My Desire for History
Essays in Gay, Community, and Labor History

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PART II

A National Historian
Reexamining World War II
Marching to a Different Drummer
Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II

This is the first essay that Bérubé published based on the research that culminated in his award-winning book, Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II (1990). In it, he draws on oral histories, correspondence, and other documentary evidence to reconstruct the experience of gay men and lesbians during World War II. Written in the tradition of the New Social History of the 1960s and 1970s, it relates the experience of ordinary Americans rather than the rich, famous, and powerful. Bérubé makes the argument that World War II was “a turning point” in gay and lesbian history and that it “lay the groundwork for gay life as we know it” by helping to build the urban communities of the postwar decades. In that sense, the war years were to Bérubé “as crucial . . . as the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion.” Written while he was still in the early stages of research for the book, it was published in the Advocate, the national gay newspaper with the largest circulation at the time. It spread the word about his project and helped him find other men and women to interview.

The U.S. military has a long tradition of purging homosexuals from its ranks. In January 1982, the Pentagon released a directive that may be its strongest antigay policy to date. “Homosexuality is incompatible with military service,” the directive explained, because it undermines military discipline, creates security risks, and gives the military a bad reputation. Even a member of the armed forces who “has stated that he or she is a homosexual” or “desires” to “engage in homosexual conduct” is considered a threat to the military under these rules.1

The massive mobilization of all Americans for World War II allowed the U.S. military to adopt its first explicit antihomosexual policy, which included provisions for temporarily utilizing homosexual men and women

in situations that served the war effort. As one Women's Army Corps (WAC) officer testified early in 1944, during a secret investigation into lesbian activity in the WAC, "The Surgeon General's Office in the latest circular letter, particularly for soldiers overseas, [stressed] that homosexual relationships should be tolerated" as long as they were private, consensual, and did not disrupt the unit. "The military, in spite of its contempt for homosexuals, was not above using lesbian and gay GIs when it needed them to win a war."

The implementation of this secret policy was just one of the radical social changes that made World War II a turning point in the lives of lesbian and gay Americans. The massive war mobilization forced many American women and men to discover their homosexuality for the first time, to end their isolation in small towns and find other people like themselves, and to strengthen their identity as a minority in American society. Their experiences in the military and on the assembly line, their discovery of gay nightlife in the cities, and their struggle to survive the postwar antigay crackdowns all helped to lay the groundwork for gay life as we know it today. World War II was as crucial to these women and men as the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion would be to a later generation, but its impact was lost in the tragedy of a world war, with no gay movement or gay press to record its history.

Most Americans, when they talk about World War II, begin by what they were doing on December 7, 1941, the day Pearl Harbor was attacked. Stuart Loomis, a gay man who was twenty-one and still living in his Nebraska town, remembers "sitting upstairs in the balcony of Walgreens drugstore late in the afternoon, listening to a rebroadcast of President Roosevelt's announcement to Congress and talking with my friends—over malted milks and peanut butter sandwiches, about what was going to do. What was going to happen to us?"

Stuart Loomis's generation soon discovered that the war mobilization made them part of a massive migration of Americans. More than 15 million civilians—mostly women—moved across state lines during the war by the millions of new defense jobs, while nearly as many men were drafted into the military. Black workers moved to northern and West Coast cities where they found new jobs; servicemen and their families flocked to cities; Japanese Americans were "relocated" to internment camps; government shipped Mexican farm workers into California to replace evacuated Japanese workers. This massive mobilization radically changed the character of American life during the war. Women, for example, had new opportunities to leave male-run households and live in all-female rooms.

Lisa Ben left a small northern California town and moved to Los Angeles to find secretarial work. "I got my own room," she recalled, "with kitchen privileges, and from there I met some gay girls. They lived on the floor above me, and one day we were all sunbathing on the garage roof, and they got to talking and I got to listening. . . . So when I heard these girls talk, I started talking, and finally they asked me, "Do you like boys, or do you go out strictly with girls?" And I said, "If I had my own source, I'd go out strictly with girls," and they said, "Have you always felt this way?" and I said, "Yes," and she said, "Well, then you're like we are.""

Lisa Ben's coming-out experience was so radically changed that she began the first lesbian newsletter in the States, which she called Vice-Versa.

Perhaps the most unusual experience for American women in World War II was being part of the war effort but not being able to tell anyone about it.
Il was the chance to enlist in the military, the largest women’s branch being
the Women’s Army Corps, with nearly 150,000 women in the ranks. Unlike
male branches of the military, however, which consisted primarily of draf-
tees, the WAC was an all-volunteer corps. A nationwide campaign encouraged
women to sign up with the WACs as well as with the Women Marines, the
Women’s Army Air Corps, the WAVES, and the Coast Guard spars. The of-
ficial rationale for recruiting women was that they were “releasing men to
fight,” but authorities later admitted that women also enlisted to overcome
the restrictions of conventional women’s roles, to learn new skills, and, for “a
certain number of women,” to “be with other women.” These women who
chose to “be with other women” enlisted in great numbers, and lesbians
seem to have made up a large percentage of the corps.

WAC officers faced a difficult dilemma when it came to formulating a
policy on lesbian relationships within the corps. On the one hand, since the
public had stigmatized the WAC as an army of lesbians and prostitutes, offi-
cers tried to prevent any disruptive witch hunts that might further discredit
the corps and its recruiting program. On the other hand, while encouraging
intimacy because it helped the corps, officers tried to discourage any overt
homosexual behavior. The official WAC policy on homosexuality was made
clear in a secret lecture to officer candidates in 1943, which warned against
“indulging in witch hunting or speculation.” It was explained that, without
men, women naturally formed “relationships in companionship and work-
ing together.” The lecture even acknowledged the experience of coming out
in the WAC. “Sometimes [a relationship] can become an intimacy that may
eventually take some form of sexual expression. It may appear that, almost
simultaneously, such a relationship has sprung up between two women, nei-
ther of whom is a confirmed active homosexual.”

The lecturer was right. Life in the military provided many opportu-
nities for women to form lesbian relationships, “Sami,” a lesbian veteran, de-
scribed how she came out in the navy during the war:

I was sitting in the barracks in Florida, and this one woman that I
admired greatly—she was a little older than I, very articulate, very up,
and a lot of fun—I just adored her. We were sitting next to each other
on the couch with our feet propped up on the table and she started
stroking my leg, and I thought, “Wow! What’s all this!” And I just
got terribly excited about it. I just was instantly enchanted with this
woman and had a lot of sexual attraction toward her. Eventually we
got in bed together. We never talked about it but we had a mad, mad
love affair. . . . She had said that she had never related to a woman
before. We didn’t talk about what we were doing, we just did it and
felt good about it. I just thought, well, this is the way it’s going to be
forever.”

Women in every branch of the military had similar experiences during
the war. WAC officers were instructed by their superiors that only women
whom they could prove to be “addicted to the practice” were to be discharged.
“Any officer,” warned the lecturer, “bringing an unjust or unprovable charge
against a woman in this regard will be severely reprimanded.”

Early in 1944, the policy against witch hunting was put to a test. The
mother of a WAC recruit wrote to Washington, complaining that Fort Ogle-
thorpe, a WAC basic training camp in Georgia, was “full of homosexuals
and sex maniacs.” The inspector general’s office sent an emergency team to
investigate. Witnesses testified that

women having the appearance of perverts have been observed at Fort
Oglethorpe; . . . these women affect mannish appearance by haircut,
by the manner of wearing the clothing, by posture, by stride, by seek-
ing “to date” other girls such as a man would, and when with other
girls pay all the bills. . . . These addicts have certain signals by which
they recognize each other. . . . The signal is said to be a whistle of the
“Hawaiian War Chant.” . . . Expressions common between them are
said to include, “We’re going to have a gay time tonight”, “Are you in
the mood?” and “Messing around.”

In spite of this testimony, the investigative team concluded that they could
not find any real homosexual “addicts” and concerned themselves rather
with how to keep as many of these women in the WAC as possible. Clearly
Washington needed lesbian WACs to do their part in winning the war. The
report recommended that there be no further investigations for the duration
of the war.

Gay men, as well as women, discovered that the war mobilization also
gave them new opportunities to come out, but for different reasons. The
tension of living in the all-male world of the military, the comradeship that
came with fighting a common enemy, and the loneliness of being away from
home in strange cities looking for companionship all helped to create a kind
of “gay ambiance,” as one veteran put it. Servicemen openly cruised each
other in the anonymity of crowded bus and train stations, city parks, rest-
rooms, YMCAs, beaches, and streets. They doubled up in hotel beds, slept on
the floor in movie theaters, and went home with strangers when there was
no other place to sleep.
While this gay ambiance was attractive to many gay men, foremost in their minds after Pearl Harbor was an eagerness to participate in the war effort. Their patriotism was sometimes dampened, however, by rumors that the military was mistreating gay servicemen. Shortly before Pearl Harbor, both the army and navy made it their policy to keep all homosexuals out of the service. While men in World War I had been court-martialed for committing homosexual acts, never before had the U.S. military set out to identify and reject all homosexual recruits.

This impossible task created a dilemma for military authorities. How could they eliminate homosexuals from their ranks when they needed every warm body they could get? And how were they going to tell exactly who was genuinely homosexual? The military assigned the task of identifying homosexuals to draft board members and military doctors, who were supposed to become experts on homosexuality overnight. Standardized psychiatric testing, developed after World War I, made their job a little easier. Millions of men were asked at induction physicals if they had ever had homosexual feelings or experiences. For many, this was the first time that they had had to think of their lives in homosexual terms. This mass sexual questioning was just one of the ways that homosexuality became an issue during the war.

Gay men who wanted to serve in the military could easily get past this screening, however. “I walked into this office,” recalls Bob Ruffing, who enlisted in the navy, “and there was this man who was a screaming belle—boy of gold braid but he was a queen if I ever saw one. And he asked me the standard questions, ending up with, ‘Did you ever have any homosexual experiences?’ Well, I looked at him right in the eye and said, ‘No.’ And he looked back and said, ‘That’s good.’ Both of us lying through our teeth.”

Most of these interviews lasted no more than three minutes. How could you identify a homosexual in three minutes? Easy, reported Newsweek. You could tell homosexuals by “their effeminate looks and behavior and by repeating certain words from their homosexual vocabulary and watching for signs of recognition.” This screening, needless to say, identified only obviously effeminate men, many of whom were not gay. “Scores of these inverts,” Newsweek complained, “managed to slip through induction centers.”

The military, in fact, accepted possibly a million or more gay men into the ranks during the war.

Many gay soldiers, however, did not even know they were homosexual until they were in the armed forces, where life in the barracks was especially charged with homosexual tension. A wartime psychiatric study of barracks life described what it called “homosexual buffoonery,” a game that strain men played with each other. “In the barracks,” the study observed, usually when the men are getting undressed... various persons will ‘kiddingly’ assume the role of the overt homosexual. One soldier, returning from the shower in the nude, will be greeted with catcalls, salacious whistling, comments like ‘Hey Joe! You shouldn’t go around like that—you don’t know what that does to me!’ Joe will respond by wriggling his hips in a feminine fashion after coyly draping a towel around himself... Others act the part of active solicitors for sexual favors. ‘How much do you want for sleeping with me tonight?’; ‘Come into my bed and I’ll give you the time of your life.’

Young gay draftees had to grow up fast to survive being surrounded by all this joking about queers. While some gay men found safety in keeping to themselves, others sought out each other for support. “When I first got in the navy,” recalled one man, “in the recreation hall, for instance, there’d be eye contact, and pretty soon you’d get to know one or two people and kept branching out. All of a sudden you had a vast network of friends, usually through this eye contact thing, sometimes through outright cruising. You could get away with it in that atmosphere.” These circles of gay friends were well known in military life. “You kind of migrated to other gays in the barracks,” explained an army man, “and sometimes it would be referred to as the ‘fruit corner’ or the ‘fruit salad.’ But not with much violent intent. You were thought to be queer, but nobody could prove anything, unless you were caught.”

While the military generally tolerated gay men because of the manpower shortage, getting caught having sex with a man could be a serious crime. The brigs were notorious for guards who enjoyed beating up gay prisoners as well as prisoners of color. If a gay man was thrown in the brig, he found himself in no-man’s-land, where even his gay friends avoided him to protect themselves.

Some gay men could not take the harassment or isolation of life in the military and tried to get out. Army regulations clearly stated that homosexuality was an “undesirable habit or trait of character” and sufficient grounds for discharge. The catch-22 procedure for discharge, however, involved special board hearings, hospitalization in the psychiatric ward, the risk of a court-martial, and even a prison sentence. Discharges for homosexuality, often printed on blue paper, were sometimes called “blue discharges”; neither honorable nor dishonorable, they labeled a gay man or lesbian as an “undesirable.” Blue discharges could have “its” or other codes for homosexual stamped on them, disqualifying a veteran from all GI rights and benefits and often preventing women as well as men from getting a civilian job. The
thousands of men and women who received these discharges formed the first wave of gay veterans to seek refuge in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other cities during the war.

As a result of these discharge procedures, military psychiatric wards were often filled with gay patients, some trying to get out of the military, others being kicked out. Psychiatrists took advantage of these captive patients to develop new techniques for identifying homosexuals. One study of over 200 gay patients in an army hospital in 1944 observed, “Homosexuals tend to group together and it is interesting to observe the speed and certainty with which they are able to recognize one another. Within a few hours after admission to the ward, the homosexual will have located others of his type and becomes one of the group. They tend to stay grouped together and rarely include heterosexuals in their activities... It is wise to insist that these cases be hospitalized for observation.”

A study of 1,400 patients in another hospital made its purpose even clearer. Homosexuals, the study observed, did not show a “gag reflex” when a tongue depressor was put down their throat. This “Gag Reflex Test,” the study concluded, “is a definite aid in screening candidates not only for the military services, but for positions where the sexual deviate must be eliminated.” This military identification of homosexuals set a precedent for the massive screenings and purges of homosexual women and men and their acquaintances from federal agencies following the war.

While the military discharged thousands of men for being homosexual during the war, few were sent to prison. Those who were, however, were segregated, often received brutal treatment, and were set up as examples for the rest of the troops. A black serviceman stationed at the racially segregated Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama describes how officers treated black soldiers charged with homosexuality:

The way they dealt with the black troops was that if you were identified as a “punk” or you were caught or confessed, you were removed from your position and you were given a pair of blue fatigues. You were made to know that if you got in trouble there was nobody going to help you. “Even Mrs. Roosevelt ain’t gonna come down here.” They even pointed out a tree where several people had been lynched. And you learned that very early. They put them in the blue outfits, put them in a barracks by themselves, where the sissies, the punks, were. Each was assigned eight men to march them three times a day from the barracks to the mess hall, taking the catcalls and stuff. It was horrible. I remember one man—I went up to him one morning and I put my hand on him and said, “It’s terrible what’s going on,” and he said, “Stay away from me, or you’ll be called one too.”

Most gay men stayed in the military and ultimately received honorable discharges. For these men, being gay in the military could have its special advantages, particularly for young draftees who had never left home. “You see,” a twenty-year-old draftee wrote to a gay friend in 1945, “the army is an utterly simplified existence for me—I have no one to answer to as long as I behave during the week and stay out of the way of the MP on weekends. If I go home, how can I stay out all night or promote any serious affair? My parents would simply consider me something perverted and keep me in the house.”

With weekend passes and furloughs, the military gave its personnel the freedom to explore the gay nightlife that flourished during the war. In large cities, servicemen and women found gay bars like Bradley’s in Hollywood, the Black Cat in San Francisco, Mary’s Tavern in Denver, and a small number of lesbian bars, such as the H Club in Los Angeles and Mona’s in San Francisco. These were among the first exclusively gay or lesbian bars in America. They branched out from, and sometimes replaced, the bohemian cafes, hotel bars, skid row taverns, nightclubs, and cafeterias of the 1930s where “queers,” “fairies,” and “dykes” could blend in with other social outcasts. These few meeting places of the Depression could not handle the large number of homosexuals uprooted by the war. As a result, lesbians and gay customers moved from bar to bar looking for a place that would accept their business. Bar owners sometimes discovered that catering to a gay crowd could improve their business, at least until the police or military put the heat on. Lesbians and gay men took advantage of a more tolerant social climate during the war to stake out a new public turf in these bars. Later, in the 1950s and 1960s, the successors to these wartime bars, which lawmakers called “homosexual hangouts,” became a major battleground in the fight for public meeting places free from harassment.

While lesbians and gay men could meet each other in these bars, or military bases, and even in defense plants, it was difficult for anyone to maintain a lasting relationship during the war. Lovers were transferred to other bases and circles of friends split up as troops, including women’s units were sent overseas. Sometimes lovers never came back. Countless lesbians and gay men during the war faced the deaths of their lovers silently and alone.

A black air corpsman who was stationed in the South remembers how he faced the death of his boyfriend.
In those days we couldn't tell anybody who we were. But we liked to be together. I used to send him books, and I had lunch with him. We played the game of “circling,” which is all you could do in those days. He came up to my office one morning and he said, “I'd like to have lunch with you. Can you meet me at 12:00 at the px?” I said that would be good. And at 11:45 I looked out the window and I could see this burst. His plane blew up in front of my face. He was killed. You never really get over something like that. And you know, something happened. I stopped living for a while. And I couldn't grieve, because I'd be a punk if I grieved, and be treated like those men in the blue outfits.

Because of these separations, letters and photographs became absolute necessities of life. But lesbians and gay men writing letters to their lovers and friends faced the special problem of wartime censorship. Military censors, of course, cut out all information that might aid the enemy, but this surveillance made it necessary for gay and lesbian correspondents to be careful not to expose their homosexuality. To get around this, gay men befriended sympathetic censors or tricked others by using campy phrases, signing a woman's name (like Dixie or Daisy), or changing the gender of their friends. Sailors became WAVES, boyfriends became WACS, Robert became Roberta. There must exist, hidden in closets and attics all over America, a huge literature of these World War II letters between lesbians and between gay men that would tell us even more about this important part of American history.

By the end of the war, in August 1945, most Americans were exhausted from years of casualties, rationing, long work hours, and separations from loved ones and were anxious to settle down to a normal life again. Unfortunately, “normal life” meant different things to different people. For black Americans, it meant losing wartime jobs and stepping up their fight against segregation and discrimination. For women, it meant a return to the home as wives and mothers. And for lesbians and gay men, it meant witch hunts, bar raids, arrests, and a retreat to the closet.

The tolerance that some homosexual men and women experienced during the war proved to be all too temporary. Many patriotic lesbians and gay men saw their wartime freedom disappear as the country they fought for began to turn against them with the advent of peace. Churches, the media, schools, and government agencies conducted a heavy-handed campaign to reconstruct the nuclear family, to force women back into their traditional roles, and to promote a conservative sexual morality. A tactic of this campaign was to isolate homosexual men and women and identify them, like Communists, as dangerous and invisible enemies. These attacks on nonconformists of all kinds soon replaced the live-and-let-live climate of the war years.

Throughout the war, to prepare for peacetime, the government, industry, and the media had carefully controlled the radical social changes that were necessary to win the war. Advertisements reminded women that even though their labor was desperately needed in heavy industry, their jobs were only temporary and ultimately belonged to men. America was supposed to come first both in war and in peace, and their return as head of the household was one of the goals that men and women were both supposed to be fighting for. By early 1945, as soon as the end of the war was in sight, the media began to prepare the nation's women and men for their reentry into “normal” life. “Rosie the Riveter,” the media's symbol for women working in heavy industry during the war, disappeared from the magazine covers, replaced by the traditional symbol of American womanhood: the young mother and wife, whose fantasies were of babies, whose only joy was to please her husband and children and to buy new appliances for her kitchen. The media took the reality of postwar families struggling to reestablish their lives and transformed it into hard-hitting propaganda for the nuclear family. Lesbians and gay men, many of them unable or unwilling to conform to this narrow family ideal, stood out more and more as “queers” and “sex deviates” who endangered the fragile security of the postwar American family.

While the media tried to lure women back into the home, the government drove women out of industry and the military. Thousands of women working in shipyards, for example, were fired shortly after V-J Day. Antilebian witch hunts in the military, generally avoided during the war, spread like an epidemic after the war. The extent of these witch hunts is still unknown, but we are beginning to realize that they affected hundreds of women. Many lesbian veterans remember them with horror and pain. “I was trained as an aviation machinist mate,” remembers a woman stationed at a Florida naval base in 1945, “which is not a usual women's task. [My] first important love relationships with women were in the navy. And then—this was near the end of the war—the interrogation came about and I was terrified. I remember I was interrogated and was scared to death and just lied through my teeth. I stopped running around with the women I was running around with and felt very isolated. The other people that I had been really friendly with—the relationships just were cut off completely.” In the film Word Is Out, Pat Bond recalled what happened to her WAC unit stationed in occupied Japan.
after the war: "They started an incredible witch hunt in Tokyo. Unbelievable, sending five hundred women home for dishonorable discharges. Every day there were courts-martial and trials—you were there testifying against your friends, or they were testifying against you... until you got afraid to look your neighbor in the eye. Afraid of everything." These women had nowhere to turn. Gay and lesbian organizations did not yet exist, and liberal and radical organizations refused to help homosexuals who pleaded with them for support.13

According to some veterans, similar military purges affected gay men after the war at U.S. bases in Europe, Asia, and stateside. Thousands of men were put in detention barracks and shipped home with dishonorable discharges on special "queer" ships. On some bases, gay office workers were able to sabotage these purges by warning their friends just before the investigation teams arrived. Many of these discharged personnel could not return to their hometowns, so they remained in port cities, where they became a part of the rapidly growing urban gay population in the early 1950s.

The civilian world had its counterpart to the military witch hunts. The U.S. Senate and many state legislatures held unprecedented antihomosexual hearings, causing the firing of thousands of men and women from government jobs merely for being suspected of "homosexual perversion." The FBI began nationwide surveillance of gay and lesbian bars, compiling enormous lists of homosexuals and "associates of homosexuals." In addition, local antigay crusades swept through many American towns and cities, particularly where gay bars had become most visible and were continuing to multiply. Refugees from these crackdowns moved from city to city, looking for more tolerant surroundings. A San Francisco grand jury even held special hearings to curb what it called a postwar "invasion of sex deviates." States began to pass laws to close down the growing number of bars that catered to "sex perverts," both male and female. Massive bar raids and street arrests received prominent coverage in the press. Pulp magazines, exploiting the national paranoia, ran antigay articles in nearly every issue, with titles such as "Hidden Homos and How to Spot Them."

How did the postwar years affect the new generation of lesbians and gay men? Many returning veterans based their decisions for civilian life on their newly discovered homosexuality. "I can't change," wrote a gay GI in a letter shortly before his discharge in 1946. "I have no desire to change, because it took me a long, long time to figure out how to enjoy life. For you'll agree, I'm not going back to what I left." Many veterans left their parents, abandoned small towns, and migrated to large cities they had seen for the first time during the war. There they created lesbian and gay neighborhoods, risked going to the growing number of lesbian and gay bars, and looked for work that would allow them to lead relatively open lives. Others, who had found lovers after the war, tried to settle down into quiet, private lives and even joined the exodus to the suburbs. Reunited with wartime friends, they socialized with other gay couples in their homes and avoided the bars. With the heat on in public gay life, private homes were often the safest places to be gay.

While this backlash pushed many into the closet, it also forced others to realize the extent of their oppression, their identity as a minority, and the power of their numbers. Like the GI facing his discharge, many could not go back to what they left. Some even came out with a vengeance. It was thus no accident that the postwar years witnessed the birth of a small gay and lesbian movement in America, beginning with veterans' social groups, the Mattachine Society, and the Daughters of Bilitis. The taste of freedom during the war, the magnitude of the postwar crackdown, and the example of the growing black civil rights movement caused more and more lesbians and gay men to think of themselves as an unjustly persecuted minority. They increasingly realized that when they defended their new bars from attacks by queer bashers, when lesbians kicked straight men out of their bars, when bar owners challenged the cops and liquor control boards, and when lesbian and gay defendants began to plead "not guilty" in court, they were actually fighting to establish a public turf of their own, defending their right to gather in public places. After they returned home, the generation of World War II veterans began to lay the groundwork that made the Stonewall Rebellion and gay liberation possible.

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NOTES


2. Report, "Investigations of Conditions in the 3d WAC Training Center, Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia," July 19, 1944, p. 25, file 331-9, Record Group 159, National Archives.

3. Author's interview with Stuart Loomis, March 25, 1980, San Francisco.


7. Interview with "Sami" (pseud.) by JoAnn Castillo, San Francisco Lesbian and Gay History Project.


10. Author's interview with Bob Ruffing, May 14, 1980, San Francisco.

11. "Homosexuals in Uniform," Neasweek, June 9, 1947, 54. The estimate of 1 million gay servicemen equals 6.25 percent of the 16 million men who served in World War II. Alfred Kinsey's study, which was in part conducted during the war, concluded that 4 percent of white males in the United States were exclusively homosexual after adolescence and that 8 percent were exclusively homosexual for at least three years between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five. See Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, Sexual Behavior in the Human Male (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1948), 650-51.


13. Author's interview with Bob Ruffing.


17. Author's interview with (anonymous), May 28, 1980, San Francisco.


19. On the local and state campaigns against lesbian and gay bars in the San Francisco Bay Area during the 1950s and 1960s, see "Resorts for Sex Pervers," a slide lecture by Allan Bérubé.