

Twitter Thread by [Ali Velshi](#)



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"Pay it no mind". It was a phrase that became popular in the '60s and '70s among members of the LGBTQ community. When facing hate, many adopted the mindset: Pay it no mind. #velshi

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In 1969, the abuse against the gay community in America could no longer be ignored. At the time, it was illegal to engage in gay behavior in public - like holding hands, kissing, or dancing with a person of the same sex. #velshi

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So, gay, lesbian, and transgender people flocked to bars and clubs where they could express themselves openly and socialize without worry. #velshi

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The Stonewall Inn in New York's Greenwich Village was the hub for New York City's gay and trans men and women. Over time, in response to public pressure, bars like that became the target of violent police raids. #velshi

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Police would storm into the Stonewall Inn. They'd haul patrons and staff out into the street and arrest them. But on a June night in 1969 on Manhattan's Christopher Street, gay and trans New Yorkers had had enough of the harassment. #velshi

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They fought back and the Stonewall Uprising began. Marsha P. Johnson is thought by some to be the person who threw the first shot glass. 1969 was a tough time to be gay - and especially trans - in America, but Marsha P. Johnson was unapologetically herself. #velshi

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Bold and fearless, she draped herself in elaborate outfits, painted her face with colorful makeup and told wild tales of modeling for Andy Warhol - tales that her brother would laugh off as just that: tales. #velshi

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Indeed, her tales were almost always true. Marsha P. Johnson was a trailblazer, but her life was anything but rainbows and

butterflies. She spent much of it living on the street. #velshi

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That wasn't uncommon then, nor is it today, for gay and trans kids to be kicked out of their homes, without work, without money. #velshi

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Back then, Marsha and her friend, Silvia Rivera, built a safe space for homeless gay and trans people with an organization called STAR: Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries. #velshi

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Marsha P. Johnson amassed a cache of nicknames over the years: The Saint of Christopher Street, Drag Mother, Queen of the Village, the Rosa Parks of the LGBTQ movement. One day someone asked her what the "P" in her name stood for. Her answer: "Pay it no mind." #velshi

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Even today, that's easier said than done if you are gay. Despite massive progress, gay people, particularly trans people, trans women and in particular, trans women of color, have it really hard. #velshi

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Today marks 5 years since the deadly shooting at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, FL. This fight is far from over. The only difference now is that, for many of us, we've come to realize that THEIR fight, is OUR fight. None of us are equal until ALL of us are equal. #velshi