

**Submission
No 7**

**INQUIRY INTO GAY AND TRANSGENDER HATE CRIMES
BETWEEN 1970 AND 2010 - 57TH PARLIAMENT**

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In 1984, I was a shift worker at News Ltd in Surry Hills, Sydney, and live on Bourke St on the other side of Surry Hills. I often walked home at night and was often chased home by gangs of young men with weapons.

One night on my way home, I stopped at a pub on Oxford St to meet with friends. My friend, Gary, and I left together, walked up to Taylor Square and, as he lived in Woolloomooloo and I lived in the opposite direction, said goodnight and went our separate ways.

Only minutes later, I heard footsteps running up behind me so I began to run as usual. But looking back over my shoulder I saw that it was a friend who had been at the pub. He ran up to me, hugged me and said, "Thank God you're ok. They got Gary."

Six men had surrounded Gary and beaten and kicked him to death directly across the road from the Darlinghurst Police Station. I was told that Gary was unrecognisable, such was the violence of the attack. Those six men were then seen to climb into several cars and simply drive away. Gary was murdered on the street that I was walking down and I am alive because on that night I turned right instead of left. That is not good enough.

I will never forget those words. "They" got Gary. "They" were a standard part of life for a gay man in Sydney in the 1980s. While politicians, religious leaders, and the Media were using the expression "God's Wrath" in reference to the AIDS epidemic, members of the general public were putting that wrath into action for themselves.

I will never forgive the Judaeo-Christian politicians of the day who not only tolerated the hatred of gay men but behaved in ways that exacerbated that hatred.