

# **WE ARE EVERYWHERE - *Protest, Power, and Pride in the History of Queer Liberation***

*We'll be using these questions only as a guide for our discussion. Please try and read each chapter's questions before reading the book. We will not be able to talk about every question, so circle any questions that you would like to discuss. There are no expectations that you have something to say about each question.*

## **Week Five: Friday, June 3**

### **Part III—Sissy, The Closet Done Burned Down, 1973 - 1979**

1. In San Francisco, for example, the queer community celebrated the defeat of a statewide antigay law in November 1978, only to mourn the murder of openly gay city supervisor Harvey Milk later that month.

**What effect did the ups and downs have on the gay community and society at large during this period?**

2. Troy Perry, founder of the Metropolitan Community Church, church developed for Gays founded in 1968 ...since 1973, twelve of his churches had been burned to the ground. "In one case," he said, referencing a fire in New Orleans that had taken place the same day as Christopher Street Liberation Day 1973, "our minister and ten of our church members were burned to death because of oppression."... Twenty-nine people—one woman, twenty-eight men—died Sunday night; fifteen were hospitalized. Luther Boggs, identified as a homosexual by the local press, lost his teaching job while he lay in a hospital bed; he died soon thereafter, as did two others. "What will we bury the ashes of queers in?" a local radio host asked. "Fruit jars."

**What are your thoughts and feelings about these hate crimes as they compare to those in current events?**

3. In late 1973, the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) delivered perhaps the greatest "public relations tool" imaginable when it adopted two resolutions: first, removing homosexuality per se as constituting a mental illness. Secondly,

organization called for the repeal of all laws discriminating based on sexuality, including those criminalizing private sexual activity between consenting adults. “Being told you’re sick makes you sick,”

**How has this breakthrough been accepted by society and how has it been thwarted?**

4. In the mid-1970s, while some Gay Rights got attention, only the “right gays” got the benefits.

**How did this both positively and negatively benefit the movement as a whole?**

5. Negative backlash—In CA, Lynda Chaffin being declared unfit mother because she was a lesbian, having to surrender custody of children...For those being fired, evicted, separated from children, or punched by bar owners, though, calls to “play our public-relations cards right” were insulting.
6. The Anita Bryant saga in Florida created a mobilization of a “Gay offensive which matches our 1969 birth in strength and anger.”

**Why do you think that gays are most effective when attacked?**

7. Appealing to conservative principles, Reagan warned that Proposition 6 had the possibility of creating real mischief.”

**Why do you think he was more supportive of gays than most conservatives?**