

Instrumental contributor to the Stonewall Riots

Charlotte Cushman: 1817-1879 *American Idol, Lover of Women*



Charlotte Cushman was a famous stage actor and from a prominent New England family whose ancestor, Mary Allerton came on the Mayflower. She and her partner Louise Hays wore matching outfits in public and were accepted as a having ‘made vows...of eternal attachment to each other’ and their coupled status was written about in fan publications. The acceptance she received is ground breaking and also demonstrates how privilege can influence perception and safety. At her funeral Reverend W.H.H. Murray said: *“She was a Samson and Ruth in one. In her the strength of the masculine and the tenderness of the feminine nature were blended. She seemed to stand complete in nature, with the finest qualities of either sex.”*

Painting of Charlotte Cushman playing Romeo and her sister Susan as Juliette from the New England Historical Society. Text paraphrased from “A Queer History of the United States: for young people”

Gladys Bentley: 1907-1960 *Blues-Singing Bulldagger*



Gladys Bentley was a famous jazz singer and piano player during the Harlem Renaissance and Jazz Age, and an out lesbian who performed in men’s clothing and had preferred it since childhood in Philadelphia. One of Gladys Bentley’s most famous songs was “Nothing Now Perplexes Like the Sexes, Because When You See Them Switch, You Can’t Tell Which Is Which.”

With the onset of the Great Depression and Prohibition ending Harlem nightlife began to change, and Gladys Bentley moved to Los Angeles to continue to boost her career, where she performed at gay club, Joaquin’s El Rancho, until the police stopped her from performing in men’s clothing. She also performed in San Francisco’s famous lesbian bar, Mona’s 440 Club, where all the entertainers dressed as men. There

she was known as the “The Brown Bomber of Sophisticated Song.”

Gladys Bentley

Photo: Smithsonian Archive. Text paraphrased from “A Queer History of the United States: for young people”

ANSWER! Marsha P. Johnson: 1945-1992 *One of three credited activists on the vanguard of the Stonewall Riots, The Mayor of Greenwich Village*



Marsha P. Johnson, was from a large family in New Jersey, and moved to New York in 1963. She initially used the name “Black Marsha” But changed to Marsha P. Johnson, she said the P. was for ‘Pay it no mind’ which she would respond when questioned about her gender.

Marsha was a self-proclaimed “drag queen” and her style of drag was grassroots, comedic and performative. She was famous for wearing crowns assembled from flowers discarded from NY’s flower district.

Marsha was one of the first transgender women to go to the Stonewall Inn after it allowed women and drag queens inside. She says she wasn’t there when the Stonewall Riot first broke out, but arrived around 2am that night. She was there from the start the second night and dropped a brick through the windshield of a police car.

In 1973 she and Rivera were banned from participating in the NY gay pride parade by gay and lesbian organizers because drag queens were “giving them a bad name.” In response Johnson and Rivera marched defiantly in front of the parade

After the riots she joined the Gay Liberation Front and cofounded STAR Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries with close friend Sylvia Rivera. They founded STAR House in 1972, a shelter for homeless gay and trans street kids and though the house wasn’t focused on performance in Ball culture, Johnson was a ‘drag mother’ for this chosen family, she and Rivera paid the rent with sex work.

Marsha P. Johnson was found dead in the Hudson River, and while it was initially ruled a suicide, her friends said that while her mental state was fragile she was never suicidal. The police were not interested in investigating the death, even though a person who was witnessed having a fight with her and using a homophobic slur, later bragged that he had killed a drag queen named Marsha. Her case was reopened twice in subsequent years but never solved.

Famous quotes: “Darling, I want my gay rights now!”—when asked by a reporter what she was doing at Stonewall she angrily replied in this way.

“As long as my people don’t have their rights all across America, there is no reason for celebration” As true today as it was then.

Text paraphrased from Wikipedia and quotes from <https://www.biography.com/activist/marsha-p-johnson> <https://filmdaily.co/news/marsha-p-johnson-quotes/>

Albert D.J. Cashier: 1843-1915 *Transgender War Hero*



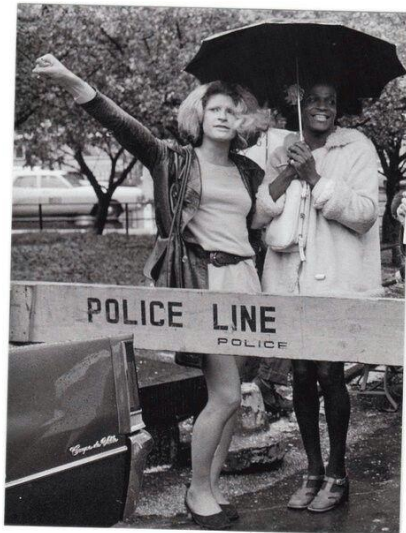
Albert Cashier immigrated from Ireland and transitioned to his male identity prior to enlisting in the Union Army at 18 and maintained it until his death. Cashier became famous as one of a number of women soldiers in the Civil War, but historians have identified him as a trans man, he lived as a man for 53 years.

Cashier served in the 95th Infantry and which fought in approximately 40 battles. His fellow soldiers remarked that Cashier was small and tended to keep to himself. Cashier entered a hospital once during the war but avoided detection as a trans man. Cashier fought with the regiment throughout the war and was honorably discharged when all soldiers were mustered out.

Living as a man allowed Cashier to be eligible to vote and to receive a soldier's pension when they began in 1907. He was struck by the auto of his employer Ira Lish in 1911. Unable to work, he entered a Soldiers and Sailors Home in Quincy, IL. He was visited by many friends and fellow infantry men there. After a decline of his mental state he was moved to the Watertown State Hospital for the Insane in March 1914. There, hospital staff discovered he was a trans man and forced him to wear women's clothes throughout the rest of his life. In 1914, Cashier was investigated for fraud, but soldiers that fought with him testified to his right to his pension and he received it for the rest of his life. *Text paraphrased from "A Queer History of the United States: for young people"*

First LGBTQ Protests/Riots in United States (ANSWER, Compton's Cafeteria Riot and more)

Stonewall Riots: June 28-July 3 1969



The Stonewall Riots broke out in the early morning hours of June 28 at the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village neighborhood of NYC when police raided the bar, and patrons of the Stonewall and other Village lesbian and gay bars fought back when the police became violent. The riots are widely considered to constitute one of the most important events leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for LGBTQ rights in the United States. The riots catalyzed many important changes with two gay activist organizations and focusing on confrontational tactics and three newspapers that promoted gay and lesbian rights being formed after the riots in New York. On the first year anniversary of the uprising the first gay pride marches took place in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, within a few years similar marches were organized in other cities and gay rights organizations were founded across the U.S. and around the world. Trans activists

played an important role in Stonewall. Pictured here are Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson who were instrumental in the riots in the second night and the protests, activism, and organizing that followed.

Text paraphrased from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots

Compton's Cafeteria Riot: August 1966



The Compton's Cafeteria Riot was the first LGBTQ riot in the United States and predated the Stonewall Riots by three years, it marked the beginning of transgender activism in San Francisco. The Compton Café was one of the few places that was safer for transgender women to congregate since the city's gay bars were not safe for them because of transphobia. However the management of the Compton Café would call the police to arrest the women for the crime of "impersonating a woman" when several would gather. The riot broke out when a woman resisted arrest by throwing her coffee at a police officer. Furniture and plates were thrown, the large window in the front was broken. The women then streamed outside and used their high heels and heavy handbags to fight back the police officers. The next night the protestors were joined by other members of the San Francisco

LGBTQ community, and riot resulted in the newly installed replacement window being broken. A group of queer youth, many transgender and involved in survival sex work without stable housing had formed a militant group called Vanguard with the support of Glide Memorial Church. After the Compton's riot, Vanguard organized some notable actions, including a "street sweep" where they took back the Tenderloin with push brooms to protest the police "sweeps" of queer neighborhoods where they would remove all the queer people. In the wake of the Compton's Riot the National Transgender Counseling Unit (NTCU) was created in 1968—the first peer-run support and advocacy organization in the world. The Compton's Riot didn't solve the problems trans folks faced but prompted the city to begin treating them as citizens rather than as a problem to be removed.



Text paraphrased from Wikipedia, photos of Felicia 'Flames' Elizondo a trans woman who participated in the Compton Riots speaking at its 50th anniversary and a 46th Anniversary Protest banner

Black Cat Tavern Raid and Protests: February 11 1967

On New Year's Eve, 1966, at stroke of midnight, patrons of the Black Cat Tavern were attacked by plainclothes police officers placed in the crowd to ambush LGBTQ patrons. Officers beat an uncounted number of people and arrested fourteen on charges of "lewd conduct for same-sex kissing." In response to the events of those early-morning hours on New Year's Day 1967, the community came together for a demonstration that took place February 11. These protests were one of the earliest large-scale demonstrations for LGBTQ rights in U.S. History, predating the Stonewall Riots. In 2008, Black Cat Tavern was designated a Historical-Monument by the city of Los Angeles, thanks to the efforts of LGBTQ activists who remembered the events and community solidarity that followed.



Sources: Wikipedia, LA Times and LAConservancy.org

Picket of Philadelphia's Independence Hall: Annually July 4, 1965-1969



The Picket of Philadelphia's Independence Hall was actually a series of demonstrations that took place on July 4 between 1965 and 1969. The original picket was composed of a group of thirty-nine mostly white LGBTQ identified people. The protests were referred to as "Annual Reminders." The organizers of these demonstrations adhered to a politic of "normalcy" and "professionalism" that they wanted ascribed to LGBTQ people; demonstrators were asked to wear business attire in order to show that LGBTQ people were "employable." This was an entirely different view of LGBTQ rights and acceptance than the ones held by the protestors at Black Cat Tavern in 1967, or by the protestors at the Stonewall Riots in 1969.

Sources: PhillyGayPride.org, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (<http://hsp.org/blogs/fondly-pennsylvania/before-stonewall-a-reminder>)

First Historical Mention of a Non-Binary Individual

ANSWER! Asushunamir: 900 BCE, *First non-binary person in historical text*



Asushunamir is the name of the first nonbinary person referenced in human history. Asushnamir is a mythological figure who plays a role in the myth of Babylonian goddess Ishtar's descent into the underworld. The story goes that after Ishtar was trapped in the underworld, the gods created Asushnamir, a being who was neither man nor woman, to rescue her. In order to complete the rescue, Asushnamir charms and seduces Erishkigal, the Queen of the underworld; when Erishkigal realizes that she has been deceived she becomes enraged and curses Asushnamir and all those like them to be viewed with suspicion in human society. Ishtar is unable to lift the curse made against her rescuer but is able to bless them and those like them with wisdom, prophecy,

and powers of healing.

Sources: Wikipedia (Inanna), SolarPunkDruid.com/2020/02/06/asushnamir Image, carving of Ishtar-Fine Art America

Public Universal Friend: November 29, 1752 – July 1, 1819, *Non-binary religious leader*

The Public Universal Friend was an preacher in the 18th century. In their youth, the Public Universal Friend (formerly known as Jemima Wilkinson) contracted a severe illness and nearly died. The Friend recovered from their illness and at that time declared that they had become reanimated as a genderless evangelist to be known hereafter as The Public Universal Friend, casting off both their birth name and gendered pronouns. The Friend started a Quaker-influenced sub-sect of Christianity, known as the Society of Universal Friends, and preached throughout the northeastern United States.



Source: Wikipedia

We'wha: 1849–1896, *Most famous Zuni Lhamana*



We'wha or Weiwha lived in the 19th century. We'wha was a part of the Zuni tribe whose land is now a part of the U.S. state of New Mexico. Her status was deeply important to the tribal community as she was considered one of the lhamana, or male-bodied people who take on the social and ceremonial roles usually performed by women in their culture. We'wha used both 'he' and 'she' pronouns interchangeably, according to friends and relatives. Like the other lhamana, We'wha was recognized for being a bridge between the spiritual and human worlds and was adored and revered by his community.

Sources: University of Illinois Springfield (uis.edu/gendersexualitystudentservices/weiwha

Thomas/ine Hall: c. 1603–after 1629, *Early American immigrant and intersex soldier and servant*

Thomas Hall was born Thomasine Hall sometime in the early 17th century. Written accounts from their time indicate that Thomas/ine was likely an intersex person, who presented themselves in different times of their life as a man and different times of their life as a woman – for example, to serve in the military, obtain work on a tobacco plantation, or to obtain “women’s work” in the homes of wealthy people in Jamestown, Virginia. Thomas/ine’s identity was not embraced by the people around them and they were actually brought to court by some of the members of the Jamestown community. Thomas/ine was ruled to be both male and female. Court precedent would typically force an individual in this case to choose an identity – either “male” or “female” – but because of Thomas/ine’s previous gender “indiscretions,” the court ruled that they would be forced to wear both men’s and women’s clothing simultaneously, as a form of public ridicule. Following this ruling, mentions of Thomas/ine disappear from recorded history.

Sources: Wikipedia, The-toast.net/2016/05/26/intersex-and-genderfluid-identity-in-the-colonial-period