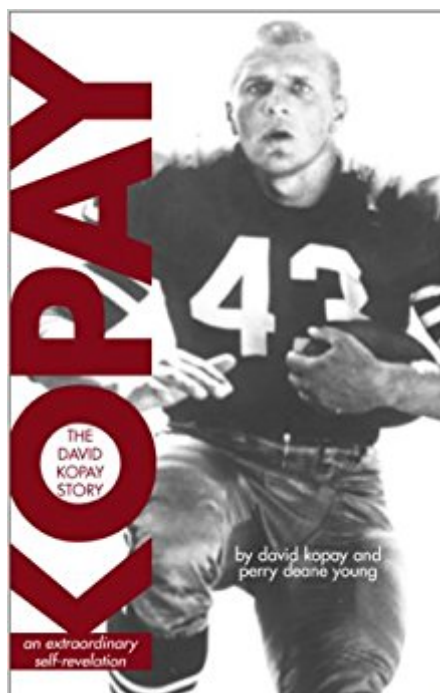


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# The David Kopay Story: An Extraordinary Self-Revelation



## Synopsis

Twenty-three years after publishing his story, David Kopay remains the only NFL player who has publicly acknowledged his homosexuality. From psychotherapy to hypnosis to heartbreaking family confrontations to finally surprising acceptance from former teammates and coaches, this is a story of denial leading to acceptance, and finally to pride. As inspiring today as it was upon publication, Advocate Books is proud to make The David Kopay Story available to a new generation of readers. David Kopay has been involved in a variety of business ventures since his decision to leave professional football. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

David Kopay has been involved in a variety of business ventures since his decision to leave professional football. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

I enjoyed the book. I learned about David things I didn't know, however, there were information I felt were missing. He didn't go into much details that I was expecting like I have read from other football players. However, you will enjoy it.

Being a don't ask don't tell type for years, I can identify with the secret a well known person deals with in order to thrive in a professional career but it is like living a huge lie. The David Kopay Story is a fascinating read.

It's an older book, no professional writer, just two gay guys who want to show what homosexuality was at the time. With MILK (movie) and The Normal Heart (movie), both real life events, it depicts a view of the gay world. And living today, it's still a current topic. And especially in sports. Many have gotten the spotlight for coming out, mostly after their careers. But there are signs that some choose to be up front from the birth of their possible stardom. Well it's good to see/read that those close know even if it's not in the public eye.

I can only say this book is "okay" for someone who knows of Dave Kopay, or perhaps who is gay. Someone not in either of these categories would be challenged to find this book worth the time of reading. I am not gay, nor do I have much of an understanding of being so, nor of the challenges such presents. This book does help the reader understand some of those challenges. Dave Kopay was an "All-American guy", stereotypical of a real "macho man" as then thought to be. With such a bias, I would have guessed that Dave was the last guy in our US Army company to be gay. Yes, I served with him in that army. I was astounded to hear of his "coming out." Some of Dave's revelations are disappointing and somewhat sickening; i.e., a number of prostitutions, bar pickups, etc. This, too, does not represent the Dave that I thought I knew. I knew him as a man of high standards, regardless of his sexual orientation. While it has been decades since I've seen Dave, and only did I know him a bit while we were in the army together, this book revealed a totally different side of David Kopay from that person I thought I knew. I'm happy for him that he "came out" and I do hope that he's found happiness in his life.

This book was a real revelation to me. To read a firsthand account of a gay man's journey, back in the late 1970s, was truly a rare, and positive experience. This was the era when gays were finally getting positive public recognition (at least on TV and in the press) other than being labeled "not normal," mentally ill, or other negative call-words. These were the days of gay marches, people "coming out" publicly, and the dawn of a new and positive age for homosexuality. Reading this book was a very mind-blowing experience. To read, and understand, David Kopay's struggle and coming to terms with his own sexual identity, "coming out" to his parents and family, and the discrimination he experienced in searching for a job in the sports field, truly shows the social climate of the times; and also might show others that the human experience is similar to most people. Perhaps "straight" people, right-wing Republicans and religious fanatics of the Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell types might gain some insight into the human condition by reading this, and similar, books. Too much time is spent on negativity and extolling people's differences by some groups and people; when there is

still homophobia and gay-bashing still going on -- as shown by the sad episode of Matthew Shepherd, not too many years ago. This book is a must-read for any gay man, also friends and family members of gay persons. The book may just show people that there isn't much difference between people, whatever their race, sexual preferences, or even religious beliefs. Even though I read this book almost twenty years ago, its message is still strong, and I highly recommend this book to anyone who has a gay family member, a gay friend, or if you are a gay person reading this.

After reading this incredible novel, I was surprised that David Kopay remains obscure to most people. An NFL football player of ten years, David Kopay decides to unmask himself and come out of the closet in the Washington Star newspaper. What happens then is a series of trials for him, in the very gay-oppressed 1970s. He meets such huge figures of history, such as Jimmy Carter, Congressman Gerry Studds, and the slain mayor and office holder of San Francisco, Harvey Milk and George Moscone. Throughout his unfolding, revelational story, he denounces the religious right, and the hate that Christianity brings to other fellow human beings. Kopay finds that the only way to be true to oneself, is to simply tell the truth. He does so, and the whole world comes to face him. Being in the National Football League (the NFL) is all the much harder, since professional football in America has become the epitome of masculinity and machismo, and gay men are supposed to not exist within this world. Kopay proves the stereotypes wrong, and tells personal stories of other gay men within the football world, including a fellow NFL player who dies of AIDS, Jerry Smith. This book is an integral story for everyone alive, for through Kopay, we can see a mirror of ourselves.

Inevitably somewhat dated, this book (first published in 1977, but revised a bit since) is nonetheless still on the short list of must-reads for both gay people and for heterosexuals who want to know more about gay people and what we go through. Kopay was hugely courageous to come out when he did, on the scale he did, and as a former NFLer no less! Kopay's autobiography (it's not "a novel," as the review before mine says) busts all sorts of stereotypes, but his story is really quite similar to those of many gay men who have never fit the stereotypes in the first place. Kopay was so ahead of his time that I don't think any professional football player has come out since him (Jerry Smith, who died of AIDS, is described in the book, and was a buddy of Kopay's, never really came out).

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