# Lesson Plan

## Plan for Instruction

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  a. Formulate compelling and supporting questions after evaluating primary sources for point of view and historical context.  
  b. Gather and analyze historical information to address questions from a range of prima |

**TITLE:** Stonewall – The moment that sparked the LGBTQ Liberation Movement*  

*Note: Many academics refer to this time period as the Gay Liberation Movement. To better reflect all sexual orientations and gender identities, we have opted to refer to this movement as the LGBTQ Liberation Movement when appropriate.

## Brief Overview (Summary) of the Lesson:

During this lesson students will answer a question open to historical debate “Why were the Stonewall riots the moment that sparked the LGBTQ Liberation Movement in American History?” Students will then be given panels from the [Stonewall 50 history exhibit](#) talking about the history of Stonewall: the events leading up to Stonewall, the events of the riots themselves, and events and organizations that developed after the riots, such as the Gay Activist Alliance (GAA) and Gay Liberation Front (GLF), as well as the first Denver LGBTQ pride event, and the National March on Washington for Gay & Lesbian Rights in 1979. Students will be given 15 minutes to read panels from the exhibit underlining the important names, dates, and events. Students will then share what they learned. Students will then create their own posters outlining the events of the riots as a formative assessment.

## Desired Results

| Competency (Key knowledge, skill and/or misconceptions will be addressed): | - Students will understand the events leading up to the Stonewall Riots: Such as police raids on LGBTQ spaces, pathologization of homosexuality.  
  - Students will understand what happened at the Stonewall Riots.  
  - Students will understand the forms of resistance to oppression created out of Stonewall: creation of LGBTQ institutions such as the Gay Activist Alliances (GAA), LGBTQ pride festivals, and political rallies such as the March on Washington for Gay & Lesbian Rights in 1979. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enduring Understanding(s):</td>
<td>- Students will understand that the Stonewall Riots were the events that spawned the period known as LGBTQ Liberation marked by increased political activism, the creation of LGBTQ institutions, and the creation of LGBTQ pride festivals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essential Question(s) – could be used as an Academic Prompt):</td>
<td>- Why were the Stonewall Riots the moment that inspired the LGBTQ Liberation Movement?</td>
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Differentiated Instruction needed to ensure all learners have access to this learning (including SPED, MTSS and Gifted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modifications:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers may modify within their district guidelines.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Learning Plan, Experiences, Instruction and Learning Activities:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Teacher will...</strong></td>
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<td>Teacher should prepare the lesson by printing out the text below and cutting into individual sub-headings. Then place a line down the middle of the room or rearrange the desks so that they are facing each other. The teacher should then place the question on the board: Why were the Stonewall riots the moment that inspired the LGBTQ Liberation Movement?</td>
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| Warm-up | To activate background knowledge the teacher will explain that the Stonewall Riots were the event that led to the period known as the LGBTQ Liberation Movement. The teacher will ask a question: What is Liberation? | Students will then read each panel and underline key words and ideas. |
| Warm-up [5 mins] | | |

| Activity One | The teachers will separate the students into groups of two to three. The teacher should cut up the text of exhibit below and pass them out. | Students will then draw a picture, put them in chronological order. |
| Activity One [10 mins] Close reading | | |

| Activity Two | The teacher will tell the students to draw a picture which illustrates their panel, putting it on the timeline. | Students will go over the timeline explaining what their timeline means. |
| Activity Two [15 mins] Timeline and Jigsaw | | |

| Overview | Teacher will ask students to explain what their panel was about. | |
| Overview [5 mins] | | |

| Exit Ticket | Teacher will prompt students to write a brief reflection on their exit tickets | |
| Exit Ticket [5 mins] | | |

As an extension or adaptation, students may create posters in place of a timeline based upon the textual description of their panel to be placed in the classroom in chronological order, in essence a mini-exhibit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources Used/Materials Needed:</th>
<th>Websites, books, video, etc.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Resource(s):</td>
<td>Name of Resource(s):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Resources</td>
<td>• LGBTQ Heritage - National Park Service <a href="https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/lgbqlif.png">https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/lgbqlif.png</a></td>
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Police Harassment of LGBTQ Communities

The police raid of the Stonewall Inn was not a historically unique event. Harassment by police of LGBTQ establishments and hang-outs can be found in the decades before Stonewall all over the country. In the late 1930s, the push to remove a corrupt Los Angeles mayor led to “vice crackdowns” all over the city, including raids on gay bars.¹

Both Federal and local law enforcement were involved in the policing of LGBTQ communities in the United States.² A ball fundraiser in San Francisco for the Council on Religion and the Homosexual was the site of police harassment and an attempted raid on January 1, 1965. Having been told about the event by organizers, San Francisco Police patrolled the outside of the event location, photographing those who entered and exited, and ultimately arresting three lawyers and a ticket taker when they were denied entry.³

In Denver in the early 1960s, police arrested six men for wearing women’s clothing in a local gay bar in violation of a local ordinance against such behavior.⁴ Of eight gay bars in Denver in the mid-1960s, six were off limits to members of the armed services, so military police would regularly go in to check for GIs.⁵

A few years later, in 1968, Denver police made twenty-one arrests in three weeks of homosexual men caught in public restrooms in the city’s parks. Sixteen men were arrested in a single bathroom in City Park. Many of those arrested were faced with charges of felony and misdemeanor lewd acts.⁶

These were all just a few of the events happening around the country in the years leading up to the Stonewall Riots involving police harassment of popular LGBTQ hang-outs.

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⁴ Whearley, "Clientele Feels Safer in 'Gay Bars'," 15.
⁵ Bob Whearley, "Clientele Feels Safer in 'Gay Bars'," The Denver Post, (February 16, 1965), 15.
**Mattachine Society**

Primary Source: [1959 Mattachine Review detailing the 6th Annual Convention in Denver, CO](#)

Gay rights activist Harry Hay, along with his associates, held the first meeting of what would become the Mattachine Society in Los Angeles, in 1950. At the time, the small group was semi-satirically called the “Society of Fools”. The group later changed its name to the “Mattachine Society”. This name came from tales of a medieval French group that held masked meetings where members felt free to criticize rulers of the time.

As the Mattachine Society grew, it branched out into chapters throughout the nation. Members of Denver’s professional community, including professionals such as lawyer Wendell Sayers, made up a significant portion of the Society’s numbers. However, many were closeted and used pseudonyms when writing for the Society’s publications.

The Denver chapter held the larger Mattachine Society conference in 1959, in Denver’s Albany Hotel. This meeting was unprecedented, as members of the society were speaking publicly and using their real names.

The proceedings were eventually marked by the presence of Denver’s Vice Squad, members of which were sitting in the audience, taking names. Some members of the Denver chapter were later arrested for charges such as the possession of pornography. The aftermath of the 1959 meeting effectively ended the Denver chapter’s activity.

Nationwide, by 1961, the Mattachine Society had largely splintered into independent chapters. As the 1960s progressed, many emerging LGBTQ activists saw the Society as overly traditional. Though the Mattachine Society eventually faded by the 1970s, its early activism paved the way for later groups and movements.
ONE, Inc.
Primary Source: *One Inc. Magazine (April, 1967)* – Read the One Magazine including an article on “Feminine Perspective” in 1967.

Like many early activist groups, the Mattachine Society was not bound to last. Changes in how people wanted to live in their communities, including an increased desire for openness and more outright activism, precipitated major changes in activist groups.

Neither was the Mattachine Society the only LGBTQ rights organization in the nation. Only a few years after the arrival of the Mattachine Society, ONE, Inc. was incorporated in 1952. Its name derived from 19th-century writer Thomas Carlyle, who wrote that, “A mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one.”

ONE, Inc. was the first LGBTQ organization to have its own offices, making it one of the first de facto LGBTQ community centers in the nation. In 1953, it started to openly publish the first gay magazine, *One*. The U.S. Postal Service said that the magazine was “obscene” and refused to deliver it. However, ONE, Inc. brought a lawsuit to federal court, arguing that the organization had First Amendment rights to publish and distribute *One*. In 1958, the Supreme Court agreed, reversing earlier court rulings and allowing *One* to be distributed through the U.S. mail.

Though *One* ceased publication in 1969, it remains an important landmark in both LGBTQ and legal history. ONE, Inc. continued its advocacy work, as well. In 1956, it established the ONE Institute of Homophile Studies, which published an academic journal focused on LGBTQ issues and community. Later, in 1996, ONE, Inc. merged with the Institute for the Study of Human Resources. The organization later transferred its archives to the ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives in 2010.
Daughters of Bilitis
Primary Source: *The Ladder, 1957* which looks at Lesbian life in the 1950’s.

While other gay rights groups, such as ONE, Inc., were open to members of different genders, they often tended to be dominated by gay men. By 1955, however, there would be at least one formal organization dedicated solely to the rights of lesbian women: the Daughters of Bilitis.

The Daughters of Bilitis was formed by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon in 1955. Originally, the DOB was meant to be a social group that provided an alternative to lesbian bars. The lesbian bar scene was frequently the subject of police raids, while offering limited privacy. Martin, Lyon, and their friends also wanted a friendly group that was at least partially shielded from the invasive and homophobic attitudes that dominated American culture at the time.

Soon after its 1955 formation, the Daughters of Bilitis began to take on activist work. Chapters began to appear in large cities, such as New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Members worked to educate other women and to combat shame and internalized homophobia.

The DOB followed the Mattachine Society in advocating for a degree of cultural assimilation. By the 1960s, though, members increasingly called for more visibility and less conformity. This decade also brought more overt feminism to the organization.

Its publication, *The Ladder*, also grew in prominence. By the 1970s, disagreements within the organization and over *The Ladder*, led to the DOB’s downfall. The Daughters of Bilitis closed in 1970. *The Ladder*, running as a separate publication, ran out of money and ceased publication in 1972.
Compton’s Cafeteria
Primary Source: *The Black Cat: Harbinger of LGBTQ Civil Rights Activism*

The site of yet another pre-Stonewall Police raid, Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco, at the corner of Turk and Taylor streets, was a popular hang-out site for gay prostitutes, drag queens, and young transgender people. The cafeteria’s management instituted a twenty-five-cent service charge in July of 1966. The cafeteria’s LGBTQ clientele saw this as a thinly veiled attempt to push them out. A month later, in August of 1966, a riot took place when police were called to deal with rowdy customers. Patrons reportedly threw coffee and items, such as cups and trays, at the officers. The riot supposedly lasted for two days, but due to the fact that it took place at the hang-out of prostitutes and transgender youth, it was largely ignored at the time. Despite that initial lack of attention, this riot is credited with starting transgender activism in San Francisco. Six months after Compton’s Cafeteria, police raided the Black Cat Tavern in Los Angeles. These raids and riots were symptoms of police oppression of minorities often in response to the climate in the decade of civil rights activism.

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11 Armstrong and Crage, “Movements and Memory,” 733.
Stonewall Timeline
Primary Sources: Two Village Voice reporters were at the Stonewall the night the riots happened. Howard Smith managed to get inside the bar while the crowd rioted outside. Lucian K. Truscott IV happened by as the riots escalated and observed from outside. Read accounts from both writers here, republished by the Voice in 2015:

- Howard Smith’s *Village Voice* article
- Lucian K. Truscott’s *Village Voice* article

Before the riots

- 1967 - Stonewall Inn is established
- 1969 - Mayor John Lindsay runs for re-election. The “clean up” of NYC and increased police raids is part of his re-election campaign.

The first riot - June 28, 1969 at 1:20am

- Police enter the Stonewall Inn and announce that they are conducting a raid.
- Patrol vehicles are late in arriving. Meanwhile, a crowd of 100-150 people gather in front of the Stonewall Inn.
- As the first vehicles arrive, the crowd grows restless and increasingly hostile towards officers. A police officer reportedly shoves a patron, who then strikes him with her purse.
- A woman in handcuffs is escorted out the front door. She fights with police and is hit on the head by an officer with a police baton. Bystanders recall that the woman looked at the crowd and shouted, “Why don’t you guys do something?”
  - After she is moved into a police wagon, the crowd went “berserk”. Some reports indicate that Stormé DeLarverie is this woman, though no one has been able to definitively identify her.
- The crowd grows to 500-600 people. Many throw bottles, garbage cans, bricks, and other debris while shouting insults.
- Ten police officers barricade themselves inside the Stonewall Inn, along with a small number of detained bar patrons.
- Some members of the crowd begin to light fires and throw burning debris at the police in the Stonewall Inn.
- Additional police officers arrive. They walk down Christopher Street and begin to disperse crowds
- People within the police wagons begin to escape.
- The crowd begins to move around the blocks, outpacing police. This continues for hours.

After the first riot

- Stonewall Inn reopens on Saturday night
- Others join in the ongoing protests, including Black Panthers and anti-war protestors
- Police show up in larger numbers on the second night, using more violent tactics and tear gas canisters
- “There was more anger and more fight the second night” - Danny Garvin
- June 28, 1970 - Christopher Street Liberation Day commemorates the first anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. This is considered the first LGBTQ pride parade in the U.S.

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Christopher Street Liberation Day
Primary Source: Video of the first Christopher Street Liberation Day

One year after the Stonewall riots, on June 28, 1970, thousands of LGBTQ people marched from Greenwich Village to the Sheep Meadow in Central Park as a protest against LGBTQ discrimination and foster pride in the LGBTQ community. This first LGBTQ pride parade came to be known as Christopher Street Liberation Day. The parade began as a protest march that was the culmination of “Gay Liberation Week,” a series of events sponsored by various groups that reportedly drew large crowds.14 A sister march was held the same year in Los Angeles under the name Christopher Street West. In subsequent years, similar marches and protests began to pop up in major cities throughout the country. The Mattachine Society declared that the community had found its “strength and pride” from the Stonewall Riots.15

Craig Rodwell and Ellen Broidy first introduced the idea of Christopher Street Liberation Day at the November 1969 Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations (ECHO). They proposed the event in a resolution as a way to keep the events in New York and the fight for gay civil rights relevant. It passed with full support, not counting the abstention of the New York branch of the Mattachine Society.16 The feeling of the event was meant to be a celebration of LGBTQ resistance. In fact, people were urged to boycott the mafia-controlled Stonewall Inn after the riots, and instead emphasize the claiming of space by LGBTQ communities and the struggle for LGBTQ liberation happening in the streets.17

Three years after the initial rally, at the 1973 incarnation, Sylvia Rivera took the stage in what would become an infamous moment in LGBTQ history. Rivera hustled in the streets with her long-time friend Marsha P. Johnson to help fund their activist group Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR).18 In the four years since the riots at the Stonewall Inn, Rivera had become very upset with the fact “that she and her drag queen, homeless gay youth, and sex worker friends were being pushed out of the movement they helped to create.”19 It was Rivera’s desire to keep these groups, along with prison inmates and people of color, from being erased in the narrative of “gay liberation.”20

At the 1973 Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally, Rivera decided to take action by storming the stage and taking the microphone from emcee Vito Russo. Later on, Rivera would recall being hit and punched on her way to the stage.21 Some reported that Marsha P. Johnson joined her friend on stage.22 During her speech, Rivera encouraged those attending the rally to stand up for those exposed to police brutality and incarceration for being gay; she warned that not doing so was causing a rift in the community. The crowd began to boo, which only made her speak louder.23

Eventually Rivera was removed from the stage.24 Jean O’Leary, of the Lesbian Feminist Liberation faction of the Gay Liberation Front, eventually got the microphone and promptly called Rivera “a man” and insulted all transgender women by referring to them as “drag queens” and “female impersonators.” O’Leary, one of the founders of National Coming Out Day, later stated she regretted her earlier statements about transgender women.

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17 Carter, Stonewall 265.
18 Jonathan Flately, “Just Alike,” Social Text32, no. 4 (Winter 2014): 89. The organization was later renamed the Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries.
22 Tommi Avicolli Mecca, Smash the Church, Smash the State! The Early Years of Gay Liberation, (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 2009) 261.
24 Avicolli Mecca, Smash the Church, Smash the State! 261.
The 1979 March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights

Community building and equality—those were the driving forces behind the first March on Washington for Gay & Lesbian Rights in 1979. The idea of the march and strategies were borrowed from the African American Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s. In fact, the march’s origins were entirely anchored in grassroots organizing. The leadership of National Gay Task Force worried that such a protest would “attract publicity and right-wing reaction” and withheld their endorsement until a month before the event. Due to these fears, the mainstream movement almost entirely rejected the event. Some organizations did support the event including the Lambda Legal Defense Fund, the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, and the National Organization for Women.

The first march occurred on October 14, 1979 and mobilized around one-hundred-thousand people. The estimates ranged from as low as twenty-five-thousand by the Parks Service to as high as two-hundred-and-fifty-thousand by the participants. Organizers drafted five demands:

- Pass a comprehensive lesbian/gay rights bill in Congress
- Issue a presidential executive order banning discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal government, the military, and federally contracted private employment
- Repeal all anti-lesbian/gay laws
- End discrimination in lesbian-mother and gay-father custody cases
- Protect lesbian and gay youth from any laws which are used to discriminate, oppress, and/or harass them in their homes, schools, jobs, and social environments.

The march ended in a rally between the Washington Monument and Reflecting Pool. Speakers at the 1979 rally included Harry Britt, Charlotte Bunch, Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky, Flo Kennedy, Morris Knight, Audre Lorde, Leonard Matlovich, Kate Millett, Troy Perry, Eleanor Smeal, Adele Starr, and Congressman Ted Weiss. It was also broadcast live on many NPR radio affiliates throughout the U.S. There would be three subsequent marches, in 1987, 1993, and 2000.

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28 Vaid, Virtual Equality, 61.
30 Engle, The Unfinished Revolution 40.