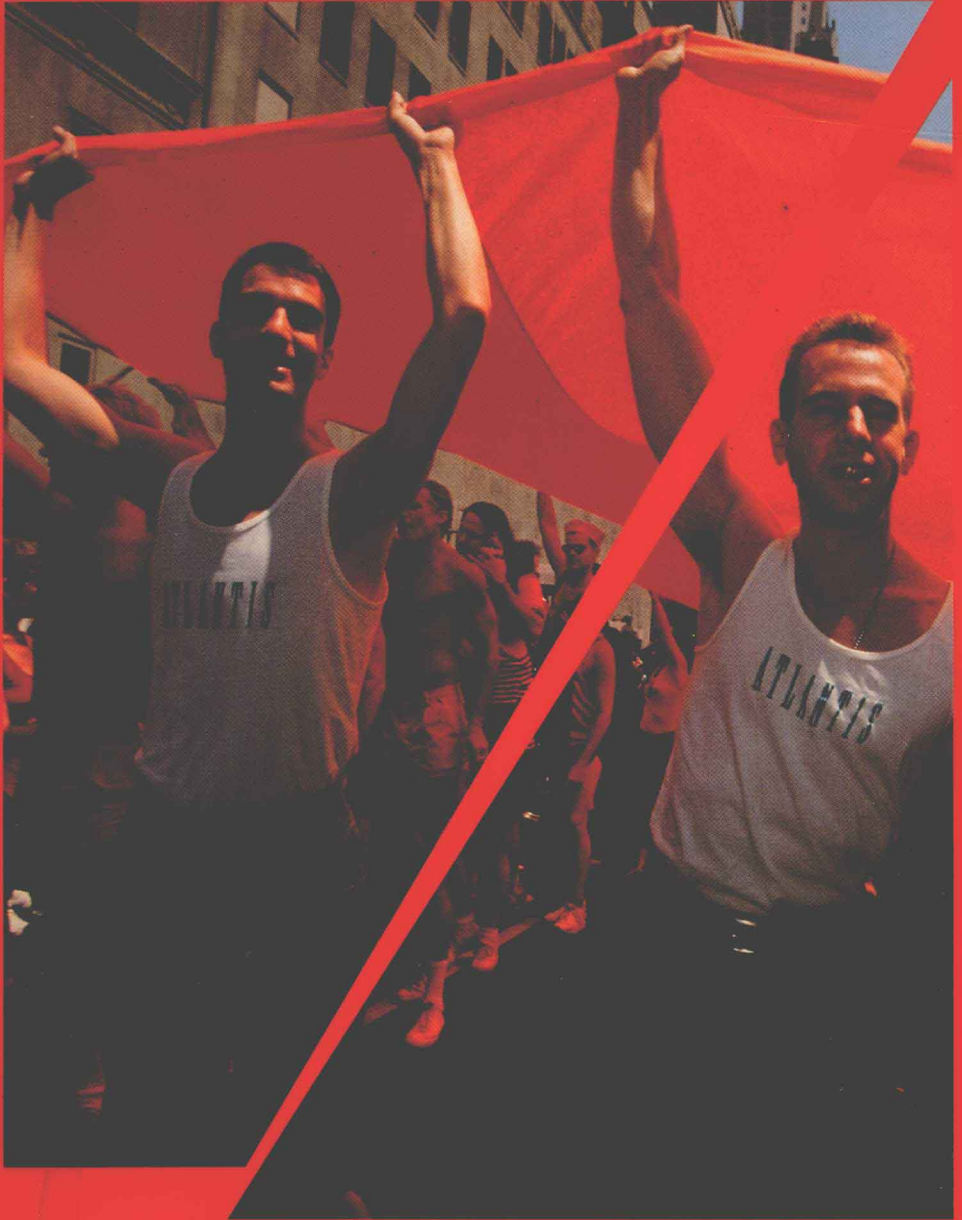


GAY RIGHTS



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Critics argue that homosexuality is incompatible with military service because it disrupts and undermines discipline. This view is misguided and is based on prejudice. There is no evidence that allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the military would be disruptive. Countries that have changed their policies to allow gays and lesbians to serve have noticed no negative effects on morale, efficiency, or discipline.

Chapter 4: Do Gays and Lesbians Need Antidiscrimination Laws?

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Gay rights activists maintain that, as victims of abuse and discrimination, gays and lesbians need extra legal protection. They advocate laws protecting gays from discrimination as a means of leveling the playing field. Conservatives claim that homosexuals already have the same civil rights as everyone else; any additional protections would give them "special rights."

Yes: Gays and Lesbians Need Antidiscrimination Laws

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Gays and lesbians are entitled to the same constitutional rights as other Americans. Their right to live their lives free of abuse and discrimination should be upheld by the force of the law.

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Several constitutional amendments, as well as numerous local, state, and federal laws, guarantee gays and lesbians equal protection under the law. Laws that permit discrimination against homosexuals oppress gays and lesbians and should be repealed. Laws that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation do not give homosexuals "special rights," but the right to be treated equally.

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Colorado voters approved an amendment to their state's constitution (Amendment 2) prohibiting laws that protect homosexuals from discrimination. Because this amendment makes homosexuals a separate class with no right to seek legal protection from discrimination, it violates the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees all Americans equal protection under the law.

No: Gays and Lesbians Do Not Need Antidiscrimination Laws

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