

Insight Into History: LGBTQ+ History Edition

February 2022 edition

Editors welcome:

Welcome to our second edition of the Lymm High School Insight into History magazine 2022! Our topic this month is LGBTQ+ History as February is LGBTQ+ History Month. We have a wide range of articles and fact files which reflects the varied history of the LGBTQ+ community and their experiences. Our games editor –Verena– has put together a anagram challenge on page 27 with a chance to win a prize so make sure to check that out.

A huge thank you to the history magazine team for putting this magazine together. If anyone would like to get involved in future issues, please email 16sburnett@lymmhigh.org.uk or speak to your history teacher..

-Atticus Burnett, Editor in Chief

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Many thanks to everyone who contributed on this issue :

Annie Martin

Verena Jenegan

Anya Grieve

Anna McDonald

Amy Deeks

Grace Main

Lena Devaney

Campbell Grattan

Reuben Roberts

Atticus Burnett

Tom Matthews

LGBTQ+ Dictionary

Below is a quick introduction to some of the key terms used in this article, they are by no means exclusive but can be helpful in understanding and respecting you, your friends or others identities.

- **LGBTQ+** — an acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/ Questioning+. Sometimes shown as LGBT or LGBTQIA
- **Ally** — Someone who confronts heteronormative standards, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and actively supports the LGBTQ+ community
- **Asexual** — A Person who is not sexually attracted to anyone
- **Bisexual** —A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to both men and women
- **Cisgender** — A person whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth
- **Gay/homosexual** — refers to either a man whose attracted to men or more generally anyone who doesn't fit the term straight
- **Straight/heterosexual** — Someone who is attracted to people of the opposite gender
- **Lesbian** — a woman who is attracted to other women
- **Genderfluid** — A person whose gender identity is not fixed as male nor female
- **Non-binary** — someone whose gender identity is neither male or female, they often use they/them pronouns
- **Intersex** — People who are born with reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or chromosome patterns that do not seem to fit typical definitions of male or female.
- **Pansexual** — A person who is sexually attracted to all or many gender expressions.

- **Queer** — An umbrella term that includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, intersex persons,
- **Sex** — A medical term designating a certain combination of gonads, chromosomes, external gender organs, secondary sex characteristics and hormonal balances.
- **Gender** — peoples cultural, social and psychological identity, behaviour and norms. This can be male, female, non-binary and others and is seen as a more holistic, non-scientific term.



Homosexuality in the Medieval Era

In medieval Europe, opinions on homosexuality were based on the teachings of the Catholic church which, at the time, viewed it as a mortal sin. Because of this, punishments were swift, deadly and were often issued without trial. In thirteenth century France, homosexual practises for both men and women resulted in harsh punishments including torture and often death. By 1533 in England, Henry VIII issued acts stating homosexual behaviour was to be punished with death.

It is hard to know if there were any prominent homosexual or bisexual people in the medieval era as we mostly rely on chronicles written by monks and other members of the clergy for contemporary accounts of the times and, as previously mentioned, the church viewed homosexuality as a great sin. However, it is accepted by many historians that England has had at least two homosexual or bi-

sexual monarchs during this time:



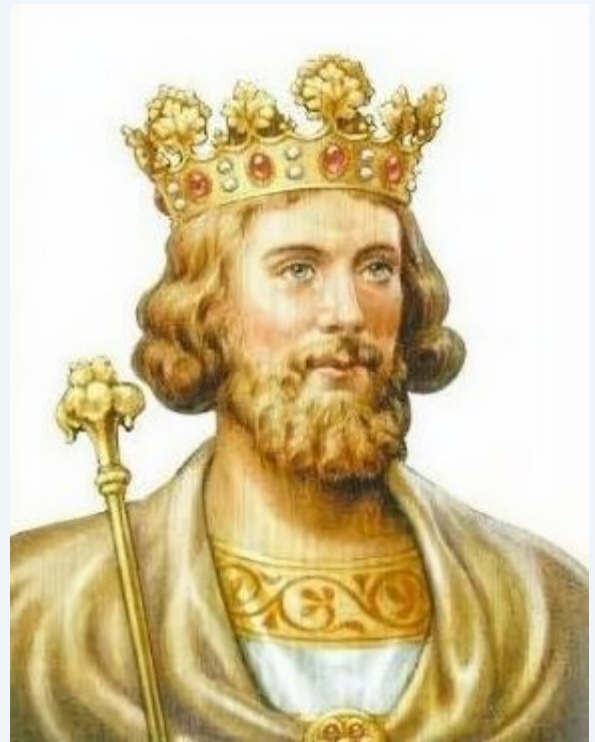
Richard I was born in 1157 to King Henry II and Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine. His reign is remembered for crusades and rebellions and ,eventually, his death in combat. Modern historians have argued that there is evidence that Richard was homosexual. The king had been married to Berengaria of Navarre for eight years before his death and she had never showed signs of pregnancy. Additionally, the King and Queen spent most of their reign apart, him being on Crusade and her being in France. Despite these rumours, Richard has

been remembered quite favourably in popular culture. Unfortunately, this is not the case for the other potentially LGBTQ+ English kings.

Edward II was born in 1284 to King Edward I and Queen Eleanor of Castile. His reign is remembered for weakness and rebellions that ultimately led to his murder.

King Edward II showered his friends- in particular, a landless knight Piers Gaveston- with titles, riches and positions at court. He even went as far as giving the jewels of the Queen of England to Gaveston rather than to his wife and the Queen: Isabella of France. Edward and Gaveston's

"unbreakable bond of love", as it was described in medieval literature, ended when, in 1312, the nobles of England murdered Gaveston. The next man to receive the favour of the king was Hugh Despenser. Remembered for his cruelty and greed, Despenser ignited many rebellions in the realm which would eventually cause both Edward and Despenser's downfall. In 1326, Queen Isabella and her lover, Sir Roger Mortimer, deposed Edward II. They replaced him with Edward's and Isabella's son Edward III, and executed Despenser. Edward II himself died under suspicious circumstances a year later which led to a rumour that Queen Isabella and Mortimer had murdered him. Unlike Richard I, Edward II is remembered unfavourably in film and literature as a weak and effeminate man.



Even for those born into luxury and royalty, life for homosexual people in the medieval era was a struggle often ending in persecution and death.

-Amy Deeks, Year 11 student

Alan Turing Factfile

Who was he?

Alan Turing was an outstanding mathematician, whose work during WW2 had an enormous impact on how we live today.

Why is Alan Turing so significant?

He is one of the founding fathers of computer science, artificial intelligence and is a celebrated war hero – not for being a soldier in WW2 but for his work devising code breaking machines during the second world war and setting the foundations for work on artificial intelligence. Without Turing's work and team, who decoded secret German messages sent by Enigma machines, British forces could not have cracked what Germany's next plans were in the war and may not have defeated them!

So why was Alan Turing arrested?

Simply for having a relationship with a man, which was illegal at the time. He was found guilty and had to choose between undergoing medical treatment (taking estrogen) or spending 2 years in prison. He also lost his security clearance and had to stop working at GCHQ (The Government Communication Headquarters). This was purely because he was having a homosexual relationship, which was deemed illegal at the time. This was the country's most able mathematician and scientist, yet he lost his job because of his sexuality. In 1954, he was found dead from cyanide poisoning and an inquest concluded it was suicide. It is estimated that around 49,000 people were convicted under similar outdated laws until homosexuality was decriminalised in England.

What has been done to acknowledge his unfair treatment?

In 2009 the Prime minister at the time, Gordon Brown, issued an apology on behalf of the government on behalf of Alan Turing. He described the treatment that Turing faced as "horrifying" and "utterly unfair" when in fact the country

owed him huge debt. In 2013, Turing received a royal pardon almost 60 years after his conviction.



What steps have been taken since?

The former PM, Theresa May said her government was committed to an “Alan Turing Law” through an amendment to the Policing and Crime Bill which would pardon thousands of gay men convicted under history of gross indecency crimes for consensual same sex relationships. Alan Turing is now recognised for his amazing work during the war and for the hero that he was. The £50 banknote recognises his work finally after years where his sexuality was discussed, as opposed to the brilliant work he did to save our country from German defeat in WW2.

-Annie Martin, Year 8 student

Daughters of Bilitis

In 1950, the California State Department declared homosexuals to be security risks due to an apparent vulnerability to blackmail from Communists. This resulted in federal, state and local government employees being dismissed if they were suspected of being gay. Police often raided gay bars; dancing in public with the same sex was illegal.

Under this climate of repression, the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) was courageously established in 1955 in San Francisco. It was established by four lesbian couples, and was the first national lesbian political and social organisation in the US. Initially, DOB hoped to create a social alternative to lesbian bars which were continuously subject to raids and harassment. However, its focus shifted to supporting women afraid to come out and embracing gay identity and history. The unusual



name originated from the character of 'Bilitis': a lesbian contemporary of Sappho by French poet Pierre Louys -the members of DOB recognised the importance of secretiveness so the name was purposefully cryptic. This precaution is reflected in the motto too –'Qui vive'- which translates to 'on alert'. In such oppressive times, vigilance overshadowed every aspect of life.

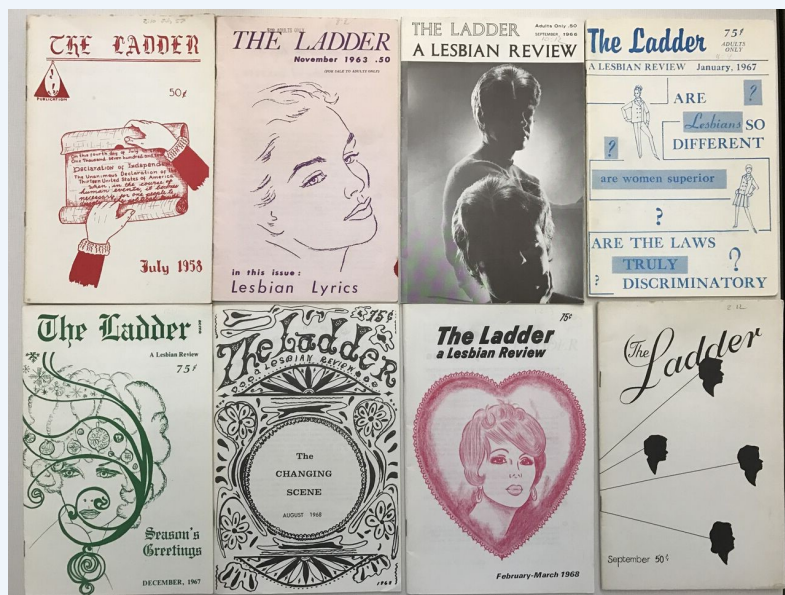
Within a year, the organisation had 16 members, but many working-class women were uncomfortable with the oncoming publicity so left. By 1959, DOB had chapters in New York, Chicago and Rhode Island, as well as a publication named 'The Ladder' which had been set up in 1956. One focus of the group was to reduce other lesbians' self-loathing which had resulted from prejudicial societal views and in fact the group heavily emphasised improving gay self-esteem. Despite DOB encouraging members to assimilate into the predominant heterosexual culture, their

meetings were monitored by the FBI, who reported in 1959 that ‘the purpose of DOB is to educate the public to accept the lesbian homosexual into society’. A very understandable motive in our day-and-age, but in the 20th century not so much.

Despite being criticised politically as ‘sex deviants’, the DOB holding their first convention in 1960 in their home-town of San Francisco. Two hundred women attended, joined by San Francisco police to check if anyone was wearing men’s clothes (the organisers had already made provisions to ensure this didn’t happen). Over the years, DOB grew in numbers and support, with chapters even popping up in Australia. The organisation eventually dissolved in the 1970s, however its quest of greater lesbian visibility, acceptance and community has helped to create a lasting legacy.

Throughout history, strength has managed to prevail in the most unwelcoming and volatile of climates, changing people’s social lives and personal images for the better. The Daughters of Bilitis is a shining example of this.

-Anya Grieve, Year 12 politics editor



‘The Ladder’ front covers of some of their issues

Lynn Conway Factfile



Where was she born?

Lynn Conway was born in Mount Verron, New York on January 2nd, 1938 and is currently 84 years old.

What is she famous for?

When working for IBM, she invented generalized dynamic instruction handling which is a key advance in the design and production of microchips that is used by most modern computer processors to improve performance. She is also widely known for the Mead & Conway revolution which put simply was a way of simplifying rules in computing.

She is a pioneer of microchip technology who challenged perceptions of what Engineers look like.

Personal Life

Lynn was an unhappy child, she suffered with anxiety and depression due to gender dysphoria. She often talked about being 'trapped' in a male body.

Lynn was born a male and transitioned to a woman in the 60's. Despite having the support of her colleagues at IBM when she went through this transition, her boss wasn't as open minded and sacked her.

In 2020, 52 years after being sacked, she was invited to a Global Event and received an apology from IBM.

Conway's legacy...

In 2020, she was given a Lifetime Achievement Award by IBM, a rare honour given to very few people in recognition of those who have changed the world through their technological inventions.

Today Lynn continues to change the world for the better as a transgender activist, fighting for equal opportunities and employment protection for transgender people.

- Rueben Roberts Year 8 student

Stonewall Factfile

What happened?

During the 1950s and 60s the gay civil rights movement in America was small and insubstantial: little was done to advocate for the rights of gay people who were treated poorly by American society (this treatment was despite their inclusion in the 1964 Civil Rights Bill).

On the 28th June 1969 a riot broke out at a gay bar in New York City known as Stonewall following a police raid- the police had been frequently raiding gay bars at the time. Around 400 people fought back against the police resulting in violent clashes. The police were forced into the bar which was then set alight by protesters.

The riots lasted 7 days and eventually came to an end on the 3rd July 1969.

Outcome

Fortunately, no one was killed or seriously injured but the riots played a significant role in increasing the profile of the gay civil rights movement, finally bringing it the attention it needed.

Following Stonewall, gay pride marches were held in several cities across the world, such as in London in 1970, and new gay civil rights organisations emerged.

On the 28th June 1970, thousands of people marched through the streets of Manhattan from Stonewall Inn to Central Park. This is known as the Christopher Street liberation day as the Inn was located on Christopher Street.

The Stonewall protests will be forever remembered as a catalyst for the gay rights movement. In 2016, President Obama made the Stonewall Inn a national monument.

-Tom Mathew, year 8 student

TV/Film review:

The life and death of Marsha P Johnson

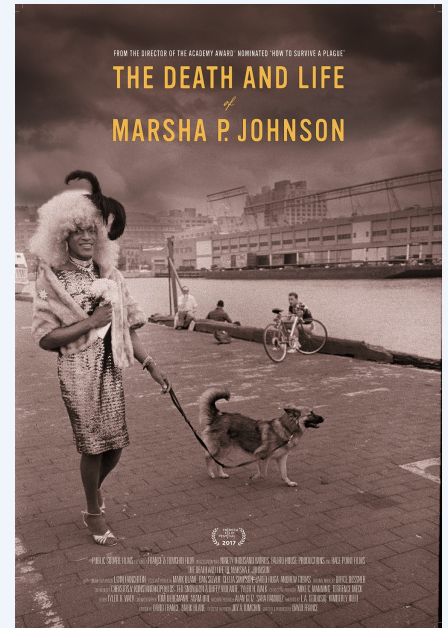
This heart breaking true crime documentary film follows the death of transgender icon, Marsha P. Johnson, who was found floating in the Hudson River in 1992. Many in the community believed she was murdered whilst it was originally ruled as a suicide and this documentary aims to shed new light on the horrific story. It's an important watch for all.

What Lena thinks:

This compelling documentary looks into the suspicious death of one of the most prominent figures of the gay community; trying to find her some justice after her case went cold over 25 years ago.

Marsha's family requested to see her body, but were denied. In response, Victoria Cruz, who works for the Anti-violence project in New York City, investigates her death. Cruz visits Randy Wicker, who was Marsha's roommate. Wicker, along with 20 of Marsha's friends, began to protest against the police's investigations into her death.

Wicker had filmed an interview with Sylvia Rivera (one of Marsha's closest friends and an influential activist in the gay liberation movement) 2 years after Marsha's death, and she talks about the stonewall riots: Stonewall was a gay bar, owned by the mafia that controlled those who visited by blackmail and threats. The police often raided this bar and arrested the men and drag queens inside with no cause. On June 28th 1969, the police raided the bar again. Some described it as a 'switch being flipped' and people inside the building began to fight back. Sylvia recalled Molotov cocktails being thrown and windows being



smashed. The riots caused chaos and the next day the movement had begun. Marsha P. Johnson was at the centre of these protests.

Marsha and Sylvia set up STAR, which became a voice for transgender people within the gay community. It recognised there was little representation for transgender people. STAR focused on helping those who were struggling or homeless. They began STAR house to keep transgender people off the streets, Marsha P. Johnson recognised how the transgender community was being left behind during the gay power movement.

This documentary looks at old recordings of protests after Marsha's death and her friends' reactions to her passing. Randy Wicker campaigned to expose and replace the Christopher street festival, which was an annual European LGBTQ+ celebration. He felt there were “shady operators” of the festival and suspected it was run by the Mob.

Marsha's influence was powerful: many felt they should continue her legacy or spirit and keep speaking up for their rights.

This moving documentary perfectly portrays the many battles that transgender people face, throughout society and within the LGBTQ+ community. Marsha P. Johnson was a fearless activist who joined the gay liberation front and marched in pride rallies regularly. She joined AIDS activist groups and committed herself to looking after those who were struggling with AIDS, she participated in a memorial service for those who died. She is still referred to today as one of the most influential people in the protests for gay rights.

-Lena Devaney, Year 12 TV and film editor

Homosexuality in politics

Unfortunately, the representation of LGBTQIA+ in politics is limited. In fact, the history of this community in politics is a short one. Despite the prevalence of the LGBTQIA+ community and the fact that it has existed since the beginning of time, politics is an overwhelmingly straight field. It wasn't until 1997 that Britain had its first openly gay cabinet minister – Chris Brown of the Labour Party – and still the significance of this historic achievement seems lost on many. To this day there has been no transgender MPs, even though the proportion of lesbian, gay and bisexual MPs is at its highest ever. It is clear to see that, in spite of the progression made as a society in the advancement of LGBT representation, there is still a 'glass ceiling' in politics as Chris Smith himself put it.

All around the world new 'firsts' are being made: Leo Varadkar becoming the first openly gay Prime Minister of Ireland in 2017; Miguel Mansur became the first openly gay party leader in Aruba as recently as last year; Petra de Sutter became the first openly trans national minister in Europe in 2020. And, although these feats must obviously be celebrated, there is a bittersweet aftertaste left when you ask yourself 'Why did it take so long?'. Politics is not new, not being straight or cisgender



is not new, so why are these achievements so recent? Only when you consider this does the ugly face of prejudice, violence and true fear reveal itself.

Coming out in everyday life can be dangerous enough; placing yourself in a public position whilst out must take extreme courage and determination. In 69 countries homosexuality is banned, with the death penalty prescribed for same-sex sexual acts in a handful. However, as representation in politics increases, so does hope for civilians who find their identities outlawed: thankfully the general trend is moving towards decriminalising same-sex acts.

Moreover, as of December 2020, 81 countries had laws **against** workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation. Twenty years ago, there were only 15. As a Western country, Britain often assumes that people in our borders are free to do as they like, to be who they are, to love who they love. Yet I believe that the lack of LGBT+ in politics proves the existence of menacing sub-cultures that discourage many people from either being openly themselves or striving towards positions in the public eye. As we move forward, it is essential to remember that 'acceptance' is never enough, until there is active recognition of the issue of non-straight or heteronormative members of society in politics, and until there are active efforts to thoroughly break down the barriers of hatred that they face, politics will always be exclusive.

-Anya Grieve, Year 12 Politics editor

Interview Feature Part 1

Our opinions editor, Campbell Grattan, was able to interview 4 different people of a range of ages from different spectrums of the LGBTQ+ community. The interviews cover a range of issues, from coming out to legal rights.

Some background information to better understand the interviews is:

- Person A and Person B are engaged to each other and both currently live in Australia. They both identify as males but Person A is transgender and Person B is cisgendered. Person B used to live in Dubai where it is still illegal to be gay and is also the son of Person C and Person D. Their interviews are in **part 1**
- Person C and Person D are married women who currently live in England. They lived most of their lives in Dubai and have also spent some of their lives in Australia. They are the parents of person B . Their interviews are in **part 2**

Interview A

How old are you?

I am 25 years old

When did you realise you were part of the LGBTQ+ community?

I found out I was trans when I was 11 and found out I was bisexual when I was about 14

When did you come out?

I came out about my gender at 11 and started my transition at about 14. I never saw the point in officially coming out about my sexuality.

What difficulties did you have coming out?

I found difficulty in getting people to use the right name and pronouns for me. Sexuality wise I went to a very progressive school and it was not an issue at all.

How did your family react to you coming out?

My family reacted very positively; my nan was sad that I was going to change my name but was pleased when I chose Spencer as it was her family nickname

What aspects of being LGBTQ+ have been the hardest?

There are probably two instances that were the hardest. The first instance was the medical side of transition- the laws weren't as kind to trans children when I was growing up and there was no access to legal medical transition. The second would be when the Australian Christian Lobby used a photo of me to run a national smear campaign against the Safe School Coalition. This brought on a lot of stress and hate to me.

What are your views on how the world is now in terms of LGBTQ+ rights and laws?

In some places LGBTQ+ people have it pretty good and only suffer micro aggressions. However, in a huge number of places being queer is still illegal and punishable by death. We're not equal until we're all equal.

What do you think about the attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people?

I'm pretty blessed to be in an area where LGBTQ+ people are celebrated and allowed to live freely. I have however experienced the denialism and hatred from the far right. It's quite hard to make a general statement with so many opposing views.

If you could make any major legislative change what would it be?

I would give trans children access to puberty blockers, hormone therapy and name and gender marker changes for free and make it illegal for them to be discriminated against

Who has helped you the most with exploring/ expressing your identity?

It's hard to name just one person as I had a lovely group of friends and family who supported me. If I had to name one it would probably be my psychiatrist from the royal children's hospital gender clinic. I saw him from ages 13-18 and he helped me socially and medically with my transition while also providing me with ongoing support and making me feel normal.

Have you noticed changes in the rights of LGBTQ+ people in your lifetime?

The LGBTQ+ community has come so far. Back when I was coming out there was no trans young people around me and very few queer kids in general. We've given young people the language they need to describe themselves and the support they need. It's fantastic. We have also seen the introduction of same sex marriage which is a huge step in the right direction.

Interview B

How old are you?

I am 27 years old.

When did you realise you were part of the LGBTQ+ community?

I figured out that I was gay at about 14

When did you come out?

I came out at about 15/16. I was pretty quick with coming out because both my parents were queer so it was easy to tell them. It only took a year or so because I was trying to figure out exactly how I felt. At first, I came out as gay, because I was sexually attracted to both genders but really only felt romantically attracted to men. This changed as I got older, now I don't really care about genders and I would say I am bisexual or biromantic. I don't really know the right label for it

What difficulties did you have coming out?

Some families wanted it to be a big deal or a big announcement which was frustrating to me as I didn't believe it really mattered. Straight people don't announce they're straight so I never understood why I had to announce it.

How did your family react to you coming out?

All my family reacted really well. My parents seemed to be scared about how it would affect me because of the world they lived in when they were young. However, they really didn't have to as we live in a very different world now. Other than that, there were no negative reactions from immediate family.

What aspects of being LGBTQ+ have been the hardest?

I believe your career is most affected by being LGBTQ+. Sometimes it can be a positive effect as it can open you up to new peers and audiences. However, if you have someone in power who is outright or subconsciously prejudice against gay people it can really affect how you grow or progress in a company. A lot of the time this is very hard to detect and so is very difficult to overcome.

What are your views on how the world is now in terms of LGBTQ+ rights and laws?

I believe the world is terrible in terms of rights and laws. Even in developed countries there is a constant battle off gaining and taking away queer rights, especially for trans folk. Gay and lesbian folk have it a lot easier then trans and non-binary but there still even some legal issues there.

What do you think about the attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people?

Gay and Lesbian folk have it a lot better than trans and non-binary. Generally, its ok for us but trans people in particular have to be a lot more cautious about where/who/what is going on around them

If you could make any major legislative change what would it be?

Trans people should be recognised by law and that gender affirmation surgery is covered by national healthcare

Who has helped you the most with exploring/ expressing your identity?

My parents (person C and person D) made expressing myself very easy as role models while I was growing up. They made it feel ok or normal which makes me very lucky compared to some other people. An ex-boyfriend taught me that vibrant sexual expression is fun and ok. My fiancé (person A) has taught me a lot about gender expression and how that can link to sexuality

— Interviewed by Campbell Grattan, Year 12 Opinions Editor

Olly Alexander: Growing up Gay

Documentary review



Years and Years leading artist, queer pop icon and friend of Stonewall, Olly Alexander, explores the mental health issues faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as his own relationship with his identity.

What Grace thinks:

A beautifully honest documentary that opens the conversation for mental health and sexuality! Discussing many hard hitting topics, such as eating disorders, it delves into what hiding your own sexuality can do to people. Not only does Olly open up about his own struggles, allowing access to his diary that he kept as a teenager which documents all his struggles and emotions, but he interviews others who share their experiences as 'growing up gay' within the Documentary. Importantly the Documentary doesn't just focus on personal journeys but also highlights the lack of youth LGBTQ+ specific mental health support. This element is vital to the future of the struggling youth as it explores what could be done in the future to help those who feel they are in need of help!

Please note: this documentary includes sensitive topics such as mental health problems and eating disorders so ask a parent or guardian before watching.

-Grace Main, year 12 TV and film editor

Interview Feature Part 2

Interview C

How old are you?

I'm 52

When did you realise you were part of the LGBTQ+ community?

I was about 17 when I figured out I was gay.

When did you come out?

I first came out at 17 but my family didn't accept me so I ran away, had a child, and then returned to the family. Then I came out again at about 21 but they still didn't accept me so I got married to a man and had another child. I then got divorced at 29 and finally stood my ground.

What aspects of being LGBTQ+ have been the hardest?

I felt that my life in the Middle East was the hardest period in my life. I had already hidden my sexuality for so long and at this point and I had finally developed a family that I had loved and felt comfortable in. However, when moving to the Middle East I once again had to not only hide my sexuality but also had to hide the truth about my family due to the fact that it was illegal to be in a same sex relationship with such harsh punishments such as stoning. On top of this both of our home countries had very hard immigration laws meaning this was pretty much the only way to live somewhere as a family. This meant we had to leave our friends and family.

What are your views on how the world is now in terms of LGBTQ+ rights and laws?

I believe we have progressed miles and miles ahead and it is noticeably easier to be a part of LGBTQ+.. Also my relationship is now actually legal and we are acknowledged as a part of society.

What do you think about the attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people?

In general, the LGBTQ community is treated pretty well especially in comparison

to what we had to go through while growing up.

Who has helped you the most with exploring/ expressing your identity?

My wife helped me the most. She always loved me unconditionally and that made me feel like I was a worthwhile person.

What do you think needs to be a goal for progressing the rights of LGBTQ+ people?

I still feel we have to cluster together as different groups of LGBTQ whereas people with a “normal” sexuality can easily fit in with many others so I truly believe we have not achieved the goal of integrating properly with society.

Have you noticed changes in the rights of LGBTQ+ people in your lifetime?

LGBTQ+ rights have improved massively during my lifetime, at least in legislation. When I was a younger person, it was illegal to be gay and everyone who was gay was at a massive risk of being attacked by others. Whereas now I feel much more protected and safer.

Interview D

How old are you?

I am 47

When did you realise you were part of the LGBTQ+ community?

I found out I was gay at 21

When did you come out?

I came out at 21

What difficulties did you have coming out?

My mother is a Jehovah witness and told me I was condemned to hell and was incredibly anti-gay. She verbally attacked me for three days

How did your family react to you coming out?

My dad was fine with me being gay and apparently already knew. My brother was

surprised but wasn't too fazed. My mother didn't accept it at all and I never told my grandma as I didn't want to upset her.

What aspects of being LGBTQ+ have been the hardest?

I found it the hardest to be gay when I was pregnant with my child as I was in the Middle East and terrified of the death penalty (stoning). At one point we even had a close friend who was ready to marry me if in an emergency situation

What do you think about the attitudes towards LGBTQ+ people?

I believe it depends where you live. Many places are still very regressed. However, while living in England, I believe in person I am treated pretty well in most places. Unfortunately, I do still have a certain amount of fear and caution when holding hands with my wife in certain places. I still very much don't think the tolerance for gay relationships is equal and I feel it makes people much more uncomfortable than straight relationships. However, this is not even comparable to how it was when I was younger. At one point I was even chased by a group of four men just for being identifiable as gay by the way I was dressed.

What assumptions about LGBTQ+ people need to change?

Many people assume that gay people are defined by their sexual attraction to the same sex, this is true but it's just one aspect. I have had many gay female friends talk about the same issue when telling a straight women friend/acquaintance that they are gay, that woman will immediately assume that the gay woman will be sexually attracted to them. In my experience, this same assumption is not made about heterosexuals. What is ignored in this is that we are discerning just like our straight counterparts. We have preferences such as hair colour, body type, smile etc that we find attractive. Just being female is not enough, the same as it wouldn't be for a straight person.

Who has helped you the most with exploring/ expressing your identity?

Friends and girlfriends helped me express myself the most. Friends accepted me for who I was and girlfriends introduced me to gay culture and the gay scene while also giving me someone to go with to these places. Later on in life my wife showed me that I could have a 'normal life' with her and even have my own chil-

showed me that I could have a 'normal life' with her and even have my own children which many gay women I had met did not believe this to be a possibility.

Have you noticed changes in the rights of LGBTQ+ people in your lifetime?

Rights for LGBTQ+ have come a long way. I've gone from a time of possible prosecution to a time where I can marry my wife.

-Interviewed by Campbell Grattan, Year 12 Opinions Editor

Many thanks to those who were interviewed for this issue for sharing their story and experiences; it is immensely appreciated.

TV/Film Recommendations

Yes God Yes - film rating 15+

Natalia Dyer (Stranger Things' Nancy Wheeler) is a young Catholic girl in the early 00s who attends Catholic school retreat in an attempt to suppress her newfound sexual urges.

Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson rating 15+

This heart-breaking true crime documentary film follows the death of transgender icon, Marsha P. Johnson, who was found floating in the Hudson River in 1992. Many in the community believed she was murdered whilst it was originally ruled as a suicide and this documentary aims to shed new light on the horrific story. It's an important watch for all.

Olly Alexander: Growing up Gay

Years and Years leading man, queer pop icon and friend of Stonewall, Olly Alexander, explores the mental health issues faced by members of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as his own relationship to his identity.

Welcome to Chechnya rating 15+

This heart-breaking and vital look into the spiralling wave of homophobic violence and anti-gay purges spreading through Chechnya as of the late 2010s. It follows LGBTQ+ Chechen refugees - mostly anonymised for their own safety - using hidden cameras as they fled out of Russia through a network of safehouses aided by activists and good Samaritans.

Pride rating 15 +

Based on a true story, the film depicts lesbian and gay activists who raised money to help families affected by the British miners' strike in 1984, at the outset of what would become the Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners campaign .

Anagram Game

Name: _____ Date: _____

LGBTQ+

1. NON IYNABR -----

2. SRNDEGETRA -----

3. SBXLUEAI -----

4. EQRUE -----

5. USPANALXE -----

6. GENIUSNTQO -----

7. AGY -----

8. EINSREXT -----

9. NELIABS -----

10. USALAEX -----

11. RGDEEN LIDFU -----

12. LALY -----

Hand in your completed anagram sheet with your name and form to Mr McNally in A204 to be in with a chance to win a prize!!