

For our timeline, we will cover the recent history of LGBTQ+ activism, specifically in the United States, beginning in 1958. Even though we are starting in 1958, it is important to understand the culture of the early 1900's and what led up to the major activism that occurred in the late 1960's and 1970's. Historically (and still currently), people who identify as LGBTQ+ faced much discrimination and were systemically oppressed. In the early 1900's, specifically around the 1930's, there were laws prohibiting homosexuals to meet in public places, prohibiting gay characters in films and prohibiting even the discussion of homosexuality in the theatre (Chauncey, 1994). The LGBTQ+ community was suppressed not only socially but also legally. It is important to keep this in mind as you learn about the story, struggle and victories of the LGBTQ+ community throughout the rest of the 1900's and into present day.

- 1958 – **Supreme Court Case One Inc. vs Olesen**
 - “The U.S. Post Office and the FBI deemed *One: The Homosexual Magazine*, a lesbian, gay, and bisexual publication, obscene, and as such could not be delivered via U.S. mail. The publishers of the magazine sued, and lost both the first case and the appeal. The Supreme Court accepted the case and reversed it, marking the first time the Supreme Court ruled in favor of homosexuals.” (Rowen, n.d.)
- 1960's
 - Activism was regional, moderately successful, made up of independent cells instead of one large organization (Scot, 2013).

- Early homophile organizations such as Mattachine Society, Daughters of Bilitis, and ONE Inc. had been organizing for years prior to Stonewall (Scot, 2013)
- “It has been said that during the turbulent ’60s, gay bars were to gay people as churches were to African-Americans in the South. They were temporary refuges, sanctuaries where one could find a brief respite from the stifling homophobic heat of the outside world.” (Scot, 2013)
- “Before Stonewall, gay leaders had primarily promoted silent vigils and polite pickets, such as the “Annual Reminder” in Philadelphia. Since 1965, a small, polite group of gays and lesbians had been picketing outside Liberty Hall. The walk would occur in silence. Required dress on men was jackets and ties; for women, only dresses. We were supposed to be unthreatening.” (Sargeant, 2010)
- June 28, 1969- **Stonewall Inn Riot**
 - The Stonewall Inn was a gay club in Manhattan, New York. It was known to get raided by the police. On June 28th, 1969, a police raid occurred, but unlike every other raid, this time the patrons of Stonewall Inn fought back (Desta, 2014). This riot turned activism from independent cells to “a full-fledged national social equality movement” (Scot, 2013)
 - “A groundswell of deep systemic anger, defiance from a community on the edge of revolution, and the fervent freedom that comes with having nothing to lose came together to form the perfect storm that night. The fire had suddenly and spontaneously been lit and a new

national gay civil rights movement had been given a pulse” (Scot, 2013).

- November 2, 1969 – **The First March Proposal**
 - First pride march was proposed at the Eastern Regional Conference of Homophile Organizations in Philadelphia (Scot, 2013).
- June 28, 1970 – **Christopher Street Liberation Day March**
 - The Christopher Street Liberation Day March was the first gay pride event. It was created to celebrate the Stonewall Inn Riot that occurred exactly one year before (Desta, 2014). The march went from Greenwich Village to Central Park (Desta, 2014), and they chanted, “Say it clear, say it loud. Gay is good, gay is proud” (Sargeant, 2010). At the end of the march, there was a gay “be-in” in Central Park’s Sheep’s Meadow (Fitzsimons, 2018).
 - ““We were tired of being targets of manipulation and exploitation; tired of being maggot excuses for raids upon our assembly, tired of being someone else’s scapegoat for some other reason. Tired of being threatened and harassed and entrapped and told what we were, what to do, and how to do it, when to do it, how to feel, what to say, how to be, what to be..ya can’t be it outside, nor can you inside! We rioted because rich, or poor, young or old, we dared to be ourselves. We wanted to be ourselves, to be, to laugh and play in joy! We rioted to be gay.” — Christopher Street Liberation Day Committee member, 1974” (Scot, 2013).

- Fred Sargeant described the march: “There were no floats, no music, no boys in briefs. The cops turned their backs on us to convey their disdain, but the masses of people kept carrying signs and banners, chanting and waving to surprised onlookers.” (Sargeant, 2010)
- Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco also held marches this same weekend. LA was the first to have it sanctioned, marking it the first “official” pride parade even though most people consider the New York march to be first (Scot, 2013).
- Fred Sargeant, a leader of the gay community at the time, attended and wrote a firsthand account of the march in *Village Voice* in 2010. It can be read here: <https://www.villagevoice.com/2010/06/22/1970-a-first-person-account-of-the-first-gay-pride-march/>
- 1970’s
 - 1973 -the American Psychiatric Association eliminates homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. (D’Emilio, 2004)
 - 1974 – Los Angeles added the festival component to the pride parade which is now a major part of the parade. Many other cities followed (Scot, 2013).

Late 1970’s – Lesbian Feminism (D’Emilio, 2004)

- “Most gay men’s lack of understanding of institutionalized sexism forced lesbians to fight for political and action agendas that recognized their needs. Thus, they formed their own autonomous lesbian groups, developing a separate lesbian-feminist movement where lesbians with

experience in women's liberation and women with experience in gay liberation converged.

- **Achievements:** a self-sufficient lesbian community, crisis lines and community centers, magazines, newspapers, publishing companies, bookstores, film collectives, food co-ops, restaurants, etc., self-defense schools and shelters for battered women.” (D’Emilio, 2004)

The Impact of AIDS

HIV, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is the precursor to AIDS, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. The disease is a virus that attacks a person's white blood cells, the cells that fight infection and help you recover when you get sick. HIV has a long latency period which means a person can have HIV and have no symptoms for a very long time. The person may not even be aware that they have HIV because they do not have symptoms. This allows HIV to spread quickly because if a person does not know they have the disease, they are not trying to stop it from spreading to other people. When HIV turns into AIDS, it becomes a deadly disease. People get sick from other illnesses such as tuberculosis or pneumonia but are unable to survive the infection because of the lack of white blood cells from AIDS.

In 1981, America saw its first cases of AIDS (Henry, 2019). There were seemingly healthy, young men dying, and doctors and public health researchers alike were confused as to what the disease was, how it was transmitted and why it had such a high mortality rate. Due to the severe stigma of gay people at the time, researchers could not get adequate funding which delayed the understanding of the disease. Some examples of stigma include

the media calling the disease “gay cancer” or the “gay plague” and some church leaders arguing that the “gay plague” was the will of God punishing gay people for sinning. While the gay community and its allies still fought for their right to live and get funding for research for the disease, the disease really gained media and politicians attention when started to negatively impact other communities as well (Morin, 2015). It is estimated that over 700,000 people have died from AIDS in the United States since the beginning of the disease to present day (Henry, 2019).

Today, there is still no cure for HIV/AIDS. However, there is medication that patients can take daily that will allow people to live seemingly normal, long lives. There are, of course, difficulties in access to the medication and adhering to it, as it is needed every day for the rest of the patient’s life. Additionally, there is also medication that will prevent the transmission of HIV. Similar to birth control, a person who is involved in high risk behaviors, such as having a long term partner with HIV, may take a daily pill to prevent the transmission of HIV from their partner to themselves. This medication has been proven to be safe and effective, but is still in the midst of becoming regularly implemented.

- 1980’s
 - 1986 - **Bowers v Hardwick**
 - “The Supreme Court ruled 5–4 that consenting adults do not have a constitutional right to engage in homosexual acts in private, upholding a Georgia law... This decision, considered a serious blow to the gay-rights movement, was overturned in 2003's *Lawrence v. Texas* decision” (Rowen, n.d.)

- 1996 - **Romer v Evans**
 - “Under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, a state cannot amend its constitution to deny homosexuals the same basic legal protections that heterosexuals receive.” (Romer, 1996)
- 2000 – **Boy Scouts of America v Dale**
 - “The Supreme Court ruled...by a 5-to-4 vote that the Boy Scouts have a constitutional right to exclude gay members because opposition to homosexuality is part of the organization's "expressive message." (Greenhouse, 2000)
- 2003 - **Lawrence v Texas**
 - “The Supreme Court, 6–3, overruled a Texas sodomy law and voted 5–4 to overturn 1986's *Bowers v. Hardwick* decision. ‘The state cannot demean their [gays'] existence or control their destiny by making their private sexual conduct a crime,’ wrote Justice Kennedy in the majority opinion. In his dissent to *Lawrence v. Texas*, Justice Scalia said the court has ‘largely signed on to the so-called homosexual agenda.’” (Rowen, n.d.)
- 2013 - **United States v Windsor**
 - “The Supreme Court ruled that the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional. In a 5 to 4 vote, the court ruled that DOMA violated the rights of gays and lesbians. The court also ruled that the law interferes with the states' rights to define marriage. It was the first case ever on the issue of gay marriage for the Supreme Court.” (Rowen, n.d.)

- 2015 – **Obergefell v Hodges**
 - “This was the Supreme Court case that made banning same-sex marriage in any state illegal in the United States. Groups from all over the country sued their relevant state for not allowing them to get married and it was taken to the Supreme Court. The 5-4 decision in favor of marriage equality stated that under the Fourteenth Amendment’s Equal Protection Clause the states must provide marriage licenses to same-sex couples and must recognize marriages that were legally licensed and performed in other states.” (Rowen, n.d.)
- June 24, 2016 – **Stonewall Inn as a National Monument**
 - Stonewall Inn and its surrounding area is recognized as a National Monument by President Obama. It is the “first National Park Service unit dedicated to the gay rights movement” (Rosenberg, 2016).
- Present Day (2019)
 - NYC:
 - “Governor Andrew M. Cuomo...announced efforts to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion in 2019... As part of the state’s commemorative efforts, cultural events will be promoted statewide and New York will host the largest international LGBT pride celebration in 2019 – Stonewall 50 / WorldPride” (Governor, 2017).
 - Boston
 - The Boston Pride parade will be held June 8th. The theme is “Looking back... Loving forward”

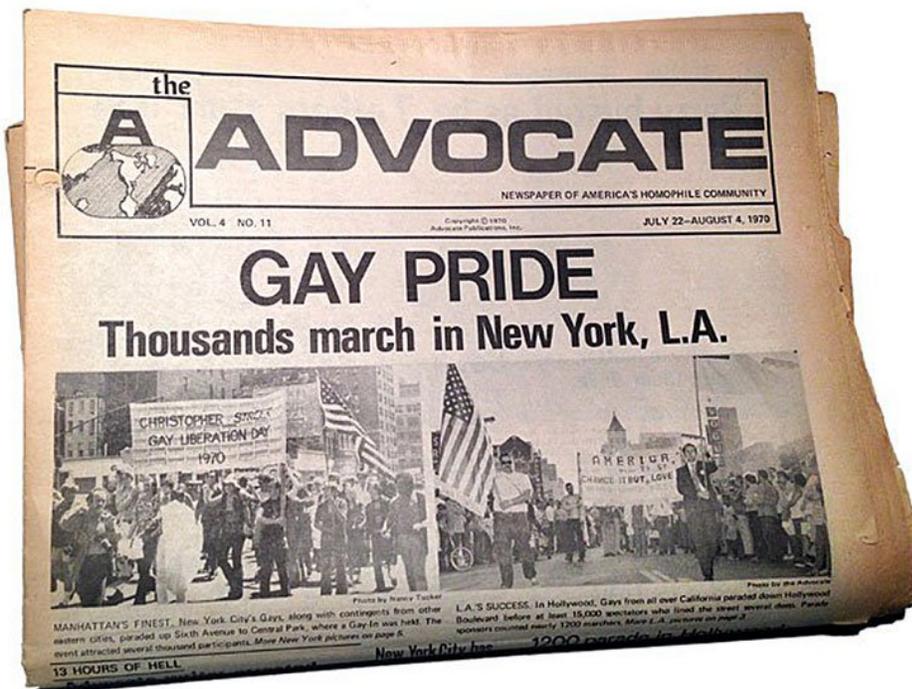
celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Inn riot. For more information on the Boston Pride Parade and other pride events in Boston, please visit <http://www.bostonpride.org/>.

o Court cases

- There are still many court cases involving LGBTQ discrimination, rights and advocacy. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) brings more LGBTQ related cases to court than any other national organization. If you would like to learn more about their present cases, please visit

<https://www.aclu.org/issues/lgbt-rights>

Photos:



Issue of the Advocate, late July/early August 1970 (Scot, 2013)



“New York: Parading up Sixth Avenue to Central Park for the big Gay-In; thousands of participants marched and attended” (Scot, 2013)

the **ADVOCATE**
NEWSPAPER OF AMERICA'S HOMOPHILE COMMUNITY
EST. 1953

GAY PRIDE '71

Thousands turn out across nation

NEW YORK HOLLYWOOD CHICAGO BOSTON SAN JOSE

Newspaper of America's Homophile Community

The ADVOCATE

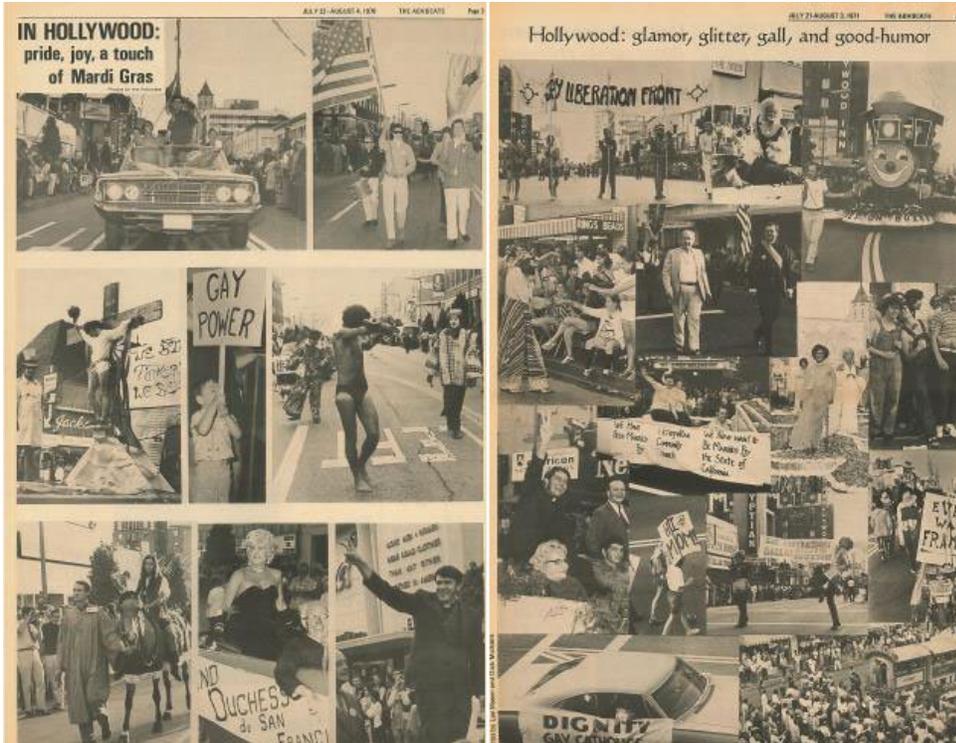
50¢ Gay
35¢
June No. 54
50¢
Elsewhere

Y STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
 SEEN CITY
 OUTLINE SCALE
 TACOMA GAY ALLIANCE

GAY LIBERATION FRONT
 GAY WOMEN ALLIANCE

THE BIG GAY PARADES

COAST TO COAST COVERAGE



“Clippings from *The Advocate* covering the [1971] parade” (Scot, 2013).



“Men hold a “Black Gays Unite” banner at the Los Angeles Christopher Street West pride parade, 1975” (Scot, 2013)

“radical” queer groups. That, in turn, led to the announcement of an alternative march—the Spirit of Stonewall march. While the vast majority of participants marched on the U.N. on the East Side of Manhattan, thousands of radicals—ACT UP, Lesbian Avengers, Transsexual Menace, Radical Faeries, among others—marched from Stonewall up Fifth Avenue, led, naturally, by Sylvia Rivera. Some say the moment the two marches coalesced at 57th and 5th was the last time radicals and moderates peacefully agreed on anything.” (Wmag, 2018)



NYC, June 1983 “In the early years of the epidemic, as the community worked to figure out what was happening and whether the government was going to help (it wasn’t), the word “victim” was still widely applied. Soon, the queer community came to understand that they alone had to fight the AIDS battle, and a massive change of consciousness came about” (Wmag, 2018).



NYC, June 28, 1970 “Gay

Activists Alliance members with the lead banner at the Christopher Street Liberation Day” (Wmag, 2018).



“Christopher Street Liberation Day, Central Park,

June 1977.” (Wmag, 2018).



“Christopher

Street Liberation Day, New York City, June 1980.” (Wmag, 2018)



“A rainbow flag unfurled at the Parade pride in Athens, Greece on June 8, 2018” (Ruiz, 2018).



“Emma Gonzales, gun safety advocate and Parkland shooting survivor, at New York City’s Pride parade on June 24, 2018” (Ruiz, 2018).



“Packed streets at the Pride parade in Warsaw, Poland on June 9, 2018” (Ruiz, 2018).

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