

# HEAR ME OUT



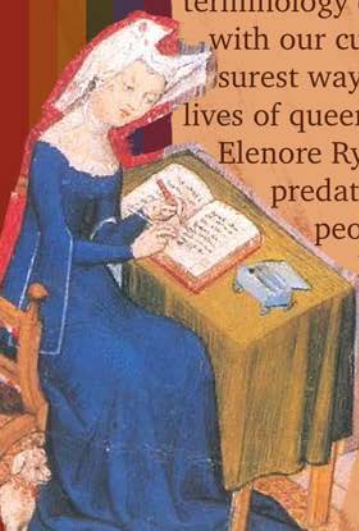
LGBTQ+ History Month Edition

# Foreword

When I was approached about an LGBTQ+ History Month edition of Hear Me Out, I was cautiously optimistic. This was my inaugural project and the magazine's first foray into themed editions, so I was ambitious. As a lesbian and a lifelong history nerd, LGBTQ+ History Month is really important to me; one aspect of queer life that tends to go underrepresented is how isolating it can be. That's partially why finding historical figures that they can relate to is important to so many queer people: you aren't just existing in strange, disconnected isolation, your part of a beautiful, expansive tapestry of experiences.

I think it's important to just preface this issue with the understanding that a lot of our current ideas about sexuality and gender are informed by the current cultural zeitgeist and most of the terminology we use is very modern; 'gay' despite dating back to 1225 it only acquired the meaning 'homosexual' in the 1930's. Most historians tend to use the term 'queer' as a generalisation for atypical gender expression and sexualities and tend to focus more on actions rather than identities. However, speculating on what terminology dead historical figures might have used if they existed with our current terms is useful; identity politics tends to be the surest way to secure legislation that materially improves the lives of queer people living today. If pointing to a figure like Elenore Rykener and calling her a trans woman despite her predating the term by about 1340 years helps transgender people now, then I think it's a pretty good use of LGBTQ+ History Month.

I want to thank all the people who submitted articles, the charity Just Like Us who I was lucky enough to interview a representative of and give a special thanks to Ellie; I wouldn't have been able to do this without you.







To C—, sweeter than honey or honeycomb, B— sends all the love there  
to her love. You who are unique and special, why do you make delay so  
long, so far away? Why do you want your only one to die, who as you  
know, loves you with soul and body, who sighs for you at every hour, at every  
moment, like a hungry little bird.

Since I've had to be without your sweetest presence, I have not wished to hear or see  
any other human being, but as the turtle-dove, having lost its mate, perches forever on  
its little dried up branch, so I lament endlessly till I shall enjoy your trust again. I look  
about and do not find my lover — she does not comfort me even with a single word.  
Indeed when I reflect on the loveliness of your most joyful speech and aspect, I am  
utterly depressed, for I find nothing now that I could compare with your love, sweet  
beyond honey and honeycomb, compared with which the brightness of gold and silver  
is tarnished. What more?

In you is all gentleness, all perfection, so my spirit languishes perpetually by your  
absence. You are devoid of the gall of any faithlessness, you are sweeter than milk and  
honey, you are peerless among thousands, I love you more than any. You alone are my  
love and longing, you the sweet cooling of my mind, no joy for me anywhere without  
you. All that was delightful with you is wearisome and heavy without you.

So I truly do want to tell you, if I could buy your life for the price of mine, [I'd do it]  
instantly, for you are the only woman I have chosen according to my heart. Therefore I  
beseech God that bitter death may not come to me before I enjoy the dearly desired  
sight of you again.

Farewell. Have of me all the faith and love there is. Accept the writing I send, and  
with it my constant mind.

A letter written by a nun in the 12th century







# Leo Baker



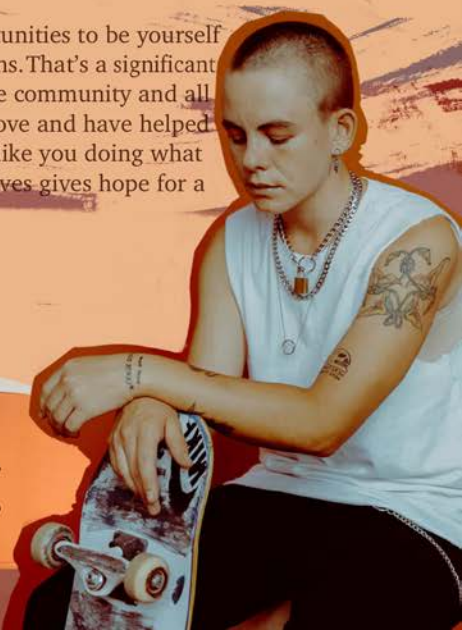
As many of you may know it's LGBTQ+ history month this month, a chance to be proud of the community's history or to appreciate and celebrate the lives of those who fought for rights and equality for LGBTQ people. For each person it may mean something different, someone different may come to mind. Within the community's history there are people who've lost their lives, saved others and widened minds, weather it be someone who's helped you or helped millions.

For me it's 31 year old Leo Baker, an American skateboarder with undeniable skill. Baker is an professional skateboarder based in New York, they are transgender and non-binary and use he/him and they/them pronouns. For years he'd been out as trans-masculine to friends and family but only came out to the skateboarding community recently. However, even before that he'd struggled to be seen as an equal.

They started getting sponsors in their teen years but began to loose them - simply for cutting his hair. At the time having short hair as a girl was socially frowned upon but through persistence he spent his 20s travelling and taking part in skate competitions professionally. By late 2019 he started to feel tired of being categorised as female while using he/him pronouns in his private life. His large following meant he could've been risking everything he'd worked for and an opportunity for him to take part in the very first Olympics featuring skateboarding came up. They had to choose between a being a major part of skateboarding history or being himself, so he decided to come out professionally and chose to quit the olympics.

To me that's really inspiring, being able to turn down opportunities to be yourself and not be discouraged by other people's doubts and opinions. That's a significant part of LGBT history for me. I can't talk for the whole community and all the history but I can talk about the parts that I love and have helped me. As a young trans person seeing people like you doing what you want to do and being themselves gives hope for a better future and life.

Written by Grey Kavanagh





# Ode to Aphrodite

Ornate-throned immortal Aphrodite, wile-weaving daughter of Zeus, I entreat you: do not overpower my heart, mistress, with ache and anguish,

but come here, if ever in the past you heard my voice from afar and acquiesced and came, leaving your father's golden house,

with chariot yoked: beautiful swift sparrows whirring fast-beating wings brought you above the dark earth down from heaven through the mid-air,

and soon they arrived; and you, blessed one, with a smile on your immortal face asked what was the matter with me this time and why I was calling this time

and what in my maddened heart I most wished to happen for myself: "Whom am I to persuade this time to lead you back to her love? Who wrongs you, Sappho?"

If she runs away, soon she shall pursue; if she does not accept gifts, why, she shall give them instead; and if she does not love, soon she shall love even against her will."

Come to me now again and deliver me from oppressive anxieties; fulfill all that my heart to fulfil, and you yourself be my fellow-fighter

-Sappho

Sappho of Lesbos was a lyric poet writing in the 600's-570's in Greece. Lyric poetry was written to be accompanied by the lyre and usually concerned the individual. Subject matter varied wildly depending on time and location but Sappho's poetry primarily focused on her experiences of love. Very little of her work has survived, largely because of linguistic drift, with only three complete poems surviving: Ode to Aphrodite, The Brothers Poem and The Kypris.



ποικιλότρον ἄθανάτ' Ἀφροδίτα,  
παῖ Δίος δολόπλοκε, λίσσομαί σε,  
μή μ' ἄσσαις μηδ' ὀνίαισι δάμνα,

πότνια, θυμόν,  
ἀλλὰ τυϊδ' ἔλθ', αἶ ποτα κατέρωτα  
τὰς ἡμᾶς αἰδᾶς αἰοῖσα πῆλοϊ  
ἐκλυες, πάτρος δὲ δόμον λίποισα

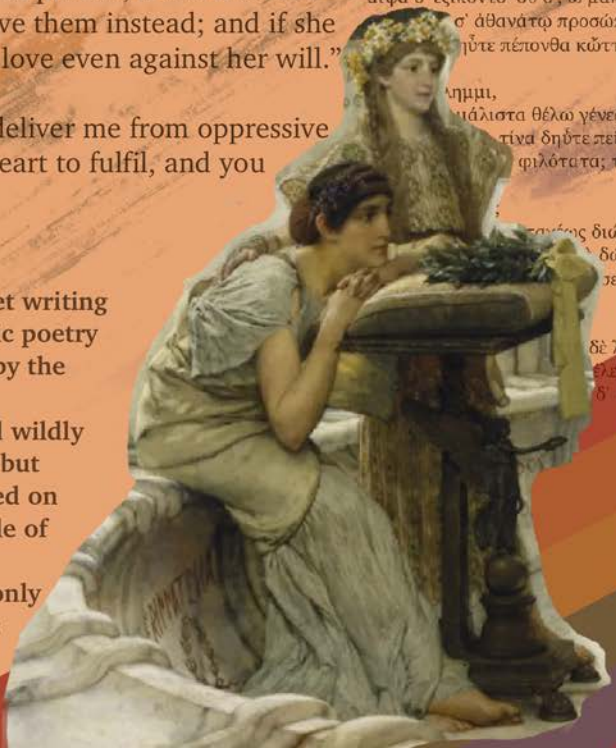
χρόσιον ἦλθες  
ἄρμ' ὑπαιοδύεσσα· κάλοι δέ σ' ἄγον  
ᾠκεες στρουθοὶ περὶ γὰς μελαίνας  
πέκνα δίννεντες πτέρ' ἀπ' ὠράνῳιθε·

ρος διὰ μέσσω,  
αἶψα δ' ἐξίκοντο· σὺ δ', ὦ μάκαιρα,  
σ' ἄθανάτῳ προσώψω  
ῖτε πέπονθα κῶττι

νημῖ,  
μάλιστα θέλω γένεσθαι  
τίνα δηῶτε πείθω  
φιλότατα; τίς σ', ὦ

πανός διώξει·  
δώσει·  
ρει

δὲ λίσσον  
ἐλθεσαι  
δ' αὐτά





## Bury Your Gays

On the 5th of November 2020, Tumblr exploded at the airing of Ep 18, Season 15 of Supernatural. Thousands of current and former fans flooded the site to comment on the absurdity of one of the main characters of the show, Castiel, confessing romantic feelings to another man and then dying and being sent to 'Super Hell' as coined by fans.



One of the main controversies that arose from Destiel (the ship\* name for Castiel and Dean) canonisation\* was that it played into the 'bury your gays' trope ie. the discrepancy between queer character deaths and straight character deaths in fiction. Typically, this trope describes the only queer character in a story dying or the queer character dying quickly after coming out. Despite there being some precedent for this character death in Supernatural it brought back discussions of this harmful trope.

It is important to emphasise that 'bury your gays' does not just mean any queer deaths but specifically the expendability of queer characters in media or their deaths being structurally tied to their queerness - i.e., Castiel dying directly after coming out implies coming out is bad because it is being punished by the narrative. This trope has obvious negative outcomes - implying that queerness is wrong, diminishing the value of queer life in comparison to straight life and desensitizing queer death - but where did this writing trope originate and why do harmful tropes like this persist in the subconscious of many writers and show runners?

There are broadly two reasons for the 'bury your gays' trope, the most well-known is the Hays Code, named after the originator William H. Hays, a former president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA). Hays and others at the MPPDA wrote a set of guidelines that began to be rigidly enforced in 1934 to self-sensor film and television, and applied to most major studios in the United States of America. The Hays Code primarily concerned itself with morality and made any positive queer representation impossible.

"The sanctity of the institution of marriage and the home shall be upheld. Pictures shall not infer that low forms of sex relationship are the accepted or common thing.... No picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympathy of the audience should never be thrown to the side of crime, wrongdoing, evil or sin.... Law, natural or human, should not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation."

The only way gay characters could be included was as antagonists (which is where we get the prevalence of queer-coded villains) or if they died; even in more sympathetic characters their queerness would still be punished by the narrative. Despite being replaced by the Motion Picture Association of America film rating system in 1968, the code influenced generations of writers and normalised killing off your gay character.

The second, possibly more insidious, reason for the 'bury your gays' trope is an extension of queerbaiting - using the possibility of a queer character/relationship as a marketing strategy to entice an LGBTQ+ audience without delivering proper representation. Often a character will be confirmed as queer, so the show has technically fulfilled the promise, and then the character/characters will be killed off, so they don't have to keep having queer characters in the show.

'Bury your gays' is sometimes known as 'dead lesbian syndrome' due to the prevalence specifically of lesbian or bisexual women being killed after coming out or entering into a romantic relationship. Julie from *Executive Suite* (1976) is largely considered to be the earliest example of this trope. She realises she has romantic feelings for her best friend and discovers they are reciprocated. Julie is subsequently hit by a car and dies.

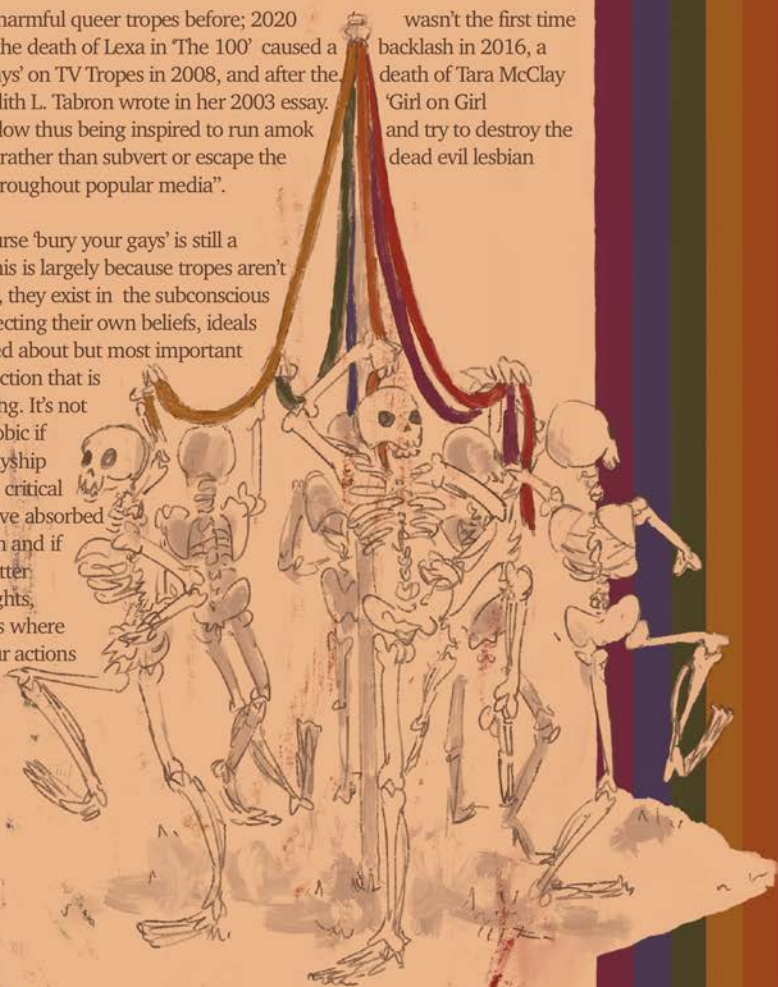
I think the reason that dead sapphic women is particularly common is largely because sapphic relationships often aren't considered to be as real as other relationships. We have very little information on historical sapphic women partially because there was (and to a certain extent is) a permeating belief that sapphic relationships can't be as romantically fulfilling as heterosexual relationships and so were largely ignored or dismissed.

A writer can include sapphic women or relationship and an audience won't take them too seriously, because it's not 'a real relationship' and then kill them off. It's this mentality that also leads to a woman being clearly established as a lesbian and then meeting 'the right man' (typically the main character) and falling in love with him- i.e., Irene Adler in BBC *Sherlock*. In cases like these, her lesbianism is only there to show off how cool the male character is, divorcing it from the women and making it a tool for men.

There have been discussions on harmful queer tropes before; 2020 'bury your gays' was examined: the death of Lexa in 'The 100' caused a page was made for 'bury your gays' on TV Tropes in 2008, and after the death of Tara McClay in 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer', Judith L. Tabron wrote in her 2003 essay. Politic "Tara lying dead, and Willow thus being inspired to run amok world, are images that reinforce rather than subvert or escape the clichés that have run rampant throughout popular media".

Despite these examples of discourse 'bury your gays' is still a common writing trope; I think this is largely because tropes aren't purposefully or maliciously used, they exist in the subconscious of creators as a result of not dissecting their own beliefs, ideals and biases. One of the least talked about but most important aspects of allyship is the introspection that is required to develop understanding. It's not enough to just NOT be homophobic if you want to perform effective allyship or tell queer stories, you must be critical of societal systems and how you've absorbed them. Nobody exists in a vacuum and if you can self-examine you can better differentiate between your thoughts, societal prejudices and the points where these intersect and influence your actions and the art you create.

Written & illustrated  
by Zara Toefy





## Mark ashton

In 1960, Mark Ashton was born in Oldham, Manchester, he moved to Portrush as a young child and grew up there. The university near him brought many students and new ideas; a branch of the Sexual Liberation Movement was set up in Coleraine and in 1973 Ireland's first conference on sexual freedom took place here. By the mid-70s, the small town of Portrush was also home to gay-friendly bars.

Homosexuality was also largely decriminalised in England in the 1970's; so, like many other emigrants, Ashton left for London when he was 18 where it was easier to be himself. Shortly after his arrival in London, he started dressing in drag in the Conservative Club in King's Cross. His transformation was so convincing that customers didn't even notice.

In 1982, Ashton visited his parents in Bangladesh and the poverty he saw there motivated his initial involvement in politics. He joined the Communist Party of Great Britain and began to get involved in a wide range of organisations – from LGBT helplines, to anti-racism movements, to nuclear disarmament campaigns.

At London's Pride March, Ashton and his friend raised 150 pounds for the striking miners and created Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM). They posted an ad for LGSM in the Capital Gay newspaper and held their first members meeting at Ashton's flat. They successfully collected donations on the pavement but police threats forced them into hiding. By 1985, there were 11 LGSM groups around the UK.

Three months later, Ashton reunited with his companions for the London Pride march. At the Labour Party Conference, a motion to support equal rights wasn't assured but it passed thanks to all of their work. Ashton continued his activism and became involved in a London print workers strike, where he wrestled a wooden truncheon from a police officer.

In 1987 he was admitted into the hospital and just 12 days later, he died of an AIDS-related illness at the age of just 26. I find Marks story inspirational as he shows how dedicated he is to the things he supports. He never gave up fighting for everything he was passionate about, and he achieved so much.

Written by Emma Willson





WHEN WAS THE FIRST DOCUMENTED USE OF A NEOPRONOUN?

IT WAS 'A' USED AS A PRONOUN, DOCUMENTED BY WILLIAM H MARSHALL

- A) 1789
- B) 1864
- C) 1958

HOW MANY SOLDIERS WERE SELECTED FOR AN ELITE SECTION OF THE THEBAN ARMY CALLED THE 'SACRED BAND OF THEBES'?

IT WAS MADE UP OF PAIRS OF MALE LOVERS WHO WERE HAND PICKED FOR MERIT AND ABILITY REGARDLESS OF SOCIAL CLASS

- A) 200
- B) 300
- C) 400

WHAT WERE THE 'BLOOD SISTERS'?

- A) A LESBIAN VAMPIRE SOCIETY
- B) A GROUP OF LESBIANS WHO DONATED BLOOD DURING THE AIDS CRISIS
- C) A GROUP OF LESBIANS WHO SERVED AS NURSES

WHAT WAS A EUPHEMISM FOR HOMOSEXUALITY IN CHINA DURING THE HAN DYNASTY?

- A) A CUT SLEEVE
- B) CROPPED HAIR
- C) CROPPED ROBES

WHAT WAS SAPPHO MOST WELL KNOWN FOR?

- A) WRITING ABOUT HISTORY
- B) LYRIC POETRY.
- C) THEATRE

ONLY A FRAGMENT OF HER WORK HAS SURVIVED WITH 'ODE TO APHRODITE' BEING THE ONLY COMPLETE WORK

## WHEN WAS 'THE CITY AND THE PILLAR' PUBLISHED?

THE CITY AND THE PILLAR IS CONSIDERED THE FIRST MODERN QUEER NOVEL; IT FOLLOWS A YOUNG MAN COMING OF AGE AND DISCOVERING HIS HOMOSEXUALITY

- A) 1924
- B) 1948
- C) 1962

## WHEN WAS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE LEGALISED IN ENGLAND AND WALES?

- A) 2000
- B) 2004
- C) 20014

## WHICH INVADING EMPORER HAD A CONTROVERSIAL ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP WITH ANOTHER MAN?

- A) GENGHIS KHAN
- B) NAPOLEON BONEPARTE
- C) ALEXANDER THE GREAT

## HOW DID JOSEPHINE BAKER HELP THE WAR EFFORT DURING WORLD WAR II?

- JOSEPHINE BAKER ACTUALLY HAD A BRIEF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP WITH ANOTHER QUEER ARTIST OF THE TIME, FRIDA KAHLO
- A) HID REFUGEES AND FRENCH RESISTANCE MEMBERS
  - B) BECAME A SPY AND ATTENDED ITALIEN AND JAPANESE DIPLOMATIC PARTIES
  - C) SANG TO SOLDIERS ON THE WAR FRONT OVER THE RADIO

## WHEN WAS THE ICONIC RAINBOW FLAG DESIGNED BY GILBERT BAKER?

- A) 1967
- B) 1972
- C) 1978

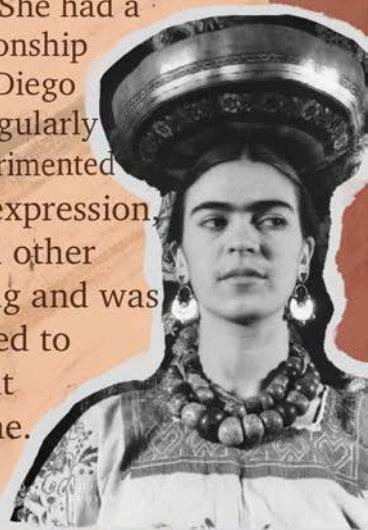
Answers in the back!



# Frida Kahlo



Frida Kahlo was a Mexican painter, best known for her coded imagery which often alluded to her feelings of isolation and pain as a result of an accident that left her partially disabled. She had a tumultuous relationship with her husband Diego Rivera who was regularly unfaithful. She experimented with her gender expression, wearing suits and other masculine clothing and was romantically linked to various prominent women of the time.





Josephine Baker was an American born French dancer, singer and actress, who lived an unconventional lifestyle and dated men and women throughout her life. Frida Kahlo and Josephine Baker met in 1939 at Josephine's night club while Frida was preparing to exhibit at the Louvre in Paris. They allegedly came out to each other as bisexual and had short whirlwind romance in the year preceding Frida and Diego's divorce.




Georgia O'Keeffe was another famous female artist of the time and when they first met Frida allegedly bragged about flirting with her. They saw each other often and maintained a correspondence. In a letter to Georgia Frida wrote "I thought of you a lot and never forget your wonderful hands and the colour of your eyes. I would be so happy if you could write me even two words. I like you very much Georgia."

Chivela Vargas was a Mexican singer who performed Mexican folk songs and ranchera music that were predominantly performed by men. She didn't change the pronouns when she sang romantic songs and later came out as a lesbian in her biography. Chivela and Frida were rumoured to have had a relationship during the 1940's and later Chivela said she was 'a great love of Frida's. Frida once said to her "I live only for you and Diego"'.







This month Plymouth High School raised money for the 'Just Like Us' charity. I was lucky enough to be able to ask them some questions about how their charity works and how they're approaching LGBTQ+ History Month:

### Why was 'Just Like Us' founded?

Growing up LGBTQ+ is still unacceptably tough. Founded in 2016, we work with schools and young people across the UK to change this.

### What sort of work do you do with schools and young people?

We run four main programmes:

- **School Diversity Week:** School Diversity Week is our annual celebration every June of LGBTQ+ inclusion within education. Reaching over 5,000 primary and secondary schools across England and Wales, the aim is to help schools to engage with LGBTQ+ inclusive education. Sign up via our website to access free resources and start planning your School Diversity Week!
- **Pride Groups:** The Pride Groups programme aims to create safe and fun spaces for LGBTQ+ young people and their allies to come together and enjoy their time together at school. We support groups across the country by providing fortnightly educational resources, termly training and facilitate the sharing of best practice amongst a community of educators. Find out more online here.
- **School Talks:** Schools in England and Wales can book a talk from our ambassadors, LGBTQ+ young people aged 18-25. Visiting schools in person or through an online platform, they educate on LGBTQ+ terminology, share their experiences and talk about allyship. Find out more here.
- **Ambassador programme:** Our Ambassador Programme is a volunteering opportunity for LGBTQ+ young people aged 18-25 across England and Wales. We support them to use their voice in schools and in the media, to develop their skills and to find a sense of community. Join the programme here.

### Where do you primarily get your funding from?

Like a lot of charities, we get funding from donations by organisations, individuals and even schools who fundraise for us.

### What roles do your ambassadors play in helping LGBTQ+ youth? What sort of volunteering do 'Just Like Us' do?

Our ambassadors are volunteers, young people aged 18-25 that share their story of growing up LGBTQ+ in school. When they go into a school to deliver a talk, they will talk about LGBTQ+ terminology, why this work is important and also answer some student questions.

Ambassadors also get to do mentoring, attend skill workshops and write for the press through their volunteering at Just Like Us.





## How is 'Just Like Us' approaching LGBTQ+ History month?

We will shortly be releasing resources on LGBTQ+ young people of faith, but in the meantime we have free resources for teachers on running a form time on the history of pride or history curriculum resources.

## What sort of resources do you provide to primary schools and secondary schools?

We have lesson plans, form time activities, assemblies and more on our website - the teacher just needs to sign up to School Diversity Week to gain access.

In addition, as part of our pride groups programme we create resources every two weeks for student led groups in schools.

## Do you work with the parents or carers of LGBTQ+ youths? How can young people contact you?

We don't work directly with parents, carers or young people under 18 years. If you're over 18 you can sign up to our ambassador volunteering programme, or if you're under 18 and still in school, we can liaise with your teachers running your Pride Group.





# The Queer History of the Old West

When considering the concept of “cowboys” in 2023, one is presented with two very curiously antithetical perceptions. There is the cowboy that has become the personification of American ideals and masculinity, a lone rider on the frontier with his trusty steed by his side, charming, determined and popularised in the mid 20th century in John Wayne and Gary Cooper movies. There is also the dazzling glamour that is becoming increasingly present in country music, clear in queer and queer-supporting country singers such as Orville and Brandi Carlile, and perhaps epitomised in Lil Nas X’s “Old Town Road”. It can be difficult to reconcile these two conflicting ideas before even beginning to consider how the mythical cowboy of the present fits with the real cowboys of the past.

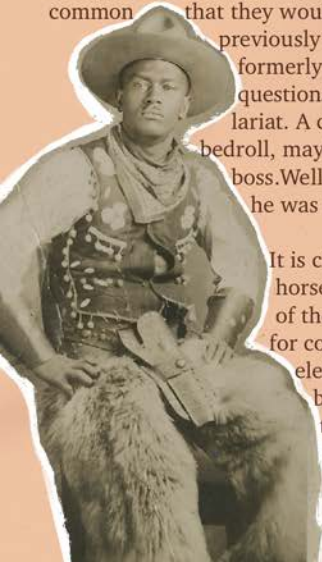
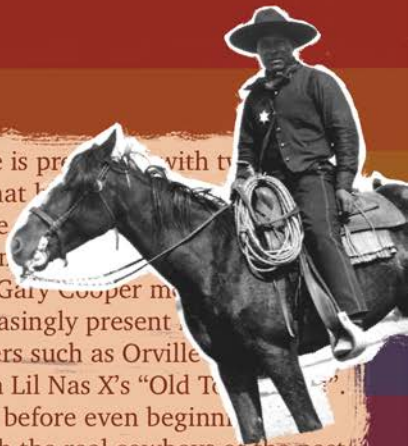
## The Old West

Suffice it to say, the reality for cowboys in the Old West was far from the adventurous lifestyle portrayed in film. Instead, cowboys were born from the application of African riding and herding techniques to North America by the Spanish. The first cowboys were the indigenous people of Mexico. The role of cattle-herder was not a desirable one: it was dangerous, difficult and dismally ill-paid, and therefore fell to minoritised or impoverished groups. These initial cowboys became known as vaqueros.

Westward expansion in the United States was driven by a conglomeration of varying forces. It was argued that it was Americans’ “manifest destiny” to carry the “great experiment of liberty” to the edge of the continent: to “overspread and to possess the whole of the [land] which Providence has given us,” wrote journalist John O’Sullivan. This mass movement westward meant there was little reason to stay in the East: mining, railroad and cattle industries flourished in the West, and so people went.

Cowboys were a diverse group of labourers that worked for often under a dollar a day. These labourers were deeply poor, far from the flourishing mining barons and railroad owners, let alone the livestock kings. After the Civil War, the livestock industry boomed, and the ranchers were then caring for one of the most valuable commodities of the 1880s: beef. This is when the professional cowboys became an American establishment. These men were in the same working class category as coal miners and factory workers - they were deeply poor, and often black, Hispanic or Indigenous people. It was also common for them to be running from an element of their past, whether they had been previously incarcerated, disowned by their community for their sexuality, or were a formerly enslaved person. Patricia Nell Warren observed that “Nobody asked questions. All that mattered was whether he could be trusted with a horse and a lariat. A cowpuncher was usually poor - he owned his clothes, horse gear, rope and bedroll, maybe a harmonica or a Colt 45... the horses he rode usually belonged to the boss. Well into the twentieth century, his wage was \$40 a month and board - less if he was black or Mexican.”

It is clear that cowboys did not have an easy job - they often had to wrangle horses and cattle, a potentially lethal task. It was this aspect that led to the idea of the sport and entertainment form of rodeo. Rodeo proved far more profitable for cowboys than their usual job, but it was also highly dangerous. However, the element of danger did nothing to discourage the sport, and rodeo quickly became a place where marginalised communities were able to come together. Rebecca Scofield states that “In many ways, early rodeo actually reflected to a closer degree the diversity of the rural working-class life in the West: women could bronc-ride, the rare African American performer could headline a show, and a Native American cowboy could be crowned champion.”





## Queer People in the Old West

It is important to understand that in the 18th Century "homosexuality... changed from something one did, to something one was." (Danielle Thom). This meant that, as long as one conformed to certain societal expectations such as gender presentation and eventual heterosexual marriage, it was normal to engage in queer relationships. The constant movement in the life of a cowboy played very well into this - long term job commitments far from any towns meant that male cowboys would go months without seeing a woman at all, as it was unusual for women to work on the ranches. Eric Patterson states: "it's highly likely that among cowboys, as among other largely male communities isolated from women, such as loggers, miners, and sailors, male-male sexual relationships were relatively common." As a result of this isolation and continual movement, many cowboys ended up forming extremely close partnerships, whether motivated by romance, fiscal benefits, or both. This blurred the line between male friendships and gay romances. Because the atmosphere was (marginally) more inclusive, it was easier for gay men with gay preferences to make it known, using codes such as references to gay poet Walt Whitman.

Similar to their male counterparts, sapphic relationships were perceived as "romantic friendships". They were generally tolerated because they were not perceived as "valid", because of the lack of a male present. Acceptance for lesbian relationships was, however, largely conditional: as soon as a woman was perceived to be breaking the gender constructs set (i.e. dressing in more masculine attire), this acceptance was revoked - their relationships potentially branded as sexually predatory, while simultaneously asexual, man-hating and yet seeking to imitate men. An example of a queer woman from this period lies with Shirley Martin, who, dressed in masculine attire, dated women. In a news article in 1912, she is quoted as saying, in spite of never receiving a marriage proposal herself, "I might have won a wife if I had tried very hard though."

Transsexual people were also present and often highly respected by their communities. There are many examples of trans people in the Old West: one such story is that of Joseph Lobdell, who escaped an abusive marriage and took up his male identity in Minnesota in the 1850s. He later became a teacher in Pennsylvania, and was popular with the women who took his class. He eventually became engaged to one of these women, but a rival for her affections discovered that Lobdell had been assigned female at birth, and planned to run him out of town. When his fiancée discovered this, she retained feelings for him and warned him, ensuring he was able to escape safely.

Another instance is that of Alan Hart. Hart was born in 1890, and in his late teens entered into a relationship with classmate Eva Cushman: "Hart and Cushman were inseparable by day, typically attending all functions in each other's company, and they usually spent one night of the week together." (Peter Boag). Later in life, Hart studied under physician J. Allen Gilbert,

who agreed that acceptance was the best way for Hart to reconcile himself with his trans identity and performed a hysterectomy on Hart, who cut his hair and switched to masculine clothing. Hart said in 1918 that "I had to do it. For years I had been unhappy. With all the inclinations and desires of the boy I had to restrain myself to the more conventional ways of the other sex. I have been happier since I made this change than I ever have in my life, and I will continue this way as long as I live."







## The New Old West

Following World War II, the concept of the "Wild, Wild West" grew in popularity - the concept of the cowboy was romanticised, becoming a symbol of freedom and grungy masculinity by the soldiers coming home from war, as a form of escapism. Within the first several decades of the twentieth century, the cowboy had transcended his status as an occupational folk hero to represent a profound belief in American exceptionalism." (Rebecca Scofield). The cowboy was transformed from an occupation to an identity, and one that contradicted the very source from which it was drawn.

Cowboys were transformed into tall gun-slinging men who rescued damsels, and "won" land from "savage" native people, when, in reality, they would have hardly interacted with Indigenous people unless they were paying a toll, or happened to be Indigenous themselves. They did not carry guns due to safety precautions, and a short stature and small horse suited ranching far better.

This image has, however, become widespread and permeates American culture. It is present in film, music and political campaigns. Real cattle ranchers have had to play into it to provide tourists from Eastern America (and later the rest of the world) the "cowboys" that they came to see. It is because of this that the perception of cowboys, and the Old West itself had become so fragmented.

Subsequently, there has been a movement of gay reclamation of the cowboy image. Returning to Lil Nas X's "Old Town Road", we find that "[he] managed to represent a huge population of true history, who have long been forgotten: black cowboys, gay cowboys and, of course, black gay cowboys." (Kaz Rowe). Today, rodeos still offer marginalised people a sense of community, and the rise of gay rodeo was able to dislodge the concepts of hypermasculinity with camp fun, challenging what it really means to be a cowboy.

It is important to recognise that there is a huge amount of history surrounding this topic, and that, while the presence of queer people and that sense of community is very important, that can be recognised while still understanding the negative effects that "manifest destiny" produced, that are still prevalent in society today. Here are some links to support and/or find out more about Native American heritage:

- First Nations Development Institute.



- Native American Heritage Association



- Navajo Water Project



## The LGBTQIA+ Community: 1950's to Present

There have been many good and horrific events in the LGBTQIA+. If you do not know what that stands for, I will briefly tell you: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and all other identities under this umbrella.

In 1951, the first known case of sex reassignment surgery happened on the trans woman Roberto Cowell. She was assigned male at birth but later had her sex legally changed to female and underwent vaginoplasty surgery.

The first Pride March EVER was set in London. On July 1st, 1972, the march was hosted by the London Gay Liberation Front (GLF), who were inspired by similar marches carried out by their American allies. About two thousand LGBTQ+ people, many in drag, marched through central London, culminating with a kiss in Trafalgar Square. It was a two mile march beginning in Hyde Park and, ending in Trafalgar Square. Along with the GLF, gay rights activist and human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell helped organise the first Pride march in Hyde Park and was held on the Saturday after the Stonewall Riots. He later told The New York Times: "In those days, most LGBTQ'S were closeted and much of the public were ignorant or hostile. It was a gamble, and the fear of the arrest and violent attacks deterred many and made us nervous."

The first decade of the new millenium saw huge steps forward for LGTBQ+ rights. The ban on lesbian, gay and bisexual people serving in the army was lifted by the UK Government and in 2002, same sex couples in the UK received equal rights for adoption as straight couples. Section 28 was repealed in 2003 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and in 2004, the Gender Recognition Act passed, which allows transgender people to fully and legally identify with their chosen gender, as well as getting a new birth certificate. Ten years later, in 2014, same-sex marriage was legalised in England and Wales.

These events mean a lot to people as it gives LGBTQ+ rights around the world and means gay couples can get married, adopt a children, and more. Me personally, I think that this means a lot because everyone is allowed to be treated the same, with equality. I am also glad that the community has rights and can live a normal life. They shouldn't be treated any differently as they are still humans too.

Written by Lucy Beardmore

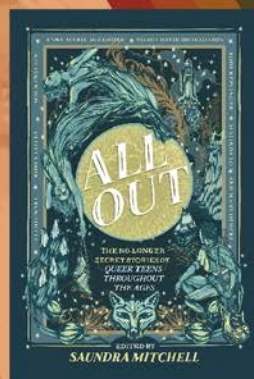




## The Other Ones

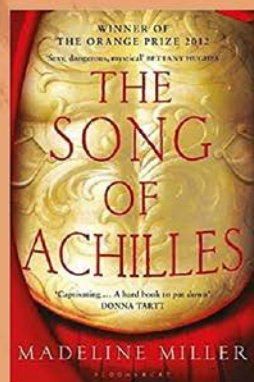
This is a really good YA book written by Fran Hart, the main character (Sal) lives in a haunted house and he longs to be ordinary, but when a new kid called Pax arrives at his school an unlikely friendship forms between the two and Sal realises that he isn't so ordinary after all. If you like 'Heartstopper' then this is the book for you. It is full of mystery, suspense and romance. I definitely recommend this read.

Written by Kayley Gardiner 7L



## All Out: The No-Longer-Secret-Stories of Queer Teens Throughout the ages

'All Out' is a wonderful anthology of different queer experiences throughout the ages. Each story has a different focus and tone; one of the ones that stuck most in my mind was 'And They Don't Kiss at the End' a very touching story about young black women discovering her asexuality. It could definitely have more representation especially in terms of geography but it's a wonderful introduction to queer historical fiction.



## The Song of Achilles

Madeline Miller's Song of Achilles is a heartbreaking retelling of the Iliad from the perspective of Patroclus. The descriptions are beautiful focusing more on interpersonal relationships and introspection. If you are a fan of Greek mythology you will really enjoy how it depicts some elements and deviates from others.

## Quiz Answers

1. a. 6. b
2. b. 7. c
3. b. 8. c
4. a. 9. All of them are correct!
5. b. 10. c

