

Stonewall Riot, June 27, 1969

(<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/eresources/exhibitions/sw25/case1.html>)

A campaign had been established in the early 1960s to rid New York City of gay bars. The city revoked the liquor license of bars who served gay men, and police worked undercover to entrap as many gay men as possible. On June 27, 1969, the police raided a popular Greenwich Village gay bar, The Stonewall Inn. Police raids were not uncommon in this era, however on this night; those subjected to the raid were pushed over the edge. The streets erupted into violent protests as the crowds in the bar fought back. The riot lasted several nights. This event is marked as the beginning of the modern gay rights movement. The following primary sources are newspaper clippings about the riot. There are also pictures of the riot in the accompanying powerpoint.

<p>4 POLICEMEN HURT IN 'VILLAGE' RAID</p> <p>Melee Near Sheridan Square Follows Action at Bar</p> <p>Hundreds of young men went on a rampage in Greenwich Village shortly after 3 A.M. yesterday after a force of plainclothes men raided a bar that the police said was wellknown for its homosexual clientele. Thirteen persons were arrested and four policemen injured.</p> <p>The young men threw bricks, bottles, garbage, pennies and a parking meter at the policemen, who had a search warrant authorizing them to investigate reports that liquor was sold illegally at the bar, the Stonewall Inn, 53 Christopher Street, just off Sheridan Square.</p> <p>Deputy Inspector Seymour Pine said that a large crowd formed in the square after being evicted from the bar. Police reinforcements were sent to the area to hold off the crowd.</p>	<p>Plainclothes men and detectives confiscated cases of liquor from the bar, which Inspector Pine said was operating without a liquor license.</p> <p>The police estimated that 200 young men had been expelled from the bar. The crowd grew to close to 400 during the melee, which lasted about 45 minutes, they said.</p> <p>Arrested in the melee, was Dave Van Ronk, 33 years old, of 15 Sheridan Square, a well-known folk singer. He was accused of having thrown a heavy object at a patrolman and later paroled in his own recognizance.</p> <p>The raid was one of three held on Village bars in the last two weeks, Inspector Pine said.</p> <p>Charges against the 13 who were arrested ranged from harassment and resisting arrest to disorderly conduct. A patrolman suffered a broken wrist, the police said.</p> <p>Throngs of young men congregated outside the inn last night, reading aloud condemnations of the police.</p> <p>A sign on the door said, "This is a private club. Members only." Only soft drinks were being served.</p>
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Chant sung "Rockette style" by a "chorus line of mocking queens."

"We are the Stonewall girls
 We wear our hair in curls
 We wear no underwear
 We show our pubic hair...
 We wear our dungarees
 Above our nelly knees!"

At the beginning of the riots, the crowds sang "We Shall Overcome", a song that was originally a civil rights theme song.

1. We shall overcome
 We shall overcome
 We shall overcome some day
- CHORUS: Oh, deep in my heart
 I do believe
 We shall overcome some day
2. We'll walk hand in hand
 We'll walk hand in hand
 We'll walk hand in hand some day
- CHORUS

3. We shall all be free
We shall all be free
We shall all be free some day

CHORUS

4. We are not afraid
We are not afraid
We are not afraid some day

CHORUS

5. We are not alone
We are not alone
We are not alone some day

CHORUS

6. The whole wide world around
The whole wide world around
The whole wide world around some day

CHORUS

7. We shall overcome
We shall overcome
We shall overcome some day

CHORUS