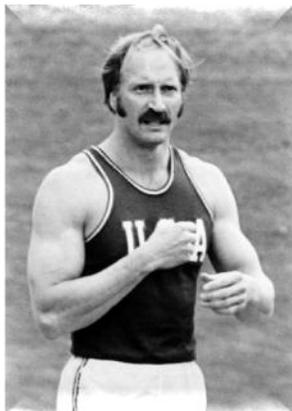


# TOM WADDELL

Gay U.S. Athlete, Physician and Founder of the Gay Games  
(1937-1987)



Entering college on a track scholarship to pursue a pre-med major, Tom Waddell earned his M.D. in 1965. Drafted into the Army in 1966, Waddell became a preventative-medicine officer and paratrooper. When he realized he would be sent to Vietnam he voiced his moral opposition to war. Instead of court-martialing him, the Army sent Waddell to study tropical diseases and later to train as a decathlete for the 1968 Olympics. The oldest member of the U.S. Olympic team, he placed sixth. A subsequent knee injury dashed his hopes of making the 1972 team. Relocating to San Francisco in 1974, he established a private practice and immersed himself in gay life. In June 1976 Waddell and his then lover, Charles Deaton, were the first homosexuals to appear in the 'Couples' section of People Magazine. In 1981 Waddell had the idea to organize a gay sporting event modeled on the Olympics. Weeks prior to the first Gay Olympics in 1982, the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) sued Waddell's organization over the use of the word 'Olympics,' claiming that association with the gay community would taint the brand. Though Waddell renamed the competition "The Gay Games," the USOC sued to recover its legal costs. In 1981, while working on the Games, Waddell met public relations specialist Zohn Artman, who became his lover, and lesbian athlete Sara Lewinstein, with whom he conceived a daughter, Jessica, born in 1983. To secure Jessica and Sara's rights following his diagnosis with AIDS, Waddell and Lewinstein married in 1985. Despite his illness, he competed in Gay Games II in 1986 and won Gold in the javelin event. In life as in sports, Waddell's motto was always "Winning is doing your best." He died from an AIDS-related illness on July 11, 1987 at the age of 49. The Gay Games continue to be held every four years throughout the world, dedicated to Waddell's memory.

## Lesson Plan

### Level 1: Contributions Approach

1. Activate prior experience: What do you know about Tom Waddell, the Gay Olympic athlete, physician, and paratrooper?
2. Read the biographical information found at this link: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom\\_Waddell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Waddell)
3. Describe how Waddell lived "An All American Family" in this link: <http://moviesector.net/AnAllAmericanFamily.html>

### Level 2: Additive Approach

1. Based upon his strong conviction, Waddell protested his belief against the Vietnam War. Investigate how his belief for justice became a motivating factor in other choices that he made in his life. Examine the following biography at [http://www.browsebiography.com/bio-tom\\_waddell.html](http://www.browsebiography.com/bio-tom_waddell.html)
2. Connect Waddell's activism to others during this time period in the U.S.
3. How did Waddell become an alternative role model for younger homosexuals? Read the report in <http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20066975,00.html>
4. Website Investigation: Describe the attributes that Waddell shared in common with other role models in athletics or medicine from The Legacy Project at <http://www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Athletics.html> and <http://www.legacyprojectchicago.org/Medicine.html>

### Level 3: Transformational Approach

1. Investigate Waddell's early life, medical life, sporting career, and Gay Olympic career. How did Waddell develop his own sense of ethics and values to pursue his goals? View this link at <http://www.lgbthistorymonth.com/tom-waddell?tab=biography>
2. Describe the events in Waddell's life that become pivotal in developing his strong identity as a gay man? Read the following: <http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1066220/5/index.htm>
3. How did Waddell's become a model for transforming himself into a strong role model for others? Examine the following: [http://www.glbtc.com/arts/waddell\\_t.html](http://www.glbtc.com/arts/waddell_t.html)

### Level 4: Social Action Approach

1. Waddell is the founder of the Federation of Gay Games, a sports competition for individuals of all sexual orientations. View this link at <http://gaygames.org/wp/mission-and-values/frequently-asked-questions/our-founder-dr-tom-waddell/>
2. View the Tom Waddell tribute, Gay Games IV, New York at this link: View this link at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbskJZrCo8Y>
3. Waddell was a "teacher" in so many ways as described in the following: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCzsZqg14wQ>  
Describe how you can be a teacher for our society?