

Mark Segal: Stonewall 1969 and beyond



Pearson

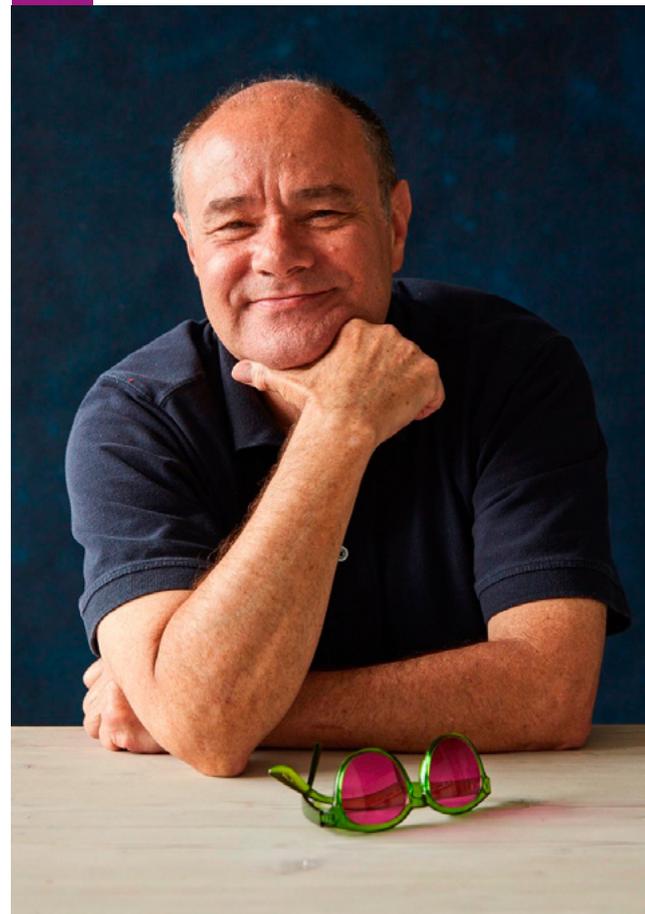
Born in 1951 in Philadelphia USA, pioneering gay activist and author, Mark Segal has spent a lifetime fighting for the rights of LGBT+ people worldwide.

At a time when the law restricted homosexuality in so many ways (in public gatherings, on TV or radio, magazines or public discussions), Mark felt alone and worthless.

Fast forward to 1969, at the age of 18, Mark moved to New York City, met people like him and threw himself into the – still illegal – gay scene and the infamous Stonewall bar.

One night the police raided Stonewall, sparking a riot and only the second time in American history that gay people had publicly stood up for their rights.

At the time, just 100 people in the whole of America had come out as gay, but things were about to change.



We decided we need to be out, loud and proud – and not just inside our own community, but also let the world know who we were.

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I'm a person that didn't feel that I had value, because society told me I didn't belong anywhere.



In the wake of the Stonewall riot, Mark and the LGBT+ community began to unite, working together against the oppression of gay and trans people. Within the first year, they had created America's first open LGBT+ community, along with the country's first trans organisation, avenues of legal, mental health and medical support for LGBT+ people, and the very first Pride march.

For Mark, it was important that LGBT+ people became visible. Disruptions to local and national TV broadcasts gained media attention (as well as a number of arrests), but importantly a shift in perception.

Tolerance comes over time; visibility comes over time.

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The work of Mark and his fellow activists are still driving change around the world, not least through the international Stonewall movement, named after that night of rioting at the bar.

Mark is proud of all he has achieved, and feels there is a lot more to be done. For him, this can only happen if we work together.

“ *I think we need to look back at time, and realise there's a time we need to unite.*

To find out more about inspiring activist Mark Segal, **watch the full talk** he gave when he visited us at Pearson.



For free guidance and resources to support **LGBT+ inclusion in education**, visit our **Diversity and Inclusion webpage**.

