

# Study Guide

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PRESENTS



a story of  
**FAMILY, LOVE, and LOSS**  
at the dawn of the **AIDS** crisis

# WARREN

A PLAY BY REBECCA RANSON, DIRECTED BY JOHN C. WILSON

# Study Guide for *Warren* A play by Rebecca Ranson

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“...from 1980, when the first isolated gay men began falling ill from strange and exotic ailments, nearly five years passed before all the institutions—medicine, public health, the federal and private scientific research establishments, the mass media, and the gay community’s leadership—mobilized the way they should in a time of threat. The story of these first five years of AIDS in America is a drama of national failure, played out against a backdrop of needless death.

In those early years, the federal government viewed AIDS as a budget problem, local public health officials saw it as a political problem, gay leaders considered AIDS a public relations problem, and the news media regarded it as homosexual problem that wouldn’t interest anybody else. Consequently, few confronted AIDS for what it was, a profoundly threatening medical crisis.”

excerpt from Prologue of  
*And The Band Played On:  
Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*  
by Randy Shilts

## Director's Note

1984. Thirty years ago things were quite different. Particularly for me and other gay men. As gay rights were starting to gain some attention, our community was hit by a terrible plague. It was a time when a disease without a name was spreading, and we didn't know how one caught it, or how to avoid catching it. We witnessed friends in the prime of their lives die horrible deaths.

Warren Johnston had an electric personality and an unstoppable creative spirit. Warren died on April 13, 1984. Rebecca's play is a loving tribute to her friend. It was first produced in August of 1984 in Atlanta, making it the first play to address AIDS.

I met Warren at Alternate ROOTS' (Regional Organization of Theatres—South) first Performance Festival in Sarasota, FL in 1976.

Many things go into my choice of plays. Knowing some of the people in the play clearly contributed to my choice of WARREN. Also, I am drawn to stories with a strong personal narrative and WARREN provides such a powerful story. In this fictional biography Rebecca knew or met all the characters, so had first-hand knowledge of the real people.

The AIDS crisis was a frightening and fearful time of my life, and I'm grateful to be living today – as many of my friends are not. Last year I saw a production of *The Normal Heart*, and was struck how important is to tell the story. There are many who did not live through it, and given that AIDS is now a 'treatable condition' they don't know about that terrifying era.

Selecting a play is an important decision for me as a director. In addition to reading a script, part of my process is to hear it read by actors. I am grateful that Spotlight UB provided that opportunity when we did a staged reading for World AIDS Day 2013. I'm delighted that Spotlight UB continues to recognize the value of this play.

I am pleased to have known Warren (Rebecca and Kelly as well), and dedicate this production to them in celebration of their artistry, courage, and love. And to the memory of all my other friends and acquaintances whose lives were cut short by AIDS.

John C. Wilson, director

# Biographies

## Rebecca Ranson

Rebecca Ranson is the author of more than 30 plays. She was born in 1943. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Radio, Television, and Film from the University of Georgia in 1970, and a Master of Fine Arts in Playwriting at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 1975. She worked as a creative writing instructor in North Carolina in 1978-1979, and as project and workshop director, media producer, and writer at WVSP Public Radio in Warrenton, North Carolina from 1979 to 1981. In 1982, she served as Playwright-in-residence for The Road Company, Johnson City, Tennessee, and from 1983 to 1985 she was Writer-in-residence at Harrisburg Area Community College. In 1983, when her friend Warren Johnston was diagnosed with AIDS, the center of her life became gay and lesbian issues. She became Executive Director of the Southeastern Arts, Media and Education Project (SAME), a multi-arts organization for the gay and lesbian community in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1986, serving for twelve years. In 2004 she received the Robert Chesley Foundation Lifetime Achievement award.

## Warren Johnston

Warren Johnston was an actor, director, and multi-media artist. He explored many mediums; acting, mime, dance, video, piano, drawing, sewing, cooking, and much more. He graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1972. After college he conducted theatre workshops with prison inmates at the Orange County Correctional Unit in Hillsboro, NC. He worked at a number of southern theatres, including Pocket Theatre, Pendulum Mime Theatre, and the Road Company. At Ensemble Theatre in Nashville in addition to acting he was also business manager, a workshop instructor, and founder of their experimental laboratory. He was also a member of Don Evan's Little Marrowbone Repair Corporation, a multi-media performance group, described as "a bunch of friends who get together and do stuff." He was an original member of Alternate ROOTS (Regional Organization of Theatres-South), served on the Executive Committee, and was an organizer of the 1978 Festival of Performance in Nashville. One of the most inspiring experiences of a trip to Poland to take a physical theatre workshop with Jerzy Grotowski. He moved to San Francisco, CA in the 1980s to continue his artistic life, and for self-discovery. He died of AIDS in San Francisco on April 13, 1984.

Obituary that appeared in the April 19, 1984 issue of the Clinton Courier-News, Clinton, TN:

### Actor from area dies April 13

A 1967 graduate of Clinton Senior High School, Warren Johnston, 34, of San Francisco, Calif., died April 13 of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Johnston, who attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill following graduation from high school, was a stage actor and director in the San Francisco area. He had been in the hospital for about two months before his death.

He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Florence Johnston of Oak Ridge, and his father, Wiley W. Johnston Jr. of Loudon. Other survivors include a stepmother, Mrs. Helen Johnston of Loudon, a step-brother, Douglas Owen of Oak Ridge and a stepsister, Melissa Owens of Deer Lodge.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete at press time.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donation be made to San Francisco AIDS, KS Foundation, 54 10th St., P.O. Box 14227, San Francisco, Calif., 94103.

# A Timeline of AIDS

The history of the domestic AIDS epidemic began in illness, fear, and death—but we conclude those 30 years with hope. This timeline highlights milestones of “30 Years of AIDS.”

I've selected a sampling from <http://www.aids.gov/hiv-aids-basics/hiv-aids-101/aids-timeline/>

## 1981

On June 5, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publish a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), describing cases of a rare lung infection, *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia (PCP), in five young, previously healthy, gay men in Los Angeles. All the men have other unusual infections as well, indicating that their immune systems are not working; two have already died by the time the report is published. This edition of the MMWR marks the first official reporting of what will become known as the AIDS epidemic.

On June 5, the Associated Press and the Los Angeles Times report on the MMWR. On June 6, the San Francisco Chronicle covers the story. Within days, doctors from across the U.S. flood CDC with reports of similar cases.

On June 8, CDC establishes a Task Force on Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections (KSOI) to identify risk factors and to develop a case definition for national surveillance.

On July 3, the New York Times reports on cases of Kaposi's Sarcoma affecting 41 gay men in New York and California. By year-end, there is a cumulative total of 270 reported cases of severe immune deficiency among gay men, and 121 of those individuals have died.

## 1982

The City and County of San Francisco, working closely with the Shanti Project and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, develop the “San Francisco Model of Care” which emphasizes home- and community-based services. In January, the first American AIDS clinic is established in San Francisco.

Gay Men's Health Crisis, the first community-based AIDS service provider in the U.S., is founded in New York City. On April 13, U.S. Representative Henry Waxman convenes the first congressional hearings on HIV/AIDS. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that tens of thousands of people may be affected by the disease.

In September, Congressional representatives Henry Waxman and Phillip Burton introduce legislation to allocate \$5 million to CDC for surveillance and \$10 million to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for AIDS research. On September 24, CDC uses the term “AIDS” (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) for the first time, and releases the first case definition of AIDS: “a disease at least moderately predictive of a defect in cell-mediated immunity, occurring in a person with no known case for diminished resistance to that disease.”

## 1983

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) establish the National AIDS Hotline to respond to public inquiries about the disease.

In February, Dr. Robert Gallo, from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), suggests that a retrovirus probably causes AIDS.

On May 20, Professor Luc Montagnier, of the Pasteur Institute in France, reports the discovery of a retrovirus named Lymphadenopathy Associated Virus (LAV) that could be the cause of AIDS.

In June, people living with AIDS (PLWAs) take over the plenary stage at the Second National AIDS Forum in Denver, and issue a statement on the right of PLWAs to be at the table when policy is made, to be treated with dignity, and to be called “people with AIDS,” not “AIDS victims.” The statement becomes known as “The Denver Principles,” and it serves as the charter for the founding of the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA).

On July 25, San Francisco General Hospital opens the first dedicated AIDS ward in the U.S. It is fully occupied within days.

On September 2, in response to concerns about transmission of AIDS in healthcare settings, CDC publishes the first set of occupational exposure precautions for healthcare workers and allied health professionals.

In the September 9 MMWR, CDC identifies all major routes of HIV transmission—and rules out transmission by casual contact, food, water, air, or environmental surfaces. In October, the World Health Organization (WHO) holds its first meeting to assess the global AIDS situation, and begins international surveillance.

After a New York doctor is threatened with eviction from his building for treating AIDS patients, Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) and Lambda Legal file the first AIDS discrimination lawsuit.

In November, Dr. Robert Gallo's lab grows the AIDS virus in immune system cells.

On December 6, a congressional subcommittee releases The Federal Response to AIDS, a report criticizing the U.S. Government for failure to invest sufficient funding in AIDS surveillance and research.

## 1984

On April 23, Margaret Heckler, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, announces that Dr. Robert Gallo and his colleagues at the National Cancer Institute have found the cause of AIDS, the retrovirus HTLV-III. She also announces the development of a diagnostic blood test to identify HTLV-III and expresses hope that a vaccine against AIDS will be produced within two years.

In June, Dr. Gallo and Professor Luc Montagnier, from the Pasteur Institute in France, hold a joint press conference to announce that Dr. Montagnier's Lymphadenopathy Associated Virus (LAV) and Dr. Gallo's HTLV-III virus are almost certainly identical and are the likely cause of AIDS.

In October, San Francisco officials order bathhouses closed due to high-risk sexual activity occurring in these venues. New York and Los Angeles follow suit within the year.

## 1985

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) licenses the first commercial blood test, ELISA, to detect antibodies to HIV in the blood. Blood banks begin screening the U.S. blood supply.

The U.S. Congress allocates \$70 million for AIDS research. The Pentagon announces that it will begin testing all new military recruits for HIV infection and will reject those who test positive for the virus.

Ryan White, an Indiana teenager who contracted AIDS through contaminated blood products used to treat his hemophilia, is refused entry to his middle school. He goes on to speak publicly against AIDS stigma and discrimination.

On January 11, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revise the AIDS case definition to note that AIDS is caused by a newly identified virus and issue provisional guidelines for blood screening.

On April 15-17, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the World Health Organization (WHO) host the first International AIDS Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Actor Rock Hudson dies of AIDS-related illness on October 2. Hudson leaves \$250,000 to help set up the American Foundation for AIDS research (amfAR). Elizabeth Taylor serves as the founding National Chairman.

## 1986

The National Academy of Sciences issues a report critical of the U.S. response to a "national health crisis." The report calls for a U.S. \$2 billion investment. An Institute of Medicine report calls for a national education campaign and for creating a National Commission on AIDS.

AIDS activist Cleve Jones creates the first panel of the AIDS Memorial Quilt.

In May, the International Committee on the Taxonomy of Viruses declares that the virus that causes AIDS will officially be known as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

On September 17, President Ronald Reagan mentions AIDS publicly for the first time, vowing in a letter to Congress to make AIDS a priority.

On October 22, U.S. Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop, issues the Surgeon General's Report on AIDS (PDF, 1.98 MB). The report urges parents and schools to start frank, open discussions about AIDS and urges education and condom use.

## 1987

In February, the World Health Organization (WHO) launches The Global Program on AIDS to: raise awareness; formulate evidence-based policies; provide technical and financial support to countries; initiate relevant social, behavioral, and biomedical research; promote participation by nongovernmental organizations; and champion the rights of those living with HIV.

Emmy-award winning pianist, Liberace, dies of AIDS-related illness on February 4.

On March 19, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves the first antiretroviral drug, zidovudine (AZT). The U.S. Congress approves \$30 million in emergency funding to states for AZT—laying the groundwork for what will be the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), authorized by the Ryan White CARE Act in 1990.

In March, playwright and AIDS activist Larry Kramer founds the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) in New York City.

In May, FDA creates a new class of experimental drugs, Treatment Investigational New Drugs, which accelerates drug approval by 2-3 years.

On May 16, the U.S. Public Health Service adds HIV as a “dangerous contagious disease” to its immigration exclusion list and mandates testing for all visa applicants.

On May 31, President Reagan makes his first public speech about AIDS and establishes a Presidential Commission on HIV.

In July, the U.S. Congress adopts the Helms Amendment, which bans the use of Federal funds for AIDS education materials that “promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual activities.”

In August, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) hold the first National Conference on HIV and Communities of Color in New York.

On August 18, FDA sanctions the first human testing of a candidate vaccine against HIV.

In October, the AIDS Memorial Quilt is displayed for the first time on the National Mall in Washington, DC. The display features 1,920 4x8 panels and draws half a million visitors.

In October, AIDS becomes the first disease ever debated on the floor of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly . The General Assembly resolves to mobilize the entire UN system in the worldwide struggle against AIDS and designates the WHO to lead the effort.

Journalist Randy Shilts’ book about the early years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, *And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic*, is published. CDC launches the first AIDS-related public service announcements, “America Responds to AIDS.”

## 1988

The World Health Organization (WHO) declares December 1 to be the first World AIDS Day .

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) allows the importation of unapproved drugs for persons with life-threatening illnesses, including HIV/AIDS.

Ryan White, an HIV-positive teenager who has become a national spokesperson for AIDS education, treatment, and funding, testifies before the President’s Commission on AIDS.

Elizabeth Glaser , an HIV-positive mother of two HIV-positive children, and two of her friends form the Pediatric AIDS Foundation (later renamed the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation) to advocate for research into the care and treatment needs of children living with HIV/AIDS.

On May 26, the U.S. Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop, launches the U.S.’s first coordinated HIV/AIDS education campaign by mailing 107 million copies of a booklet, *Understanding AIDS* (PDF), to all American households. On October 11, ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) protests at FDA headquarters about the drug-approval process. Eight days later, FDA announces new regulations to speed up drug approvals.

## 1989

Photographer Robert Mapplethorpe dies of AIDS-related illness on March 9.

On June 16, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issue the first guidelines for preventing *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia (PCP), an AIDS-related opportunistic infection, and a major cause of illness and death for people living with AIDS.

On June 23, CDC releases the *Guidelines for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Hepatitis B Virus to Health-Care and Public-Safety Workers*.

The U.S. Congress creates the National Commission on AIDS. The Commission meets for the first time on September 18.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of the National Institutes of Health’s National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), endorses giving HIV-positive people who do not qualify for clinical trials access to experimental treatments.

The number of reported AIDS cases in the United States reaches 100,000.

## 1990

Pop artist Keith Haring dies of AIDS-related illness on February 16.

On April 8, Ryan White dies of AIDS-related illness at the age of 18.

On May 21, ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) protests at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), demanding more HIV treatments and the expansion of clinical trials to include more women and people of color.

In June, the 6th International AIDS Conference meets in San Francisco. To protest U.S. immigration policy that bars people with HIV from entering the country, domestic and international nongovernmental groups boycott the conference.

In July, the U.S. Congress enacts the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Act prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including people living with HIV/AIDS.

In August, the U.S. Congress enacts the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act of 1990 (PDF), which provides \$220.5 million in Federal funds for HIV community-based care and treatment services in its first year. The U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) manages the program, which is the nation's largest HIV-specific Federal grant program.

On October 26, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves use of zidovudine (AZT) for pediatric AIDS.

CDC adopts the HIV-prevention counseling model, a “client-centered” approach that focuses on the patient, rather than the disease.

## 1991

The Visual AIDS Artists Caucus launches the Red Ribbon Project to create a visual symbol to demonstrate compassion for people living with AIDS and their caregivers. The red ribbon becomes the international symbol of AIDS awareness.

On November 7, American basketball star Earvin “Magic” Johnson announces that he is HIV-positive.

On November 24, Freddie Mercury, lead singer/ songwriter of the rock band Queen, dies of bronchial pneumonia resulting from AIDS.

## 1992

The 8th International AIDS Conference is originally scheduled to be held in Boston, but is moved to Amsterdam due to U.S. immigration restrictions on people living with HIV/AIDS.

AIDS becomes the number one cause of death for U.S. men ages 25 to 44.

## 1993

President Clinton establishes the White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP).

World-renowned ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev dies of AIDS-related illness on January 6, and tennis star Arthur Ashe dies on February 3.

The film “Philadelphia” starring Tom Hanks as a lawyer with AIDS, opens in theaters. Based on a true story, it is the first major Hollywood film on AIDS. Angels in America, Tony Kushner’s play about AIDS, wins the Tony Award for Best Play and the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

## 1994

AIDS becomes the leading cause of death for all Americans ages 25 to 44.

On February 17, Randy Shilts, a U.S. journalist who covered the AIDS epidemic and who authored *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*, dies of AIDS-related illness at age 42.

Pedro Zamora, a young gay man living with HIV, appears on the cast of MTV’s popular show, “The Real World.” He dies on November 11 at age 22.

## 1995

On February 23, Greg Louganis, Olympic gold medal diver, discloses that he is HIV-positive.

In June, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves the first protease inhibitor. This ushers in a new era of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).

President Clinton hosts the first White House Conference on HIV/AIDS on December 6.

By the end of the year, 500,000 cases of AIDS have been reported in the U.S.

## 1996

In Vancouver, the 11th International AIDS Conference highlights the effectiveness of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), creating a period of optimism.

The number of new AIDS cases diagnosed in the U.S. declines for the first time since the beginning of the epidemic.

AIDS is no longer leading cause of death for all Americans ages 25-44, although it remains the leading cause of death for African Americans in this age group.



In October, the AIDS Memorial Quilt is displayed in its entirety for the last time. It covers the entire National Mall in Washington, DC.

## 1997

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report the first substantial decline in AIDS deaths in the United States. Due largely to the use of HAART, AIDS-related deaths in the U.S. decline by 47% compared with the previous year.

On May 18, President Clinton announces that the goal of finding an effective vaccine for HIV in 10 years will be a top national priority, and calls for the creation of an AIDS vaccine research center at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS) estimates that 30 million adults and children worldwide have HIV, and that, each day, 16,000 people are newly infected with the virus.

## 1998

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that African Americans account for 49% of U.S. AIDS-related deaths. AIDS-related mortality for African Americans is almost 10 times that of Whites and three times that of Hispanics.

In March, African American leaders, including members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), are briefed on the highly disproportionate impact of HIV and AIDS in their communities. They develop a “Call to Action,” requesting that the President and Surgeon General declare HIV/AIDS a “State of Emergency” in the African American community.

In October, President Clinton declares AIDS to be a “severe and ongoing health crisis” in African American and Hispanic communities in the United States and announces a special package of initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS on racial and ethnic minorities.

On April 20, Donna Shalala, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, determines that needle-exchange programs (NEPs) are effective and do not encourage the use of illegal drugs, but the Clinton Administration does not lift the ban on use of Federal funds for NEPs.

## 1999

The World Health Organization (WHO) announces that HIV/AIDS has become the fourth biggest killer worldwide and the number one killer in Africa. WHO estimates that 33 million people are living with HIV worldwide, and that 14 million have died of AIDS.

## 2000

In his State of the Union address on January 27, President Clinton announces the launch of the Millennium Vaccine Initiative to create incentives for developing and distributing vaccines against HIV, TB, and malaria.

On April 30, President Clinton declares that HIV/AIDS is a threat to U.S. national security.

On May 10, President Clinton issues an Executive Order to assist developing countries in importing and producing generic HIV treatments.

In July, UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS), the World Health Organization (WHO), and other global health groups announce a joint initiative with five major pharmaceutical manufacturers to negotiate reduced prices for HIV/AIDS drugs in developing countries.

In August, the U.S. Congress enacts the Global AIDS and Tuberculosis Relief Act of 2000.

## 2001

Newly appointed U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, reaffirms the U.S. statement that HIV/AIDS is a national security threat.

After generic drug manufacturers offer to produce discounted, generic forms of HIV/AIDS drugs for developing countries; several major pharmaceutical manufacturers agree to offer further reduced drug prices to those countries.

## 2002

On June 25, the United States announces a framework that will allow poor countries unable to produce pharmaceuticals to gain greater access to drugs needed to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other public health crises.

On November 7, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves the first rapid HIV diagnostic test kit for use in the United States that provides results with 99.6 percent accuracy in as little as 20 minutes. Unlike other antibody tests for HIV, this blood test can be stored at room temperature, requires no specialized equipment, and may be used outside of traditional laboratory or clinical settings, allowing more widespread use of HIV testing.

Worldwide, 10 million young people, aged 15-24, and almost 3 million children under 15 are living with HIV. During this year, approximately 3.5 million new infections will occur in sub-Saharan Africa, and the epidemic will claim the lives of an estimated 2.4 million Africans.

## 2003

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) calculate that 27,000 of the estimated 40,000 new infections that occur each year in the U.S. result from transmission by individuals who do not know they are infected.

On January 28, President George W. Bush announces the creation of the United States President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in his State of the Union address. PEPFAR is a \$15 billion, 5-year plan to combat AIDS, primarily in countries with a high burden of infections.

On March 31, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation awards a \$60 million grant to the International Partnership for Microbicides to support research and development of microbicides to prevent transmission of HIV.

On October 23, the William J. Clinton Foundation secures price reductions for HIV/AIDS drugs from generic manufacturers, to benefit developing nations.

## 2004

In January, the U.S. Congress authorizes the first \$350 million for the United States President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

## 2005

On January 26, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS), the U.S. Government, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria announce results of joint efforts to increase the availability of antiretroviral drugs in developing countries. An estimated 700,000 people have been reached by the end of 2004.

## 2006

June 5 marks 25 years since the first AIDS cases were reported.

## 2007

CDC reports over 565,000 people have died of AIDS in the U.S. since 1981.

## 2008

On July 31, President Bush signs legislation reauthorizing PEPFAR for an additional five years for up to \$48 billion. The bill contains a rider that lifts the blanket ban on HIV-positive travelers to the U.S., and gives the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services the authority to admit people living with HIV/AIDS on a case-by-case basis.

## 2009

Newly elected President Barack Obama calls for the development of the first National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States.

On April 7, the White House and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launch the Act Against AIDS campaign, a multiyear, multifaceted communication campaign designed to reduce HIV incidence in the United States. CDC also launches the Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative (AAALI), to harness the collective strength and reach of traditional, longstanding African American institutions to increase HIV-related awareness, knowledge, and action within Black communities across the U.S.

On May 5, President Obama launches the Global Health Initiative (GHI), a six-year, U.S. \$63 billion effort to develop a comprehensive approach to addressing global health in low- and middle-income countries. The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) will serve as a core component.

## 2010

On January 4, the U.S. Government officially lifts the HIV travel and immigration ban.

On March 23, President Obama signs the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which expands access to care and prevention for all Americans—but offers special protections for those living with chronic illnesses, like HIV, that make it difficult for them to access or afford healthcare.

## 2011

AIDS activist and award-winning actress Elizabeth Taylor dies on March 23. One of the first celebrities to advocate on behalf of people living with HIV and AIDS, Taylor was the founding national chairman of amfAR (American Foundation for AIDS Research), a nonprofit organization that supports AIDS research, HIV prevention, treatment education, and advocates for AIDS-related public policy.

# The American Gay Rights Movement

## The American Gay Rights Movement: A Timeline

This timeline provides information about the gay rights movement in the United States from 1924 to the present: including the Stonewall riots; the contributions of Harvey Milk; the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy; the first civil unions; the legalization of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York; and more.

### 1924

The Society for Human Rights in Chicago becomes the country’s earliest known gay rights organization.

### 1948

Alfred Kinsey publishes *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, revealing to the public that homosexuality is far more widespread than was commonly believed.

### 1951

The Mattachine Society, the first national gay rights organization, is formed by Harry Hay, considered by many to be the founder of the gay rights movement.

### 1955

The first lesbian-rights organization in the United States, the Daughters of Bilitis, was established in San Francisco in 1955.

### 1956

The Daughters of Bilitis, a pioneering national lesbian organization, is founded.

### 1958

Joe Cino, an Italian-American theater producer, opens Caffe Cino. Caffe Cino is credited with starting the Off-Off-Broadway theater movement. Six years after Caffe Cino opens, it hosts the first gay plays, *The Madness of Lady Bright*, by Lanford Wilson, and *The Haunted Host*, by Robert Patrick.

### 1962

Illinois becomes the first state in the U.S. to decriminalize homosexual acts between consenting adults in private.

### 1966

The world’s first the transgender organization, the National Transsexual Counseling Unit, was established in San Francisco.

### 1969

The Stonewall riots transform the gay rights movement from one limited to a small number of activists into a widespread protest for equal rights and acceptance. Patrons of a gay bar in New York’s Greenwich Village, the Stonewall Inn, fight back during a police raid on June 27, sparking three days of riots.

### 1973

The American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from its official list of mental disorders. Harvey Milk runs for city supervisor in San Francisco. He runs on a socially liberal platform and opposes government involvement in personal sexual matters. Milk comes in 10th out of 32 candidates, earning 16,900 votes, winning the Castro District and other liberal neighborhoods. He receives a lot of media attention for his passionate speeches, brave political stance, and media skills.

### 1976

San Francisco Mayor George Moscone appoints Harvey Milk to the Board of Permit Appeals, making Milk the first openly gay city commissioner in the United States. Milk decides to run for the California State Assembly and Moscone is forced to fire him from the Board of Permit Appeals after just five weeks. Milk loses the State Assembly race by fewer than 4,000 votes. Believing the Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club will never support him politically, Milk co-founds the San Francisco Gay Democratic Club after his election loss.

### 1977

Activists in Miami, Florida pass a civil rights ordinance making sexual orientation discrimination illegal in Dade County. Save Our Children, a campaign by a Christian fundamentalist group and headed by singer Anita Bryant, is launched in response to the ordinance. In the largest special election of any in Dade County history, 70% vote to overturn the ordinance. It is a crushing defeat for gay activists.

### 1978

On January 8, Harvey Milk makes national news when he is sworn in as a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Running against 16 other candidates, he wins the election by 30 percent. Milk begins his term by sponsoring a civil rights bill that outlaws sexual orientation discrimination. Only one supervisor votes against it and Mayor Moscone signs it into law.

John Briggs drops out of the California governor's race, but receives support for Proposition 6, also known as the Briggs Initiative, a proposal to fire any teacher or school employee who publicly supports gay rights. Harvey Milk campaigns against the bill and attends every event hosted by Briggs. In the summer, attendance greatly increases at Gay Pride marches in San Francisco and Los Angeles, partly in response to Briggs. President Jimmy Carter, former Governor Ronald Reagan, and Governor Jerry Brown speak out against the proposition. On November 7, voters reject the proposition by more than a million votes.

On November 27, Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone are assassinated by Dan White, another San Francisco city supervisor, who had recently resigned and wanted his job back, but was being passed over because he wasn't the best fit for the liberal leaning Board of Supervisors and the ethnic diversity in White's district. San Francisco pays tribute to Harvey Milk by naming several locations after him, included Harvey Milk Plaza at the intersection of Market and Castro streets. The San Francisco Gay Democratic Club changes its name to the Harvey Milk Memorial Gay Democratic Club.

## 1979

About 75,000 people participated in the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Washington, D.C., in October. It was the largest political gathering in support of LGBT rights to date.

## 1980

At the 1980 Democratic National Convention held at New York City's Madison Square Garden, Democrats took a stance supporting gay rights, adding the following to their plank: "All groups must be protected from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, language, age, sex or sexual orientation."

## 1982

Wisconsin becomes the first state to outlaw discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

## 1984

The city of Berkeley, California, becomes the first city to offer its employees domestic-partnership benefits.

## 1993

The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy is instituted for the U.S. military, permitting gays to serve in the military but banning homosexual activity. President Clinton's original intention to revoke the prohibition against gays in the military was met with stiff opposition; this compromise, which has led to the discharge of thousands of men and women in the armed forces, was the result.

On April 25, an estimated 800,000 to one million people

participate in the March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation. Several events such as art and history exhibits, public service outings and workshops are held throughout Washington, DC leading up the event. Jesse Jackson, RuPaul, Martina Navratilova, and Eartha Kitt are among the speakers and performers at a rally after the march. The march is a response to "Don't Ask Don't Tell", Amendment 2 in Colorado, as well as rising hate crimes and ongoing discrimination against the LGBT community.

## 1996

In *Romer v. Evans*, the Supreme Court strikes down Colorado's Amendment 2, which denied gays and lesbians protections against discrimination, calling them "special rights." According to Justice Anthony Kennedy, "We find nothing special in the protections Amendment 2 withholds. These protections . . . constitute ordinary civil life in a free society."

## 2000

Vermont becomes the first state in the country to legally recognize civil unions between gay or lesbian couples. The law states that these "couples would be entitled to the same benefits, privileges, and responsibilities as spouses." It stops short of referring to same-sex unions as marriage, which the state defines as heterosexual.

## 2003

The U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Lawrence v. Texas* that sodomy laws in the U.S. are unconstitutional. Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote, "Liberty presumes an autonomy of self that includes freedom of thought, belief, expression, and certain intimate conduct."

In November, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that barring gays and lesbians from marrying violates the state constitution. The Massachusetts Chief Justice concluded that to "deny the protections, benefits, and obligations conferred by civil marriage" to gay couples was unconstitutional because it denied "the dignity and equality of all individuals" and made them "second-class citizens." Strong opposition followed the ruling.

## 2004

On May 17, same-sex marriages become legal in Massachusetts.

## 2005

Civil unions become legal in Connecticut in October.

## 2006

Civil unions become legal in New Jersey in December.

## 2007

In November, the House of Representatives approves a bill ensuring equal rights in the workplace for gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals.

## 2008

In February, a New York State appeals court unanimously votes that valid same-sex marriages performed in other states must be recognized by employers in New York, granting same-sex couples the same rights as other couples. In February, the state of Oregon passes a law that allows same-sex couples to register as domestic partners allowing them some spousal rights of married couples.

On May 15, the California Supreme Court rules that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. By November 3rd, more than 18,000 same-sex couples have married. On November 4, California voters approved a ban on same-sex marriage called Proposition 8. The attorney general of California, Jerry Brown, asked the state's Supreme Court to review the constitutionality of Proposition 8. The ban throws into question the validity of the more than 18,000 marriages already performed, but Attorney General Brown reiterated in a news release that he believed the same-sex marriages performed in California before November 4 should remain valid, and the California Supreme Court, which upheld the ban in May 2009, agreed, allowing those couples married under the old law to remain that way.

November 4, voters in California, Arizona, and Florida approved the passage of measures that ban same-sex marriage. Arkansas passed a measure intended to bar gay men and lesbians from adopting children.

On October 10, the Supreme Court of Connecticut rules that same-sex couples have the right to marry. This makes Connecticut the second state, after Massachusetts, to legalize civil marriage for same-sex couples. The court rules that the state cannot deny gay and lesbian couples the freedom to marry under Connecticut's constitution, and that the state's civil union law does not provide same-sex couples with the same rights as heterosexual couples.

On November 12, same-sex marriages begin to be officially performed in Connecticut.

## 2009

On April 3, the Iowa Supreme Court unanimously rejects the state law banning same-sex marriage. Twenty-one days later, county recorders are required to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

On April 7, the Vermont Legislature votes to override Gov. Jim Douglas's veto of a bill allowing gays and lesbians to marry, legalizing same-sex marriage. It is the first state to legalize gay marriage through the legislature; the courts of the other states in which the marriage is legal—Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Iowa—gave approval.

On May 6, the governor of Maine legalized same-sex marriage in that state in Maine; however, citizens voted to overturn that law when they went to the polls in November, and Maine became the 31st state to ban the practice.

On June 3, New Hampshire governor John Lynch signs legislation allowing same-sex marriage. The law stipulates that religious organizations and their employees will not be required to participate in the ceremonies. New Hampshire is the sixth state in the nation to allow same-sex marriage.

On June 17, President Obama signs a referendum allowing the same-sex partners of federal employees to receive benefits. They will not be allowed full health coverage, however. This is Obama's first major initiative in his campaign promise to improve gay rights.

On August 12, President Obama posthumously awards Harvey Milk the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

## 2010

March 3, Congress approves a law signed in December 2009 that legalizes same-sex marriage in the District of Columbia.

August 4, Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker rules that Proposition 8, the 2008 referendum that banned same-sex marriage in California, violates the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause. "Proposition 8 singles out gays and lesbians and legitimates their unequal treatment," Vaughn writes. "Proposition 8 perpetuates the stereotype that gays and lesbians are incapable of forming long-term loving relationships and that gays and lesbians are not good parents."

December 18, the U.S. Senate votes 65 to 31 in favor of repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell, the Clinton-era military policy that forbids openly gay men and women from serving in the military. Eight Republicans side with the Democrats to strike down the ban. The ban will not be lifted officially until President Obama, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, and Admiral Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, agree that the military is ready to enact the change and that it won't affect military readiness. On Dec. 18, President Obama officially repeals the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" military policy.

## 2011

June 24, New York passes a law to allow same-sex marriage. New York is now the largest state that allows gay and lesbian couples to marry. The vote comes on the eve of the city's annual Gay Pride Parade and gives new momentum to the national gay-rights movement. The marriage bill is approved with a 33 to 29 vote. Cheering supporters greet Gov. Andrew Cuomo as he arrives on the Senate floor to sign the measure at 11:55pm, just moments after the vote. After making same-sex marriage one of his top priorities, Cuomo emerges as a true champion of gay rights.

## 2012

February 7, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in California rules 2–1 that Proposition 8, the 2008 referendum that banned same-sex marriage in state, is unconstitutional because it violates the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. In the ruling, the court says, the law “operates with no apparent purpose but to impose on gays and lesbians, through the public law, a majority’s private disapproval of them and their relationships.”

February 13, Washington becomes the seventh state to legalize gay marriage.

March 1, Maryland passes legislation to legalize gay marriage, becoming the eighth state to do so.

May 9, President Barack Obama endorses same-sex marriage. “It is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married,” he said. He makes the statement days after Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan both came out in support of gay marriage.

Nov. 6, Tammy Baldwin, a seven-term Democratic congresswoman from Wisconsin, prevails over former governor Tommy Thompson in the race for U.S. Senate and becomes the first openly gay politician elected to the Senate. Also on Election Day, gay marriage is approved in a popular vote for the first time. Maine and Maryland vote in favor of allowing same-sex marriage. In addition, voters in Minnesota reject a measure to ban same-sex marriage.

## 2013

Feb. 27, in a policy shift for party members, several Republicans back a legal brief asking the Supreme Court to rule that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right. More than 100 Republicans are listed on the brief, including former New Hampshire Congressman Charles Bass and Beth Myers. Myers was a key adviser to Mitt Romney during his 2012 presidential campaign. The brief is filed as the U.S. Supreme Court prepares to consider overturning Proposition 8, the California initiative banning same-sex marriage, as well as overturning the Defense of Marriage Act, a federal law passed during Bill Clinton’s presidency, which defines marriage as between a man and a woman. March 26, the Supreme Court begins two days of historical debate over gay marriage. During the debate, the Supreme Court consider overturning Proposition 8, the California initiative banning same-sex marriage, and the Defense of Marriage Act, a federal law passed during Bill Clinton’s presidency, which defines marriage as between a man and a woman. The Supreme Court’s decision will be announced in June 2013.

April 29, Jason Collins of the NBA’s Washington Wizards announces in an essay in *Sports Illustrated* that he is gay. “I’m a 34-year-old N.B.A. center. I’m black and I’m gay,” he writes. “I’ve reached that enviable state in life in which I can do pretty much what I want. And what I want is to continue to play basketball. I still love the game, and I still have something to offer. My coaches and teammates recognize that. At the same time, I want to be genuine and authentic and truthful.” Collins is the first active athlete in the NBA, NFL, NHL, or MLB to make the announcement.

May 2, after same-sex marriage legislation passes in both houses of Rhode Island’s legislature, Governor Lincoln Chafee signs it into law. The new law, legalizing same-sex marriage, goes into effect on August 1, 2013.

May 7, Governor Jack Markell signs the Civil Marriage Equality and Religious Freedom act, legalizing same-sex marriage for the state of Delaware. The new law goes into effect on July 1, 2013.

May 13, in Minnesota, the State Senate votes 37 to 30 in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage. The vote comes a week after it passes in the House. Governor Mark Dayton, a supporter of same-sex marriage, says he will sign the bill the following afternoon. Gay couples will be able to marry in Minnesota in August 2013.

June 26, the Supreme Court rules that the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional. In a 5 to 4 vote, the court rules that DOMA violates the rights of gays and lesbians. The court also rules that the law interferes with the states’ rights to define marriage. It is the first case ever on the issue of gay marriage for the Supreme Court. Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. votes against striking it down as does Antonin Scalia, Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas. However, conservative-leaning Justice Anthony M. Kennedy votes with his liberal colleagues to overturn DOMA.

July 17, Queen Elizabeth II approves a same-sex marriage bill for England and Wales. Her approval comes a day after it passes in Parliament. While the queen’s approval is simply a formality, her quick response clears the way for the first gay marriages to happen as soon as 2014 in England and Wales. The bill allows same-sex couples to marry in both religious and civil ceremonies. It also allows couples currently in a civil partnership to convert it into a marriage. Scotland is currently considering its own new legislation on same-sex marriage.

Aug. 1, Minnesota and Rhode Island begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples this month.

Oct. 21, in an unanimous vote, the New Jersey Supreme Court rejects Gov. Chris Christie’s request to delay the implementation date of same-sex weddings. Same-sex couples in New Jersey begin to marry. Just hours later, Christie drops his appeal to legalize same-sex marriages. Therefore, New Jersey becomes the 14th state to recognize

same-sex marriages. To see a current list of all the states that have legalized same-sex marriage, go here.

Read more: The American Gay Rights Movement: A Timeline | Infoplease.com <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0761909.html#ixzz3F1HmDpv5>

Nov. 5, Illinois becomes the 15th state to recognize same-sex marriages when the House of Representatives approves the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act, which passed the state Senate in February 2013. Governor Pat Quinn, a strong supporter of same-sex marriage, will sign it into law. The new law will be implemented on June 1, 2014.

Nov. 12, Hawaii becomes the 16th state to recognize same-sex marriages when the Senate passes a gay marriage bill, which had already passed in the House. Governor Neil Abercrombie, a vocal supporter of gay marriage, says he will sign the bill. Beginning December 2, gay couples who are residents of Hawaii as well as tourists can marry in the state. Hawaii is already a very popular state for destination weddings. State Senator J. Kalani English says, "This is nothing more than the expansion of aloha in Hawaii." To see a current list of all the states that have legalized same-sex marriage, go here.

## 2014

Jan. 6, the United States Supreme Court blocks any further same-sex marriages in Utah while state officials appeal the decision made by Judge Shelby in late December 2013. The block creates legal limbo for the 1,300 same-sex couples who have received marriage licenses since Judge Shelby's ruling.

Jan. 10, the Obama administration announces that the federal government will recognize the marriages of the 1,300 same-sex couples in Utah even though the state government has currently decided not to do so. In a video announcement on the Justice Department website, Attorney General Eric Holder says, "I am confirming today that, for purposes of federal law, these marriages will be recognized as lawful and considered eligible for all relevant federal benefits on the same terms as other same-sex marriages. These families should not be asked to endure uncertainty regarding their status as the litigation unfolds." With federal approval, same-sex couples will be able to receive spousal benefits, like health insurance for federal employees and filing joint federal income tax returns.

May 19, same-sex marriage becomes legal in Oregon when a U.S. federal district judge rules that the state's 2004 constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage violates the Equal Protection clause in the U.S. Constitution. May 20, a judge strikes down the same-sex marriage ban in Pennsylvania, making the state the 18th to legalize gay marriage. The judge rules that Pennsylvania's 1996 ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. The state is the last in the Northeast to legalize same-sex marriage. Before now, the state did not even recognize domestic partnerships or civil unions.

# Chronology of AIDS Plays

## August 1984

*Warren*, by Rebecca Ranson  
7 Stages, Atlanta, GA

## September 1984

*The AIDS Show*, collaboratively written  
Theatre Rhinoceros, San Francisco, CA

## March 1985

*As Is*, by William M. Hoffman  
Circle Repertory Company and The Glines, New York, NY

## April 1985

*The Normal Heart*, by Larry Kramer.  
The Public Theater, New York, NY  
Revived in Los Angeles and London and again Off-Broadway in 2004. The Broadway debut opened in April 2011.

## October 1986

*Jerker*, by Robert Chesley.  
Celebration Theatre, Los Angeles, CA

## May 1991

*Lips Together Teeth Apart*, by Terrence McNally  
Manhattan Theatre Club, New York, NY  
The play transferred to the Lucille Lortel Theatre on January 1992.

## February 1992

*The Baltimore Waltz*, by Paula Vogel  
Circle Repertory Company, New York, NY  
It was first shown in a workshop at the Perseverance Theatre, Juneau, Alaska, October 1990.

## December 1992

*Jeffrey*, by Paul Rudnick  
WPA Theatre, New York, NY

## 1993

*Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes*, by Tony Kushner. The entire two-part play debuted on Broadway at the Walter Kerr Theatre, and won The Pulitzer Prize. Development of the two parts:

### *Millennium Approaches*

May 1991, Eureka Theatre Company, San Francisco, CA  
It was commissioned by the Center Theatre Group at the Mark Taper Forum and first performed in Los Angeles as a workshop in May 1990.

### *Perestroika*

November 1992, Mark Taper Forum, Los Angeles, CA

## June 1994

*The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*, by David Drake  
Perry Street Theater, New York, NY

## October 11, 1994

*Love! Valour! Compassion!*, by Terrence McNally.  
Manhattan Theatre Club, New York, NY  
transferred to Broadway in 1995 and won the Tony Award for Best Play and the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Play.

## January 1996

*Rent*, by Jonathan Larson  
New York Theatre Workshop, New York, NY  
Loosely based on Giacomo Puccini's opera *La bohème*, the show won a Pulitzer Prize. The musical was first seen in a limited three-week workshop production at in 1994. It moved to Broadway's Nederlander Theatre in April 1996 and won a Tony Award for Best Musical among other awards.

Source: Wikipedia



## Press Release

### Recalling the Beginnings of the AIDS Crisis Through the Play *Warren*, at UB Oct. 23-26

John C. Wilson Directs Spotlight UB Play About Love and Loss at the Dawn of Crisis

Continuing its history of utilizing theater to explore social issues, Spotlight UB will present *Warren*, American playwright Rebecca Ranson's powerful play about caregiving and grief at the beginning of the AIDS crisis, at the University of Baltimore on Oct. 23-26. This surprisingly funny and moving work will feature a mix of campus and local actors, including Adam Cooley, Don Clark, Rebecca Clendaniel, Diane Finlayson, J. Hargrove, Nancy Linden, Kevin James Logan, Patrick Martyn, and Patrik Fleming. John C. Wilson, a UB alumnus and former faculty member, will direct. *Warren* will run in UB's Wright Theater, located in the University's Student Center at 21 W. Mt. Royal Ave., Oct. 23-26. Several performances will be followed by a facilitated audience discussion.

Ranson, a North Carolina native, is a staple of Southern theater and a social activist who began writing this play as her friend Warren Johnston was battling AIDS. Instead of concentrating on the political landscape of the time, Ranson explored the effects of Johnston's illness on his friends and family, along with the fears of a young, bright artist suddenly facing his mortality.

Johnston succumbed to AIDS in San Francisco General Hospital's Ward 5B, one of the first AIDS wards. The play opened in 1984 at Atlanta's Seven Stages Theatre, pre-empting early AIDS activism plays including Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* and William Hoffman's *As Is*.

Wilson, a UB alumnus and former faculty member, personally knew both Ranson and Johnston. He selected the play, which is perhaps the first AIDS play, both to revive a largely forgotten work, and to honor the lives and legacy of these two gifted artists. Wilson says he wants younger generations to better understand the early years of the AIDS crisis.

"I am attracted to plays with strong personal narratives and powerful social issues, which is true of this show and ones I've recently directed—*The Laramie Project* (at Spotlight UB), *Kennedy's Children*, and *A Fierce Longing*," Wilson says.

Ranson has written more than 30 plays, many of them dealing with social issues. Among her many jobs in theater, for 12 years she served as executive director of the Southeastern Arts, Media and Education Project, (S.A.M.E.) a multi-arts organization for the gay and lesbian community in Atlanta. In 2004, she received the Robert Chesley Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award. She currently lives on Virginia's Eastern Shore.

# Discussion Questions

1. What issues or details in *Warren* were most striking or surprising for you? Why?
2. Why do you think Ranson's play has fallen into relative obscurity, while other plays focusing on AIDS have received greater notoriety or have received film treatments?
3. Randy Shilt's (author of *And The Band Played On*) describes the AIDS crisis as a national failure. Do you agree? Who is most at fault, and why? [see quote opposite Table of Contents]
4. How did the AIDS Crisis affect the Gay Rights Movement?
5. What effect did theatre have upon AIDS awareness? Do you think theatre is an effective medium for creating awareness and change?
6. What are the parallels and differences between the AIDS Crisis and the Ebola Epidemic?