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LGBT+ people in medicine and health, 1900-2020

Volume 2



LGBT+ History Month 2021

Introduction

As part of the awareness session's, training and events to mark LGBT+ History Month this year, Velindre University NHS Trust are thrilled to be working with historian and author Norena Shopland, to present this time line of people and events focusing on LGBT+ in medicine and health.

This is the second volume of 2. Volume 1 focused on the period 1700's to 1900's. In this volume we will look at the 1900's to today.

The majority of the content for this volume is NHS North West publication, LGB&T History, Challenges and Successes. A brief history of involvement of lesbian, gay, bisexual and Trans people in medicine and healthcare through the ages, which was published in 2011.

We are very grateful to the authors and developers of that publication for giving us permission to adapt it for this document. We have added to their timeline and extended it to cover the past 10 years.

It is important to remind you that as you go through the timeline you will see words, phrases and descriptions that may not be used today, but as this is taken from historical writings and information for authenticity the words and phrases from that time have been used.

Attempting to trace individuals with diverse histories of sexual orientation and gender identity can be very difficult. Few terms are available for historians to use, and most in use today belong predominantly to the 20th century.

It becomes necessary then to look at, not what or who people were, but what they were doing and the most frequent behaviour by those we would identify today as lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans is that they were cross-dressing. The following examples cannot definitively be defined - even if a woman lived as a man for many years it may not mean she identified as a man, simply that she did not wish to live as a woman for whatever reasons. However, due to the gossamer thin line between genders they can be included in Trans history.



We hope that you, like us, will find this timeline interesting, inspiring and insightful.

The more we learn about our history, the more we can grow, empathise and support the LGBT+ community today.



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Homosexuality? What homosexuality?

Before the 19th C sexual relationships and love between people of the same sex certainly existed, but an homosexual identity as we know it did not.

Sexual relationships between men were common in Ancient Greece, with an older man taking on the role of educator to a younger boy. There was no homosexual identity as such and men were expected to take part in heterosexual marriage.

The writings of Sappho (c.620-560 BC) a poet from the Greek island of Lesbos survive only in fragments and much of what we know about her is based on rumour and speculation, but it was her powerful poetry about her love for other women that inspired the term 'lesbian'.



Native American men who wore women's clothing, did women's work, and became wives to men were seen as a mediator between the world of women and the world of men, and they always held a respected position in the tribe. Known as 'Two Spirits', they often had ceremonial roles and sometimes were attributed special power, such as curing the sick. Some tribes had a female equivalent but this was less common.

In Britain, from medieval times onwards, homosexuality was thought to be linked to disease. For example a pamphlet published in 1787 warns of 'emasculated foreign singers', whose 'degeneracy and effeminacy' are 'contagious like the pestilence'.

contagious like the pestilence
emasculated
foreign singers



19th Century

Categorise it!

Doctors, writers and lawyers begin to explore what homosexuality might be and what causes it, seeing it as either a disease or a crime. However, this discussion allows an idea of the homosexual as a figure to emerge, albeit one that is very much focused on sexual activity between men.

Today, transsexuality is recognised as distinct from homosexuality. However, in the 19th century, the two concepts are blurred. Sexology, or the study of human sexuality, seeks to study, and consequently classify, types of sexual behaviors, especially allegedly more 'devious' and 'abnormal' practices. So begins the medicalisation, and consequent pathologisation, of trans and gay identities.

Homosexuality is regarded as one of the many diseases that can be caused by masturbation (itself an obsession for social moralists of the period). In the 1860s, English psychiatrist Henry Maudsley (1835-1918) claims masturbation leads to insanity. After 1858 clitoridectomy is popularised for girls as a cure for masturbation by London surgeon Dr Isaac Baker Brown (1811-1873).

The medical profession begins to categorise non-procreative sex into different 'perversions' and 'deviations'. Homosexuality gradually emerges as a separate category, and so too the homosexual as an individual.

European medicine largely sees homosexuality as degeneration in individual development (post-Darwinian ideas offering a scientific explanation of sexual evolution play a significant part). Homosexuality could be the result of the parents' defective genes, resulting from, for example, hysteria, alcoholism, epilepsy or debauchery. Such theories conclude that these 'born criminals' should not be locked up in prison but treated in asylums.

By contrast, the British medical profession places more emphasis on madness than moral depravity or wickedness, possibly because madness is something that could happen to anyone, and is the only explanation that doesn't undermine social norms.

Castration and hypnosis are used as 'cures' for homosexuality across Europe and America.

Theorise it!

Although homosexual acts are still illegal, enlightened discussion begins to move away from criminalisation towards ways to understand and deal with homosexuality.

News items of 'cross-dressed men and women' occur regularly in the British press in the early part of the 20th century.

1905

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Austrian founder of psychoanalysis, publishes *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* which theorise that homosexuality is not a congenital madness or disease, but the result of arrested development at a young age. Homosexuals had 'failed' at heterosexuality, but it is extremely unlikely that they could be cured. Freud argues that homosexuals should not be punished and homosexuality should be legal.

1906

Dina Alma de Paradedda (1871-1906) was a Brazilian socialite who committed suicide in front of a doctor, who after examining the body revealed she was physically male. Subsequent media interest in the story made her one of the first documented and known by name transgender women either of South American origin or living in Central-Eastern Europe.



Dr Louisa Martindale sets up a private practice in Brighton and becomes the first woman GP. With a group of other Brighton feminists she develops the New Sussex Hospital for Women, where she is senior surgeon and physician. She later becomes a

specialist in the early treatment of cervical cancer and is awarded a CBE in 1931. Louisa lives with her partner Ismay FitzGerald for three decades, and writes of her love for her in her autobiography *A Woman Surgeon*, published in 1951.

1907

Otto Weininger (1880-1903) in *Geschlecht und Charakter (Sex and Character)* wrote:

there are no inverts who are completely sexually inverted. In all of them there is from the beginning an inclination to both sexes; they are, in fact, bisexual. It may be later on they may actively encourage a slight leaning toward one sex or the other, and so become practically unisexual either in the normal or inverted sense, or surrounding influence may bring about this result for them.

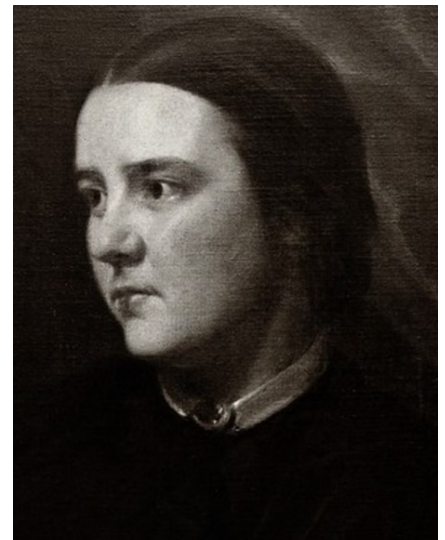
1910

American philosopher and psychologist, William James (1842-1910) writes in the *Principles of Psychology*: 'There is no inborn heterosexuality and no inborn homosexuality. There is only bisexuality.'

1912

Sophia Jex-Blake (1840-1912) dies.

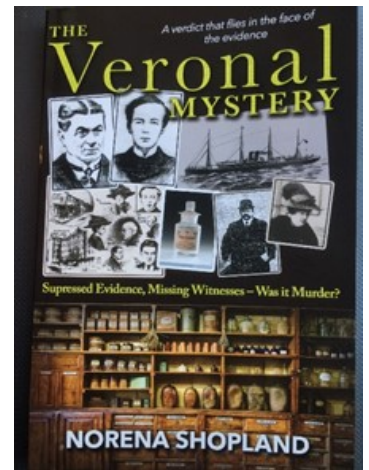
In 1869 Sophia Jex-Blake applied to study medicine at Edinburgh University but was denied a place. The university's reasoning was that they could not cater for just one lady. So, she advertised in *The Scotsman* and other newspapers, for women to join her and eventually seven applied that same year. 'The Edinburgh Seven' as they became known gained distinctions in their entrance exams but due to growing resentment of the women all the scholarships were awarded to men, even those with lower marks. Battling through three years of resentment the Edinburgh Seven passed their courses but were not allowed to graduate and it was not until 1876 that women could finally study at universities.



Jex-Blake become one of the first woman doctors in the United Kingdom. In 1886 she helped open the Edinburg School of Medicine for Women and it was there she met her life partner Dr. Margaret Todd, (she coined the word *isotope* in 1913) one of the first students to enrol in the institute. Together they wrote several crucial texts arguing in favour of women's suffrage and women's importance to the medical field. After Jex-Blake's death, Todd wrote *The Life of Dr Sophia Jex-Blake* (1918) describing the fight of women in the 19th century to enter the medical profession.

1912

Dr Bernard Henry Spilsbury (1877-1947), pathologist, uses the flawed Tardieu system of identifying homosexual men (see Vol. 1) to label Eric Trevanion a 'sexual pervert'. Misinformation and suppression of homosexual evidence at the inquest leaves the possibility that Trevanion was murdered. For more see the book *The Veronal Mystery*.



1914

The British Society for the Study of Sex Psychology is set up by a group of theorists and activists, with Edward Carpenter as president. Carpenter is a proponent of the theory of homosexual as a third sex, and himself lives openly with his lover, George Merrill. The Society discusses the topic of homosexual oppression along with other issues including women's rights, contraception, divorce law reform and the use of sex hormones.

1916

Urania a privately published feminist gender studies journal is established. It challenges gender stereotypes and advances the abolishment of gender; each issue is headed with the statement: "There are no 'men' or 'women' in *Urania*." *Urania* was edited by Eva Gore-Booth (187-1926) and her partner Esther Roper (1868-1938), trans Irene Clyde (1869-1954), Dorothy Cornish (1870-1945), and Jessey Wade (1859-1952).

1917

Alan L Hart (October 4, 1890 – July 4, 1962) is one of the first female-born but male-identified people to undergo hysterectomy and gonadectomy in the US. Hart is an American physician, radiologist, tuberculosis researcher, writer and novelist, who pioneers the use of X-ray photography in tuberculosis detection, and helps implement TB screening programmes that save thousands of lives.

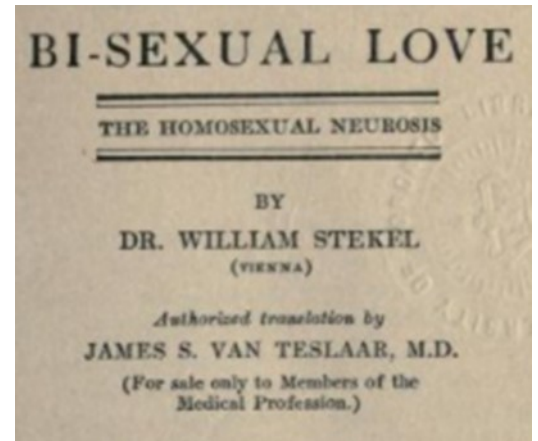


1921

A law to criminalise female homosexuality is discussed in Parliament but rejected it due to the fear a law would draw attention and encourage women to explore homosexuality.

1922

Austrian physician and psychologist, Wilhelm Stekel (1868-1940) writes [*Bi-Sexual Love: the Homosexual Neurosis*](#)



1927

Welshman Ernest Jones reads a paper at the 10th International Congress of Psycho-Analysis detailing his treatment of five homosexual women. As the head of the International Psychoanalytic Association, he later refuses to admit homosexual men as psychiatrists, despite the disapproval of Sigmund Freud. Anna Freud, Sigmund's daughter, also a psychoanalyst, backs Jones despite herself having a 'close companionship' with Dorothy Burlingham.

1928

Radclyffe Hall's (1880-1943) novel, *The Well of Loneliness*, is published and later banned for 'obscenity' because it centers on the life of a 'sexual invert', Stephen Gordon, who wishes to have been born male. Dr William H. Willcox (1870-1941), the Senior Scientific Analyst to the Home Office, gave vital evidence towards the ban. 'Lesbianism,' was, according to Willcox, 'well known to have a debasing effect on those practising it, which is mental, moral and physical in character.' Adding, 'It leads to gross mental illness, nervous instability, and in some cases to suicide in addicts to this vice. It is a vice which, if widespread, becomes a danger to the well-being of a nation.'

Pathologise it!

For the most part, homosexuality is still seen as an illness, and even those involved in campaigning tend to be apologists, pleading for fair treatment for sufferers of this 'abnormality'

During this period, the first 'sex change' stories begin to enter the British press. Medical advances in the field of endocrinology and surgery enable some of the first gender confirmation surgeries to be performed in the UK.

1930

Lili Elbe (1882-1931), a Danish painter, goes to Germany for gender reassignment surgery, which is only in an experimental state at this time. Five operations are carried out over a period of two years. The first surgery, removal of the testicles (orchidectomy), is carried out under the supervision of sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld in Berlin. The rest of Elbe's surgery is carried out by Dr Kurt Warnekros in the Dresden Municipal Women's Clinic. The second operation is to remove the penis, and transplant ovaries from a 26-year-old donor. These are soon removed in a third, then fourth, operation, due to rejection and other serious complications. The fifth operation is to transplant a uterus and is intended to allow Elbe, now nearing the age of 50, to bear children. She dies from complications from the surgery in 1931.



The Encyclopaedia of Sexual Knowledge by Norman Haire is published, addressing transvestitism and gender reassignment.

1932



Colonel Sir Victor Barker DSO (1895 – 1960) marries Elfrida Haward in Brighton. Barker's birth sex (female) is later revealed and the marriage consequently annulled. Barker goes on to appear in 'freak show' displays in New Brighton, Southend-on-Sea and Blackpool.

1933

Homosexuals are sent to concentration camps. Nazis burn the library of Magnus Hirschfeld's (1868-1935) Institute for Sexual Research, and destroy the Institute.

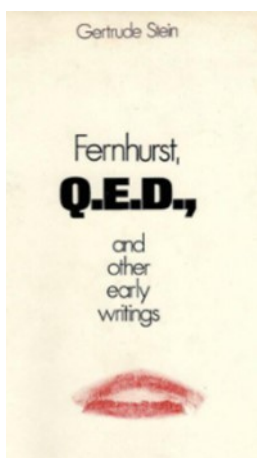
1935

Aversion therapy is first used to eliminate homosexuality and later is used on trans people.

Sigmund Freud publishes his famous letter to the mother of a homosexual son outlined his beliefs: "Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function produced by a certain arrest of sexual development. Many highly respectable individuals of ancient and modern times have been homosexuals, several of the greatest men among them (Plato, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, etc.) It is a great injustice to persecute homosexuality as a crime and cruelty too."



Jane Addams (1860–1935) an important leader in the history of social work and the first American woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1931, dies. She had a relationship with Ellen Gates Starr (1859–1940) an American social reformer.



Martha Carey Thomas (1857-1935) dies. She is the first woman president of Bryn Mawr College, USA a position she acquires through the influence of her partner Mary Garrett (1854-1915). Thomas also creates the world-famous medical college at John Hopkins on the condition that women are admitted to study. Her relationships with both Garrett and English professor Mamie Gwin provide the inspiration for lesbian author Gertrude Stein's bisexual story *Fernhurst* (1904).



1940's The War Years

Homosexuals are persecuted by the Nazis during the Holocaust. 53% of homosexual prisoners die in the concentration camps, a higher proportion than for political prisoners. Medical experiments on homosexuals, in an attempt to 'cure' them, are common, including injecting them with large amounts of male hormones to see if they begin to show interest in the opposite sex.

1941

Transsexuality was first used in reference to homosexuality and bisexuality.

1945

Sir Harold Gillies and his colleague Ralph Millard carry out female-to-male confirmation surgery on Michael Dillon. Sir Harold Gillies developed his pioneering pedicle flap surgery with injured soldiers from World War Two. Initially developed as reconstructive surgery, phalloplasty is now offered as a genital surgery option for trans men.



Dillon undergoes at least 13 surgeries between 1946 and 1949 but the exact nature of the surgery is concealed. Michael Dillon (1915 – 1962) was born to aristocrat Robert Dillon of Lismullen, County Meath. In 1939 he seeks treatment from Dr George Foss who had been experimenting with testosterone to treat excessive menstrual bleeding but who understands its potential masculinising effects. Dillon graduates from Trinity College Dublin and sets up as a physician.

In 1946 he publishes *Self A Study in Endocrinology and Ethics*, which makes a case for 'masculine invert' to be treated medically – 'Where the mind cannot be made to fit the body, the body should be made to fit, approximately at any rate, to the mind'. In 1958, Dillon's history is brought to public attention as a result of a discrepancy between the reporting of his aristocratic background. He consequently flees to India and becomes ordained as a monk.

The Sex Education Society is formed, holding public lectures aimed at enlightening public opinion on sexual health matters and supporting relevant legislation. Part of its programme calls for 'the establishment of a rational attitude towards sexually abnormal persons' and the reform of sexual offences legislation. Norman Haire is president and under his influence the *Journal of Sex Education* is first published in 1948, including research articles and advice to readers promoting enlightened views on sexuality.

American biologist Alfred Kinsey (1894-1956) publishes *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* and *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female*, showing that homosexual practices are much more widespread than previously thought. Kinsey's findings have a major impact on public opinion, as people debate the validity of his claims.

He, and others, develop the controversial *Kinsey Scale* - ranging from 0, meaning exclusively heterosexual, to 6, meaning exclusively homosexual in both male and female. Later x is added to denote asexuality, a lack of sexual attraction.

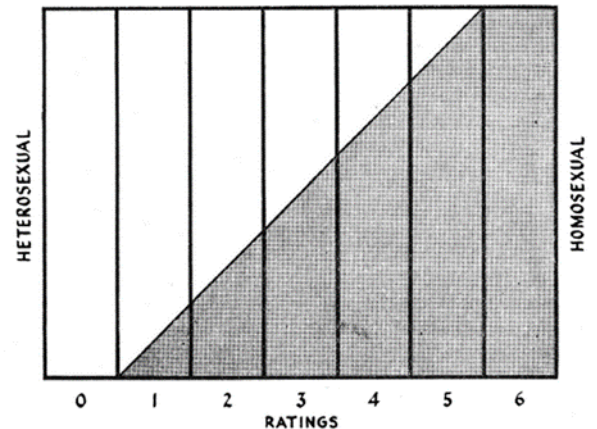


Figure 161. Heterosexual-homosexual rating scale

Based on both psychologic reactions and overt experience, individuals rate as follows:

0. Exclusively heterosexual with no homosexual
1. Predominantly heterosexual, only incidentally homosexual
2. Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual
3. Equally heterosexual and homosexual
4. Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual
5. Predominantly homosexual, but incidentally heterosexual
6. Exclusively homosexual

1950's

Cure it!

American and British psychiatry are dominated by idea that homosexuals can be changed through psychoanalysis. Freudian theory is still very influential, leading to the belief that homosexuality is a state of arrested development and the outlining of homosexual and lesbian 'types'. Homosexuality continues to be pathologised as psychiatrists are determined to find a cure for it. The first serious moves towards legalising homosexuality are made with the work of the Wolfenden Committee.

Medical 'cures' for homosexuality (often offered to men convicted of sexual offences instead of a jail sentence) include electric shock treatment, hallucinogenic drugs, aversion therapy and brainwashing techniques.

Transsexuality enters public discourse during this time, largely as a result

1950's

Heyday of London's *Gateways club* (1931-1985) one of the few places in the UK where lesbians could meet openly and is featured in the lesbian film *The Killing of Sister George*. During the 1950s women would often adopt a butch/femme role to conform to a notion of binary genders. During this time people of colour could often find it difficult to find venues but *Gateways* welcomed them.

1952

Roberta Cowell (1918-2011) is the first known UK trans person to undergo gender confirmation surgery. The operation is performed by Sir Harold Gillies, a plastic surgeon. Cowell learns of the procedure through Michael Dillon (who had earlier performed an orchidectomy on her). Cowell trained as a fighter pilot and a motor racing driver before becoming a prisoner of war.



The last lobotomy to 'cure' homosexuality is carried out.

1954

After being convicted of sexual offences with a young man, Alan Turing, code breaker and founder of modern computer science, chooses to undergo hormone treatment instead of going to prison. He is regularly injected with oestrogen in an attempt to neutralise his libido. Two years later, his body is found by his cleaner. He had died of cyanide poisoning and the coroner gives a verdict of suicide. In 2009 the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, issues an apology on behalf of the government.



Bisexual psychiatrist James Strachey (1887-1967) and his wife Alix (1892-1973) begin publishing the *Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*.

1955

First meeting of the Wolfenden Committee to discuss the potential decriminalisation of homosexuality, taking its name from the committee leader John Wolfenden (1906-1985). Ophthalmic surgeon Patrick Trevor-Roper (1916-2004) is one of only three out gay men who give evidence to the Wolfenden Committee that homosexuality is not a physical or mental illness.

1957

American psychologist Evelyn Hooker (1907-1996) proves that gay men can be just as psychologically well adjusted as straight men; before this, studies of gay men had involved those who were already seeking psychiatric treatment or were in prison.



The word "Transsexual" is coined by U.S. physician Harry Benjamin (1885-1986)

1958

Coccinelle (1931-2006), an entertainer from Paris, undergoes Gender Reassignment Surgery with Dr Georges Burou (1910-1987) in Casablanca, Morocco. Burou also treats April Ashley and Jan Morris.



1959



Alan Horsfall, Labour councillor for Nelson, Lancashire, tables a motion to his local Labour party to back the decriminalisation of homosexuality.



The motion is rejected, but Horsfall and fellow activist Anthony Grey are later to form the North West Homosexual Law Reform Committee.



1960's Legalise it

A decade of campaigning for an end to the criminalisation of homosexuality eventually sees legislation passed. However, it is limited and public opinion is still largely homophobic.

1960's

From Jane Traies book *The Lives of Older Lesbians* 'I decided that I wanted to become a teacher ... but I had to go and have a medical. Not just an ordinary medical, but a full medical ... the doctor said, 'You take *all* your clothes off.' When I was in College, I said, 'Wasn't that medical awful that we had before we came here?' So they said, 'What medical?' And then I realised that I'd actually been subjected to something to try to find out – I don't know what – whether they thought I was a hermaphrodite or something like that, or what.'

1960's

British model April Ashley undergoes gender reassignment surgery with Dr Burou in Casablanca. At just 18 years old, Ashley receives psychiatric treatment and later moves abroad for surgery denied in Britain. At this time, surgery is very much dependent on social class and social connections (this explains the ability of Cowell to access surgery a few years earlier).



1964

During the 1950s, genital surgery does take place but is unusual. Most surgeons refuse to perform these operations, leaving 'treatment' instead to the field of psychiatry. However, access to surgical procedures becomes more readily accessible in the 1960s. There is a growing body of research on transsexuality, from the fields of sexology, psychology and psychiatry. Much of this literature (eg Green and Money, 1969) emphasises dysfunctional socialisation as the cause of the transsexual 'condition'. However, gender starts to be recognised independently from biological sex, leading towards the gradual acceptance of surgery as a 'cure' for the disjunction between felt gender and biological sex. Benjamin argues that if surgery is refused, the transsexual person reverts to self-harm and suicide. Money declares that medical opinion should dictate public policy and, in turn, legislation. Benjamin and Money coin the term 'gender dysphoria'.

1964

North West Homosexual Law Reform Committee founded, abandoning the medical model of homosexuality as a sickness and calling for decriminalisation of homosexuality. Its first meeting is held in Manchester. The national Homosexual Law Reform Committee had been established in 1958, and the North West branch is the only one to remain active after decriminalisation legislation is passed. It becomes the national Campaign for Homosexual Equality in 1969.

American trans man Reed Erickson (1917-1992) sets up the Erickson Educational Foundation (EEF) to support the work of the LGB&T movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Erickson worked as an engineer before inheriting the family business in 1962, which he eventually sold for an estimated \$40 million. His legal change of gender and surgeries set a precedent in the state of Louisiana.

1965

A UK opinion poll finds that 93% of people still see homosexuality as a form of illness requiring medical treatment.

London psychiatrist, Clifford Allen, claims that female homosexuality "is a sexual neurosis and is just as treatable as any other neurosis" and that he had "cured" a number of female patients through psychotherapy.

1964

Founding of the Beaumont Society, a London-based social/support group for people who crossdress, are transvestite or who are transsexual. The first meeting takes place in a Southampton hotel, at a time when there is little knowledge about trans issues and a general non-acceptance from the general public and police.

Sexual Offences Act legalises private consensual homosexual sex over the age of 21.

1968

In the aftermath of the Compton's Cafeteria riot, a network of transgender social, psychological, and medical support services was established, which culminated in 1968 with the creation of the National Transsexual Counseling Unit [NTCU], the first such peer-run support and advocacy organization in the world.

1969

The Stonewall Riots – trans and gender non-conforming people are among those who resist arrest during a bar raid at the Stonewall Inn, New York. This event marks the start of the LGBT movement.

Bisexual Brenda Howard (1946-2005) played a major role in organising the first gay pride march in 1969.



1970's Liberation!

The decade of gay liberation, seeing the formation of the London Gay Liberation Front (1970) and the First Gay Pride in London (1972).

The development of gender identity clinics attempts to break away from mainstream medical practice to create a more sensitive system of care for trans people. There is also a growing body of literature on trans issues, written mainly from a radical feminist or anthropological perspective, which, in its attempts to criticise rigid classifications of gender behaviour, only serves to further scapegoat trans people.

1970

On June 27, 1970, the first gay and lesbian pride parade in the world was held in Chicago.

American Dr. Alice Hamilton (1869-1970), who founded occupational medicine, dies. Now accepted as someone today identified as lesbian, she battled the resistance to women in medicine and helped pioneer the study of harmful industrial toxins.



1971

Dr. Frank Kameny (1925-2011) becomes the first openly gay candidate for the United States Congress.

American psychotherapist Betty Berzon (1928-2006) was among the first psychotherapists to assist gay clients. After coming out as gay in 1968, she began providing therapy to gays and lesbians. In 1971, during a UCLA conference *The Homosexual in America*, Berzon became the first psychotherapist in the country to come out as gay.

1972

New Zealand psychologist John Money (1921-2006) publishes a case study *Man & Woman, Boy & Girl: Gender Identity from Conception to Maturity*, claiming that early socialisation can overrule biological programming. The case study concerns David Reimer (1965- 2004), a Canadian who was born male but reassigned female after his penis was severed beyond repair during circumcision. .

1973

Milton Diamond later reports that, despite Money's assertions, Reimer never identified as female.

In 1997, after assuming a male gender identity, Reimer undergoes chest reconstruction and phalloplasty. He later commits suicide after going public with his story to discourage similar medical practices.

London Icebreakers formed, offering a 24-hour helpline staffed exclusively by lesbian, gay, and bisexual people and offering support.

The American Psychiatric Association removes some definitions of homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. It was not until 1986 that all definitions were removed; and in 1992 the World Health Organisation removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders.

Campaign for Homosexual Equality hold the first UK gay rights conference in Morecambe, Lancashire.



1974

Homosexuality is removed from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Illness, published by the American Psychiatric Association but was replaced with the diagnosis of "sexual orientation disturbance".

After political pressure from the National Gay Task Force, the American Psychiatric Association changes the diagnosis of homosexuality from a disease to a 'condition'.

The first national Transvestite/Transsexual Conference held in Leeds.



Jan Morris (1926-2020) journalist and travel writer, publishes *Conundrum*, a personal account of her transition. Morris travelled to Morocco to undergo sex reassignment surgery, performed by surgeon Georges Burou because doctors in Britain refused to allow the procedure unless Morris and Elizabeth Tuckniss divorced, something Morris was not prepared to do.

1975



Maureen Colquhoun (1928-2021) becomes the UK's first out lesbian MP after coming out in 1975. She is the UK's first openly gay MP.

1978



American artist, gay rights activist, Gilbert Baker (1951-2017) raised the first Rainbow Flag at San Francisco Pride on June 25, 1978. It since become an international symbol of pride.

Hot pink		Sex
Red		Life
Orange		Healing
Yellow		Sunlight
Green		Nature
Turquoise		Magic/Art
Indigo		Serenity
Violet		Spirit

Original eight-colour version

1979



British documentary *A Change of Sex* is aired on the BBC, enabling viewers to follow the social and medical transition of Julia Grant. The programme also provides an important historical snapshot of the Gender Identity Clinic, Charing Cross Hospital, London.

The term Gay Bowel Syndrome is coined to describe a range of peri-anal and rectal diseases seen among gay male patients; it did not refer to a specific complaint, nor to complaints specific to gay men, but in the pre-AIDS era is the first medical term to relate to gay men. It is now obsolete and considered derogatory.

UK's oldest LGBT+ bookshop, *Gays the Word* opens in London.

1980's

Fear and panic

AIDS comes to dominate not just the decade, but LGB issues both in the mainstream and for LGB people themselves.

1981

First cases of what will come to be called AIDS recorded. Several gay men present at Californian hospitals with a range of unusual conditions including pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP) and Kaposi's sarcoma (a rare skin cancer), and all show weakened immune systems. At first it is referred to as Gay-Related Immune Deficiency (GRID) and even 'gay cancer'. The discovery that other groups are also susceptible, including hemophiliacs, recipients of blood transfusions and intravenous drug users, prompts the coining of a new name, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

1982

Terrence Higgins, from Swansea, is the first British gay man to be diagnosed with and die of AIDS. An article in *Capital Gay*, referring to it as an American disease, is published five months after his death and the story is ignored by the mainstream media. The Terrence Higgins Trust is set up later this year by his partner, Martyn Butler. It is still a leading sexual health and HIV charity in the UK.



1983

The National Blood Service (then the Blood Transfusion Service) bans men who have sex with men from donating blood. This is still in place, and so men who have ever had sex with men are not allowed to give blood, even if they have practised safe sex and tested negative for HIV. The National Blood Service justifies this as a policy to ensure blood safety and not homophobic as it is an exclusion based on specific sexual behaviour rather than sexuality.

HIV virus isolated by researchers at the Pasteur Institute in Paris.

1985

Conservative Minister for Health Ken Clarke enacts powers to keep people with AIDS in hospital against their will. Medical experts caution that this might deter some people from coming forward for treatment. The only known case of these powers being used is in Manchester, where a gay man with AIDS being treated at Monsall Hospital asks to go home for the weekend. Manchester City Council holds an emergency meeting and grants an order to have him detained in hospital for three weeks. Major protests from the gay community follow and, after a court case, the order is lifted and he is allowed to leave hospital 10 days later.

Testing for the HIV virus introduced. Health Authorities are asked to provide counselling services to people who test positive, as well as their families and friends. Blood transfusion centres begin routine testing of all blood donations.

1986

Global scientific community recognises HIV as the virus that causes AIDS.

SIGMA (Socio-sexual Investigations of Gay Men and AIDS) research group funded by the Department of Health to conduct a study of HIV in non-clinical settings, offering HIV-testing to people in their own homes. This continues until 1995, when the group becomes Sigma Research, specialising in the behavioural and policy aspects of HIV and sexual health, also undertaking research and development work on LGBT health and well-being.

Government launches the first AIDS awareness campaign – a series of hard-hitting television adverts and leaflets bearing the slogan 'Don't Die of Ignorance' which are delivered to every household.



1987

Virginia Bottomley (1948 -), Conservative MP for South West Surrey (later to become Minister of Health in 1989) advocates ECT (electroconvulsive therapy) to 'cure' homosexuality.

1988

Section 28 of the Local Government Act enacted stating that any local authority 'shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality' or 'promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship'. No prosecution is ever brought under this amendment, but its existence causes many gay groups to close or self-censor their activities.



HeartBeat (1988-1989), an American medical drama, was the first prime time television series in the US to feature a recurring lesbian couple and a lesbian as a main character, Marilyn McGrath who has a long-term relationship with Patty.

The Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health, a peer-reviewed medical journal is launched.

1989

Stonewall founded by a group of people involved in protest against Section 28 of the Local Government Act, as a professional campaigning and lobbying group for gay equality.



Celebrated jazz musician Billy Tipton dies in Washington after refusing to seek medical help for a perforated ulcer. He is only discovered to be biologically female after his death by the coroner. Tipton, who played in big bands in the 40s and 50s, lived his life as a man, marrying several times and raising children.

Gay community Fights Back

Spurred into action by the shock of the AIDS crisis and the slow response of many governments and healthcare systems around the world, the gay community organises and begins to provide support and services. community organises and begins to provide support and services.

1990

Founding of The Gender Trust, the first registered charity to help trans adults in the UK.



First National Survey on Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles carried out, the largest representative sample survey of sexual lifestyles ever undertaken in Britain. It is refused funding by the Conservative government and funded instead by the charity the Wellcome Foundation.

1992

Founding of Press For Change, a key lobbying and legal support organisation for trans people in the UK. PFC works to ensure 'respect and equality for all trans people in the UK' through case law, legislation and social change. Later, in 1996, PFC was deemed to be 'one of the most successful lobby groups seen in the last 25 years' by Lord Alex Carlile, Baron Carlile of Berriew. Patrons include Lord Beaumont, Alex Carlile QC, Edwina Currie, Professor Louis Gooren, Dr Lynne Jones MP, Lady Helena Kennedy QC, Ken Livingstone MP and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Gay Men Fighting AIDS (GMFA) founded by a group of gay men in London who feel that there is not enough targeted HIV prevention work. Since 2002 its remit includes all health issues which disproportionately affect gay men.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) International Classification of Diseases finally removes the term homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. However, it adds the diagnosis of 'ego-dystonic sexual orientation', in which a person's 'gender identity or sexual preference... is not in doubt, but the individual wishes it were different because of associated psychological and behavioural disorders, and may seek treatment in order to change it.' The WHO notes that sexual orientation itself is not a disorder, but acknowledges that treatment of ego-dystonic sexual orientation may include attempts to change a person's sexual orientation as well as helping them to be more comfortable with it.

1993

Government removes homosexuality from its list of psychiatric disorders in England and Wales (Scottish government removes it in 2000).

Department of Health sets up PRISM, its staff LGBT network, one of the first of its kind.

The survey goes national in 1997 with funding from the partners of CHAPS on behalf of the Department of Health, and since 2001 has been available online and promoted on gay community and commercial websites.

1994

Diva Europe's leading magazine for lesbians and bisexual women is launched and includes articles about women's health.

1995

Gay and Lesbian Association of Doctors and Dentists founded, providing support, information and social opportunities to gay and lesbians in the medical professions.

The case of *X, Y and Z v. the United Kingdom* is brought before the European Court of Human Rights. Here, trans man Stephen Whittle seeks recognition as the legal father of his child, born to his partner by artificial insemination by an anonymous donor. The request is refused.

The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association launched the *Journal of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association*, the world's first peer-reviewed, multi-disciplinary journal dedicated to LGBT health.

Goldstein N. [Lesbians and the medical profession: HIV/AIDS and the pursuit of visibility](#). *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. 1995

1996

A breakthrough is made in the area of AIDS treatment; Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) is found to significantly delay the onset of AIDS in people living with HIV. The NHS makes the treatment available in the UK

1997

The case of *P vs S and Cornwall County Council*. The breakthrough judgment of the European Court of Justice gives trans people protection against employment discrimination across the whole of the European Union.

The lesbian health book: Caring for ourselves. Seattle: Seal Press is published.

1998

The first bisexual pride flag was unveiled on 5 December 1998.



1999

The UK Sex Discrimination Act is amended to include protections on the basis of Gender Reassignment, by means of the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations.

Terry J. [An American obsession: Science, medicine, and homosexuality in modern society](#) Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1999



Dominic Davies set up the Pink Therapy clinic in London the UK's largest independent therapy organisation working with gender and sexual diversity.

The Transgender Day of Remembrance was founded in 1999 by Gwendolyn Ann Smith (1967-) and the first Celebrate Bisexuality Day was organized by Michael Page, Gigi Raven Wilbur, and Wendy Curry.

1998

The High Court rules in favour of three trans women who were refused gender reassignment treatment by the North West Lancashire Health Authority, representing the first challenge to the policy of not funding medical treatment for trans people. The Health Authority loses an appeal against the ruling in July 1999, making it unlawful for a Health Authority to impose anything amounting to a blanket ban on funding medical treatment for the purposes of genderreassignment.

Manchester City Council creates a post of Lesbian Participation Worker to develop groups and networks particularly for older lesbians, Black and Asian lesbians, disabled lesbians and lesbianswith children. The first *Manchester Lesbian Newsletter* is produced at the end of 1998 and becomes the Lesbian Community Project in 1999, registering as a charity in 2003.

1999

Dominic Davies sets up the Pink Therapy clinic in London. The UK's largest independent therapy organisation working with gender and sexual diversity.





2000's Legislation & Protection

The decade of ground-breaking legislation ensuring many equal rights for LGB people. It's characterised by significant gains for the trans community, with the founding of several notable trans equality and human rights organisations, and groundbreaking legalisation.

2000

Age of consent for homosexual sex equalized with heterosexual sex, set at 16 for the UK and 17 for Northern Ireland.

[Lesbians' experiences of healthcare](#). *Nursing Times Research*. 2000

2002

UK documentary *Make Me A Man* (2002) follows the lives of a handful of trans men at different stages of their gender transition. The case of former nurse Christine Goodwin v. the United Kingdom is heard, in which a trans woman successfully argues that her convention rights have been breached by the UK government's failure to provide legal recognition for a trans person's reassigned gender.

2003

The screening of a UK documentary featuring Sarah Muirhead-Allwood (MBBS, BSc, FRCS), now a consultant orthopedic surgeon who was involved with a hip replacement operation for the Queen Mother, and who specialises in the pioneering new technique of short-stay keyhole hip surgery. In 1996, Muirhead-Allwood receives the support of the British Medical Association (BMA) and the two NHS hospitals where she worked when she transitioned from male to female.

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations outlaw discrimination in employment and vocational training including direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Many organisations begin monitoring the sexual orientation of staff and service users to ensure they are providing equality of access and opportunity.

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, outlawing the 'promotion' of homosexuality by local authorities, is abolished.

The Adoption and Children Act removes the condition that only married couples can adopt, therefore allowing same-sex couples (and all single people regardless of sexual orientation) to adopt.

2004

The United Kingdom Gender Recognition Act becomes law on July 1, offering trans people full legal recognition of their change of gender. Press For Change is responsible for ensuring the success of the Goodwin & I cases and, later, the Gender Recognition bill. Christine Burns, Stephen Whittle and Claire McNab negotiate key conversations with government officials. Angela Clayton was later involved with the implementation phase after the bill is passed into law.

Stephen Whittle is awarded an OBE and Christine Burns an MBE for their outstanding work on behalf of trans people.



[Perceptions about medical culture and healthcare among Black men who have sex with men.](#) *Journal of the National Medical Association.* 2004

LGBT+ History Month founded in 2004 and first celebrated in February 2005.

2006

The handbook of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender public health: A practitioners guide to service. New York: Routledge

First annual LGBT Health Summit held in London for individuals, organisations and activists to discuss thinking and practice on LGBT health issues in the UK.

Christine Burns chairs the first Department of Health working group on trans issues, which is part of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Group (SOGIAG). Burns is later appointed to the successor LGBT Advisory Group.

Nursing Standard magazine celebrates LGBT History Month with a special 'Pride in Nursing' issue

Celia Bone, a consultant gynecologist and medical director at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, publicly announces her transition from male to female, supported by the hospital trust and Chief Executive. Letters are sent to her patients and a helpline set up to provide information and answer any questions.

2007

Department of Health publishes a series of briefings for health professionals on the health inequalities faced by LGB&T people. These address issues such as mental health as well as sexual health, and the needs of LGB&T people from different backgrounds, such as young and old, disabled, and Black and minority ethnic communities.

The Royal College of Nursing launch their national LGBT network, providing a virtual group for members offering support and advice.



The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations outlaw discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities, services, education and public functions on the grounds of sexual orientation.

[Improving access to health care among African-American, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latino lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations](#) In: Meyer IH, Northridge ME, editors. *The health of sexual minorities: Public health perspectives on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations*. New York: Springer; 2007

2008

The Human Fertilisation & Embryology Act introduced to allow lesbians and their partners equal access to legal presumptions of parentage in cases of IVF or assisted/self-insemination.

Stonewall publishes *Prescription for Change*, a national report looking into the neglected healthcare needs of lesbian and bisexual women.

2009

As part of LGBT History Month the British Medical Association publishes a collection of members' experiences as a celebration of LGB&T doctors' contributions to the NHS.

2010

Cementing equality

The Equality Act brings together 40 years of equality legislation, but many of its key provisions are yet to come into force. Rates of mental ill health and sexually transmitted infections are still high among LGB people, and homophobic attacks still frequent.

2010

The International Day for the Depathologisation of Trans Identities (October 23) is created by the Intergroup on LGBT Rights, after urging the European Commission to depathologise gender identity disorder. In the United States, Gender Identity Disorder currently appears in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. The World Health Organisation is currently reviewing the 10th edition of its International Classification of Diseases (ICD10). Gender Identity Disorder / Transsexualism may be reclassified in ICD11.

Plans to make sex education compulsory for children over 15, including information on homosexuality, is scrapped in the pre-election 'wash up'.

Gay men's magazine *Attitude* publishes its groundbreaking *issues issue*, which addresses the high rates of mental health problems and substance dependency among gay men.



Five NHS bodies appeared in Stonewall's annual league of the UK's top 100 LGB friendly employers.

The Gay Men's Sex Survey becomes part of EMIS (European MSM Internet Sex survey) a pan-European survey involving organisations in 33 countries. 184,470 men took part, making it the largest survey of this population ever undertaken anywhere in the world.

The Equality Act comes into force, making sexual orientation and gender reassignment protected characteristics. Employers are no longer allowed to ask job applicants to complete a healthcare questionnaire before an offer of employment. A Single Equality Duty that will require the public sector to actively promote equality for all protected characteristics is planned to come into force in April 2011.

2010

Claire Rayner, ally of the gay rights movement, dies.

She attended meetings of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality and was vice-president of the Gay and Lesbian Humanist Association. As a nurse, journalist, broadcaster and agony aunt, Rayner recognised the importance of safesex messages in confronting HIV/AIDS and was one of the first to talk openly about sex and sexual health.



It is estimated that there are over 22,000 people in the UK who are HIV positive but do not know it. A coalition of HIV and healthcare experts launched the Halve It campaign to reduce this number by 50% over the next five years.

Measures in the proposed Freedom Bill will make it possible for those with historical convictions for consensual gay sex to apply for their record to be deleted from the police national computer so that they no longer have to be declared and they won't show up on criminal record checks.

2011

The ban on men who have sex with men (MSM) from donating blood is lifted (except in Northern Ireland). However, only if they have not been sexually active in the last 12 months.

The U.S. Institute of Medicine (IOM) publishes its landmark report on health disparities among LGBT people and its recommendations to address these disparities.

2012

Homophobic bullying in schools is introduced into Ofsted's inspection framework in the UK.

Stonewall publishes the largest survey of gay and bisexual men's health needs in the world.

Welsh actor Victor Spinetti receives treatment from the Velindre Cancer Centre in Whitchurch for prostate cancer but dies of the

2013

Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act is passed in England and Wales.

The first UK trans Pride is held in Brighton.

2014



Queen Elizabeth II praises the information and support helpline, London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard, for their 40-year history, saying: "Best wishes and congratulations to all concerned on this most special anniversary." It is the first time the Crown has ever publicly supported the LGBT community.

Bisexual health awareness month is launched.

2015



Gov.UK publishes [Improving health equality for gay, bisexual and other MSM – why now and how?](#)

Riley Carter Millington joins Eastenders as Kyle Slater, the first trans man to play a trans character in a UK soap. 2016 William talks about the mental effects caused by bullying.



2016



Prince William appears on the cover of gay magazine *Attitude* the first member of the Royal Family to be photographed for the cover of a gay publication.

2017



The 1-year ban on MSM for donating blood is changed to 3 months (except in Northern Ireland where the ban is still in place).

Welsh Gender Service is first announced by the Health Minister, Vaughan Gething AM.



The [Bisexuality Report](#) is published by the Open University with a chapter on bisexuality and health.

2018



The UK Government publishes its four-year [LGBT Action Plan 2018: Improving the lives of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people](#) in response to the National LGBT survey. It states, 'While many respondents to the survey said they had a positive experience accessing healthcare, there is clearly more to do.'



2019

The World Health Organisation declassifies trans as a mental illness.

The UK Government appoints the first National Advisor for LGBT Health in the NHS


Helen Spandler and Sarah Carr publish their article [*Hidden from history? A brief modern history of the psychiatric "treatment" of lesbian and bisexual women in England*](#) in *The Lancet* highlighting the lack of research on psychiatric treatment of these women.

The International Longevity Centre UK publishes [*Raising the equality flag: Health inequalities among older LGBT people in the UK*](#)

Wales' first gender identity clinic run by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board begins.

2020

The FAIR (For the Assessment of Individualised Risk) steering group concludes that donors who have had the same sexual partner in the last three months and who don't have an STI should be eligible to donate. This new recommendation will mean changes to the current rules for men who have sex with men as well as other specific sexual behaviours that currently require people to wait for a period of time (deferral) before being allowed to donate blood in the UK. This change will not come into effect until summer 2021



We hope you've enjoyed reading these highlights of LGBT+ people in Medicine and Health, 1900 – 2020.

Of course, this is just a selection and if you have any suggestions for additions please do let us know and hopefully we can add to the timeline in the future.

Velindre NHS

Some links

The Lesbian & Gay Foundation (LGF)

The LGF is a vibrant charity with a wide portfolio of services and resources aimed at meeting the needs of lesbian, gay & bisexual (LGB) people.

We provide support, information and advice on many health and social issues faced by LGB people, as well as tackling continued problems of discrimination and violence.

Web www.lgf.org.uk

Phone 0845 330 3030

The Trans Resource and Empowerment Centre (TREC)

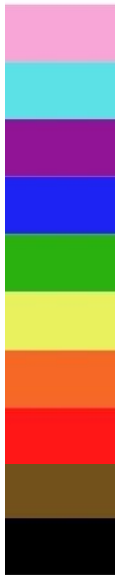
Based in the North West, TREC provides a wide range of programming and empowerment opportunities for the trans and gender variant community (and partners, friends, families, allies). Activities centre on the themes of Body and Health, Policy and Law, Creativity, Culture and Community, Safety and Networking. Community events usually take place on the second Saturday of the month from 11am-4pm at the Lesbian and Gay Foundation, 5 Richmond Street, Manchester, M1 5HF.

TREC is an Executive Member of The National LGB&T Partnership and provides an extensive research, training and consultancy service.

Please see www.transcentre.org.uk for more details.

Email board@transcentre.org.uk

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