

Jack Nichols



1938-2005

Influential gay leader and activist, Jack Nichols helped plan one of the first organized and annual gay and lesbian civil rights demonstrations in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and New York City from 1965 to 1969, prior to Stonewall. The first of those demonstrations was held on July 4, 1965, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. He cofounded a Mattachine Society in Washington, DC in 1961, and in Florida in 1965. In August 1963, Jack and nine other members of the Washington, DC, and Mattachine Society openly participated in the civil rights demonstration at the Lincoln Memorial. Nichols helped organize the first gay and lesbian protest at the White House on April 17, 1965. Nichols was among the first gay activists to challenge the American Psychiatric Association's position that homosexuality was a mental illness. In 1967 he appeared as a self-identified gay male in an interview with Mike Wallace. It was the first CBS documentary on homosexuality. From 1969 to 1973, Nichols and his partner, the late Lige Clark, were editors of GAY, the first gay weekly newspaper in the country. Together they wrote the first nonfiction memoir by a gay male couple, "I Have More Fun With You Than Anybody." Nichols authored several other books, including Men's Liberation: A New Definition of Masculinity and The Gay Agenda: Talking Back to the Fundamentalists.