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**How the Stonewall Riot Brought Change**

In the 1900s, gay, lesbians, and many members of the LGBTQ+ community were alienated and considered to be an abomination. Many of them lived complicated lives. The Stonewall Inn provided a safe haven for gay people. This bar would often get raided by the police because many people believed that gay people shouldn't be happy because it was "horrible" for men to be with a man or a woman with a woman. Like many other nights, the police raided the Stonewall Inn on June 28, 1969, but many community members decided enough is enough. They were tired that their civil rights were violated continuously, so they took to the streets and protese so change would be brought. The Stonewall Riot wasn't the first event to fight for gay rights but was the one that brought change. Being a catalyst for change, the StoneWall Riots not only started a new civil rights movement but also changed the way "homosexuals'' were viewed, allowing them to be out and proud.

Before June 27, 1969, being Lesbian or Gay was banned in the United States. Individuals that engaged in these practices were insulted and were never recognized in society. This left the community living in fear and secrecy. Often, they were regarded as "insane" by doctors, while religious leaders termed their practices as immoral. Notwithstanding, they were termed as unemployed individuals by the government while at the same time, they became predators for TV broadcasting (Henwood-Greer 33). To escalate the situation, the LGBTQ community was seen as criminals by the police and often faced brutality by the law enforcers. Since practices around consensual sexual relationships were outlawed on the US soil, individuals engaged in such practices were not allowed to work for the federal governments. Neither were they allowed to work in the military. This justifies why LGBTQ members lived in fear and secrecy as they would be denied license once they "come out" or become open in their sexual orientation. In most cases, they were denied their professional licenses, especially in medicine or law. As the law continued to be in practice, anger aroused among the LGBTQ community as they did not even have any political power to champion their civil rights (Field 45). Consequently, they feared writing letters to councilors to advocate for change as they feared exposure. The only approach to advocating for change for their civil rights was through riots or took to the streets through movements. This is exactly what happened in the Stonewall Inn, culminating in a series of demonstrations and the formation of an organized movement that brought change to civil rights among the LGBTQ community in the United States. It began with an inspirational message from Marty Robinson as chaos who instructed his teen friend to write on the brick wall "Tomorrow night Stonewall." Through his message, Robinson wanted to change civil rights violations and spontaneous acts towards the LGBTQ community to become a more significant transformation (Keegan 50). On that Friday night, police raided the bar, but this time it was fully packed with about 200 customers, primarily the LGBTQ community. As usual, gay people were found running away from the police, but this time it was different. The riot began with quarters and cents being hurled at the police officers who attacked the community in the bar. It then progressed to the use of bottles and stones, which left the police with no option but to retreat inside the building to fear their lives. Since they did not expect that there would be a fightback, only a handful of police were in the confrontation while several protestors were outside. They thus had to call for rescue from the riot police. According to Geoghagan (par. 6), this was yet the beginning of the movement. Yet it demonstrates what has been happening days before the first coin was thrown and to show that the steps that had been made towards an accepting society and marriage equality owed the youths, who engaged in a series of spontaneous demonstrations to advocate for their civil rights afterward.

Therefore, the Stonewall Inn Riot laid the foundation for activists who organized the latter to fight for unjust civil rights, especially for the LGBTQ community. The community became aware that it was now time to fight for change. They needed equality and changes in laws for a welcoming and just society. The first organized activism among the group was seen the following night when there was a large crowd at the Stonewall Inn (Quijano par. 5). The large crowd was attributed to Robinson's message and pamphlets that were used for the campaign and spread information for change. This time the rioting was violent, which made the police use excessive force, including tear gassing. Nonetheless, the protestors were determined for another four nights, which continued to be intense. Day by Day, protests became bigger, determined, and more organized. The first step towards freedom for the LGBTQ community was 30 days after the riots, and a 25-year-old, Martha Shelley, gave an inspiring speech. Complemented with Robinson's urging messages, the community again matched to Stonewell Inn chanting "Gay Power" as they hold hands (Matzner 2). At this time, the LGBTQ community took to New York streets to demand equality and change in civil rights. One of the gay rights in Philadelphia, the Mattachine Society, which was primarily a discreet affair. As a major driving force, what happened in Stonewall urged most of the community, which led to Gay Lineation Front (GLF) formation, a group alliance appearing to be loose as a single entity (Kuhn par. 3), but the group was becoming organized in advocating for the change. Through this group, the community had a motto of "control over your own body was primary." Through this group, the community was determined to advocate for equality to freedom despite race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation. They also published newspapers that were used in campaigning for the change; the "come out." Despite their aggressive and promising move towards changing civil rights and freedom for all, GLF had many disagreements agreements in their meetings, especially those regarding ways to move forward. This led to the fall of the movement. However, it is essential to note that GLF gave a foundation for forming other activist groups that created the change in the United States, including the Radical Lesbian Group Lavender menace and the Gay Activist Alliance (Armstrong et al 731). Furthermore, it was noted that another GLF was started in London, which also inspired change for the LGBTQ community in such regions.

After one year of the happenings at Stonewall, A Christopher Street Liberation Day was established in Green Village. The occasion attracted a crowd of civil rights activists, estimated to be between 3000 to 15000 people. The Day was marked to protest against the oppression that most people experienced, not only the LGBTQ community but also Blacks who felt oppressed during the period. It was about the young people laying their part in the revolution and advocating for legal changes (River 76). Most cities in the United States followed the same. Following years of protests and determination, the proponent law for excluding gays and lesbians was lifted in America. This was one achievement towards change that is attributed to the Stonewall Riot. Successively changes in misconceptions against the LGBTQ community started to emerge. For instance, the medical professions reversed their long-term belief that homosexuals required psychiatric treatment. In around the 1980s, most US's anti-sodomy laws were pulled down, thereby legalizing homosexuality in the United States. Consequently, LGBTQ members became accepted in the community and enjoyed their civil rights like other people. However, legalizing and recognizing gay marriage took long before it was federally recognized in 2015.

Stonewall Riots set a path for many members of the LGBTQ+ community to be viewed differently. All the hardship they experienced and the fighting back was for the better good. Throughout all this, they were able to successfully protest and bring forth change in the sense of civil rights. Today, many members of the LGBTQ+ community live happily and have civil rights that nobody could take away. That is all thank to the brave advocates who put their lives on the line so that many people who are gay could life without fear and just be who they are.

**Reflection Paper**

When I was first given this assignment, I was a bit in distress because I didn't know what topics to choose from. The first thing that came to mind was to talk about the whole Black Lives Matter Movement, being that it was something that I have been exposed to. I thought this was something that I wanted to write about because I related to the movement and felt what many people argued about since I am a Black Hispanic man. I was convinced that I was going to do this assignment. When it was time to write the thesis statement, I began to read over all of the topics that I have chosen again to see if I had a change in heart last minute, which is what happened. When I read over the Stonewall Riots topic but I depth, I became fascinated with the riot and how members of the gay community fought for what was right. It felt different this time I read it, and I felt like it was what I had to write about, so I went with the heart. I wrote this as a way to congratulate them for standing up for what was right and paving the way for future generations to be out and proud. When it was time to write my intro, conclusion, and body paragraphs, it became easier to write about because of everything I learned.

The genre of this assignment is an expository essay. This type of genre aims to tell a story of how it is without any bias effectively. The exigence or the reason I related to this topic was that I believe this is a topic that many people shy away from and aren't really informed about. Members of the LGBTQ+ community should be able to be out and proud of who they are. I also chose this topic because I wanted to celebrate all the changes they have accomplished since the Stonewall Riots happened. My initial audience is my professor and my classmates, who took part in the peer edit. Since the essay is posted on Blackboard, my classmates have access to see it and can show other people expanding my audience. Since I am very passionate about the topic, I would most likely post it online, which can be seen by many others, expanding my audience. It can also be seen by people who are advocates for gay rights, reporters, or even other people who are writing essays on this topic. Those people can then use my work as possible evidence for their essay and show it to their professors and classmates, expanding my audience. This assignment's purpose was to write an expository essay and get the audience to understand how the Stonewall Riots brought the fourth change in the LGBTQ+ community with no bias to meet the assignment's requirements. Since this was an expository essay, my stance had to be presented in an unbiased manner but effectively tell how change was brought after the riots with evidence from credible sources. The media of this assignment is entirely digital. A series of events happened to complete this assignment, which was all done on CUNY Blackboard. My classmates edited my draft where they constructively criticized my work so that when it's time to submit the final draft, it could meet all the requirements needed. The final submission was made on Blackboard.

The assignments follow course learning objective two, three, and six. Course Learning Objective two "develop strategies for reading, drafting, collaborating, revising, and editing." This assignment started by reading information on the topic, writing a draft, then revising it with my peers to edit what needed to be fixed before the final submission. Course Learning three, "Recognize and practice key rhetorical terms and strategies when engaged in writing situations." I wrote my essay so that all rhetorical terms could be inferred while reading my essay. I also used Course Learning Objective six, "locate research sources (including academic journal articles, magazine and newspaper articles) in the library's databases or archives and on the Internet and evaluate them for credibility, accuracy, timeliness, and bias." Throughout the essay, I used different sources to support my thesis.

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