

OUT[®] FOR SAFE SCHOOLS

LGBTQ+ History Lesson

Inquiry Question: What caused the Black Cat Tavern Riots?

Standard: 11.10



Inquiry Question:

What caused the Black Cat Tavern Riots?

Miguel Covarrubias

Los Angeles Unified School District

Content Standards

11.10 Students analyze the development of federal civil rights and voting rights.

CCSS Standards:

Reading, Grades 6-12

- RH 1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- RH 2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- RH 7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- RH 9: Integrate information from diverse information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Writing, Grades 6-12

- WH1: Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content. b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.
- WH4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. 9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis reflection, and research.

Speaking and Listening, Grades 11-12:

- SL1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in-groups, and teacher-led with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts and issues, building on others ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Overview of Lesson

- Participants will experience strategies that will help them support student analysis of primary sources.
- Participants will examine and use literacy strategies that will help them guide their students in accessing primary sources.
- Participants will engage in close reading and text-based discussions in various settings including in pairs/groups and as a classroom.
- Participants will generate at least one writing task that is Common Core based.



Sources

- Cops Start Bar Brawl – Pride Newsletter
- Tavern Charges Police Brutality – County Courier
- Four Police Raids End “Truce” with Homosexual Taverns – LA Free Press
- Black Cat Tavern Protest Poster
- Black Cat Tavern Protest Photograph
- Interview with Alexei Romanoff –NPR, Morning Edition

Procedures

1. The teacher will give students historical background knowledge on the governmental and societal discrimination of LGBT citizens in California as well as the LGBT community’s resistance to that treatment in the form of protests, legal action and political organizing. First, the teacher will do an activity to familiarize students with the general history of LGBT persons in California through a **Tea Party** activity. This activity is called "Tea Party" because students can pretend they are at a tea party, mingling around with each other, listening, sharing and discussing what information they have about a topic. Distribute a paper strip to each student with a few sentences about LGBT history in California. Each paper strip is different, but can be duplicated to accommodate the size of the class. Give students 20 – 25 minutes to do this activity. Their objective is to talk every student until they have heard and discussed every strip on LGBT history in California. At the end of the activity debrief by having a few students share what they learned. Second, use the **PowerPoint** to discuss two acts of resistance that happened here in California, Cooper’s Donuts Riots and Compton Cafeteria Riots.
2. The teacher will introduce the following inquiry question to the students: **What caused the Black Cat Tavern Riots?**
3. The teacher will do a **Jigsaw Activity** in order to analyze Sources A – E. Depending on the size of the class using Source E is optional.
4. Directions for a **Jigsaw Activity**.
 - **Divide students into 5 to 6 people per group.**
 - Have the same number of students in each team.
 - **Divide your content into 5 to 6 sources.**
 - Divide the content into the same number of sources as the number of students in each group.
 - **Assign one source to each person in the Jigsaw Group.**
 - Each person is expected to teach their source to the rest of the group.
 - At this point, students don’t interact with other members of their group; they read and study their own source independently.
 - **Have students meet in Expert Groups.**
 - After each student has studied his or her source independently, they gather with all the other students who have been assigned to the same source. (As with As, Bs with Bs etc)
 - Within each Expert Group, students compare their ideas and work together to prepare a presentation of the main ideas of their source to their Jigsaw Groups.

- During this time, gaps in individual students’ knowledge can be filled, misconceptions can be cleared up, and important concepts can be reinforced.
- **Have students return to Jigsaw Groups.**
 - Now that students have studied and discussed their source in their expert groups, they return to their original jigsaw groups, where each student takes a turn presenting their source.
 - Students listen carefully, take notes, and ask clarifying questions.
 - After each student has presented within the Jigsaw Group, students will discuss the Inquiry Question using information that they received within their group.
- 5. The teacher will **Debrief** the activity by writing some of the possible causes of the Black Cat Riots on the board as each group shares at least one cause.
- 6. Show one of the videos embedded in the **PowerPoint**. Show either LGBTQ Historic Places in LA: The Black Cat Tavern or Interview with Alexei Romanoff. In a **Share Out**, have students share a fact or idea they thought was compelling from the video clip.

Assessment

Students will engage in a **Structured Writing Assignment** where they explain and discuss at least two causes of the Black Cat Riots.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Powell, Larry. “THE PRIDE (later known as The Advocate).” 27 Feb. 1967.
- “Tavern Charges Police Brutality.” County Courier: The Voice of Los Angeles, 19 Jan. 1967.
- “Four Police Raids End ‘Truce’ with Homosexual Taverns.” LA Free Press, 17 Feb. 1967.
- The PRIDE (Personal Rights in Defense and Education). 11 Feb. 67ADAD.
- Protest Outside the Clack Cat Tavern. Los Angeles, 11 Feb. 1967.

Online Resources

- The Black Cat
<https://www.laconservancy.org/locations/black-cat>
- Alexei Romanoff and the LGBT Civil Rights Legacy of The Black Cat
<http://thirstyinla.com/2015/06/12/alexei-romanoff-lgbt-black-cat/>
- The Black Cat: Harbinger of LGBTQ Civil Rights
<https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/the-black-cat-harbinger-of-lgbtq-civil-rights>

Video Clips

- L.A. A Queer History - Alexei Romanoff talks about the Black Cat Tavern raids of 1967
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHCe_vFd59c
- Silver Lake Out Loud
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1lY6ssqamI>
- LGBTQ Historic Places in L.A.
<https://vimeo.com/203019381>

Audio Clip

- NPR: Stonewall Riots Grab The Spotlight From Black Cat Protests
<http://www.npr.org/2017/02/13/514935126/stonewall-riots-grab-the-spotlight-from-black-cat-protests>



Source A: Powell, Larry. "THE PRIDE (later known as The Advocate)." 27 Feb. 1967.



PRIDE DEMONSTRATION

JOIN NEGROES, MEXICANS, HIPPIES, FEB. 11

During the open meeting of the PRIDE Legal Division (January 31) a demonstration was called by PRIDE Chairman, Steve Ginsburg. The demonstration is to be in conjunction with city-wide protests scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 11 at 9:00 P.M.

Persons are needed both as demonstrators, and as spectators. To find out how you can assist, call Steve Ginsburg at 936-7809.

The location will be at the corner of Hyperion and Sunset Blvd. Similar coordinated demonstrations will be held in Watts, Pacoima, East L.A., Venice, and on the Sunset Strip.

The theme, citywide and in PRIDE's demonstration will be simply police lawlessness. Persons of both sexes are invited to join and all demonstrators are urged to dress conservatively.

COPS BAR

The new year started out not with a bang, but with a series of thuds as vice officers of the new Rampart Street Station ushered in 1967 with a "Stomp Thy Fellow Man" party at the Black Cat and New Faces on the little Sunset Strip.

Between 9:00 P.M. and midnight on the 31st, several plainclothes officers were in the Black Cat, enjoying themselves along with the customers, who were doing nothing arrestable, although some of them (estimates range from one to ten) were in drag. Finally, at midnight, there was some kissing; one of the officers started tearing down Christmas decorations in a frenzy, and another pulled out a gun...as a substitute for legitimate identification. By now, there were a dozen cops in the place and all hell broke loose. Using as much rough stuff as they thought they could get away with the police made enough arrests to fill the five squad cars which were waiting nearby.

In the middle of it all, a couple of the customers broke away and headed for the New Faces, presumably to spread a warning. They were chased by plainclothes officers who caught up with them just outside the door. Hearing trouble, the
Cont. Page 5.

START BRAWL

With the New Years Raids and the attendant violence (See article this page) the Establishment war on minorities entered a new area (Silverlake) and concentrated on a different minority (Homosexuals). But the tactics were readily recognizable. Individuals are arrested, in a manner violating their constitutional rights and the fact of the arrest is used so as to stifle protest, especially when a licensed business is affected...In this case, bars licensed by the notorious ABC.

However, in a rare show of spirit, the L.A. Homophile Community did protest.... perhaps disjointedly, but the will to defend our rights as men was there.

When none of the local news media would carry the story, Homophile Organizations and others created such a furor that several local TV and Radio stations gave prime time to various aspects of the incidents. When KABC-TV turned its feature story into an old fashioned Queer-Baiting (Sample Statement:... They [Homosexuals] are rapists, prostitutes among their own sex, killers,...utterly without conscience...."), another roar of protest (See page 9 for PRIDE interview with C. George.) ← This article cont. on page 6

RAIDS... from page 1

bartender then on duty, and the manager, and owner came out to investigate. Once again the officers produced a gun as a substitute for identification. Mistaking the lady owner for someone in drag, they started to work on her. The bartender came to her aid and, for his trouble, spent a couple of weeks in the hospital, lost his spleen, and was charged with Battery Against an Officer, a felony punishable by ten years in prison.

At least one person was beaten and left lying on the sidewalk but was not charged with any offense. Another was arrested for kissing his own sister (She, too, was mistaken for someone in drag.). Oddly enough, the worst victims included those who asked the officers to identify themselves.

The police also claimed casualties, ranging from a ruptured sternum to bitten fingers. Explaining the police's heroism, Inspector Sid Mills said, "We get assaulted every day. It's all in a day's work. Public morals, decency and the law must be maintained."

And they got their kicks, too.

Larry Powell

Dear C.S.,
Date her! Make a date for 8:30. Show up at 9:00. If she lives in a house, honk your horn. If she lives in an apartment, go up to the door, stand in the doorway, and ask her to hurry. Take her to a hamburger joint for dinner and follow this with a visit to a "girlie" movie. Fail to light any cigarette or open any doors. When you pull up in front of her place say goodnight and leave. Its unlikely that any other girl in the office will be throwing herself at you, by the time she gets to them.

The Leather Boot Scene

The PRIDE Hiking (et al.) Club will get on its feet by sitting down at a meeting on Thursday, February 9th at 7315 Melrose at 8:00 p. m.

The purposes of the meeting will be to set up whatever organization we feel we need, find out what kind of trips you want and start to plan them, and to have a good time (depending on what you enjoy).

There will be a showing of several fine frontal nudes of rocks and trees taken in California, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming and Idaho. (You haven't lived

Source B: "Tavern Charges Police Brutality." County Courier: The Voice of Los Angeles, 19 Jan. 1967.

As the new year rang in, police attempted to make routine arrests at a known "gay" bar on Sunset Boulevard in the Echo Park Area when all hell broke loose.

It ended with seventeen arrests and three policemen badly injured.

A bartender complained that he, too, was badly hurt and most of the other defendants contended they received bumps, bruises and cuts.

Acting on numerous complaints that lewd acts were being committed at the Black Cat Cafe in public view, plain clothes vice officers entered, decided that such was the case, and announced "This is a pinch."

Since then bars have been flooded with literature, distributed by organizations claiming to represent homosexuals, charging "police brutality," and demanding justice for deviates.

Inspector Sid Mills, area commander, said, "However, no charges against officers have been received by the Los Angeles Police Department. If we do, such complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated.

Newspapers, T.V., and radio stations have also received calls from the organizations contending that there has been a "news blackout by police."

Mills explained that the department does not intend to discuss the case while it is pending in court, principally because of Supreme Court decisions against pre-trial publicity.

"We intend to see that the defendants receive their full justice and a fair trial," Mills announced.

Putting the pieces together, the County Courier has decided to bring the facts to life.

The fracas began when a girl kissed a man dressed as a girl while seated at the bar.

Officers thought she was another man dressed as a woman. It turned out that she was giving a New Year's kiss to her brother. Police later released her when they discovered her true identity.

Patrons, most of them men dressed in girlish attire and definitely the effeminate type, took violent exception.

One officer pulled a gun. Someone thought it was a holdup. And then there was a general melee.

The plain clothes vice men then obtained help from uniformed officers who waded into the donnybrook.

Police cars were used to transport the suspects to jail.

Meantime, three other suspects escaped, chased by three plain clothes officers to a nearby bar, The New Faces.

There the officers were refused admittance even though they identified themselves to two unknown males.

A bartender jumped over the counter and before any of the policemen could make a move, one of them received a "sunday punch."

One officer wound up on the sidewalk. He was kicked, beaten and stepped upon. He was hospitalized for nine days.

Another policeman received a broken hand and other injuries and is still off duty. The third was treated and released for bites on his fingers.

The twenty four year old bartender was booked in General Hospital prison ward for battery upon a police officer, a felony. He says that his spleen was ruptured and he has facial hurts. Police said they had to use necessary force to subdue him.

During it all, the three defendants made good their escape as did the two males who assisted the bartender.

In another incident in front of another bar nearby, two members of the force were sent to the hospital. They were beaten without provocation by some men who recognized them as officers.

One of the officers received a ruptured sternum and has just come back to work. The other received lesser injuries.

Most of the defendants are represented by attorney Ray L. Smith, a noted member of the California Bar. Not guilty pleas have been entered and the trials are slated for later this month.

Despite the attacks by the groups fronting for the homosexuals, departmental members of the force shrug their shoulders:

"We get assaulted every day. It's all in a day's work. Public morals, decency and the law must be maintained."

Courtesy of the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive, <http://one.usc.edu/>

Source C: The PRIDE (Personal Rights in Defense and Education). 11 Feb. 67ADAD.

CRISIS

FOR INFORMATION

CALL

666-5312

or

936-7809

POLICE LAWLESSNESS MUST BE STOPPED!!

HAVING ASKED FOR A BADGE NUMBER, A YOUTH IS HANDCUFFED AND BRUTALLY THROWN TO THE PAVEMENT.



THIS HAS HAPPENED IN COUNTLESS STREETS, BARS, AND RESTAURANTS IN ALL SECTIONS OF OUR CITY.

Because Police Lawlessness is not just a problem of the Sunset Strip but a problem that exists throughout the City of Los Angeles, there will be:

SIMULTANEOUS DEMONSTRATIONS in Silverlake

Sunset & Hyperion

3900 Sunset Blvd.

&

Sunset Strip Watts East L.A. Pacoima Venice

Arbitrary Arrests -
Illegal Search & Seizure
Police Perjury in Courts

ENTRAPMENT

ABUSE of OUR RIGHTS & DIGNITY

must stop!

SATURDAY FEB 11 9:00 P.M.

Courtesy of the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive, <http://one.usc.edu/>



Source D: Protest Outside the Clack Cat Tavern. Los Angeles, 11 Feb. 1967.



Courtesy of the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archive, <http://one.usc.edu/>



Source E: "Stonewall Riots Grab The Spotlight From Black Cat Protests." Morning Edition, reported by Leo Duran, KPCC, 13 Feb. 2017.

Interview with Alexei Romanoff (Excerpt)

LEO DURAN, BYLINE: The story of the riot and protest at the Black Cat Tavern starts a half century ago. Eighty-year-old Alexei Romanoff was 30 at the time.

ALEXEI ROMANOFF: I have pictures of me back then. I thought I looked pretty good.

DURAN: But he still remembers what happened to his friends on New Year's Day 1967. The Black Cat was a gay bar. And inside, partiers were counting down to midnight.

ROMANOFF: People instinctively went over, hugged and kissed each other.

DURAN: But the police was there, too - undercover.

ROMANOFF: Two males kissing each other was against the law. Police were grabbing them and tearing them apart.

DURAN: By dawn, more than a dozen people were arrested. Two of the men caught kissing eventually had to register as sex offenders. And the feelings of gay people like Romanoff?

ROMANOFF: Absolute anger. Once again, we're being picked on.

DURAN: So in the weeks afterwards, he helped organize the first documented protest for LGBT rights in America. It was February 11, 1967. More than 500 people gathered back outside of the Black Cat for a somber, serious march.

ROMANOFF: They were terrified. People would go by, roll their windows down in the cars and say, you should be ashamed of yourself.

DURAN: But it had a major impact. For example, the group that organized it was called Personal Rights in Defense and Education. And Romanoff says the acronym, PRIDE, was the first time that word was used as part of the gay rights struggle. The Black Cat tavern itself, however, didn't have nine lives. It closed just a few months afterwards...

Inquiry Question: What caused the Black Cat Tavern Riots?

[POST-BROADCAST CORRECTION: In this story we say that the 1967 protest at the Black Cat tavern in Los Angeles was the country's first organized LGBT demonstration. In fact, there had been earlier protests in the U.S., including the first "Annual Reminder" demonstration in Philadelphia, in 1965.]

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<http://www.npr.org/2017/02/13/514935126/stonewall-riots-grab-the-spotlight-from-black-cat-protests>

