

June is LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH

LGBTQ pride is the positive stance against discrimination and violence toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people to promote their self-affirmation, dignity, equality rights, increase their visibility as a social group, build community, and celebrate sexual diversity and gender variance.



The Daughters of Bilitis First Lesbian Civil Rights Organization

The Daughters of Bilitis, also called the DOB or the Daughters, was the first lesbian civil and political rights organization in the United States. The organization, formed in San Francisco in 1955, was conceived as a social alternative to lesbian bars, which were subject to raids and police harassment. As the DOB gained members, their focus shifted to providing support to women who were afraid to come out. The DOB educated them about their rights, and about gay history. The historian Lillian Faderman declared, "Its very establishment in the midst of witch-hunts and police harassment was an act of courage, since members always had to fear that they were under attack, not because of what they did, but merely because of who they were."

The Daughters of Bilitis endured for 14 years, becoming an educational resource for lesbians, gay men, researchers and mental health professionals.



Founders: Phyllis Lyon & Del Martin



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The Ladder First Lesbian Publication

The Ladder was the first nationally distributed lesbian publication in the United States. It was published monthly from 1956 to 1970, and once every other month in 1971 and 1972. It was the primary publication and method of communication for the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian organization in the US. It was supported by ONE, Inc. and the Mattachine Society, with whom the DOB retained friendly relations. The name of the magazine was derived from the artwork on its first cover, simple line drawings showing figures moving towards a ladder that disappeared into the clouds.

The October 1957 edition of The Ladder, mailed to hundreds of women in the San Francisco area, urged women to take off their masks. The motif of masks and unmasking was prevalent in the homophile era, prefiguring the political strategy of coming out and giving the Mattachine Society its name.



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The Stonewall Riots Catalyst for the Gay Rights Movement

In the early hours of June 28, 1969, New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club located in Greenwich Village in New York City. The raid sparked a riot among bar patrons and neighborhood residents as police roughly hauled employees and patrons out of the bar, leading to six days of protests and violent clashes with law enforcement outside the bar on Christopher Street, in neighboring streets and in nearby Christopher Park.

The Stonewall Riots served as the catalyst for the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world and the Stonewall Inn has solidified its place in history after being granted landmark status in New York City.



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SF's First Gay Rights March June 28, 1970

A group marches down Polk Street to City Hall in San Francisco's first gay rights march. A "gay-in" takes place the following day in Golden Gate Park.

This date was specifically chosen to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, which served as the catalyst for the gay rights movement.



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Leslie Feinberg Activist, Author, Revolutionary Communist

September 1, 1949–November 15, 2014

Feinberg was the first theorist to advance a Marxist concept of “transgender liberation,” and hir work impacted popular culture, academic research, and political organizing.

Hir historical and theoretical writings have been widely anthologized and taught in U.S. and international academic circles. Hir impact on mass culture was primarily through hir 1993 first novel, *Stone Butch Blues*, widely considered in and outside the U.S. as a groundbreaking work about the complexities of gender.

In a statement at the end of hir life, Leslie said zie/she had “never been in search of a common umbrella identity, or even an umbrella term, that brings together people of oppressed sexes, gender expressions, and sexualities” and added that she/zie believed in the right of self-determination for oppressed individuals, communities, groups, and nations.

Leslie preferred to use the pronouns she/zie and her/hir for hirself, but also said:

“I care which pronoun is used, but people have been respectful to me with the wrong pronoun and disrespectful with the right one. It matters whether someone is using the pronoun as a bigot, or if they are trying to demonstrate respect.”



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GLBT Historical Society

4127 18th Street, San Francisco, CA 94114

Founded in 1985, the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender (GLBT) Historical Society is recognized internationally as a leader in the field of LGBTQ public history. Our operations are centered around two sites: our GLBT Historical Society Museum, located since 2011 in the heart of San Francisco's Castro neighborhood; and our Dr. John P. De Cecco Archives and Research Center, open to researchers in the Mid-Market district.

The GLBT Historical Society collects, preserves, exhibits and makes accessible to the public materials and knowledge to support and promote understanding of LGBTQ history, culture and arts in all their diversity.

THEIR VISION

"We envision a world in which LGBTQ people are appreciated and celebrated by one another in all their diversity and by all people for their contributions to history and culture.

We envision a world in which everyone can learn about LGBTQ history as a vital means for promoting civic engagement, social justice, and political change.

We envision a world in which LGBTQ people find acceptance, strength, and pride in acknowledging their heritage and in sharing it with society as a whole."



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The Pink Triangle LGBTQ Symbol

A pink triangle has been a symbol for various LGBTQ identities, initially intended as a badge of shame, but later reclaimed as a positive symbol of self-identity. In Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, it began as one of the Nazi concentration camp badges, distinguishing those imprisoned because they had been identified by authorities as homosexual men, a category that also included bisexual men and transgender women. In the 1970s, it was revived as a symbol of protest against homophobia, and has since been adopted by the larger LGBTQ community as a popular symbol of LGBTQ pride and the LGBTQ rights movement.

The Pink Triangle has been installed atop Twin Peaks in San Francisco. For each Pride weekend since 1996, as a visible yet mute reminder of man's inhumanity to man. It is almost 200 feet across, nearly an acre in size, and can be seen for 20 miles.

The Pink Triangle is an educational tool for all to see. The Pink Triangle is one of history's reminders of hate and intolerance, and part of appreciating and celebrating where we are today for Pride Weekend, is understanding where we have been.



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Harvey Milk

Activist, Author, Revolutionary Communist

May 22, 1930–November 27, 1978

Milk got involved in local politics and activism after moving from New York City to San Francisco. He ran twice for a position on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and lost both races. He won a spot on the City-County Board in 1977 after earning the nickname “Mayor of Castro Street,” making him the first openly gay elected official in California. Milk spent his time on the board working on many issues including gay rights before his assassination in November 1978.

Despite his short career in politics, Milk became an icon in San Francisco and a martyr in the gay community. In 2002, Milk was called “the most famous and most significantly open LGBT official ever elected in the United States.” Anne Kronenberg, his final campaign manager, wrote of him: “What set Harvey apart from you or me was that he was a visionary. He imagined a righteous world inside his head and then he set about to create it for real, for all of us.” Milk was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009.



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Martha P. Johnson Activist

August 24, 1945–July 6, 1992

Martha P. Johnson was an American gay liberation activist and self-identified drag queen. Known as an outspoken advocate for gay rights, Johnson was one of the prominent figures in the Stonewall uprising of 1969. A founding member of the Gay Liberation Front, Johnson co-founded the gay and transvestite advocacy organization S.T.A.R. (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries), alongside close friend Sylvia Rivera. A popular figure in New York City's gay and art scene, Johnson modeled for Andy Warhol, and performed onstage with the drag performance troupe, Hot Peaches. Known for decades as a welcoming presence in the streets of Greenwich Village, Johnson was known as the "mayor of Christopher Street".

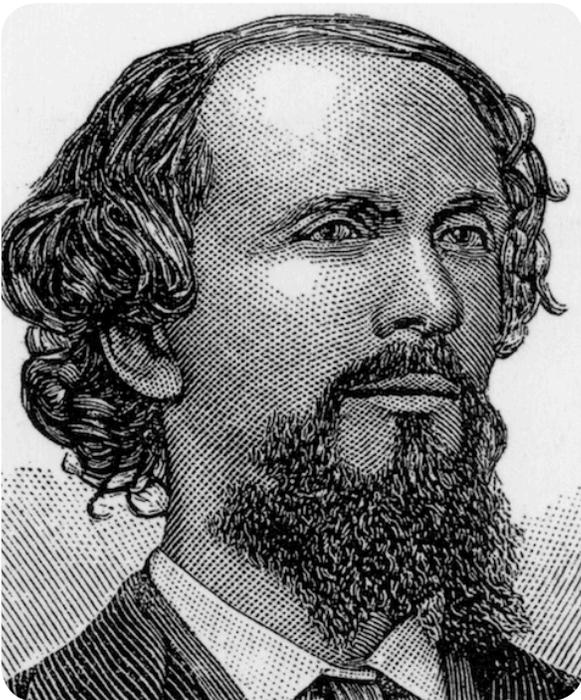
From 1987 through 1992, Johnson was an AIDS activist with ACT UP.



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Karl Heinrich Ulrichs Activist, Author

August 28, 1825–14 July 1895

Ulrichs is regarded by some as the pioneer of the modern gay movement and the first person to publicly “come out.” In fact, Volkmar Sigusch, a leading German scholar in sexual science, described him as “the most decisive and influential pioneer of homosexual emancipation in world history.”

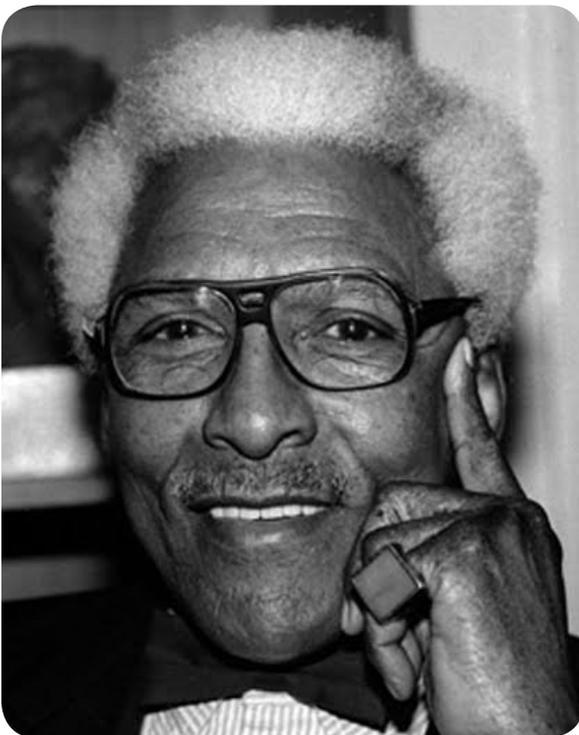
Ulrichs was a judge in Germany but was forced to resign in 1854 after a colleague discovered he was gay. After he resigned, he became an activist for gay rights. He wrote pamphlets about being gay in Germany and, in August 29, 1867, Ulrichs spoke in Munich at the Congress of Jurists to demand legal equal rights for all sexualities.



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Bayard Rustin Activist

March 17, 1912–August 24, 1987

Bayard Rustin was a close friend and advisor to Martin Luther King Jr. and organizer of the 1963 March on Washington. However, because he was an openly gay man, he did not receive wide recognition for his integral role in the civil rights movement. Rustin's sexuality was used against him and Dr. King by opposing parties, who threatened to spread lies about their relationship. This forced Rustin to work in the shadows to prevent bringing further controversy to both Dr. King and the March on Washington. Despite this, Rustin still remained a political and gay activist, working to bring the AIDS crisis to the NAACP's attention.



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Sylvia Rivera Activist

July 2, 1951–February 19, 2002

Rivera was rumored to have thrown one of the first bottles during the Stonewall uprising in 1969, but she was also fighting for LGBTQ rights for years before that. She worked alongside Marsha P. Johnson to launch Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) and co-founded the Gay Liberation Front and Gay Activists Alliance.



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Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence Activists

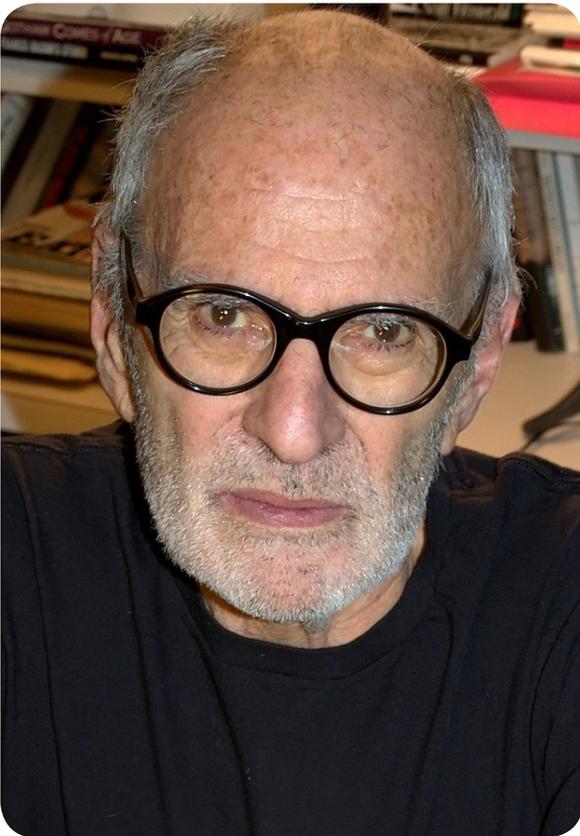
The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, also called Order of Perpetual Indulgence is a charity, protest, and street performance organization that uses drag and religious imagery to call attention to sexual intolerance and satirizes issues of gender and morality. Founded: 1979



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Larry Kramer ACT UP founder, playwright, activist

Born June 25, 1935

Larry Kramer is an American playwright, author, film producer, public health advocate, and LGBT rights activist. He wrote the screenplay for the film "Women in Love" and earned an Academy Award nomination for his work. Kramer introduced a controversial and confrontational style in his novel "Faggots," which earned mixed reviews and emphatic denunciations from elements within the gay community for Kramer's one-sided portrayal of shallow, promiscuous gay relationships in the 1970s.

Kramer witnessed the spread of the disease later known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) among his friends in 1980. He co-founded the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), which has become the world's largest private organization assisting people living with AIDS. Kramer grew frustrated with bureaucratic paralysis and the apathy of gay men to the AIDS crisis, and wished to engage in further action than the social services GMHC provided. He expressed his frustration by writing a play titled "The Normal Heart," produced at The Public Theater in New York City in 1985. His political activism continued with the founding of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) in 1987, an influential direct action protest organization with the aim of gaining more public action to fight the AIDS crisis. ACT UP has been widely credited with changing public health policy and the perception of people living with AIDS (PWAs), and with raising awareness of HIV and AIDS-related diseases.



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Monica Helms Transgender flag creator

Monica F. Helms is a transgender activist, author, and veteran of the United States Navy. She is the creator of the Transgender Pride Flag.

Helms served in the US Navy from 1970-1978, and was assigned to two submarines, USS Francis Scott Key 1972-1976, USS Flasher 1976-1978. During her time in the Navy, Helms began cross-dressing while based in Charleston, South Carolina and says in an interview it was the “deepest, darkest secret in [her] entire life”. She was reassigned to the Bay Area in 1976, and said she “felt like [she] could be out in public as [herself]”.

Helms left the Navy in 1978, and joined her hometown’s chapter of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. in 1996. After transitioning, Helms reapplied in 1998 to the Phoenix chapter of the veteran’s group with the name “Monica” and received considerable push-back, including being referred to a more generic veteran’s group for women rather than the submarine specific group. Helms eventually prevailed after a few months and claims to be the first woman to ever join the organization.



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*Original eight-stripe version
designed by Gilbert Baker in 1978*



*Version with hot pink removed due
to fabric unavailability
(1978–79)*



*Six-color version popular since
1979. Indigo changed to royal blue.*

Gilbert Baker's Pride Flag A history of the colors

GILBERT BAKER PRIDE FLAG

In 1977, Harvey Milk challenged Gilbert Baker, a veteran who taught himself to sew, to come up with a symbol of pride for the gay community. His response? The original Pride flag. Inspired by Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow," these colors flew at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade celebration on June 25, 1978. Though some dispute whether Baker was the sole creator of the flag that started it all, its symbolism remains. Each color celebrates an aspect of queer Pride:

Hot pink = Sex, Red = Life, Orange = Healing, Yellow = Sunlight
Green = Nature, Turquoise = Magic/Art, Indigo = Serenity
Violet = Spirit

1978–1999 PRIDE FLAG

After the assassination of Harvey Milk, many wanted the Pride flag he commissioned to commemorate his accomplishments for the community and their personal support. The demand was greater than the available fabric, so the Paramount Flag Company began selling this version of the flag, as did Gilbert Baker, who had trouble getting hot pink fabric.

TRADITIONAL GAY PRIDE FLAG

This is the most familiar flag. In 1979, the community landed on this six-color version, which was hung from lampposts in San Francisco. Numerous complications over having an odd-number of colors led to turquoise being dropped, at least according to reports. Read more about the modern flag here.



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