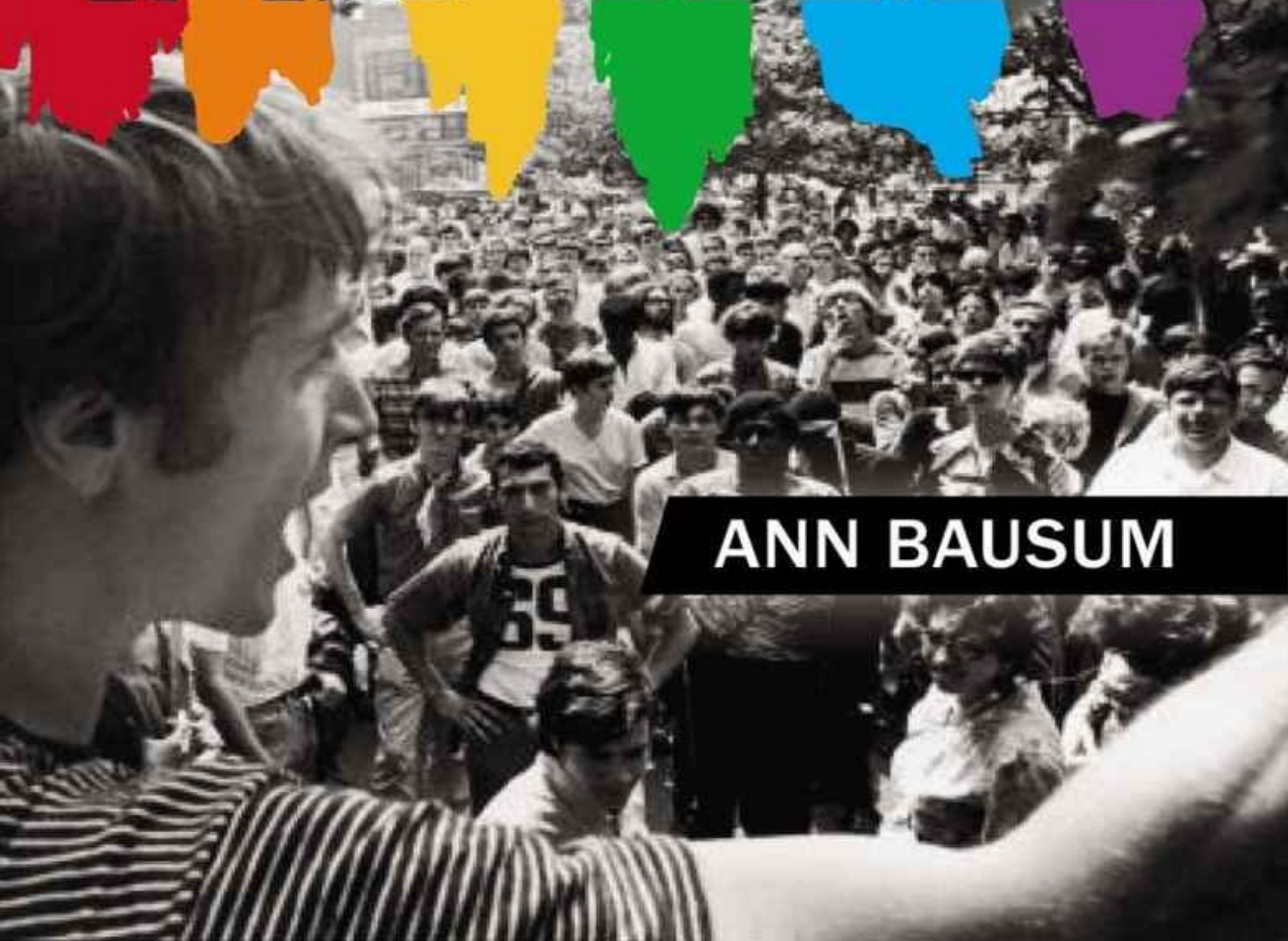


Breaking Out in the Fight for Gay Rights

STONEMATE



ANN BAUSUM

STONE WALL

Breaking Out in the Fight for Gay Rights

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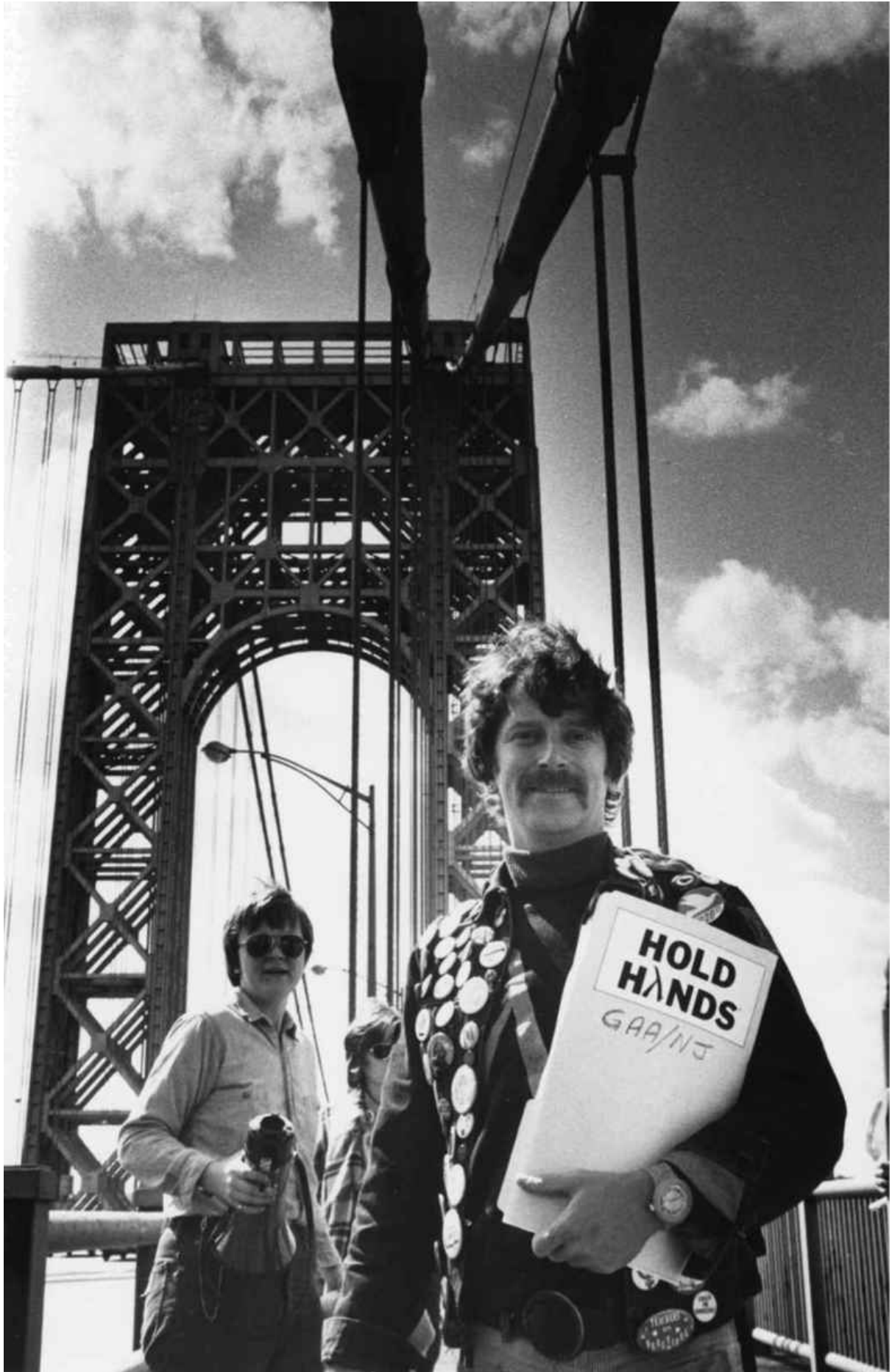
Cover: Marty Robinson (left) addresses a rally commemorating the Stonewall riots, July 27, 1969. “We’ve got to stand up,” he urged. “This is our chance.”

Version_1

Dedicated to Mike Bess



Written in memory of
Tyler Clementi (1991–2010)
and
Michael Riesenbergr (1958–1993)



Members of the Gay Activists Alliance help form a human chain across the George Washington Bridge between New York and New Jersey to demonstrate their support for gay rights, May 6, 1973.

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East Village Rambler, New York City, November 12, 1967.

A PROLOGUE

Greenwich Village.

No, no, no. Not Green-witch. Drop the W. Drop an E.

Grenitch Village. Gren-itch. Got it?

Greenwich Village, 1969: Home to the homeless. Destination for dropouts. Refuge for the kicked out.

Meet at The Corner. That's Greenwich Avenue and Sixth Avenue, opposite West Eighth Street. Everyone is there. To cruise. To chat. To find friends. Friends for life. Friends for a moment.

Walk up Sixth Avenue and you reach Fourteenth Street, the edge of the Village. Walk down Sixth, and you've left the Village when you cross Houston. (No. Not Houston like "Houston, we have lift-off," not Houston like Houston, Texas. It's Houston as in How-ston. Got it?) Cross Houston and you're in SoHo. Go back.

Go back toward The Corner, head east on Eighth Street, turn right at Fifth Avenue, and you'll find Washington Square Park. The heartbeat of the Village. Another hangout. There's the fountain and the namesake arch: "The event is in the hand of God." Open space. Green space. A space for hanging out.

Keep heading east and you stay in the Village. That's the East Village over there.

But back at The Corner, you're in the West Village. The place to be.

Don't miss Christopher Street. Born at The Corner. Headed toward the Hudson River, the western boundary of Manhattan. Walk to the water's edge and you've reached the trucks. More later about the trucks.

But first, retrace your steps. Follow the narrow street back to the breathing spot of Seventh Avenue South. Lots of streets meet here. Lots of open space celebrates the junctures. Even a park. Christopher Park. Easy to remember. Christopher Street. Christopher Park.

That door where people pause, then enter? Yes. That's important. Pay attention.

That's the Stonewall.

The Stonewall Inn.

Pay attention.

History walks through that door.