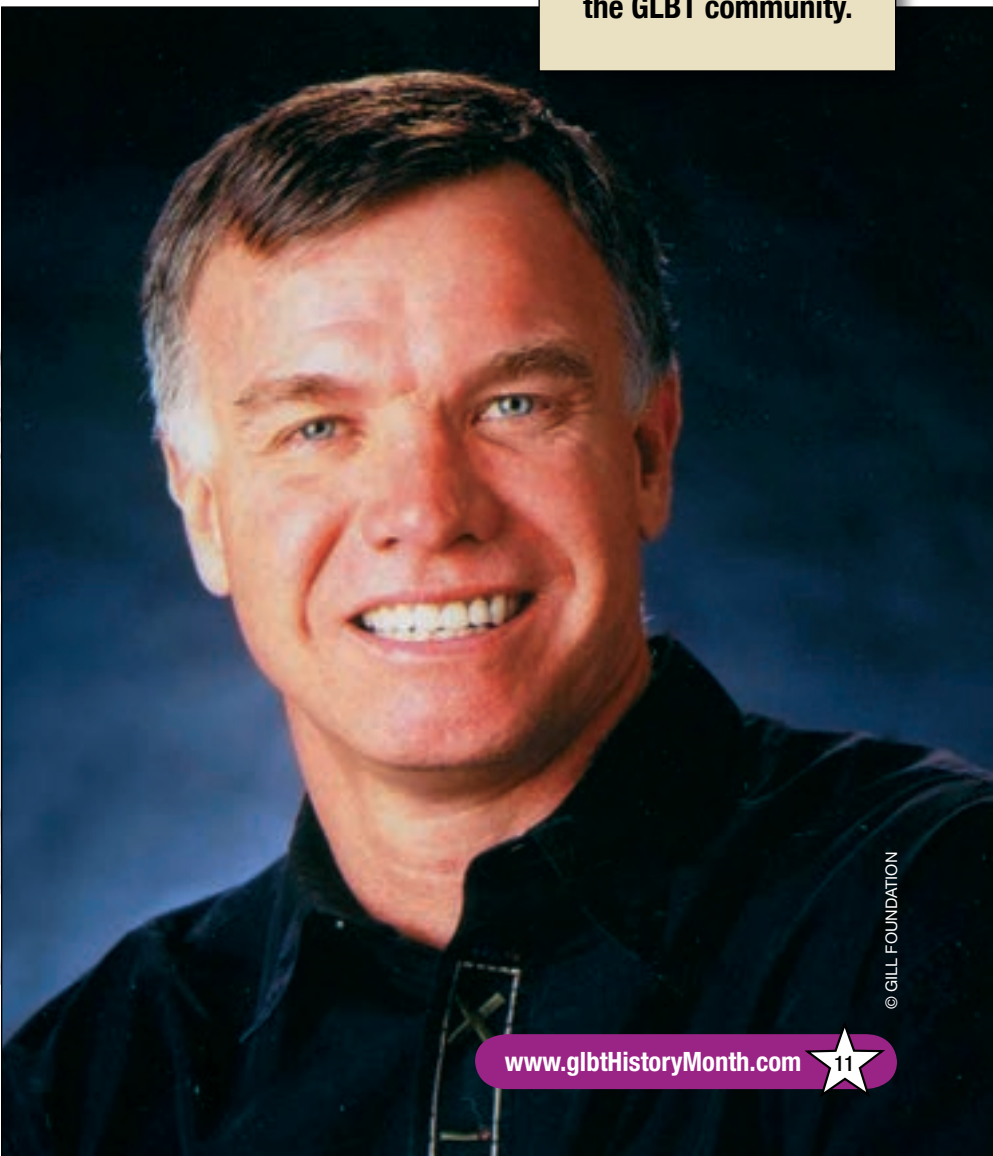
Tim Gill got hooked on computers when his high school acquired its first computer. It wasn't long until he taught himself to create complex programs. Instead of following in his father's footsteps as a physician, as he had originally planned, he majored in applied mathematics and computer science at the University of Colorado.

In 1981, Gill borrowed \$2,000 from his parents and started Quark, Inc. The road to success was not without obstacles, but in a few years' time the company became a leader in desktop publishing software. Gill established a reputation for innovative, socially conscious business practices. His name appeared on the Forbes 400 list of the nation's wealthiest people.

Gill began to speak out publicly as a gay man in 1992 when Colorado voters passed Amendment 2, which banned laws designed to protect GLBT people from discrimination. In 1994, he established the Gill Foundation with the mission of securing equal opportunity for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender expression.

In 2000, Gill sold his interest in Quark in order to devote his energies to the Foundation. In 2004, the Gill Foundation endowment was \$220 million.

Tim Gill founded the highly successful computer company Quark, Inc. and created the Gill Foundation, one of the first major foundations to benefit the GLBT community.



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BARBARA GITTINGS

b. 7/31/1932

In the 1950s, gay activism was in its infancy. Describing those years, Gittings says, “There were scarcely 200 of us in the whole United States. It was like a club — we all knew each other.” Barbara Gittings began her career in activism in 1958 when she founded the New York chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian organization. She edited DOB’s national magazine *The Ladder* from 1963 to 1966.

In 1965, Gittings marched in the first gay picket lines at the White House and other federal sites in Washington to protest discrimination by the federal government. She joined other activists in the first annual demonstrations for gay and lesbian civil rights held each July 4 from 1965 to 1969 at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. These yearly protests laid the groundwork for the Stonewall rebellion in 1969 and the first New York gay pride parade in 1970.

In the 1970s, Gittings campaigned with Frank Kameny and others to have homosexuality removed from the American Psychiatric Association’s list of mental disorders. She recruited “Dr. H. Anonymous,” a gay psychiatrist who appeared, masked, on a panel at the 1972 APA conference to tell his colleagues why he couldn’t be open in his own profession. In 1973, when the de-listing was announced, a Philadelphia newspaper headline declared “Homosexuals Gain ‘Instant Cure.’”

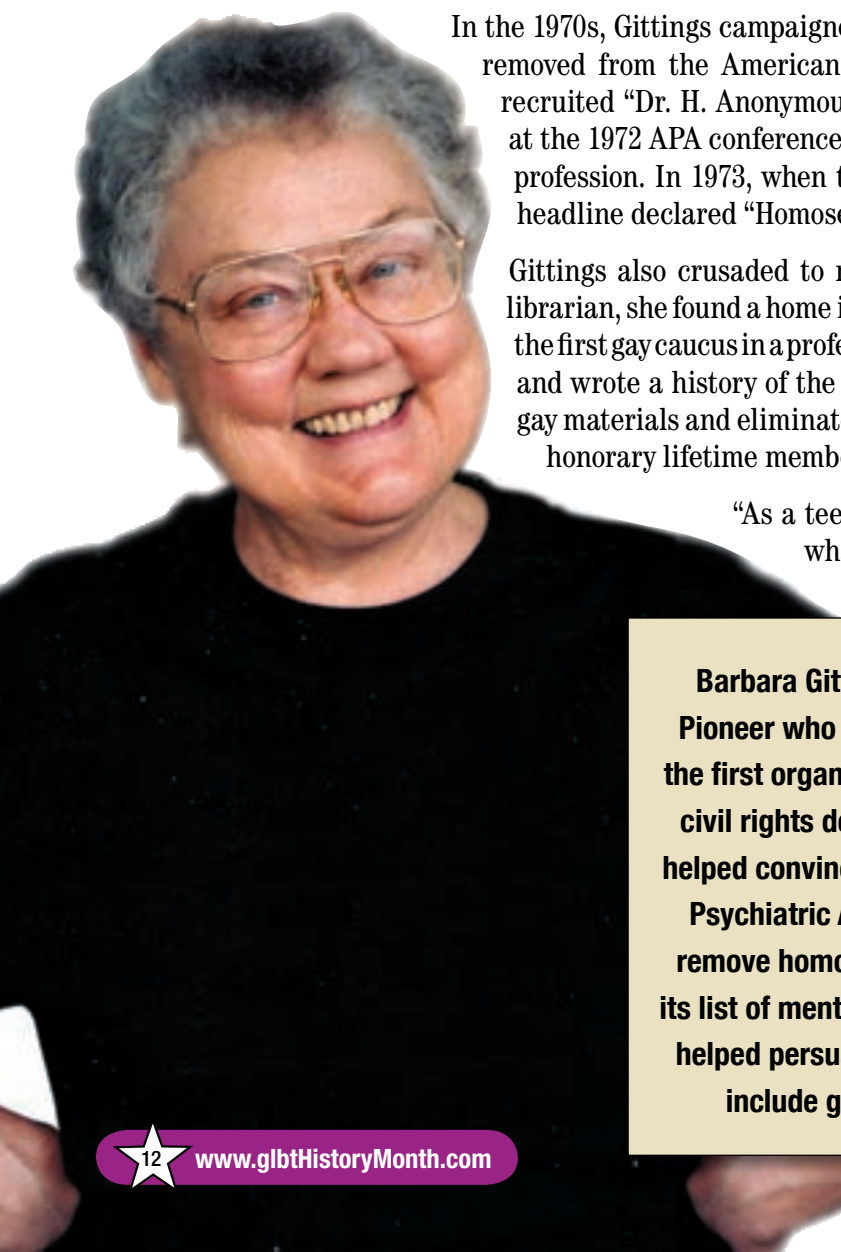
Gittings also crusaded to make gay literature available in libraries. Though not a librarian, she found a home in the Gay Task Force of the American Library Association, the first gay caucus in a professional organization. Gittings edited its *Gay Bibliography* and wrote a history of the group, *Gays in Library Land*. Her campaign to promote gay materials and eliminate discrimination in libraries was recognized in 2003 by an honorary lifetime membership conferred by the American Library Association.

“As a teenager, I had to struggle alone to learn about myself and what it meant to be gay,” says Gittings. “Now for [48] years, I’ve had the satisfaction of working with other gay people

all across the country to get the bigots off our backs, to oil the closet door hinges, to change prejudiced hearts and minds, and to show that gay love is good for us and for the rest of the world too. It’s hard work,” she says, “but it’s vital, and it’s gratifying, and it’s often fun!”

Barbara Gittings is a Gay Pioneer who participated in the first organized annual gay civil rights demonstrations, helped convince the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders and helped persuade libraries to include gay content.

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KEITH HARING

5/4/1958 – 2/16/1990

“My contribution to the world is my ability to draw. I will draw as much as I can for as many people as I can for as long as I can.”

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As a young artist living in New York City in 1980, Keith Haring had an epiphany: “One day, riding in the subway, I saw this empty black panel where an advertisement was supposed to go. I immediately realized that this was the perfect place to draw. I went back above ground to a card shop and bought a box of white chalk, went down and did a drawing on it. ... I kept seeing more and more of these black spaces, and I drew on them whenever I saw one. ... People were completely enthralled.”

His artistic influences ranged from Jean Dubuffet and William Burroughs to Walt Disney and Dr. Seuss. Haring’s vibrant visual vocabulary included crawling babies, pyramids, barking dogs and flying saucers.

Haring felt that art should not be a precious commodity accessible only to the privileged. He went on from his subway chalk drawings to place his images and sculpture in public places throughout the world. His

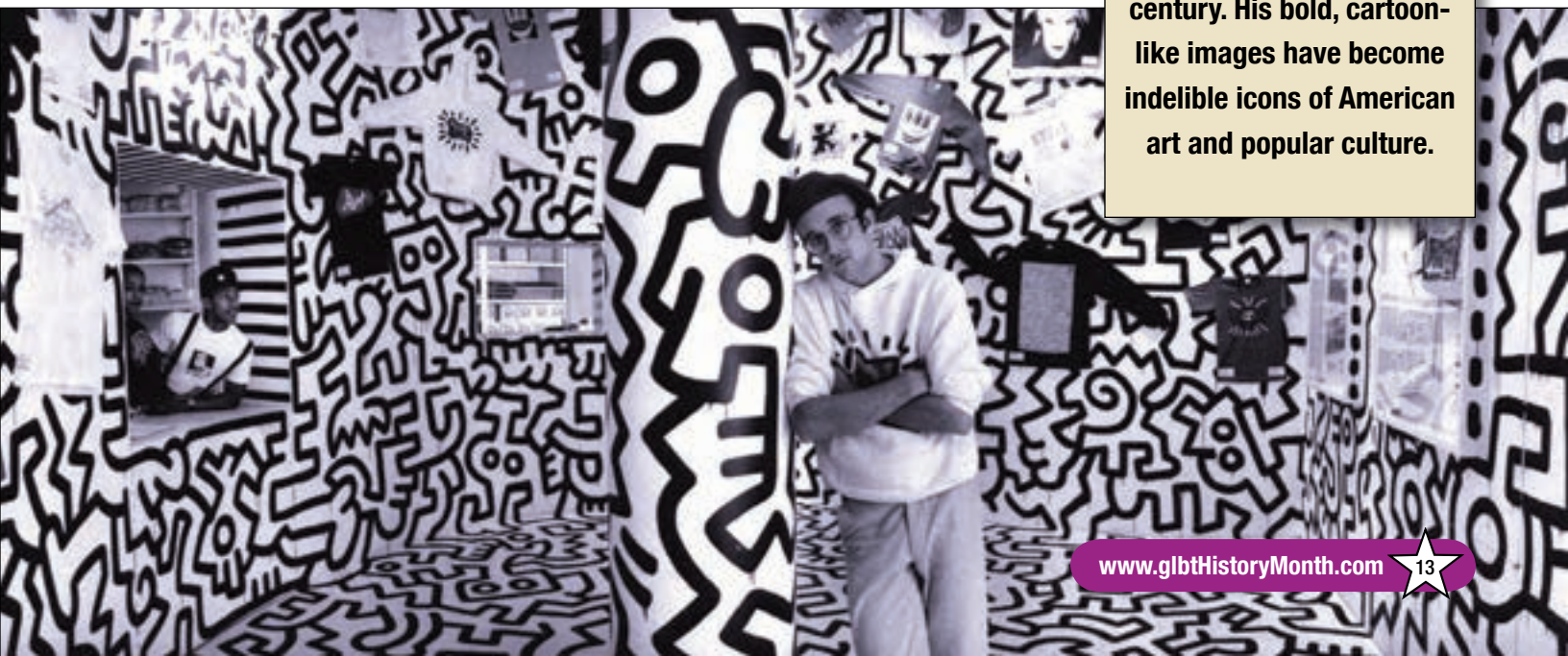
personal symbol, the Radiant Baby, appeared on an electronic billboard in Times Square. He painted a mural on a section of the Berlin Wall, and he often included the public in the making of art, once engaging 10,000 children in the creation of a 100-foot banner for the Statue of Liberty’s centennial.

In 1986, Haring’s desire to make his art available to the public led him to open the Pop Shop, a retail store selling t-shirts, posters and other merchandise bearing his signature images. The entire interior of the store was painted in his unique style.

After Haring was diagnosed with AIDS in 1988, he established the Keith Haring Foundation to provide funding to AIDS organizations and children’s programs. Near the end of his life, he used his imagery to promote AIDS activism and awareness.

Keith Haring died of AIDS-related complications at the age of 31 on February 16, 1990.

Keith Haring was one of the most influential visual artists of the late 20th century. His bold, cartoon-like images have become indelible icons of American art and popular culture.



JIM HORMEL

b. 1/1/1931

“I learned in the civil rights era that nobody gives you anything — you have to fight for it. The same is true of our effort today to bring equality to all Americans.”

Jim Hormel is a philanthropist and community leader who was the first openly gay United States ambassador.

“I learned in the civil rights era that nobody gives you anything — you have to fight for it. The same is true of our effort today to bring equality to all Americans.”

In 1992, when Jim Hormel sought to become a United States ambassador, he had no idea it would take seven years and a bruising political battle to achieve his goal. Ironically, he had enough votes from both Democrats and Republicans to win confirmation, but three anti-gay senators repeatedly blocked his nomination from coming to a vote. At the same time, special interests launched a slanderous public campaign against him. The Senate never voted, but President Clinton made Hormel U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg in a 1999 recess appointment.

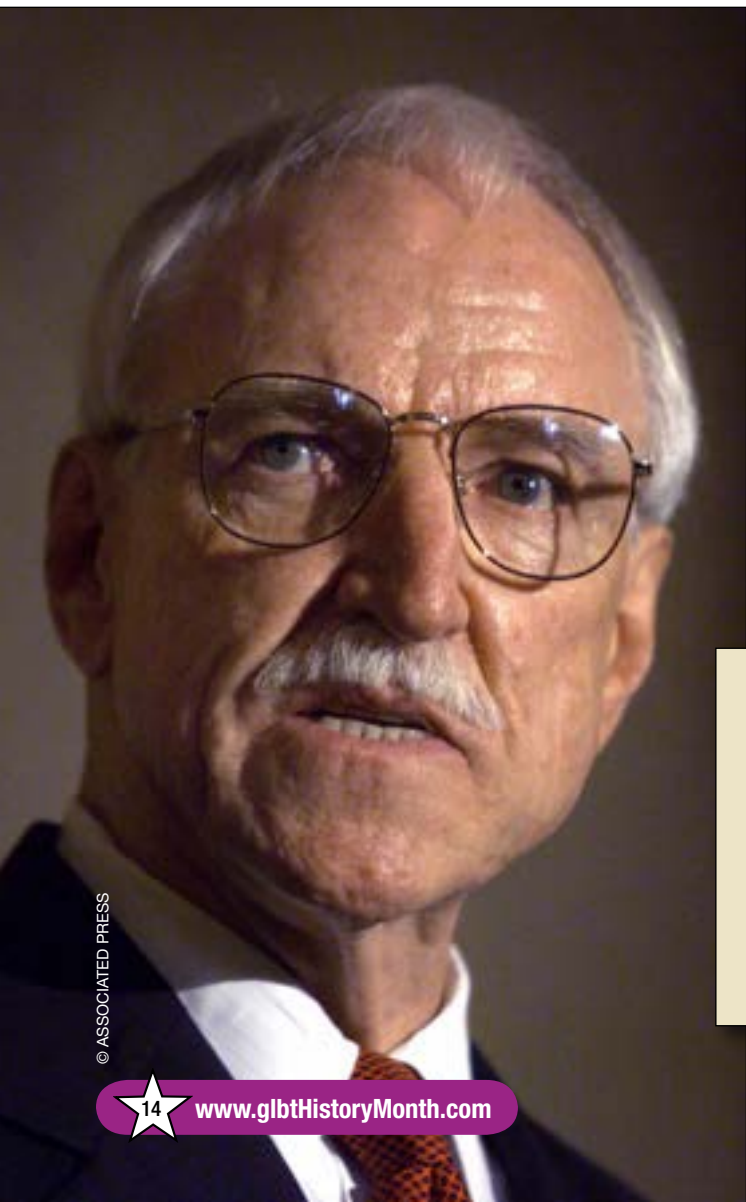
Following Hormel's appointment, the State Department made major revisions to its regulations, including measures that for the first time allowed gay Foreign Service officers to bring their partners on overseas assignments.

Jim Hormel was born in Austin, Minnesota, on January 1, 1933. He graduated from Swarthmore College and now serves on its board of managers. He earned a J.D. degree from the University of Chicago Law School and later served as its assistant dean and dean of students.

Hormel served as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1995 and to the United Nations General Assembly in 1996. He has also been active in Democratic politics and has served several times as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. Hormel sits on the boards of several national and Bay Area (California) political and cultural institutions. He is chairman of Equidex, Inc., a family-run investment firm.

Hormel's philanthropy and activism center on promoting human rights and equality. In 1995, he established the James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center at the new San Francisco Main Public Library, which houses one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of GLBTQ literature.

Jim Hormel is a philanthropist and community leader who was the first openly gay United States ambassador.



ELTON JOHN

b. 3/25/1947



Elton John was born Reginald Kenneth Dwight. The son of a former Royal Air Force trumpeter, he was a musical prodigy, playing the piano at age 4. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music for six years before leaving school for the music business.

His career reached a turning point when he connected with lyricist Bernie Taupin through a music magazine advertisement both men had answered. Their first collaboration, "Scarecrow," was recorded in 1967, beginning a songwriting partnership that continues today. About that same time, Reginald Dwight legally changed his name to Elton John as a tribute to musicians Elton Dean and Long John Baldry.

In the 1970s, John grew famous for his energetic performances and flamboyant stage wardrobe, including a large collection of outrageous spectacles. Many considered the Elton John Band to be the greatest act in the rock world. John had a string of seven consecutive No. 1 records, 23 Top-40 singles, 16 Top-10 singles, and six No. 1 hits. He holds the distinction of having had a Top-40 single every year from 1970 to 1996.

In the 1990s, John turned his talents to film and musical theater. In 1994, his collaboration with lyricist Tim Rice on the Disney animated film "The Lion King" resulted in a soundtrack that won both an Academy Award and a Grammy Award and remained at the top of the Billboard chart for nine weeks. He later worked with Rice on the film "El Dorado" and the musical "Aida," which won both a Tony and a Grammy Award.

John was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994. He was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1995.

John's friendship with young AIDS patient Ryan White and Freddy Mercury, of the rock band Queen, who later died of AIDS, inspired him to establish the Elton John AIDS Foundation in 1992. He announced his intention to donate all future royalties from sales of his singles in the U.S. and the U.K. to AIDS research.

Elton John has sold more than 250 million records in a career that spans more than three decades. He was honored with knighthood for his work on behalf of AIDS research and education.



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BARBARA JORDAN

2/21/1936 – 1/17/1996

Barbara Jordan came to national prominence during the Watergate scandal in 1974 when, as a freshman member of the House Judiciary Committee, she made an eloquent speech on the Constitution that was nationally televised in prime time. Her speech set the stage for President Richard Nixon's resignation.

Journalist Molly Ivins said of Jordan, "It seemed to me that the words 'first and only' came before Barbara Jordan[']s name] so often that they seemed like a permanent title: the first and only black woman to serve in the Texas State Senate, the first black woman elected to Congress, the first black elected to Congress [since] Reconstruction, the first black woman to serve on corporate boards. She broke so many barriers."

The daughter of a Baptist minister, Barbara Jordan grew up during the days of segregation in Houston's Fifth Ward. She earned degrees from Texas Southern University and Boston University Law School and was admitted to both the Massachusetts and Texas bars before becoming active in politics during the 1960 presidential campaign.



In 1976, Jordan delivered the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention, a speech many historians consider the best political keynote speech in modern history.

Jordan began to suffer the physical effects of multiple sclerosis in the 1970s. In 1979, she retired from politics to become a professor at the University of Texas at Austin. She addressed the Democratic National Convention in 1992.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton awarded Jordan the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

At Jordan's funeral in 1996, President Clinton eulogized her: "Whenever she stood to speak, she jolted the nation's attention with her artful and articulate defense of the Constitution, the American Dream, and the common heritage and destiny we share, whether we like it or not."

**Representative Barbara Jordan (D-Texas)
was the first African-American woman
elected to Congress from a southern state.
She was known as an outstanding orator
and Constitutional scholar.**

FATHER MYCHAL JUDGE, OFM

5/11/1933 – 9/11/2001

“Lord, take me where you want me to go, let me meet who you want me to meet, tell me what to say, and keep me out of your way.”



Shortly before entering the World Trade Center on 9/11, Father Judge rejected an offer to join Mayor Giuliani, choosing instead to step into harm's way to be with the Fire Department and the victims of the terrorist attack. A Reuters photograph of Father Judge's body being carried from ground zero by rescue workers made him an international icon of heroism.

Father Judge was a hero to many long before his death. He was beloved by New York Fire Department personnel and their families. He was a champion of New York's homeless, AIDS patients, gay and lesbian Catholics, alcoholics, immigrants and disaster victims.

Born in Brooklyn to Irish immigrant parents, he was only 6 when his father died after a long illness. As a boy, Judge was inspired to enter the priesthood by the Franciscan friars at the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi near Penn Station in Manhattan.

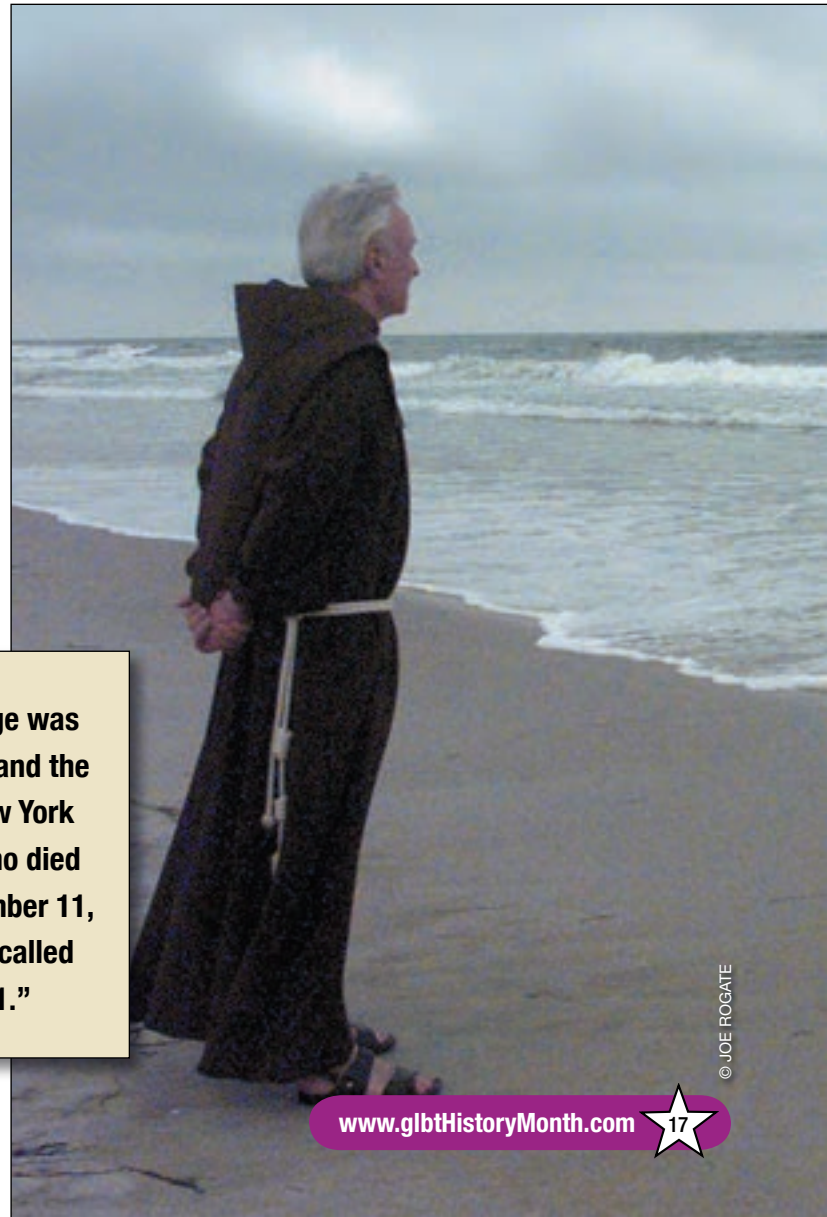
In the early years of his ministry, Father Judge served two parishes in New Jersey where he gained a reputation as “the listening priest.” During his service as Assistant to the President of Siena College, Father Judge confronted his alcoholism and achieved sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous.

In the 1980s, Father Judge was among the first clergy to minister to AIDS patients, who at that time were considered untouchable. Through the organization Dignity, he ministered to gay and lesbian Catholics even after the Church excluded them from worship.

In 1996, Father Judge led a memorial service on the beach at Smith Point, Long Island, for the families of the victims who lost their lives in the nation's second worst air disaster, the explosion of TWA Flight 800. More than 2,000 people attended.

Father Judge received numerous posthumous honors, including France's highest recognition, the Legion of Honor. His F.D.N.Y. helmet was blessed by Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

Father Mychal Judge was a Franciscan priest and the chaplain of the New York Fire Department who died heroically on September 11, 2001. He has been called “the Saint of 9/11.”



JIM KOLBE

b. 6/28/1942

“The cause for all gay persons ... will be advanced when we focus not on what sets us apart from our fellow Americans but on what we share in common.”

Congressman Kolbe is the first Republican to represent southern Arizona since statehood. He serves as Chair of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs of the House Appropriations Committee, which funds most U.S. foreign aid programs, narcotics interdiction efforts and counter-terrorism activities. Kolbe is recognized as a leading proponent of free trade and is known for his advocacy of Social Security and immigration reforms.

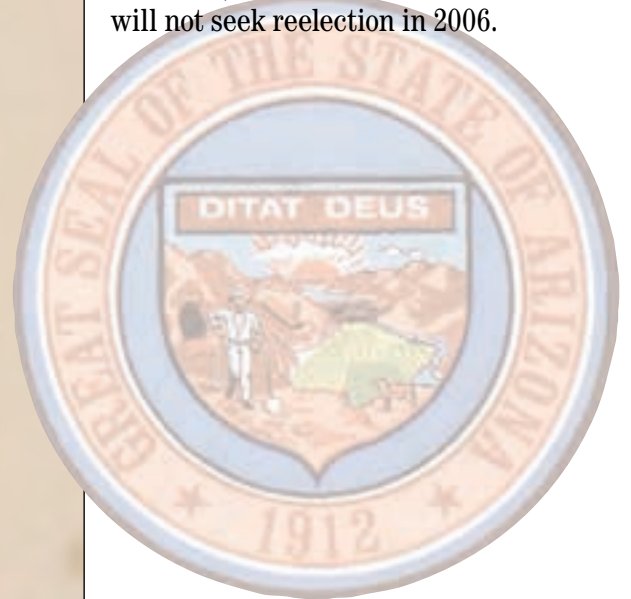
Kolbe's interest in politics began early in life. At 15 he left the family ranch in Arizona to serve as a Senate page for Senator Barry Goldwater. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Northwestern University and an M.B.A. from Stanford University. He was awarded the Navy commendation medal, "V" for valor, for his service in Vietnam. Prior to his election to Congress, he served in the Arizona State Senate.

**Jim Kolbe
(R-Arizona) has served
in the U.S. House
of Representatives
since 1985, and is the
second openly gay
Republican member
of the House.**

Kolbe is the only openly gay Republican serving in Congress. When he publicly acknowledged his homosexuality in 1996, he said: "This is the best day of my life, really. I feel a tremendous burden lifted. It's a relief. I'm being totally honest about myself to friends and family. It feels wonderful."

In 2000, Kolbe became the first openly gay person to address the Republican National Convention.

Currently completing his 11th term in Congress, Kolbe has announced that he will not seek reelection in 2006.



LARRY KRAMER

b. 6/25/1935

“We’re all going to go crazy, living this epidemic every minute, while the rest of the world goes on out there ... as if nothing is happening ...”

Larry Kramer is an award-winning playwright, commentator and pioneering AIDS activist.

After graduating from Yale University in 1957, Larry Kramer began his professional life in the film industry. He co-produced and co-wrote “Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush,” which became the No. 1 film in Britain. He wrote the screenplay for and produced “Women in Love,” based on the novel by D. H. Lawrence. The film received three Academy Award nominations, including Best Screenplay.

Kramer’s *Faggots*, written in 1978, continues to be one of the best selling of all gay-themed novels. “The Normal Heart,” his 1985 play about the early years of the AIDS epidemic, holds the record as the longest running play at Joseph Papp’s Public Theater in New York. His nonfiction book *Reports from the Holocaust: The Making of an AIDS Activist*, published in 1989, provides an important record of AIDS activism.

Kramer’s 1992 play “The Destiny of Me” received an Obie, the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Play, and the Hull-Warriner Award by the Dramatists’ Guild.

Kramer is a founder of the AIDS advocacy organization Gay Men’s Health Crisis, and in 1987, he helped found ACT-UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power).

Kramer received the Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He is the first creative artist and the first openly gay person to be honored by a Public Service Award from Common Cause.

Susan Sontag said of him, “Larry Kramer is one of America’s most valuable troublemakers. I hope he never lowers his voice.”



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SGT. LEONARD MATLOVICH

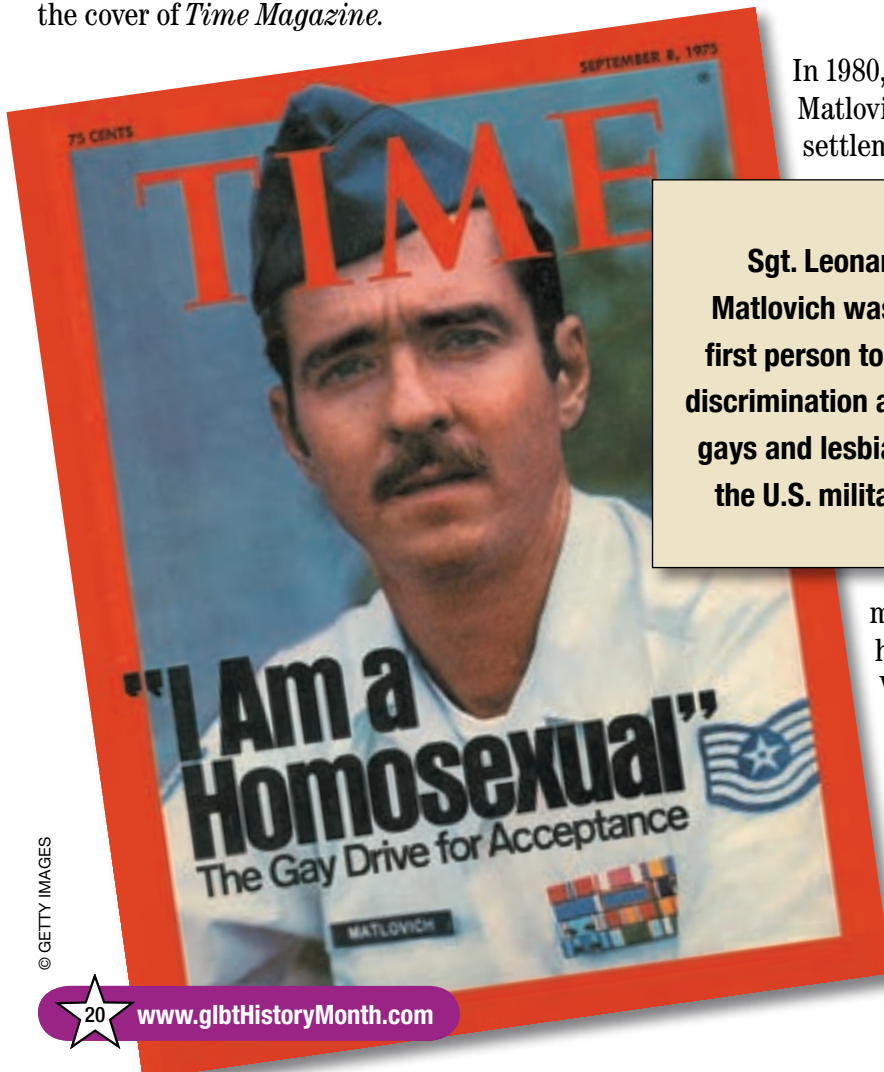
7/6/1943 – 6/22/1988

A self-described “Air Force brat,” Leonard Matlovich wanted to follow in the footsteps of his father, an Air Force master sergeant. At age 19, Matlovich enlisted and volunteered for Vietnam. He served three tours of duty, earning the Bronze Star for bravery, the Purple Heart, and an Air Force commendation.

Matlovich was an unlikely champion of gay rights. Religiously and politically conservative, he was brought up in a Catholic family and converted to Mormonism as he attempted to control his homosexual inclinations through strict religious beliefs.

Sgt. Matlovich remained closeted in the military. But in March 1975, the decorated 12-year veteran handed his commanding officer a letter stating “my sexual preferences are homosexual as opposed to heterosexual” and requesting a waiver of the military’s anti-gay policies because of his exemplary service record.

The Office of Special Investigations declared Sgt. Leonard Matlovich unfit for military service and recommended that he be discharged. Matlovich’s challenge to the ruling thrust him into the headlines. *The New York Times* wrote about him, NBC made a television movie about him, and in 1975, Matlovich became the first openly gay person to appear on the cover of *Time Magazine*.



Sgt. Leonard Matlovich was the first person to fight discrimination against gays and lesbians in the U.S. military.

In 1980, a federal judge ordered the Air Force to reinstate Matlovich with back pay. The Air Force negotiated a settlement with Matlovich and the federal court’s ruling was vacated when Matlovich agreed to drop the case in exchange for a tax-free payment of \$160,000.

After his case passed from the headlines, Matlovich became active in gay rights and AIDS organizations. In 1986, he was diagnosed with AIDS. When he died in June 1988, he was buried at the Congressional Cemetery in Washington, D.C., with full military honors. His headstone does not bear his name; it reads simply, “A Gay Vietnam Veteran.” The words “Never Again” and “Never Forget” are chiseled beneath two triangles. Below them it reads, “When I was in the military they gave me a medal for killing two men and a discharge for loving one.”

IAN MCKELLEN

b. 5/25/1939

“Try and understand what part you have to play in the world in which you live. ... Discover what part you can play and then go for it.”

Ian McKellen is perhaps best known for his movie roles as the wizard Gandalf in the “Lord of the Rings” trilogy, as Magneto in the “X-Men” films, and in the title role in “Richard III.” He has made more than 40 other features films over five decades. For much of his career, he was known primarily for his work in the London and New York theater and as a preeminent Shakespearean actor.

McKellen has been recognized with more than 40 major international acting awards, including two Academy Award nominations, a Tony Award, the Screen Actors Guild Award, a Cable ACE Award, a Golden Globe Award, and most recently, a Lifetime Achievement Golden Bear from the 2006 Berlin Film Festival.

His legendary performances as Shakespeare’s Richard II and Marlowe’s Edward II took the 1969 Edinburgh Festival by storm. As leading man for the Royal Shakespeare Company, he played Macbeth, opposite Dame Judi Dench, as well as Romeo, Iago, and Toby Belch, and performed in plays by Brecht, Chekhov, Ibsen, Jonson, Shaw, and Stoppard.

On Broadway he played Salieri in “Amadeus,” and most recently, he played the captain in Strindberg’s “Dance of Death.” Last year he achieved two long-time ambitions: a visiting role in the soap opera “Coronation Street” and a turn as Widow Twankey, the dame role in “Aladdin” at the Old Vic Theatre in London, where he lives.

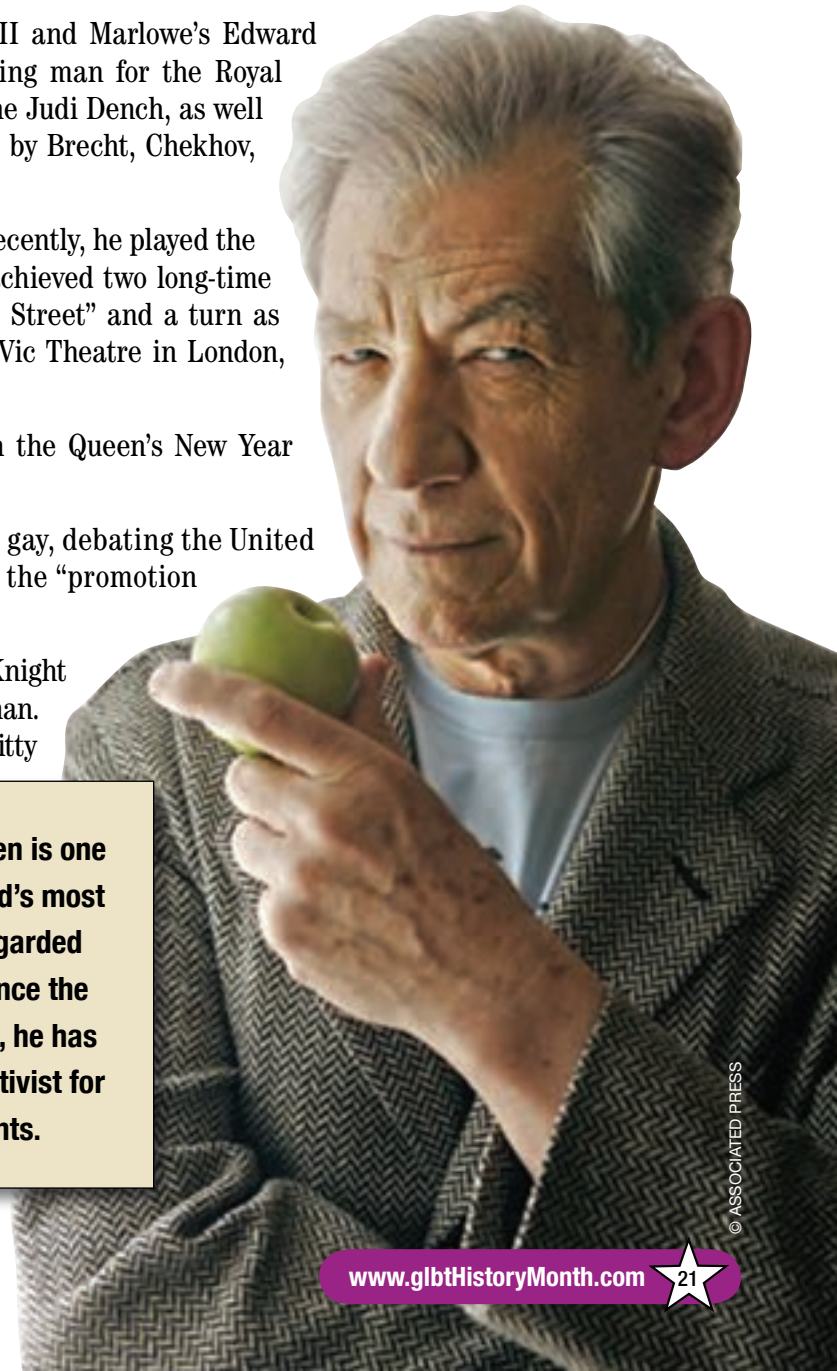
He was knighted for services to the performing arts in the Queen’s New Year Honours of 1990.

In 1988, McKellen announced on BBC radio that he was gay, debating the United Kingdom’s “Section 28” legislation, which criminalized the “promotion of homosexuality.”

Since 1994, McKellen has performed a one-man show, “A Knight Out,” about his parallel journeys as an actor and a gay man. *The Los Angeles Times* called the show “a moving and witty assessment of the conflict between our public and private selves.”

In March 2007, McKellen will return to the Stratford stage as King Lear in the final production for the Royal Shakespeare Company’s Complete Works Festival, followed by a world tour.

Ian McKellen is one of the world’s most highly regarded actors. Since the late 1980s, he has been an activist for gay rights.



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HARVEY MILK

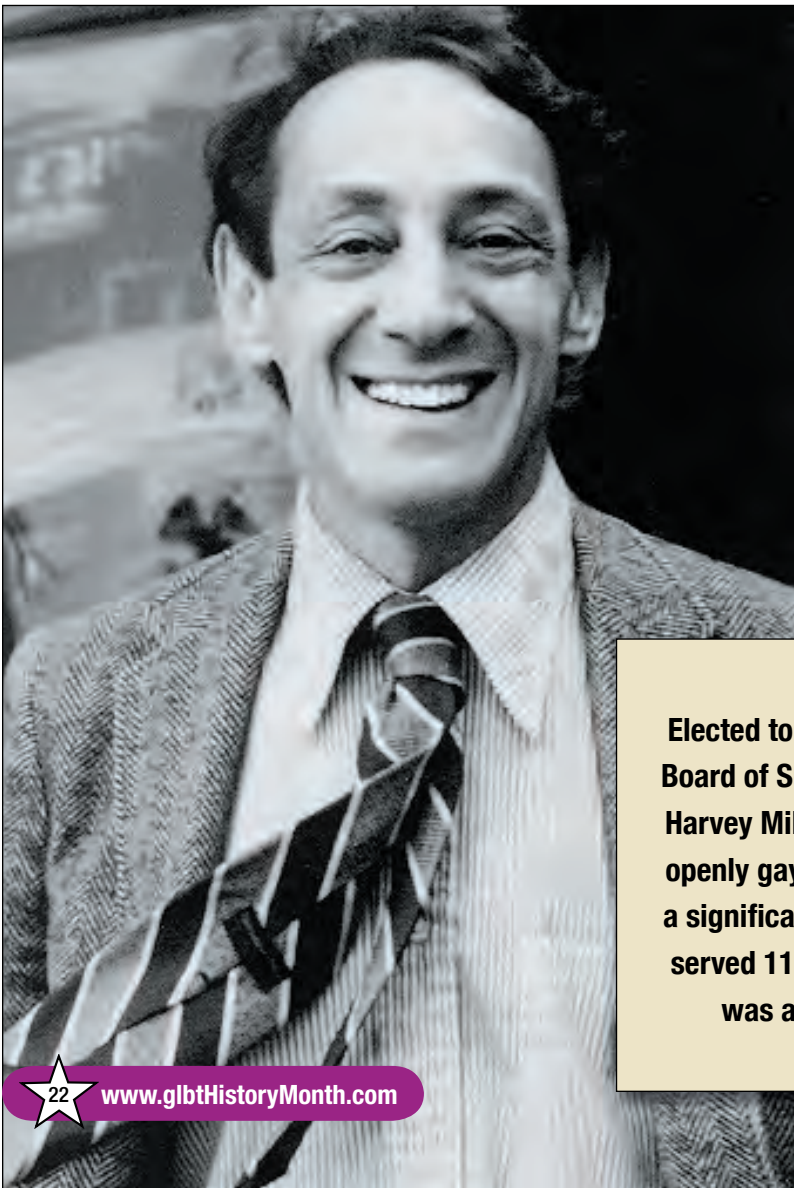
5/22/1930 – 11/27/1978

“The important thing is not that we can live on hope alone, but that life is not worth living without it.”

Harvey Milk was a New Yorker who migrated to San Francisco in the 1970s when an influx of gay immigrants from across the country was changing the Castro neighborhood into the city’s gay village. Milk opened a camera store and founded the Castro Valley Association of local merchants. His willingness to represent the interests of local merchants with city government earned him the unofficial title “Mayor of Castro Street.” Milk discovered that he had a natural flair for politics.

Harvey Milk was a political outsider and a populist who made his own rules. From his shop in the Castro, he ran grassroots campaigns based on relentless meetings, door-to-door canvassing and media interviews. His supporters formed “human billboards” by standing along major thoroughfares holding placards. Milk’s first three tries for office were unsuccessful, but they earned him increasing credibility with the electorate.

When Milk was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977, a lesbian wrote, “I thank God I have lived long enough to see my kind emerge from the shadows and join the human race.”



Milk was shot to death in his City Hall office on November 27, 1978, by Dan White, a conservative anti-gay former supervisor who also murdered Mayor George Moscone. White was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to five years imprisonment. City-wide violence erupted in San Francisco when White’s sentence was announced.

Harvey Milk had forebodings of his assassination. He left a tape-recorded “political will” naming his preferred successor on the Board of Supervisors. On that tape he said, “If a bullet should enter my brain, let that bullet destroy every closet door.”

Elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977, Harvey Milk became the first openly gay person elected to a significant public office. He served 11 months before he was assassinated.



MARTINA NAVRATILOVA

b. 10/18/1956

Navratilova knew from an early age that she wanted to be a tennis player. At 16 she turned pro, and two years later she defected from her native Czechoslovakia to the United States. In 1981 she became an American citizen.

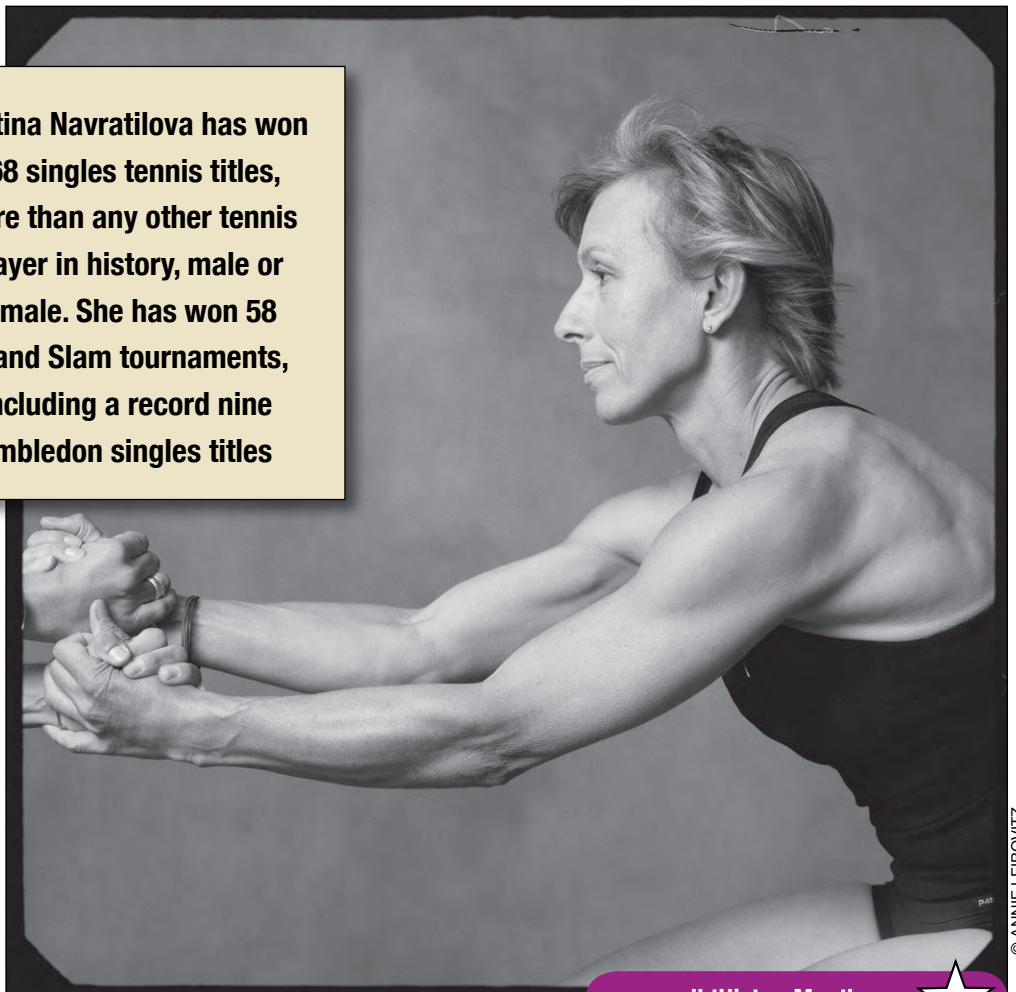
Navratilova played a powerful serve-and-volley style of tennis not yet seen in the women's game. She pioneered a regimen of diet and cross training for physical conditioning. Navratilova's friend and former on-court rival Chris Evert said: "Martina revolutionized the game by her superb athleticism and aggressiveness, not to mention her outspokenness and her candor. She brought athleticism to a whole new level with her training techniques. ... She had everything down to a science, including her diet, and that was an inspiration to me."

In 1981, Navratilova became the first athletic superstar to announce her sexual orientation. Although her candor cost her millions in endorsement opportunities, her 1982 tournament winnings alone made her the first female athlete to earn more than \$1 million in a year.

Navratilova retired from women's singles tennis in 1994, but continued as a mixed doubles player until 2006, winning a total of 175 doubles titles in her career. She has earned a reputation as an advocate of gay rights, the environment, animal welfare and women's issues. She spoke at the 1993 March on Washington and filed a lawsuit against the enactment of Colorado's Amendment 2, which banned legal protection for lesbians and gays in housing and employment.

In praise of Navratilova, TV analyst Bud Collins said: "Martina is probably the most daring player in the history of the game. She dared to play a style antithetical to her heritage without worrying about making a fool of herself. She dared to remake herself physically, setting new horizons for women in sports. And she dared to live her life as she chose, without worrying what other people thought of her."

Martina Navratilova has won 168 singles tennis titles, more than any other tennis player in history, male or female. She has won 58 Grand Slam tournaments, including a record nine Wimbledon singles titles



© ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

ADRIENNE RICH

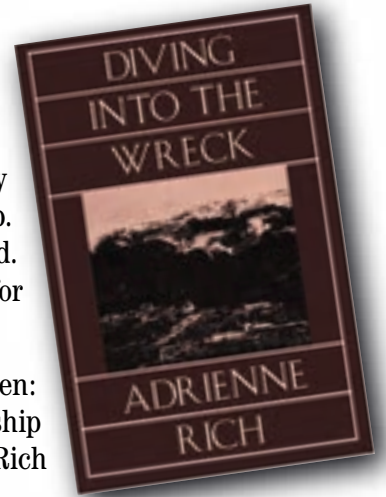
b. 5/16/1929

“The connections between and among women are the most feared, the most problematic, and the most potentially transforming force on the planet.”

Adrienne Rich became a published poet in 1951 at the age of 21, when W. H. Auden selected her first book, *A Change of World*, for the Yale Younger Poets Prize. She has published nearly 20 volumes of poetry and several books of nonfiction.

Rich's poetry has been honored with numerous prestigious awards, including the Academy of American Poets Fellowship, two Guggenheim Fellowships and a MacArthur Fellowship. Her collection of poems *Diving into the Wreck* received the 1974 National Book Award. The American Academy of Poets bestowed the Wallace Stevens Award on Rich in 1997 for “outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry.”

Rich's 1971 celebrated address to the Modern Language Association, “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Revision,” challenged many traditional assumptions of literary scholarship and prompted the inclusion of women's studies and feminist criticism in academia. Rich advocated equality for women, gays, and those disenfranchised by race and class.

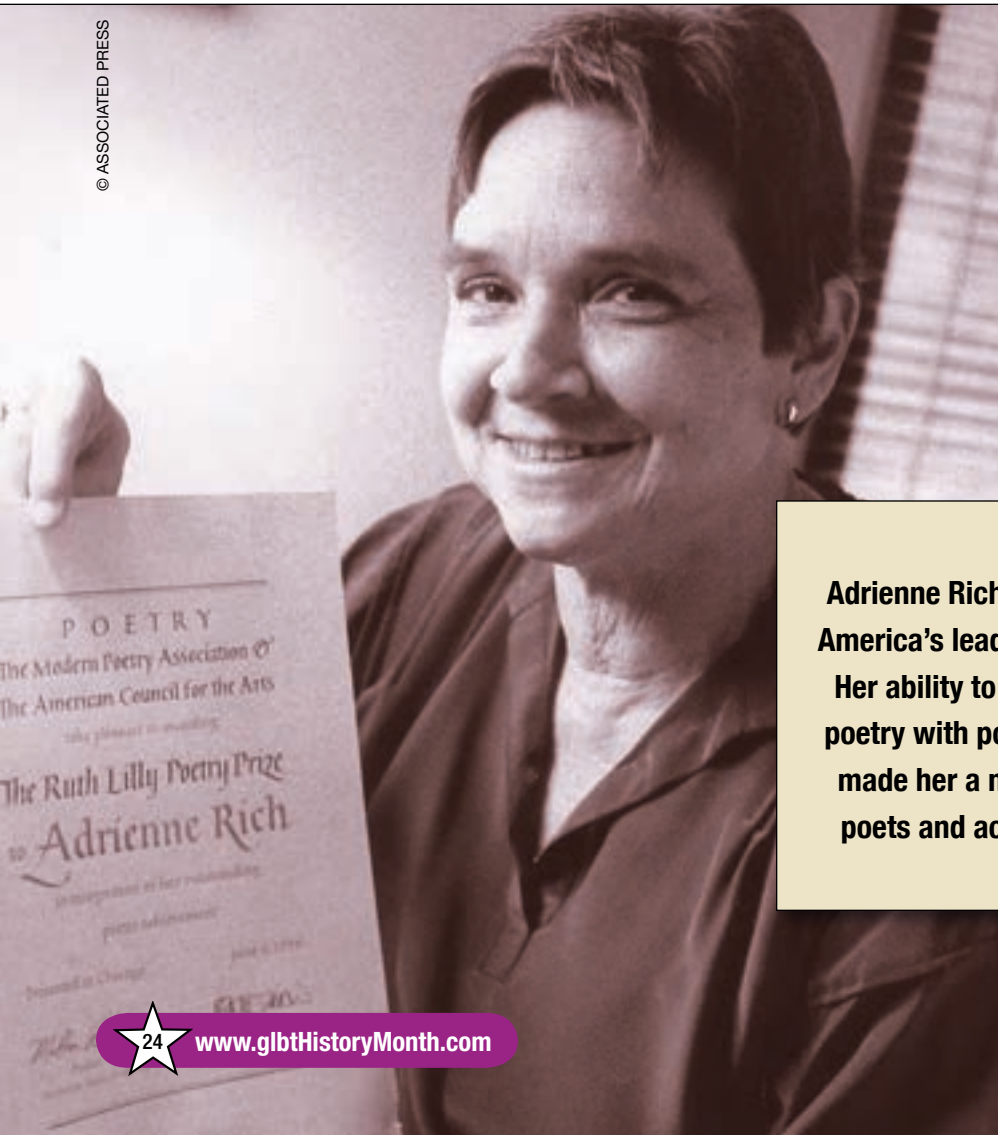


In 1997, Rich declined the National Medal of Arts, saying: “Art ... means nothing if it simply decorates the dinner table of the power which holds it hostage. The radical disparities of wealth and power in America are widening at a devastating rate. A president cannot meaningfully honor certain token artists while the people at large are so dishonored.”

Rich is active in movements for GLBT rights, reproductive freedom and the progressive New Jewish Agenda. In 1981, she received the Fund for Human Dignity Award of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

In 2003, Rich joined other poets in protesting the war in Iraq by refusing to attend a White House symposium on poetry.

Adrienne Rich is one of America's leading poets. Her ability to combine poetry with politics has made her a model for poets and activists.



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SYLVIA RIVERA

7/2/1951 – 2/19/2002

**Gay civil rights pioneer
Sylvia Rivera was one
of the instigators of the
Stonewall uprising, an
event that helped launch
the modern gay rights
movement.**

Sylvia Rivera, then a 17-year-old drag queen, was among the crowd that gathered outside the Stonewall Inn the night of June 27, 1969, when the New York police raided the popular Greenwich Village gay bar. Rivera reportedly shouted, "I'm not missing a minute of this, it's the revolution!" As the police escorted patrons from the bar, Rivera was one of the first bystanders to throw a bottle.

After Stonewall, Rivera joined the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) and worked energetically on its campaign to pass the New York City Gay Rights Bill. She was famously arrested for climbing the walls of City Hall in a dress and high heels to crash a closed-door meeting on the bill. In time, the GAA eliminated drag and transvestite concerns from their agenda as they sought to broaden their political base. Years later, Rivera told an interviewer, "When things started getting more mainstream, it was like, 'We don't need you no more.'" She added, "Hell hath no fury like a drag queen scorned."

Born Ray Rivera Mendosa, Sylvia Rivera was a persistent and vocal advocate for transgender rights. Her activist zeal was fueled by her own struggles to find food, shelter and safety in the urban streets from the time she left home at age 10. In 1970, Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson co-founded STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries) to help homeless youth.

The Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP), an organization dedicated to ending poverty and gender identity discrimination, carries on Rivera's work on behalf of marginalized people.

In 2005, a street in Greenwich Village near the Stonewall Inn was renamed in Sylvia Rivera's honor.



© KAY TOBIN LAHUSEN

BAYARD RUSTIN

3/17/1910 – 8/24/1987

“We are all one. And if we don’t know it, we will learn it the hard way.”

Bayard Rustin was raised in West Chester, Pennsylvania, by Quaker grandparents who espoused pacifism. Rustin moved to Harlem in the 1930s, the time of the Harlem Renaissance. He paid his New York City College tuition by singing with folk artist Josh White and became an organizer for the Young Communist League in their work against racial segregation.

Rustin’s refusal to register for the draft in World War II resulted in his serving three years in a federal penitentiary. Although he was arrested 23 times for nonviolent protest, he never lost his conviction that equality should be pursued through nonviolent means.

In the 1940s and 1950s, Rustin organized nonviolent groups that became the foundation of the Civil Rights Movement for American blacks, including the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Congress of Racial Equality, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In 1947, he coordinated the Journey of Reconciliation, an event that became the model for the Freedom Rides of the 1960s.

In 1955, Rustin was instrumental in organizing the Montgomery Bus Boycott. When he arrived in Montgomery, there were guns inside Martin Luther King Jr.’s house and armed guards posted at his doors. As an expert in Gandhian nonviolent tactics, Rustin persuaded King and the other boycott leaders to commit the movement to complete nonviolence.

A superb strategist, Rustin experienced prejudice because of his sexual orientation and his controversial political positions. He was often relegated to behind-the-scenes roles.

Shortly before he died 1987, Rustin said at a gay rights rally: “Twenty-five, 30 years ago, the barometer of human rights in the United States were black people. That is no longer true. The barometer for judging the character of people in regard to human rights is now those who consider themselves gay, homosexual, [or] lesbian.”

Bayard Rustin was the chief organizer for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. of the 1963 civil rights march on Washington. Rustin’s expertise in nonviolent direct action assisted King in shaping the Civil Rights Movement.



LOWELL SELVIN

b. 4/15/1959

“What I always believed growing up is that ... I was going to build something that might in a small little way change the world.”

Lowell Selvin raised the largest amount of capital ever assembled for a GLBT-identified business when, in 2001, he led the merger of PlanetOut Corp. and Online Partners into PlanetOut Inc. — one of the largest online services in the world. In October 2004, PlanetOut Inc. became the first company serving the gay and lesbian community to be publicly traded on a major stock exchange (Nasdaq: LGBT). Selvin also presided over PlanetOut's acquisition of LPI Media, which includes the publications *The Advocate* and *Out*, and the travel company RSVP.

PlanetOut's mission is “to connect, enrich and illuminate the lives of gay and lesbian people everywhere.” PlanetOut Partners offers online portals in five languages and maintains offices in the United States, Europe and Latin America.

Selvin began his career with a high-technology business serving Fortune 500 companies. He served in executive positions with direct sales company Arbonne International and with Arthur Andersen Business Consulting. He co-founded and served as executive vice president and board director for Degree Baby Products, which was acquired by Johnson & Johnson.

Selvin holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and aeronautical and astronautical engineering from the University of Illinois. Involved in numerous charitable causes, he is a founding member and chair of the Gay & Lesbian Network of the Young Presidents' Organization and serves as advisory board chair for the Hebrew Union College's Institute for Judaism and Sexual Orientation.

PlanetOut Inc., Selvin believes, communicates an important message to the GLBT community, “The company we've created says: ‘You belong, it's OK, and by the way, you can have a great and wonderful experience and we can build a valuable company.’”

Lowell Selvin created PlanetOut Inc., the leading global media and entertainment company serving the GLBT community.



COURTESY PLANETOUT INC.

ANDREW SULLIVAN

b. 8/10/1963



Andrew Sullivan was born in 1963 in South Godstone, a small town in southern England. After earning a B.A. in modern history from Oxford University, he received a fellowship to study at Harvard University, where he earned an M.A. in public administration and a Ph.D. in government.

In 1986, he took a job at *The New Republic*, and in 1991, he became the youngest editor in the publication's history. In the five years Sullivan was at the helm, the magazine's circulation grew and advertising revenues increased. Sullivan expanded TNR's sphere beyond politics to cover such cultural topics as same-sex marriage and affirmative action. He created a stir by publishing excerpts from the controversial study on race and IQ, *The Bell Curve*.

In the 1990s, Sullivan gained recognition for his writing on gay issues. His article "The Politics of Homosexuality" has been called the most influential article of the decade on gay rights. Sullivan's *Virtually Normal: An Argument About Homosexuality* was the first book to advocate civil marriage rights for gay couples. Sullivan also wrote *Love Undetectable: Notes on Friendship, Sex, and Survival* and edited a reader, *Same-Sex Marriage: Pro and Con*.

As a practicing Catholic, Sullivan has challenged the Roman Catholic Church's position on homosexuality. In *Virtually Normal* he takes the position that the Bible forbids homosexuality only when it is linked to prostitution or pagan ritual.

Sullivan started his blog, "The Daily Dish," in 2000. His articles have appeared in *The New Republic*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *Esquire*. He is a regular guest on "The Chris Matthews Show," "Charlie Rose," "Anderson Cooper 360°," "Meet The Press," "Face the Nation," "Nightline," NPR's "Fresh Air" and "Larry King Live."

Andrew Sullivan is an author and journalist. He appears regularly on national television and his commentary is featured in major national publications. He is a leading advocate of same-sex marriage.



SHERYL SWOOPES

b. 3/25/1971

“No matter how far life pushes you down, no matter how much you hurt, you can always bounce back.”

Women’s professional basketball did not yet exist when Sheryl Swoopes was growing up in Brownfield, Texas. She discovered her passion for the game by playing with her older brothers and began competing in a local children’s league when she was 7. In 1988, she led her high school team to the Texas state championship.

As a collegiate player at Texas Tech, Swoopes led the women’s basketball team to the NCAA title in 1993 and was voted the NCAA Final Four Most Valuable Player after setting a championship game scoring record. She also received the Naismith Award as National Player of the Year.



Swoopes was a member of the U.S. Basketball Women’s National Team that won gold medals at the Olympics in 1996, 2000 and 2004. She is the first woman to have a Nike athletic shoe named for her: the Air Swoopes.

Sheryl Swoopes is a professional basketball player with the Houston Comets in the Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA). She is called “the female Michael Jordan.”

When the WNBA was organized, Swoopes was recruited for the Houston Comets during their inaugural season. She joined the team a few weeks after giving birth to her son and, despite playing only the last third of the season, led the Comets to the 1997 WNBA championship.

The Comets went on to win the first four WNBA titles. In 10 years with the Comets, Swoopes has accumulated more than 2,000 career points, 500 career rebounds, 300 career assists and 200 career steals. She has been named WNBA Most Valuable Player three times — more than any other player.

In 2005, Sheryl Swoopes became one of the highest profile professional athletes in a team sport to come out publicly when she announced that she is a lesbian. She and her partner, former Comets assistant coach Alisa Scott, are raising Swoopes’s son.

ALAN TURING

6/23/1912 – 6/7/1954



The German Enigma Machine

Alan Turing was by nature skeptical and indifferent to conventional values. While often at odds with authority, he made remarkable connections between apparently unrelated areas of inquiry, including treating symbolic logic as a new area of applied mathematics.

As a fellow at King's College, Cambridge, Turing wrote *On Computable Numbers*, his landmark paper published in 1936, which is considered the founding work of modern computer science. After completing doctoral work at Princeton University, Turing returned to Britain in 1938 shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War.

Turing's potential ability as a code breaker had been identified and he was introduced to secret operations at the Government Codes and Ciphers School in London. On September 4, 1939, the day after Britain declared war on Germany, Turing reported to work at Bletchley Park, Britain's code-breaking center.

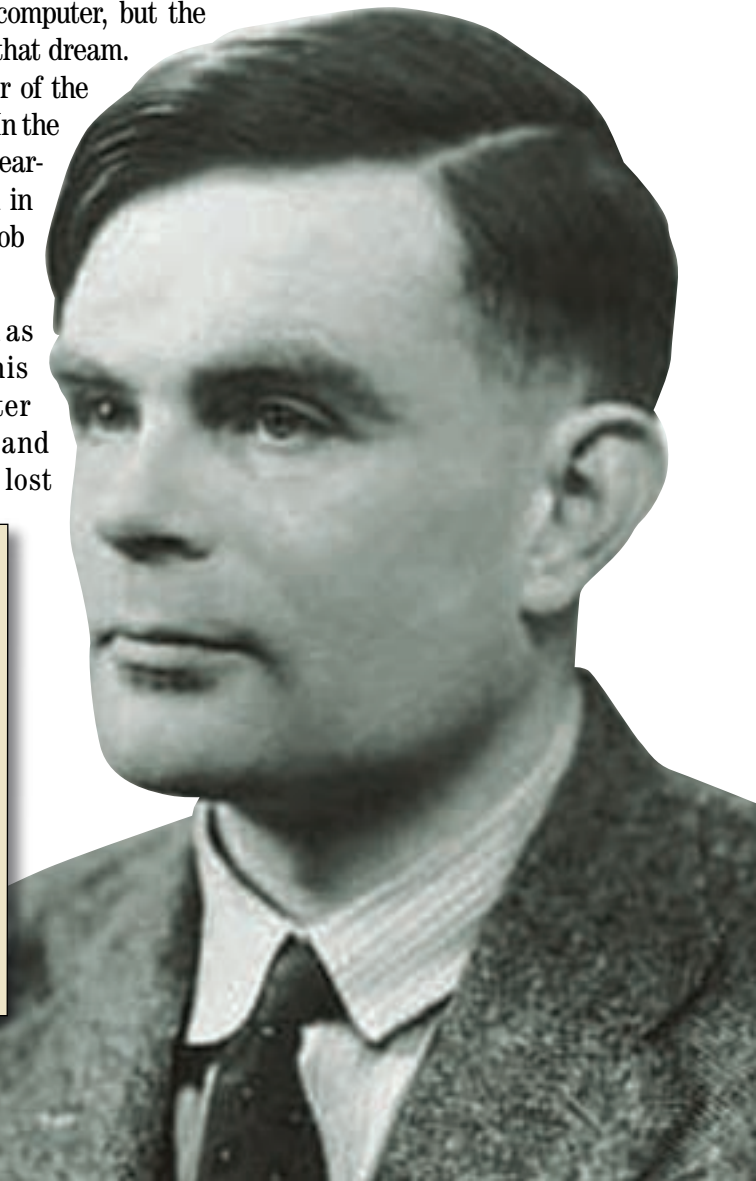
At the conclusion of the war, Turing's ambition was to create a computer, but the classified status of his wartime work prevented him from realizing that dream.

His contention that the computer could rival the computing power of the human brain correctly anticipated the field of Artificial Intelligence. In the postwar years, Turing competed as a distance runner, achieving near-Olympic race times in the marathon. When asked why he engaged in such demanding training, Turing replied, "I have such a stressful job that the only way I can get it out of my mind is by running hard."

Alan Turing lived at a time when homosexuality was regarded as a mental illness and homosexual acts were illegal. Despite his critical wartime role, when his relationship with a Manchester man became public, he was charged with "gross indecency" and forced to accept hormone treatment with estrogen. He also lost his security clearance and was no longer able to work as a cryptographer.

Turing died in 1954 shortly before his 42nd birthday after eating a cyanide-laced apple. His death was ruled a suicide.

Alan Turing led the British code-breaking team that broke the German Enigma Code, thereby shortening World War II, saving many lives and helping the Allies win the war. Turing is considered the father of computer science.



LUPE VALDEZ

b. 10/11/1947

Lupe Valdez is the first woman, the first minority candidate, and the first lesbian to be elected Sheriff of Dallas County, Texas.

“You can simply sit there complaining about something that’s broken or wrong, or you can get busy and actually do something about it.”

Lupe Valdez was a senior agent with the Department of Homeland Security when she reached a defining moment in her career. She had spent 24 years in law enforcement, beginning in the county prison system and moving into increasingly responsible positions with the General Services Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Customs, and the Department of Homeland Security. In 2004, she decided to gamble job security and retirement income to run for Sheriff.

On November 2, 2004, Valdez became the first woman, the first minority candidate, and the first lesbian to be elected Sheriff of Dallas County, Texas. She ran as a Democrat in a heavily Republican state, which led *The Dallas Morning News* to comment that “Dallas County voters managed to shatter at least four different stereotypes in one fell swoop.”

In addition to her other “firsts,” Valdez is the first former migrant worker to be elected Sheriff of Dallas County. She is the youngest of eight children. Her family followed the crops north to Michigan, picking green beans, beets and sweet potatoes. Despite the challenges, Valdez’s mother was determined that her youngest child — and only daughter — would have an education.

Valdez put herself through college by working two jobs. In six years she earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration. After college, she enlisted in the Army Reserves, where she rose to the rank of captain, serving in the military police and military intelligence. While serving as a law enforcement officer and federal agent, Valdez earned a master’s degree in criminology and criminal justice.

As Dallas County Sheriff, Valdez is responsible for 7,000 prisoners and 1,322 deputies, detention officers and bailiffs. “Going from migrant worker to a professional, that was a challenge. Going from jailer to federal agent, that was a challenge.” Compared to all that, she says, this new job is “not a challenge.”



COURTESY DALLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WALT WHITMAN

5/31/1819 – 3/26/1892

**Walt Whitman is
considered one of
America's greatest poets.
He liberated poetry
from the constrictions
of European models
and created a genuinely
American style of verse.**

Walt Whitman is best known for *Leaves of Grass*, a groundbreaking volume of 12 untitled poems first published in 1855, which heralded a new, uniquely American style of poetry. Whitman continued to revise and expand *Leaves of Grass* for the rest of his life. The first few editions were poorly received. The book was censured by some prominent American intellectuals because of its innovative, unstructured verse and its celebration of sexuality, which they found obscene.

Whitman was born into a Quaker family on Long Island, New York. Largely self-educated, he supported himself as a printer, teacher and journalist while he pursued his vision of a new form of literature that would express America's destiny as liberator of the human spirit. *Leaves of Grass* reflects Whitman's belief that poetry should be simple, with the natural rhythm of spoken language and without orthodox meter or rhyme.

During the Civil War, the poet served as an unofficial nurse in an army hospital, caring for his brother and other wounded Union soldiers at his own expense. When the war ended, Whitman, who was already internationally famous, remained in Washington, D.C., working as a clerk in the Department of the Interior. However, when James Harlan, Secretary of the Interior, discovered that Whitman was the author of *Leaves of Grass*, Harlan fired the poet.

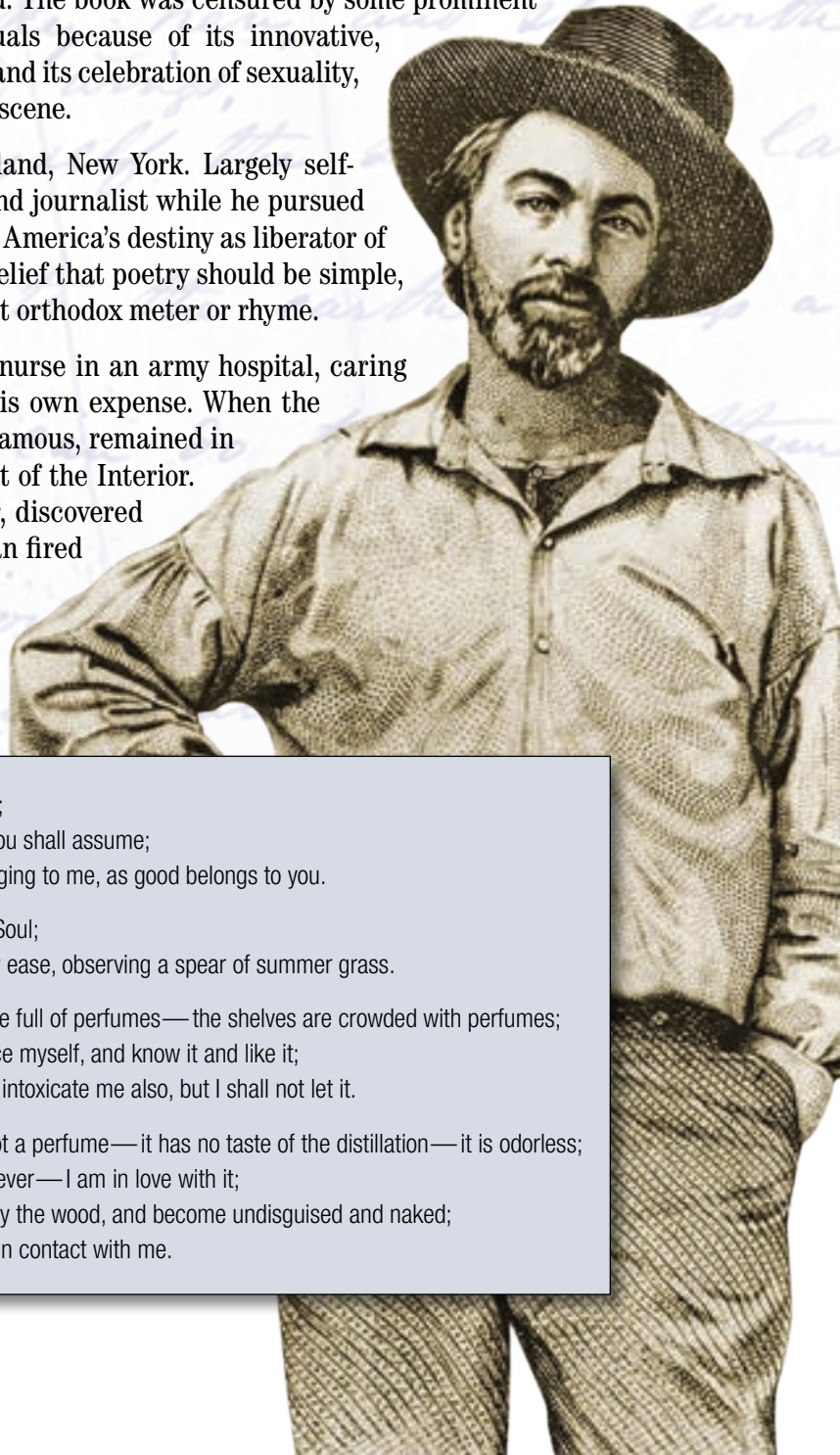
Whitman is widely considered the father of modern American literature, but during his lifetime he remained more highly regarded in Europe than in the United States. In 1882, Oscar Wilde, who was on a lecture tour of America, visited Whitman at the poet's home in Camden, New Jersey. Afterward he said of Whitman, "He is the grandest man I have ever seen, the simplest, most natural, and strongest character I have ever met in my life."

I CELEBRATE myself;
And what I assume you shall assume;
For every atom belonging to me, as good belongs to you.

I loafe and invite my Soul;
I lean and loafe at my ease, observing a spear of summer grass.

Houses and rooms are full of perfumes—the shelves are crowded with perfumes;
I breathe the fragrance myself, and know it and like it;
The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.

The atmosphere is not a perfume—it has no taste of the distillation—it is odorless;
It is for my mouth forever—I am in love with it;
I will go to the bank by the wood, and become undisguised and naked;
I am mad for it to be in contact with me.



OSCAR WILDE

10/16/1854 – 11/30/1900

“Society exists only as a mental concept; in the real world, there are only individuals.”

Oscar Wilde gloried in flaunting his individuality during the Victorian Era, a period synonymous with social conformity and sexual repression.

Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills Wilde was born in Dublin to a mother who was a noted poet and Irish nationalist, and a father who was an eye surgeon. Wilde showed brilliance from an early age, winning prizes at school and university. At Magdalen College, Oxford, Wilde adopted his signature flowing hair and flamboyant style of dress, openly scorned “manly sports,” and decorated his rooms with peacock feathers and beautiful objects.

Oscar Wilde is one of the greatest playwrights in the English-speaking world.

Wilde first became a public figure as a spokesman for the Aesthetic Movement, whose motto was “art for art’s sake.” After a lecture tour through the United States where he met poet Walt Whitman, Wilde said, “America is the only country that went from barbarism to decadence without civilization in between.”

In 1892, the debut of his first play, “Lady Windermere’s Fan,” introduced London theatergoers to such Wildean trademark witticisms as “My own business always bores me to death; I prefer other people’s” and “I can resist anything but temptation.” Wilde’s plays sparkle with satirical wit fueled by keen observations that punctured the stuffy pretenses of Victorian society.

His life reached a turning point in 1891, when Wilde, who was married and the father of two children, began an affair with Lord Alfred Douglas, known as “Bosie,” son of the Marquess of Queensbury. Infuriated by his son’s involvement with Wilde, the Marquess instigated legal actions that ended with Wilde’s conviction on a charge of gross indecency for “a love that dare not speak its name.”

In April 1895, the night he was arrested for “indecent acts,” Wilde’s name was removed from the playbills outside theatres in London and New York where his hit plays “The Importance of Being Earnest” and “An Ideal Husband” were playing.

Wilde was sentenced to two years’ imprisonment at hard labor. He spent the last three years of his life in poverty and self-imposed exile. He died in Paris in 1900 at the age of 46, his life undoubtedly shortened by the rigors of incarceration.

The continued popularity of Wilde’s plays and his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, as well as numerous films and books about his life, have made him an icon of popular culture. His grave in Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris has become a pilgrimage site.



PHILL WILSON

b. 4/29/1956

“I didn’t think 30 was an option, so to be 50 is amazing.”

“AIDS has always been personal from the very, very beginning,” says Wilson. “In 1980 I discovered that I was gay. It just kind of happened, and I began to figure out what that meant. In that process I met Chris Brownlie, and we fell in love ... and began a relationship that lasted until he died. In 1981 we moved to Los Angeles, and by that time we guessed that he had been infected along the way, and consequently we guessed that I was also infected, but we didn’t know.”

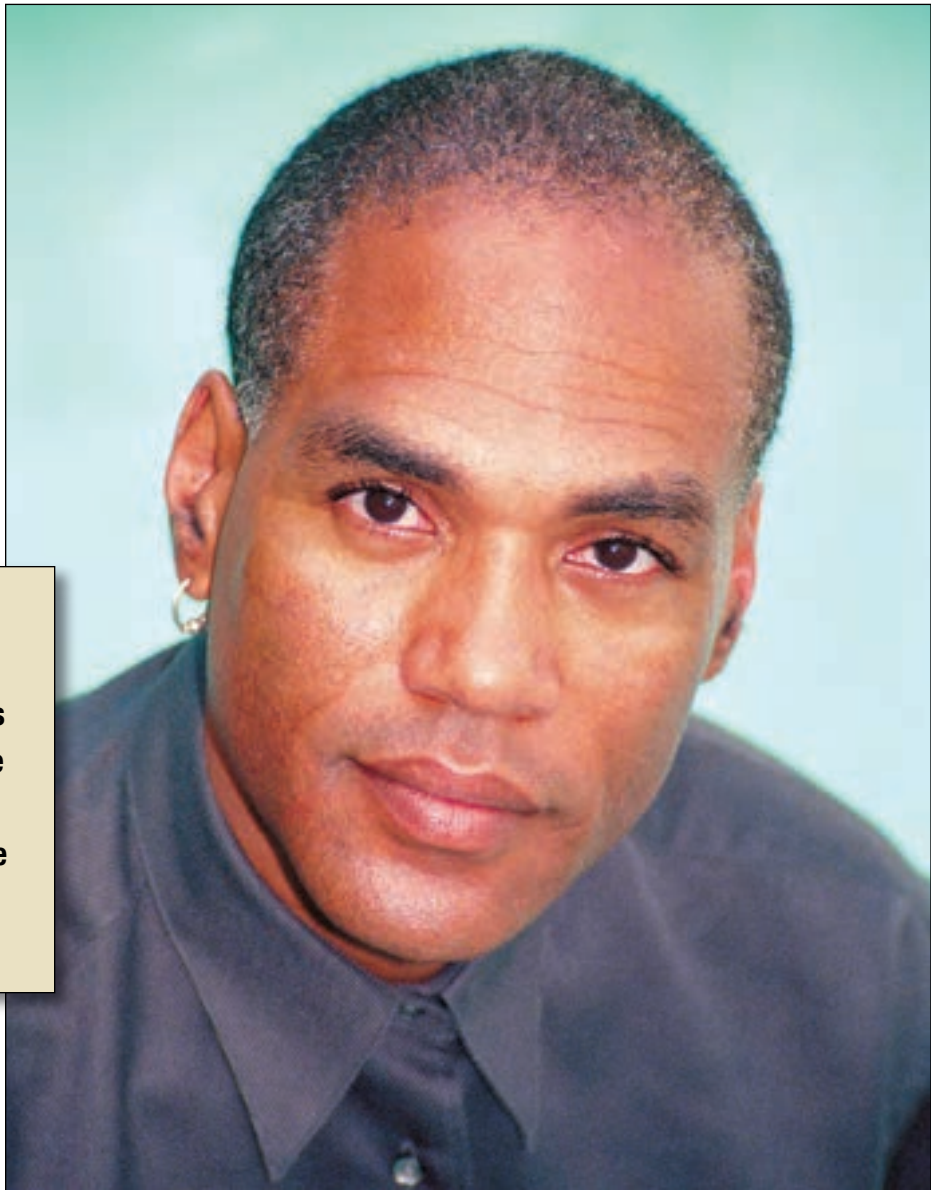
Wilson didn’t know for certain that he was HIV-positive until he was 27. At that time, in the 1980s, a positive test was assumed to be a death sentence. Wilson watched countless friends become ill and die. After Brownlie’s death, he channeled his anger into work for HIV/AIDS prevention. Wilson developed AIDS in 1990, and nearly died in 1995, but the introduction of the new antiretroviral drugs enabled him to recover.

By 1999, when he was well enough to return to the frontlines of activism, Phill Wilson founded the Black AIDS Institute. He has helped found several other HIV/AIDS advocacy organizations and has worked on HIV/AIDS policy and treatment internationally. He is credited with being the primary force in mobilizing the black community against HIV/AIDS.

On celebrating his 50th birthday in 2006, Wilson said, “I didn’t think 30 was an option, so to be 50 is amazing.”

“I have lived an unbelievably blessed life,” says Wilson. “Now people may think that’s a bizarre thing to say for someone who’s lived almost his entire adult life with either HIV or AIDS. The truth of the matter is that I’ve lived a life where I’ve had the privilege of pretending that I can make a difference, and if I can hold onto that illusion, it doesn’t get much better than that.”

Phill Wilson founded the Black AIDS Institute. He is one of the most articulate spokesmen addressing HIV and AIDS issues in the black community.



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individual GLBT Leaders, visit
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