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# GAY L.A.

A History of Sexual Outlaws,  
Power Politics, and  
Lipstick Lesbians

LILLIAN FADERMAN  
STUART TIMMONS



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For Phyllis—who makes everything possible

LF

For Jim Kepner, witness, activist, archivist, and friend

ST

And in memory of those Angelenos we have recently lost:

Betty Berzon

Vern Bullough

Frankie Hucklenbroich

Gavin Lambert

Brian Miller

William Moritz

Johnny Nojima

Jean O'Leary

Savina Teubal

Brenda Weathers

militancy. They feared that the nonprofit power structure—dominated by MECLA types who hoped to work within the system—was not angry enough and not effective enough in the battle. In 1986, an external threat in the form of a hostile ballot proposition crystallized for them the conviction that “loud and rude” was a more appropriate response to the enemy than the “MECLA mold’s” well-modulated tones.<sup>25</sup>

Right-wing politicians had hoped that AIDS, which they imagined as a “gay plague,” would be a wedge to help them turn back gay rights once and for all. In California, the furthest extremist among them, Lyndon La Rouché, introduced a 1986 ballot measure that made John Briggs’ initiative look downright gay-friendly. La Rouché’s Proposition 64 called for mandatory HIV testing, barred exposed Californians from working with children or food, and, most terrifying, raised the specter of quarantine relocation camps for those found to be HIV-infected. (An Orange County congressman who endorsed the initiative vowed to expand on La Rouché’s idea by making it a federal crime for infected persons to kiss.)<sup>26</sup> Despite the efforts of Hollywood celebrities such as Elizabeth Taylor, early polls indicated that La Rouché could win by a wide margin. Torie Osborn (the young lesbian who was to become executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center two years later) was hired to run a Southern California “No on 64” office and, with David Mixner, to plan a media campaign against the proposition. Affluent L.A. gays donated \$3 million to the campaign.<sup>27</sup>

But, as the journalist Bruce Mirken recalls, other gay people whose approach was very different from that of the No on 64 campaign office now decided that it was “time to wake up and get involved.” They formed a coalition that distributed 60,000 fliers in gay bars and neighborhoods across L.A. calling for a protest at La Rouché’s headquarters. More than 4,000 people joined their march, invading the streets of L.A.’s quiet Atwater Village. (La Rouché, who promoted the slogan “Spread panic, not AIDS,” denounced the march itself as a “public health threat.”)<sup>28</sup> The combined efforts of the No on 64 campaign and those who took to the streets of Atwater helped to defeat the proposition by a huge margin: 71 percent to 29 percent. The street-fight against La Rouché provided the momentum and model for a new style in the AIDS war.

Following the victory over La Rouché, the Stop AIDS Quarantine Committee, a group that had been formed by Michael Weinstein and Chris Brownlie as part of the March-on-Atwater coalition, turned to other compelling AIDS problems. Weinstein and Brownlie, old comrades from the Lavender and Red Union, called a public hearing that addressed the County’s failure to provide decent AIDS health care. More than a third of L.A.’s HIV-infected population relied on the Los Angeles County–USC Hospital, where the grim clinic was known only as “5P21” for its room number. Patients were forced to wait up to six weeks for an appointment at County. In the interim, they went untreated; some died.<sup>29</sup>

At the Stop AIDS Quarantine Committee hearing, hundreds of people got up to speak, and the meeting, which started in the morning, lasted well into evening. In the midst of their testimonies, Chris Brownlie was suddenly flattened by an attack of pneumonia and was rushed to the hospital. For three days, he lay on a gurney in a hallway because no room was available. Only a plea from Michael Weinstein to Supervisor Edelman finally got Brownlie into a hospital room. Weinstein had grown from a youthful radical to an admirer of Sheldon Andelson’s expert politicking. Now, however, he realized that gay political circumstances had changed yet again. He saw clearly that “AIDS was so horrifying, and the treatment of AIDS patients was so horrifying, that rubbing elbows wasn’t going to cut it.”<sup>30</sup>

What would cut it—he and many others came to believe—was a response that was tailored to the times and the dire crisis of the epidemic. AIDS activism required a high-impact form of organized protest, backed by complex political strategy: It had to be forceful, intelligent, and most of all it had to convey the urgency of the situation. Such massive, enraged, and organized civil disobedience was on display in 1987 at the March on Washington, a national protest with a sizable Los Angeles contingent. The march included a same-sex wedding of hundreds of couples on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court, followed by a group arrest of dozens protesting federal homophobia. But it was the blunt signs and rude day-glo stickers of an organization recently formed in New York, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, that provided a new

# Dictionary of Antisemitism

*From the Earliest Times  
to the Present*

Robert Michael  
Philip Rosen



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**Robert Michael**

To all those Jewish and Christian souls who have endured,  
who have fought hatred and prejudice,  
and who have made the world a better place.  
To my parents, Gilbert E. Friedberg and Jeanne Greene Friedberg.  
To my brother, Stephen H. Friedberg.  
And, especially, to my wife, Susan,  
and to my children, Stephanie, Andrew, and Carolyn.

**Philip Rosen**

In his famous Mishna Torah,  
the great Jewish philosopher Maimonides wrote:  
“How would one know we were in the days of the Messiah?  
Only that the Jews would no longer be persecuted.”  
To my wife, Lillian; daughters, Serena and Ruth;  
and saintly Sister Rose Thering.

“races” (ethnic groups) by various measurements, particularly the head shape, and urged scientists to engage in selective breeding to improve the human race. For him a good society would be antidemocratic, anticapitalist, and antisemitic. His extreme eugenic views provided **völkisch nationalists** grist for the elimination of the “lower races” in Nazi Germany. *See also* HAECKEL, ERNST.

SUGGESTED READING: Jennifer Michael Hecht, *The End of the Soul: Scientific Modernity, Atheism, and Anthropology in France, 1876–1936* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003); Jennifer Michael Hecht, “Vacher de Lapouge and the Rise of Nazi Science,” *Journal of Ideas* 61, no. 2 (April 2000): 285–304.

**LAROCHE, LYNDON** (1933–). American political activist. In 1989, though jailed for tax and securities fraud, LaRouche remained the head of an **anti-Zionist** and **antisemitic** movement. LaRouche has run for president under different party names many times. He has claimed knowledge of a conspiracy of Jewish **bankers**, espoused **Holocaust denial**, and accused Jews and the British queen of running the international drug trade. *See also* *PROTOCOLS OF THE ELDERS OF ZION, THE*.

SUGGESTED READING: Dennis King, *Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism* (New York: Doubleday, 1989).

**LASSEN, CHRISTIAN** (1800–1876). German orientalist. The Norwegian-German Lassen and French writer **Ernest Renan** were the first scholars to popularize “**Aryans**” and “**Semites**” as racial concepts, borrowing the terms from the names of language groups and claiming that Semites were racially egotistical and exclusive.

SUGGESTED READINGS: George Moss, *Toward the Final Solution* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1985).

**LATERAN COUNCIL, THIRD.** *See* GRATIAN.

**LATERAN COUNCIL, FOURTH.** Roman Catholic Church conclave called by and presided over by Pope **Innocent III** in 1215. Its first canon (church law) clarified “*Salus non est extra ecclesiam*” (There is no salvation outside the Church). Stating “There is one universal Church of the faithful, outside of which absolutely no one is saved, and in which Jesus Christ is himself at once both priest and sacrifice,” the council reaffirmed that only through the Church could a soul be saved from Hell, thus condemning all Jews to eternal suffering in the afterlife. It passed a number of anti-Jewish decrees: Baptized Jews were forbidden to practice Jewish

customs; Jews were not to appear in public at Easter time; they were barred from public office; their interest rates were to be modest (if a Jew practiced “immoderate **usury**” against a Christian, then “all relations with Christians shall be denied him”); and secular Catholic authorities were required to order their Jews to wear distinctive dress and **stigmatic emblems** (**Jew badges**). The council also canceled Christians’ debts to Jews if the former went on **Crusade**. It furthermore called for secular powers to exterminate all **heretics**. *See also* ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE; EXCOMMUNICATION OF JEWS.

SUGGESTED READING: Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Jew in the Modern World* (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College, 1999); William Nichols, *Christian Antisemitism: A History of Hate* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1993).

**LAUGHLIN, HARRY** (1880–1943). American **eugenicist**. Laughlin, editor of *Eugenical News* and executive of the Eugenics Record Office, was appointed as the U.S. House of Representatives’ Committee on Naturalization and Immigration’s “expert eugenics agent” (1921–31). He warned the committee of the “inborn social inadequacy” among Jews and Italians and of the threat that real Americans could be conquered “by other racial stocks” that were “not assimilable.” In 1934, Laughlin opposed any “special . . . provisions for . . . Jews persecuted in Germany,” and in 1939, he “recommended a substantial reduction of immigration quotas, together with procedures to denaturalize and deport some immigrants who had already obtained citizenship.” Laughlin doubted that Jews would be loyal to “American institutions and people . . . the Nordics’ task was to prevent more of them from coming.” *See also* DAVENPORT, CHARLES BENE-DICT.

SUGGESTED READING: Edwin Black, *The War against the Weak: Eugenics and America’s Campaign to Create a Master Race* (New York: Four Walls, Eight Windows, 2003).

**LAVATER, JOHANN KASPAR** (1741–1801). Swiss theologian and pseudoscientist. In 1768, with Christian **triumphalism** in mind, Lavater publicly challenged the brilliant and widely respected Jewish intellectual **Moses Mendelssohn** to either prove the Christian notion of the soul false or else **convert** to Christianity. Ultimately, Mendelssohn wrote *Jerusalem: Religious Power and Judaism* (1783), which argues that the assumed universality of Christianity results in coercive religious beliefs. In *Physiognomy of Nations* (first published in German in 1775), Lavater developed the idea that a person’s inner life was revealed in his or her body’s features.