



Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution

By David Carter

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The basis of the PBS American Experience documentary *Stonewall Uprising*.

In 1969, a series of riots over police action against The Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City's Greenwich Village, changed the longtime landscape of the homosexual in society literally overnight. Since then the event itself has become the stuff of legend, with relatively little hard information available on the riots themselves. Now, based on hundreds of interviews, an exhaustive search of public and previously sealed files, and over a decade of intensive research into the history and the topic, *Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution* brings this singular event to vivid life in this, the definitive story of one of history's most singular events.

A Randy Shilts / Publishing Triangle Award Finalist

"Riveting...Not only the definitive examination of the riots but an absorbing history of pre-Stonewall America, and how the oppression and pent-up rage of those years finally ignited on a hot New York night." - Boston Globe

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

While the centerpiece here is undoubtedly his hour-by-hour relating of the explosive June 1969 riots, Carter, an editor of Allen Ginsberg's interviews (*Spontaneous Mind*, 2001), also provides an extended prelude that highlights the places, activists and others who come to play key roles. Carter's beloved Greenwich Village and what he calls its "queer geography," which enabled gay culture to form, flourish and consolidate itself, emerges as an inimitable, finely detailed hero. But for Carter, the most audacious, energetic and enterprising of riot participants were the drag queens, homeless queer youths and other gender transgressors whose position on the farthest margins of society enabled their radical response to oppression. What they and others managed to do, Carter renders with fresh care and enthusiasm, getting new quotes and offering unfamiliar perspectives, such as the Mafia's role both as a patron of the gay scene in New York City (including the Stonewall Inn, which it owned and operated) and as a blackmailer of famous homosexuals. He ends appropriately with the emergence of the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Activist Alliance, as well as the first gay pride parade, held in June 1970. While it may distract readers interested only in the story of gay liberation, Carter's logistical history of what gay author Edmund White called "our Bastille Day" will become a permanent addition to the great histories of the civil rights era.

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From [Booklist](#)

In the late 1960s, homosexual sex was illegal in every state but Illinois; now the news routinely covers the latest on gay marriages. So the subtitle says it all--or does it? The six days of riots sparked by police action in the early morning of June 28, 1969, against a popular Greenwich Village gay bar, the Stonewall Inn, constituted a homosexual "shot heard 'round the world" that transformed an American subculture. Carter's carefully researched, well-crafted writing portrays Stonewall as part of a larger civil and human rights movement and a spur to the gay rights movement. Stonewall precipitated great change--the formation of the Gay Liberation Front and Gay Activists Alliance, for instance--and that leads Carter to examine the socio-politico-cultural convergence that resulted in the riots. Hundred of interviews figure into Carter's thorough exploration that dispels long-held myths and provides fresh facts about a freedom fight some liken to the fall of the Berlin Wall. *Whitney Scott*

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Review

"A terrific piece of nonfiction, a satisfying and illuminating document that will be referred to time and again." *The Advocate*

"Considering all that went before, the ongoing repression and corruption, and the scent of social and political liberation in the air, Carter's eloquent account makes it clear that something was bound to catch fire...A complete, full-bodied portrait, with lots of flesh on the bones of a strong narrative structure." *Kirkus Reviews*

"No matter what you may believe about the event, you will gain new insights. Historically important and socially significant." *Dallas Morning News*

"A gripping, hour-by-hour reconstruction...this definitive account is long overdue but well worth the wait."

?Richard Labonte, Bookmarks

“Stonewall presents a thorough and often compelling reconstruction of the nearly weeklong protest...provides thoughtful and sometimes delightfully quirky details about the era's gay culture and politics, Greenwich Village itself, and the New Yorkers - from mobsters to flame queens to cops - who that morning stumbled into history.” *?Providence Journal-Bulletin*

“A beautifully written, suspenseful narrative that also meets the toughest tests of academic research.” *?Bay Area Reporter*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Norman Williams:

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