



# **From the Closet to the Courtroom: Five LGBT Rights Lawsuits That Have Changed Our Nation (Queer Ideas/Queer Action)**

*Carlos A. Ball, Michael Bronski*

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The advancement of LGBT rights has occurred through struggles large and small-on the streets, around kitchen tables, and on the Web. Lawsuits have also played a vital role in propelling the movement forward, and behind every case is a human story: a landlord in New York seeks to evict a gay man from his home after his partner of ten years dies of AIDS; school officials in Wisconsin look the other way as a gay teenager is repeatedly and viciously harassed by other students; a lesbian couple appears unexpectedly at a clerk's office in Hawaii seeking a marriage license.


Engaging and largely untold, *From the Closet to the Courtroom* explores how five pivotal lawsuits have altered LGBT history. Beginning each case narrative at the center-with the litigants and their lawyers-law professor Carlos Ball follows the stories behind each crucial lawsuit. He traces the parties from their communities to the courtroom, while deftly weaving in rich sociohistorical context and analyzing the lasting legal and political impact of each judicial outcome.

Over the last twenty years, no group of attorneys has helped to transform this country more than LGBT rights lawyers, and surprisingly, their collective accomplishments have received relatively little attention. Ball remedies that by exploring how a band of largely unheralded civil rights lawyers have attained remarkable legal victories through skill, creativity, and perseverance.

In this richly layered and multifaceted account, Ball vividly documents how these judicial victories have significantly altered LGBT lives today in ways that were unimaginable only a generation ago.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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