Communication: The Rainbow Riots

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Junior Division
Group Exhibit
Exhibit: 494
Process Paper: 500
Process Paper

When we first learned about the National History Day project, we immediately thought of the LGBTQ+ community, and specifically, the Stonewall riots. This topic has always been of interest to us, as some of our friends are part of this community. We were always curious about how this community came to be, and why people are against it. Throughout American history, protests have been a key method of communication to our society. The Stonewall Riots are a prime example of this. The first day of rioting was violent, but peaceful protests also came to be, with hundreds of people gathering on streets and showing their pride.

While conducting research, we primarily used well-known sources, such as The New York Times, CNN, and The Washington Post. Though primary sources were harder to find, we managed to get first-hand accounts, and interviews with participants, which were the most helpful to our group, as it gave us insight on what it was like to be in the riots.

When we first got together for this project, we divided work based on our individual strengths. I focused on writing, while other members focused on research and visual appeal. We split the annotations as evenly as possible, citing our sources as we found them. When we were happy with our progress, we decided on the background of our trifold: the pride flag, a symbol of diversity.

The Stonewall Riots are what many considered the kickstart of the Gay Rights Movement, the turning point of a long battle. It inspired thousands of people to stand up for their basic human rights, and continue to fight for them through protests. One of the effects of the riots was the creation of the Gay Liberation Front, an organization dedicated to the LGBTQ+ community. The historical argument of our project was a very important part of our project, so, while writing our thesis, we made several different drafts trying to make our argument clear. The first draft was relatively well worded, but it exceeded the word limit and didn’t quite make a
Process Paper

The second draft was within the word limit and had a historical argument, but it didn’t have a connection to the NHD theme for this year. The third draft, however, had a good combination of all three. That was the draft we used for the final project. The final draft of our physical exhibit included a timeline of events to display changes that occurred as a result of Stonewall. The first riot had very little people in attendance, but, after Stonewall, more and more people joined the cause, until there were over 200,000 people attending the protests.

The Stonewall uprising was vital to creating the Gay Rights Movement, a historical event that shifted the public’s perspective about homosexuality, little by little. While the LGBTQ+ community is still fighting for their rights, they have made significant progress since 1969. They can marry, wear the clothing that they want, and openly express themselves like never before.
Annotated Bibliography

Primary:


This primary source gave us an interview with Inspector Pine. Inspector Pine was the officer who led the raid against Stonewall in 1969.


This primary image helped me further understand the early press reactions to the Stonewall riots. It also displayed what the bar was like before the riots happened and the building burned down.


This source gave a good picture of the Stonewall Inn. The image also gave us background and information about the incident at the Stonewall Inn.


This source was a written statement from the Gay Liberation Front. It was helpful in finding the psychological reasons why society judged them so harshly.
This source was an interview with Raymond Castro. Raymond Castro was a participant of the riots.


This CNN article describes the full events of the riots. It has several primary pictures, one of which was used for our project.


This article summarizes the death of Seymour Pine, the officer who led the raid on Stonewall. We used an older image of him on our trifold board

“One of the images from this website was an old newspaper describing the riots. We used this on our final project.

This primary source was an interview with Sylvia Rivera, speculated to have thrown the first brick at officers during the raid. She, along with Marsha P. Johnson, also participated in the peaceful protests that followed the events of the riots.


This source was helpful because it gave a few first hand accounts of what happened at the riots. It also shows how the people participating saw the riots differently than the ones who did not.


This source gave us another interview with Marsha P. Johnson, a key figure in the Stonewall Riots and the trans/queer community. She was one of the many who had been rumored to have thrown the first brick at officers.

This source gave me important insight on what it was like to participate in the Stonewall riots. It also gave our project its first primary source. We got a few quotes from here.


This article featured a primary image that we used on our exhibit. The image showed protestors struggling with police officers.


Our group used a picture provided in this article for our visual presentation. The article summarizes the events of the Stonewall riots.


This source gave us an interview of a participant in the riots. In the interview, the participant speaks about their experience during the riots.

This website featured multiple primary images, one of which we used for the visual aspect of our project. The image was of a news article describing the riots.


This website provided our group with a photo to use on our physical exhibit. The image was of a paragraph describing the diagnosis of homosexuality before the Stonewall riots.

**Secondary:**


This site features a timeline of basic events in the LGBTQ+ fight for equal rights timeline. It includes the Stonewall riots, and the legalization of same sex marriage, along with other significant events for the LGBTQ+ movement.


This site gives us more information about the Annual Reminders. We used a photograph from here, the one about the dress codes.

This site gave us information about the gatekeeping that happened then and now in the LGBTQ+ community. Gatekeeping is generally defined as restricting or controlling access to something.

Burey, Jodi-Ann. “‘It Wasn't No Damn Riot’: Celebrating Stonewall Uprising Activist Stormé DeLarverie.” The Riveter, 29 June 2020,
theriveter.co/voice/it-wasnt-no-damn-riot-celebrating-stonewall-uprising-activist-storme-delarverie/.

This source gave us information about lesbian icon Storme DeLarverie, who was believed to have encouraged the crowd to fight back, starting the riots. Her actions that morning set the ball rolling for the LGBTQ+ rights movement.


This article gave us information on the two marches on Washington. Specifically, it gave us a bit more insight on the Second March on Washington.


This article was an obituary of Marsha P. Johnson, a transgender woman who participated in the riots. Images of her protesting in the streets of New York were pictures we found in our research.

This source helped me define often misused terms such as gender and biological sex. Romantic attraction and sexual orientation were also defined on this website.


This source gave us some pictures of the Annual Reminders in Philadelphia. We also got information about the Annual Reminders, which helped us prove our historical argument.


This source had a collection of primary sources available to use. The collection included pictures, documents, and written statements


This source gave us a list of laws put up to protect the LGBTQ+ community over the past few years. These laws helped prevent possible discrimination against them.

We got some more quotes from this source. It listed the names of some important people in the Gay Rights movement.


This gave us a collective timeline to the LGBTQ+ rights movement. It also showed us the road to the Pride Parade.


This source helped me figure out what happened during the incident of the Stonewall riots. It also helped me understand the short term effects better.


This is a newspaper about the Democrats trying to get the LGBTQ+ community on its side for the election. They hoped it would win them more votes.

This source was a written statement from the Gay Liberation Front, elaborating on the possible reasons why they are discriminated against. It was helpful in providing information to quote off of or use in our final presentation.


This site gave me insight on the events leading up to the Stonewall riots. There were also other documents related to discriminatory laws against LGBTQ+ individuals.


This gave us some interesting information about the Stonewall Riots. It also gave what happened after.

This source gave me some more information about the laws against sodomy and homosexuality. These laws were eventually removed and replaced with laws protecting the rights of homosexuals.


This source gave us a quote from Ellen DeGeneres, a famous lesbian woman who’s coming out helped push the LGBTQ+ community further into the public eye. We got another quote from here.


This secondary source helped me understand how the press reacts now to the Stonewall riots in the present and how the police view the incident. The NYPD issued an official apology regarding their actions during the riots years later.

This site gave me some information on how rights for transgender people are improving. For example, the don’t ask, don’t tell policy was removed recently.

Green, Lucy Santos. “Stonewall and Its Impact on the Gay Liberation Movement.” Stonewall and Its Impact on the Gay Liberation Movement | DPLA,

This source gave our group insight on how tensions exploded between the Gay rights movement and law enforcement. The article explains the relationship between the two in excruciating detail.

“Harry Hay Quotations at QuoteTab.” QuoteTab, 2019,

This source was used for a quote by Harry Hay. Hay was a communist gay rights leader who founded the Mattachine Society.

Hastings, Christobel. “How Lavender Became a Symbol of LGBTQ Resistance.” CNN, Cable News Network, 4 June 2020,

This source gave us an idea of important symbols in the LGBTQ+ movement. One of these being Lavender.

www.history.com/topics/gay-rights/the-stonewall-riots.

This site helps portray the events of the Stonewall riots in a historical view. It also explains why the events happened and what led to the incident.

This article explains the new Equality Act in great detail. It has not been made official law, but if so, it will be a major step forward for the community.


This article helped us understand that the transgender and LGBTQ+ community still have a long way to go in terms of equality. Although they stood up for their rights, they aren’t the perfect civil rights movement.


This article helped me understand why people were against homosexuals by presenting the reader with facts and solid reasoning. The article also uses evidence from studies about homophobia.


This article gave us some statistics from 2016 of the LGBTQ+ American population. Researchers found it difficult to find a more exact estimate of this particular population.

This secondary source helped me understand what actually happened during the first Stonewall riot, and how and why it started. More specifically, Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and Storme DeLarverie were all named and well known participants of the riots.


This source provided our group with a complete and accurate timeline. It was very helpful in finding the dates of important events for our topic.


This gave me a list of facts about the Stonewall Riots. This helped us to find more sources about Stonewall Inn.

This source helped me understand how the people at the event felt about the Stonewall Riots, and how they feel about the outcome. As of 2021, most people in America support the LGBTQ+ community, although there is still some backlash.


There are multiple verses in the Bible that supposedly condemn homosexuality. This particular website was helpful in debunking those verses.


This article featured a secondary source, a picture, that we used in our exhibit. The picture portrayed people protesting against homosexuality, calling it a sin.


This source gave us a timeline of the 20th/21st century LGBTQ+ events. We got more information on things like the Marches on Washington and how the community slowly got rights.
This article provided our group with a picture of sip-ins, which were peaceful protests that occurred before the riots. People would enter a bar, announce their sexuality, and if the bar refused to serve them, they would sue.

This source provided us with a picture of the First March on Washington. We also learned more about the marches and the evolution of LGBTQ+ rights.

This source gave us a picture of the first pride parade. We also got information about the first pride parade here.
We got a picture from this site. We also used it to get some information about the marches on Washington.


This source helped me understand how the press covered the Stonewall riots and how they viewed the incident. We assume, based on an article we found describing the riots, that the press viewed the riots as a random act of violence, almost unprovoked.


In our society, gender and biological sex are often mistaken to be the same thing, which they aren’t. I found this webpage useful in properly defining those terms.


This source gives us more information about the transgender military ban. This ban was finally removed by President Biden in January 2021.

“President Obama Designates Stonewall National Monument.” *Whitehouse.gov*, Whitehouse, 24 June 2016,

We used a quote from this site. We used the one about Obama dedicating the Stonewall National Monument.


This site gave me some useful information about the way the military was for gays and lesbians. Most couldn’t be open about their sexuality, until the removal of the don’t ask don’t tell policy.


This article gave our group a full timeline of the events of the Stonewall Riots. It also gave the time in which these events occurred, and some of the early reactions.


In particular, this website gave our group a picture to put in the final project. The picture depicted the diagnosis of homosexuality before the riots occurred.

This source explained how the media and news described people who were gay or lesbian. It also described how people were treated on the streets and or in their homes.

Reuters Graphics. “Forsaken Transgender Pioneers Recognized 50 Years after Stonewall.”

Reuter,

We used this website for a picture of the transgender activists Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson. We also got some more information about their lives and activism regarding transgender people and the Stonewall Riots.

Ryan, Hugh. “How Dressing in Drag Was Labeled a Crime in the 20th Century.” History.com,
A&E Television Networks, 25 June 2019,

This source helped us better understand why so many drag queens/kings and transgender people were arrested during the riots. This was mostly due to the three article rule, which wasn’t even technically a law. It stated that one couldn’t wear over three items of clothing associated with the opposite sex.

This source gave me an idea of the liquor law that led to the Stonewall Inn being raided by the police. The owners of the bar were appealing to homosexuals while serving illegal liquor, mostly to gain more profit.


This gave us an idea of what the Annual Reminders were in Philadelphia. Also why the Stonewall Riots were such a huge deal to the LGBTQ+ community.


This article gave us information on Obama’s take on LGBTQ+ rights. We got a quote from here.


This source provided our group with an image of the current pride parade. The picture also helped our project to look more visually appealing and to display current views on the LGBTQ+ community.

This article gave us more background information in case of questions asked by the judges. It details the Lavender Scare, which was a fear of gay people in the ‘50s and ‘60s.


This article describes early reactions to the legalization of same sex marriage. Our group used a picture as a part of the trifold presentation.


This site gave us access to a picture we used about the Lavender Scare. We also got a bit of basic information about the scare.

This source helped me realise what a big impact the Stonewall riots had on everyone. It really did affect the conversation, and laws for the LGBTQ+ community.


This article helped me understand the long term effects and short term effects of what the Stonewall riots did, and how they had affected history. For example, pride month, which occurs in June, is dedicated to the LGBTQ+ community.


We didn’t use this site for much research, but it was extremely helpful in learning more about the riots. It gave us quite a lot of detail and information concerning the riots.


This talks about transgender people and how they still aren’t able to serve in the U.S. military. Discrimination among transgender people in the military is still a problem.

This source gave us at the decriminalization of sodomy and homosexuality in America after/before/during the Stonewall Uprising. More and more of these discriminatory laws were removed as the years went on.


We got a good chunk of information about the Annual Reminders and gay protests before Stonewall to help us prove our historical argument and that change had occurred at Stonewall.


This source gave us the numbers for the second March On Washington. This is where the people protested about the AIDS crisis.

This was a detailed and long timeline of events at the Stonewall Riots. It included helpful quotes to aid our project.
Equal Rights
PRIDE
COMMUNICATIONS
THE
RAINBOW
ROOTS
In the years before Stonewall, the LGBTQ+ community was heavily discriminated against. Homosexuality was even considered a mental illness by the American Psychiatric Association. In the 1950s, President Eisenhower started what is now known as the Lavender Scare: a fear of gays and lesbians in the government, which led to mass firings. Sip ins, which were plays on the African American sit-ins, were orchestrated by members of the Mattachine Society. Members would walk in, declare their sexuality, and demand a drink, which was against the law at the time. While they were social outcasts, gay bars like the Stonewall Inn were a haven for LGBTQ+ individuals. Unfortunately, these bars were often raided by police.
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Source Credit Text: The dress code for the Annual Reminders, hsp.org
The three article rule, Facebook.
An image of sip-in’s, a form of peaceful protests in bars, history.com
“I knew that I was gay in every bone of my body. So I did the only thing I could do. I started the movement,” Harry Hay, one of the founders of the Mattachine Society.
Source Credit Text: Annual Reminder
Demonstrations, Whyyy.
Newspaper regarding the Lavender Scare, which was
the mass firing of gays and esbians in the workplace,
uwm.edu.

"I'd like to see the gay revolution get started, but there hasn't been any
demonstration or anything recently. You know how the straight people are.
When they don't see any action they think, 'Well, gays are all forgotten now,
they're worn out, they're tired.' ... If a transvestite doesn't say I'm gay and I'm
proud and I'm a transvestite, then nobody else is going to hop up there and say
I'm gay and I'm proud and I'm a transvestite for them." -Marsha P. Johnson,
transgender activist and Stonewall participant
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1924: The Society of Human Rights founded. Disbanded months later.

1950s: The Lavender Scare

1951: The Mattachine Society founded.
On June 28, 1969, the New York Police Department conducted a raid on the gay bar known as Stonewall Inn. Usually the patrons would be arrested and taken into custody, but this time, the crowds began to fight back. Although the first few days after the uprising were violent, peaceful protests occurred as well; and with that, a movement was born. The LGBTQ+ rights movement. Their endless communication via protest had lasting effects on the society they lived in.

"It was a rebellion, it was an uprising, it was a civil rights disobedience... it wasn’t no damn riot." - Stoney DeLaVore, boss lesbian and Stonewall participant

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“It was a rebellion, it was an uprising, it was a civil disobedience--it wasn’t no damn riot.”--Storm DeLaverie, butch lesbian and Stonewall participant.
On June 24, 1969, the NYPD raided the Stonewall Inn for serving without a liquor license. They planned another raid for Friday, and on the night of June 28, 1969, eight undercover police officers entered the bar. In the early morning hours, they began the raid. They arrested the owners of the bar, who were part of the Mafia, and circulating rumors, for violating the Three Article Rule. More police officers arrived and they began to arrest the LGBTQ+ patrons, but unlike other nights, the crowd didn’t disperse.

One woman, thought to be the bar’s lookout, Stonewall Inn owner, put up a struggle, and called on the crowd to act. The crowd began to throw bottles and rocks at the police officers, some even throwing them around from a car the police, along with officers Howard Carter, barricaded themselves into the Stonewall Inn. Shortly after, the establishment was set on fire. At about the same time, reinforcements arrived, and the premiums scattered. Surprisingly, there were no casualties or serious injuries. The riots were quickly covered in the local news. The article, "How the New York media covered the Stonewall Riots," by Chad Hutton, states: "The story was framed as an instance of fearless youth reacting against an almost unprecedented one."
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One woman, thought to be the butch lesbian Storme DeLarvarie, put up a struggle, and called on the crowd to act. The crowd began to throw bottles and coins at the police officers, some even taunting them. Around four a.m, the police, along with reporter Howard Carter, barricaded themselves in the Stonewall Inn. Shortly after, the establishment was set on fire. At about the same time, reinforcements arrived, and the protestors scattered. Surprisingly, there were no casualties or serious injuries. The riots were quickly covered in the local news. The article, “How the New York media covered the Stonewall Riots,” by Chad Painter, states: “The story was framed as an instance of lawless youth run amok – an almost unprovoked riot.”
The Stonewall Riots, although pivotal in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights, isn't a particularly well known event. In fact, not many schools cover this event in their history classes, including our own. In our current age, it may be controversial for some, but awareness, at the very least, is important.

Source Credit Text: Messages written on the windows of the inn, CNN. Christopher Street Gay Liberation Day Parade, NYC LGBT.
The Stonewall Riots, although pivotal in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights, isn’t a particularly well known event. In fact, not many schools cover this event in their history classes, including our own. In our current age, it may be controversial for some, but awareness, at the very least, is important.

1965-1969: Less than one hundred people attend the peaceful, formal Annual Reminders in Philadelphia.

1969: The violent Stonewall Uprising. Less than 1,000 people in attendance.

1970: Christopher Street Gay Liberation Parade. Around 2,000 people attend.

1979: First March on Washington. Around 75,000 people in attendance; straight allies attend as well.


1993: Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell put into effect by the Clinton Administration.
Source Credit Text: News article ruling homosexuality as normal, Spotlight exhibits at UC Berkeley Library.
“I don’t know what people are scared of. Maybe they think their children will be influenced, but I’ve got to tell you, I was raised by two heterosexuals. Everywhere I looked--heterosexuals. And that did not influence me. It’s time we love people for who they are and let them love who they want.”-Ellen DeGeneres, modern lesbian icon.
"Today, this country is richer — filled with more equality, more acceptance, and more love than yesterday. And for the people of this city, where the movement for LGBT rights began in 1969 at the Stonewall Inn, we can be proud that we helped blaze the trail to this great victory." - Bill de Blasio, the mayor of New York City

"I'm designating the Stonewall National Monument as the newest addition to America's National Park System. Stonewall will be our first national monument to tell the story of the struggle for LGBT rights. I believe our national parks should reflect the full story of our country, the richness and diversity and uniquely American spirit that has always defined us. That we are stronger together. That out of many, we are one." - Barack Obama, 44th U.S. President
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"As Americans, we respect human dignity. That’s why we defend free speech, and advocate for political prisoners, and condemn the persecution of women, or religious minorities, or people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.”

Barack Obama, 44th U.S. President

Legislation stating same-sex marriage as legal, Core.

Source Credit Text: People celebrating the legalization of same-sex marriage, ABC News.
“As Americans, we respect human dignity. That’s why we defend free speech, and advocate for political prisoners, and condemn the persecution of women, or religious minorities, or people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.” - Barack Obama, 44th U.S. President

2011: DATA repealed by the Obama Administration.

2015: Same-Sex Marriage Legalized.

2021: Transgender Military Ban repealed.

2021: The Equality Act passes in the House of Representatives.