Stonewall Riots and the Mafia

Student’s Name

Institutional Affiliation

Course Name& Code

Instructor

Date

Stonewall Riots and the Mafia

**Part 1: Creating a Research Question**

**1. Describe how your assumptions, beliefs, and values influenced your choice of topic.**

 My assumptions about the topic, beliefs, and values influenced my choice of topic. My assumptions were based on the historical relevance of Stonewall Riots' history and Stonewall Riots being a landmark moment in the gay rights movement. My beliefs are founded in my impression that any form of discrimination deserves to be challenged both socially and legally; this is why I chose to tackle this topic as it relates to our constitution. Finally, for values, I value equal opportunity for all citizens regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

2. **Discuss the significance of your historical research question in relation to your current event.**

 The Stonewall Riots are a significant event in the history of LGBT rights and gay liberation (Rosenbaum, 2018). Although they occurred decades ago, they opened doors to greater equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people. The riots also allowed for greater visibility for queer people (particularly trans folk) at this time.

**3. Explain how you used sources to finalize your research question.**

I first carefully analyzed the information from the online sources I had already collected. After this, I used the library database along with any other useful books in addition to my resource materials. Finally, I interviewed my sources to get more direct insight into their lives before Stonewall.

**Part 2: Building Context to Address Questions**

**1. Describe the context of your historical event that influenced your current event.**

 The Stonewall riots were a series of violent demonstrations by members of the gay community in response to a police raid on the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City. Although initially focused around police harassment and abuse, the riots themselves caused widespread public attention in the late 1960s and early 1970s, leading to the eventual legalisation of homosexual contact in many parts of America (Rosenbaum, 2018). The riots have come to symbolize challenges to oppression, rejection of societal norms and prohibition.

**4. Describe a historical figure or group’s participation in your historical event.**

 This question relates to the Mafia and the Stonewall riots. The Mafia was a criminal organization that was very violent and caused much social unrest in New York City. The Stonewall riots are a sequence of riots in 1969 at the LGBT-owned Christopher Street recreational area of the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City, United States, by gay men against harassment and police brutality (Stein, 2019).

**5. Explain the historical figure or group’s motivation to participate in your historical event.**

The Mafia had a motive to participate because they thought that this event would benefit them financially because it would cause so much money to flow in from nearby hotels and nightclubs for protection by their “men” or members.

**Part 3: Examining How Bias Impacts Narrative**

**1. Describe a narrative you identified while researching the history of your historical event.**

 The Stonewall riots represent the first time that a group of people refused to be shamed and marginalized by society (Stein, 2019). They refused to give up their identities in order to fit into some idealized version of what it means to be a “real man” or a “real woman.” The Stonewall riot was a watershed moment for the progress of LGBTQ rights in the US, since it led to the decriminalization of homosexuality in New York State.

**6. Articulate how biased perspectives presented in primary and secondary sources influence what is known or unknown about history.**

 In the Stonewall Riots, the Mafia was part of the problem but not necessarily a source for the riots themselves. This is because there are other sources claiming that their dominance over different cities was what led to the rioting in 1969 at the Stonewall Inn. Some claim that this was gang violence being directed by Italians against gays; others say it was mafia bosses deciding on who would be hurt because of their sexuality. While both these perspectives could be true in some sense, it is assumed neither accounts for all complexity since there were many other factors involved besides just prejudice against homosexuals.

**7. Identify the perspectives that you think are missing from your historical event’s narrative.**

 The Stonewall Riots have been completely erased from history textbooks and ignored in popular culture, even though they resonate with today’s civil rights movements. We are told that they “set the stage” for the gay liberation movement. This is a big and shameful mistake because it is rewriting history in a very important way. The Stonewall Riots were not just another LGBT rights movement but also an uprising against organized crime and racism (Stein, 2019). As you can see from this unit, these two issues intersected when members of the mafia were using city government to steal money from LGBT establishments.

**Part 4: Connecting the Past With the Present**

**1. Explain how researching its historical roots helped improve your understanding of your current event.**

The Stonewall riots provide a key link between the Mafia and gay liberation (Stein, 2019). Understanding the history of this event has provided me with understanding of how the Mafia targets individuals and how they can be identified as targets. It has also helped me identify an individual as a target prior to learning about him or her from my current event if am inclined to do so.

**8. Articulate how questioning your assumptions, beliefs, and values may benefit you as an**

**individual.**

By questioning my assumptions, beliefs and values, I am are able to gain new knowledge and perspectives on myself, the world and others. This can help me make better choices in life.

**9. Discuss how being a more historically informed citizen may help you understand contemporary issues.**

I understand that being more historically informed will help me in understanding contemporary issues. On that note, Stonewall was an important event in gay rights, but also as a historical moment it created a rift in the mafia family (Rosenbaum, 2018). Moreover, the Stonewall riots have become a global symbol of LGBT rights and resistance. They helped catalyze the modern queer culture that continues to struggle today.

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Reference

Rosenbaum, L. K. (2018). The Influence of the Stonewall Riots.

Stein, M. (2019). *The stonewall riots: A documentary history*. NYU Press.