

VIRGINIA APUZZO

b. June 26, 1941

PIONEERING ACTIVIST

**Virginia Apuzzo
co-authored the first
gay and lesbian civil
rights plank for the
Democratic Party.**

*“I thought I’d have to live my life
with this deep, dark secret.”*

Virginia “Ginny” Apuzzo is a New York native and a former nun who played a pivotal role in LGBT civil rights and the fight against AIDS during the 1980s and '90s.

Apuzzo joined the Sisters of Charity in the Bronx when she was 26, but left after the Stonewall riots (1969) to come out publicly as a lesbian and establish herself as an activist, educator and civil servant.

“I read about Stonewall in the newspaper,” Apuzzo said in “Stonewall Uprising,” a PBS documentary. “Here I’d thought I was the only one ... it was as if suddenly a brick wall opened up.”

Apuzzo joined the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and served for many years as its executive director, working to include LGBT issues in the 1976 Democratic Party platform. In 1978 she cofounded the Lambda Independent Democrats. In 1980 she became one of the first openly lesbian delegates at the Democratic National Convention when she co-authored the first gay and lesbian civil rights plank for the Democratic Party. In 1997 Bill Clinton appointed her to the White House senior staff as assistant to the president for administration and management, making her the highest-ranking out lesbian in the federal government.

Apuzzo joined the Women’s Caucus, an arm of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, with her partner, Betty Powell, who was the first black lesbian on the group’s board. The two became increasingly vocal about lesbian rights after butting heads with well-known feminists whom they accused of insufficiently embracing lesbians in the women’s movement.

It was during her tenure with New York City’s Department of Public Health that Apuzzo became one of the earliest, most vocal female AIDS activists in the country. In New York she created a volunteer infrastructure to address the community’s needs and established one of the first telephone hotlines to help with AIDS education and resources. Apuzzo testified at the first congressional hearing on AIDS, blasting the government’s lax response to the virus, and continued to lobby passionately for federal funds.

“It was the most tragic time of my life,” she said, “each year seeing whole segments of the gay male activist community wiped out.”

In 1985 New York Governor Mario Cuomo named her vice chair of the New York State AIDS Advisory Council. She publicly challenged pharmaceutical companies over the rising cost of AIDS drugs and helped rewrite insurance policies. Years later, she worked with President Clinton to secure disability benefits for people living with the disease.

Apuzzo was a tenured professor at Brooklyn College. In 2007 New York Governor Eliot Spitzer appointed her to the Commission on Public Integrity, where she worked until she retired.



JOSEPHINE BAKER

b. June 3, 1906

d. April 12, 1975

SINGER AND ACTRESS

“People ... can learn to live together in peace if they are not brought up in prejudice.”

Josephine Baker was an American entertainer who found fame in Paris and fought segregation at home.

Josephine Baker was an American-born entertainer who found fame as a dancer, singer and actress in Paris. Sometimes called the “Jazz Cleopatra,” Baker was born Freda Josephine McDonald in a poor neighborhood in St. Louis, Missouri. After facing abuse and racial discrimination in America, she moved to France in the 1920s where she became a celebrated performer and the first black woman to star in a major motion picture. Her exotic beauty inspired Ernest Hemingway to describe her as “the most sensational woman anyone ever saw.”

Baker’s landmark cabaret show, “La Revue Nègre,” became the toast of Paris thanks to her on-stage antics. She exuded sexuality, wearing next to nothing and performing tribal-inspired dances with comic touches and cultural commentary.

When she returned to the United States as a major star a decade later, the reception was quite different. American audiences rejected her, and The New York Times called her a “negro wench.” She went back to Europe brokenhearted.

During World War II, Baker earned recognition performing for troops and smuggling secret messages on music sheets for the French Resistance. She also served as a sub-lieutenant in the Women’s Auxiliary Army. She was honored with the Croix de Guerre and named Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the French government.

In the 1950s and ’60s, Baker again faced racial discrimination in America, where the most popular clubs prohibited her from performing. She publicly criticized the Jim Crow laws that enforced segregation and refused to perform in segregated clubs. In 1951 Baker was honored for her activism by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which declared May 20th Josephine Baker Day.

Baker talked publicly about racial equality in France and segregation at home. She spoke at the March on Washington in 1963 alongside Dr. Martin Luther King.

Baker married and divorced four times and adopted 12 children of varying ethnic backgrounds, which she called “The Rainbow Tribe.” One son later described his mother as a bisexual, noting a relationship she had with the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo.

Baker also has been linked romantically to the novelist Colette, fellow expatriate performer Bricktop and other women.

Baker became a citizen of France, where she remains an icon. In 1991 HBO released “The Josephine Baker Story,” which earned five Emmys and a Golden Globe.



© GETTY IMAGES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

XAVIER BETTEL

b. March 3, 1973

PRIME MINISTER OF LUXEMBOURG

“I didn’t get up one morning and say, ‘Hey, I’m gay.’ It’s not a choice.”

Xavier Bettel is the prime minister of Luxembourg and the country’s first openly gay leader.

Xavier Bettel is the prime minister of Luxembourg. A member of the Democratic Party, he became the country’s first openly gay leader in December 2013 and one of only three openly gay world leaders. Previously, Bettel served as mayor of Luxembourg city and also as a member of the city’s chamber and council.

Bettel has described Luxembourg as a place where “people do not consider the fact of whether someone is gay or not.” The tiny European country—one of the smallest in the world with just over half a million people—is a leading financial and banking center, second only to the United States in investment funds.

As prime minister, Bettel has advocated for teaching ethics instead of religion in public schools. He is credited with reinvigorating the political scene with progressive reforms and was instrumental in passing same-sex marriage laws in the predominately Roman Catholic country. He has been vocal on social media about LGBT rights.

Under Bettel’s leadership, Luxembourg legalized same-sex marriage in 2014. One year later, after the marriage reforms went into effect, Bettel married his partner, the architect Gauthier Destenay. Bettel is the first openly gay European Union leader and only the second gay leader in the world to marry. The couple have been civil partners since 2010. “I wish for everyone to be as happy as I am,” Bettel told a crowd gathered on his wedding day.

Born in Luxembourg city, Bettel graduated from the University of Nancy where he received a masters degree in public and European law, followed by a post-graduate diploma in advanced studies of political science and public law. He hosted a weekly television talk show early in his career.

Bettel came out publicly in 2008.



CHARLES BLOW

b. August 11, 1970

JOURNALIST AND COMMENTATOR

“One thing the gay rights movement taught the world is the importance of being visible.”

Charles Blow is a columnist for The New York Times and a television commentator.

Charles Blow is an American journalist and a columnist for The New York Times. As the only African-American columnist on the paper's opinion pages, Blow focuses twice weekly on issues of social justice, race relations and the pitfalls of politics.

Before becoming a commentator, Blow was the youngest head of the graphics design department at The Times, a position he held for nine years. During his tenure, he helped the newspaper win several prestigious awards, including a Best of Show from the Society for News Design for coverage of the September 11 attacks. It was the first time the award had ever been given to a newspaper for outstanding graphic design.

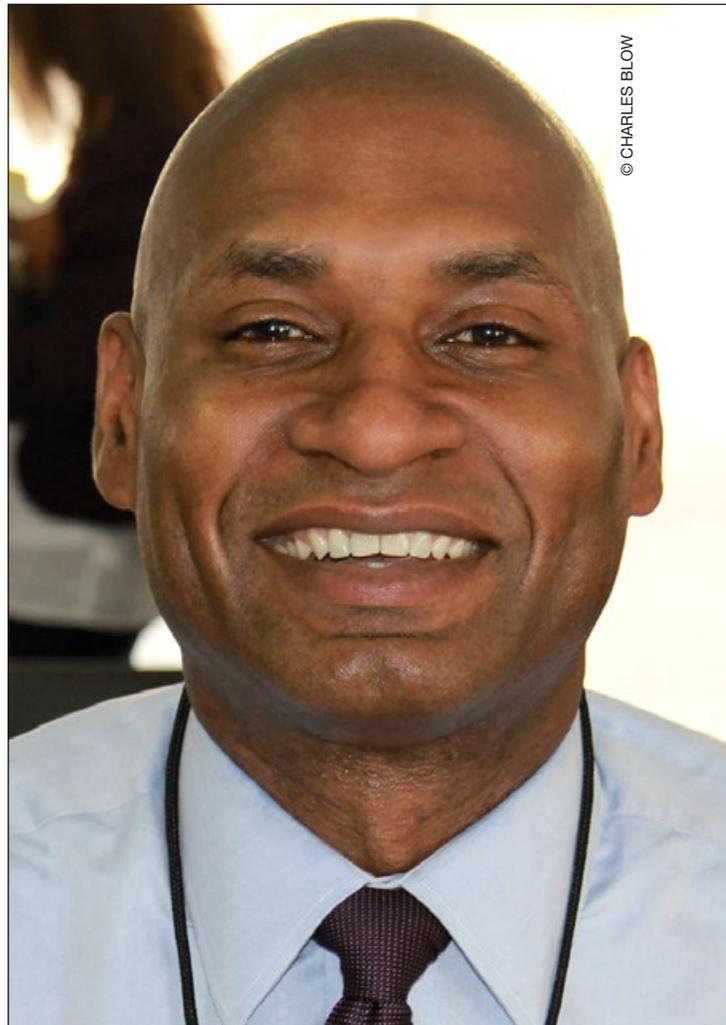
Blow has also worked at National Geographic and The Detroit News. He regularly appears on the BBC, CNN, Fox News, MSNBC and HBO to discuss timely topics related to his column and his own life. He came out publicly as a bisexual in 2014 in his memoir, “Fire

Shut Up in My Bones.” The coming-of-age account has been named a New York Times Notable Book, a Lambda Literary Award Winner and a PEN Open Book Award nominee. In it he writes candidly about his sexuality:

“In addition to being attracted to women, I could also be attracted to men. There it was, all of it. That possibility of male attraction was such a simple little harmless idea, the fight against which I had allowed to consume and almost ruin my life. The attraction and my futile attempts to ‘fix it’ had cost me my dreams.”

The book not only chronicles Blow's struggle with identity, but also provides insights into the sexual abuse he suffered as a child at the hands of an older male cousin. The author admits that he spent years trying to unravel the relationship between the abuse and his own sexuality. He has spoken candidly on the subject on several television shows, including “Real Time with Bill Maher,” “Piers Morgan Tonight” and “Anderson Cooper 360.”

Blow is a single father of three. A native of Louisiana, he lives in Brooklyn, New York.



© CHARLES BLOW



BRIAN BOND

b. October 14, 1961

ACTIVIST AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

“Coming out isn’t easy, but it is getting easier with each passing day.”

Brian Bond was an early executive director of the Victory Fund.

Brian Bond was an executive director of the Victory Fund and, in the Obama administration, became the first openly gay deputy director of the White House Office of Public Engagement.

A Missouri native, Bond got his start in politics as the executive director of the Missouri Democratic Party, where he helped to elect Democrats in local and state elections.

Bond told *The Washington Blade* that growing up in rural Missouri, he was always looking for openly gay role models and often came up short. “Coming out for me was extremely hard and honestly terrifying, as I know it has been for so many of us,” he said.

Bond searched the local library for what it meant to be gay and came out when he was 16. “When I finally had the courage to utter the words out loud,” Bond said in an interview, “it was to my priest during a face-to-face confession.”

From 1997 to 2003, Bond served as the second executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, a nonpartisan political action committee (PAC) dedicated to electing openly LGBT candidates for public office. During his tenure, the Victory Fund was instrumental in helping Tammy Baldwin win a Congressional seat. She was the first out lesbian elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Bond went on to serve as executive director of the Democratic National Committee’s Gay and Lesbian Leadership Council and then as National Constituency Director for the Obama for America Campaign in Chicago, before joining the White House staff.

In his 30s, Bond discovered he was HIV positive. “For some of us,” he said, “we don’t come out once, but twice.” He became an advocate for AIDS education, declaring that a mobilized community can reduce the number of people who become infected. Bond has written about his experiences as a gay man, a Democrat and an AIDS survivor in many nationally known publications.

In 2016 Bond served as deputy CEO for public engagement for the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.



CHAZ BONO

b. March 4, 1969

TRANSGENDER ACTIVIST

“A lot of parents never speak to their transgender kids again; that’s not the case in my family.”

Chaz Bono is a transgender activist and author.

Chaz Bono, born Chastity Bono, is the only child of American entertainers Sonny and Cher. In 2008 Bono began undergoing gender reassignment procedures, publicly discussing the experience in the Emmy-nominated documentary “Becoming Chaz.”

A native of Los Angeles, Bono grew up in the spotlight, often appearing on his parents’ popular variety show. Later he said he felt uncomfortable wearing dresses on TV and remembered wanting to be more like his father.

After his parents divorced in 1975, Bono split his time between them and later moved to New York City to attend college and pursue a career in music. He formed the band Ceremony, for which he sang lead vocals and played guitar and drums. The band released an album called “Hang Out Your Poetry,” which featured guest appearances by Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead and Bono’s parents.

By 1990 the tabloids began speculating that Bono was a lesbian. Bono came out publicly five years later in *The Advocate*, eventually becoming the entertainment director for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). Bono published “Family Outing,” a book that explores his coming out and gender issues.

In his next book, “The End of Innocence,” published in 2002, Bono provided insights into the music business and his relationship with an older woman.

Bono went public with his substance abuse problems before becoming sober in 2004. He appeared on the reality show “Celebrity Fit Club” to address body issues, and later competed as the first transgender contestant on “Dancing With the Stars.”

After completing his transition in 2010, Bono legally changed his first name to Chaz. He shared his experiences in the best-selling book “Transition: The Story of How I Became a Man” (2011). He also starred in a television special about his transition called “Being Chaz.” His mother, Cher, said that she initially had difficulty accepting Bono’s sexuality, though she has since become an outspoken advocate for LGBT rights.

Bono is a leading transgender advocate and speaks out worldwide for LGBT rights.



© GETTY IMAGES



DAVID BOWIE

b. January 8, 1947

d. January 10, 2016

ROCK STAR

*“It’s true—I’m bisexual.
... I suppose it’s the best thing that ever happened to me.”*

David Bowie was a trendsetting international rock icon who helped define androgyny.

Born David Robert Jones in London, David Bowie was a singer, songwriter, actor and record producer. He is among the best-selling recording artists in the world.

Bowie first splashed onto the music charts in 1969 with “Space Oddity.” The song became one of his best known and among three of his recordings to be included in The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame’s 500 Songs That Shaped Rock and Roll. Bowie went on to experiment with a variety of musical styles that came to define him as an innovator.

With his first album, “The Man Who Sold the World,” Bowie helped usher in the era of glam rock, a style known for its androgynous-looking performers, make-up and flamboyant costumes.

Bowie followed his debut with a string of musical successes, notably “The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars.” The 1972 concept album featured his gender-bending alter-ego, Ziggy Stardust, an alien rock star. The same year, in an interview with Melody Maker magazine, Bowie came out as gay. He later told Playboy he was bisexual.

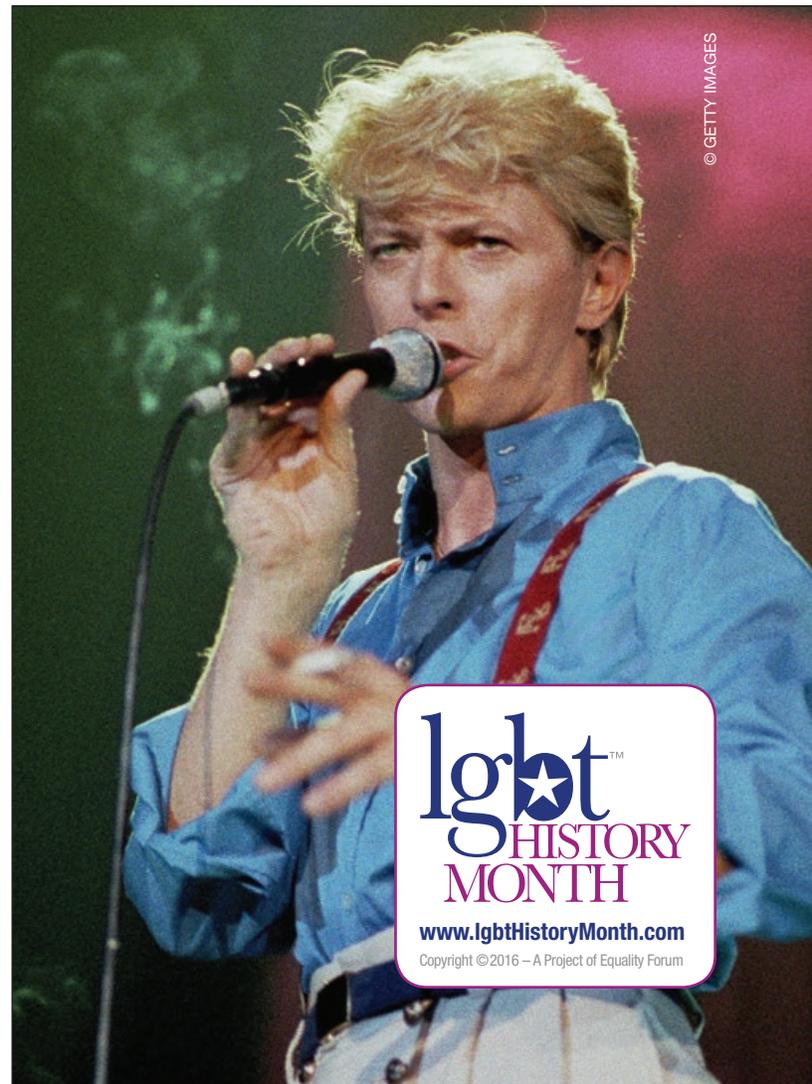
In 1976 Bowie starred in “The Man Who Fell to Earth,” the first of his many film roles. He experimented with highly theatrical live shows and narrated “Peter and the Wolf” with the Philadelphia Orchestra—the first of his many children’s projects. He made his Broadway debut in “The Elephant Man.” In addition to music, film and theater, Bowie was also an accomplished artist whose work was shown at international galleries.

Bowie produced important albums for Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, and Mott the Hoople, and collaborated with artists such as John Lennon, the band Queen, and Mick Jagger, with whom he had been romantically linked.

In 1993 he told Rolling Stone magazine that declaring his bisexuality was “the biggest mistake” he ever made. He would later say he had “no problem with people knowing I was bisexual. But I had no inclination to hold any banners nor be a representative of any group of people.”

In 1996 Bowie was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and became the first musician to release a song for download. His 30th and final studio album, “Blackstar,” was released in 2016 just two days before he died of cancer.

Bowie was married twice to women, the second time to the model Iman (his widow). He was the father of a son and a daughter.



© GETTY IMAGES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

JAMES BUCHANAN

b. April 23, 1791

d. June 1, 1868

U.S. PRESIDENT

“The test of leadership is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is already there.”

James Buchanan served as the 15th president of the United States.

James Buchanan was the 15th president of the United States, serving from 1857 to 1861. A lawyer and a Democrat, he represented Pennsylvania in the U.S. House of Representatives and later in the Senate. He served as minister to Russia under President Andrew Jackson, secretary of state under President James K. Polk and minister to Great Britain under President Franklin Pierce.

Buchanan was born into a well-to-do family in Cove Gap, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Dickinson College, where he was known as a gifted debater.

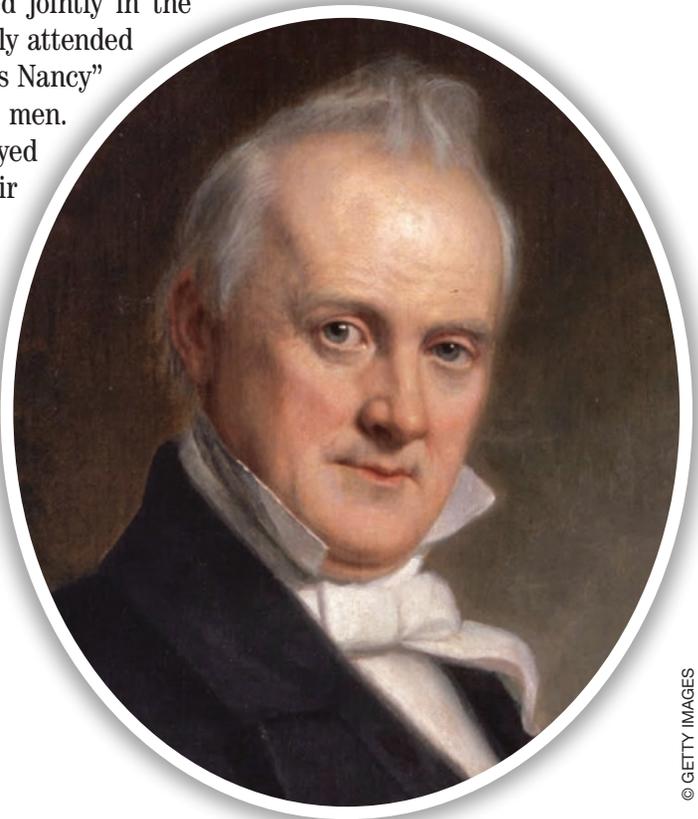
During his presidency, Buchanan led a country sharply divided over the issue of slavery. The Supreme Court issued the controversial Dred Scott decision two days after he took office, asserting that Congress had no constitutional power to ban slavery in the territories. It forced Buchanan to admit Kansas as a slave state, which upset Republicans and alienated some members of his own party.

Abraham Lincoln denounced Buchanan for failing to support the elimination of legal barriers to slavery. Buchanan vetoed both the Morrill Act and the Homestead Act, which Lincoln later signed into law. Near the end of his term, Buchanan declared that Southern states had no legal right to secede, but that the federal government could not actually prevent them from doing so.

Personally opposed to slavery, Buchanan was an ardent Unionist. He undertook numerous efforts to avoid a civil war, which Lincoln as president-elect opposed.

A lifelong bachelor, Buchanan is believed to have had a long-term relationship with William Rufus King, who served as vice president under Franklin Pierce. The two men lived jointly in the same boardinghouse in Washington for a decade and regularly attended functions together. Andrew Jackson referred to them as “Miss Nancy” and “Aunt Fancy,” both popular euphemisms for effeminate men. Biographer Jean Baker believes that King’s nieces destroyed love letters between the men for fear that the nature of their “special friendship” might be revealed. At age 26 Buchanan was engaged briefly to a woman.

A memorial honoring Buchanan was unveiled in 1930 in Washington. It bears the inscription: “The incorruptible statesman whose walk was upon the mountain ranges of the law.” Counties in Iowa, Missouri and Virginia are named after him.



lgbt
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright ©2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

JEANNE CÓRDOVA

b. July 18, 1948

d. January 10, 2016

ACTIVIST AND AUTHOR

Jeanne Córdoba helped found the Gay and Lesbian Caucus of the Democratic Party.

“It’s the job of the young to push the societal envelope.”

Jeanne Córdoba was a pioneering feminist and lesbian rights activist who helped lead the LGBT movement on the West Coast of the United States. She launched numerous civil rights and community organizations. For most of her life, she worked as a journalist and author. Her autobiography, “When We Were Outlaws: A Memoir of Love and Revolution,” was published in 2011.

Born in Germany of Mexican and Irish-American descent, Córdoba was the second of 12 children. She attended high school in California, then joined the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a convent that embraced radical changes to the Catholic Church and protested the Vietnam War. Her experience there inspired her to leave to become a community organizer. At 22 she earned a master’s degree in social work from UCLA.

Córdoba’s advocacy began as president of the L.A. chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian rights organization in the United States, where she helped open the first lesbian center in Los Angeles. She also launched The Lesbian Tide, the first American publication to use “lesbian” in its title.

Córdoba went on to organize influential women’s events, including the first National Lesbian Conference. She became the human rights editor of the Los Angeles Free Press and served as president of the Stonewall Democratic Club. She worked to defeat a proposition to ban openly gay and lesbian teachers from California public schools.

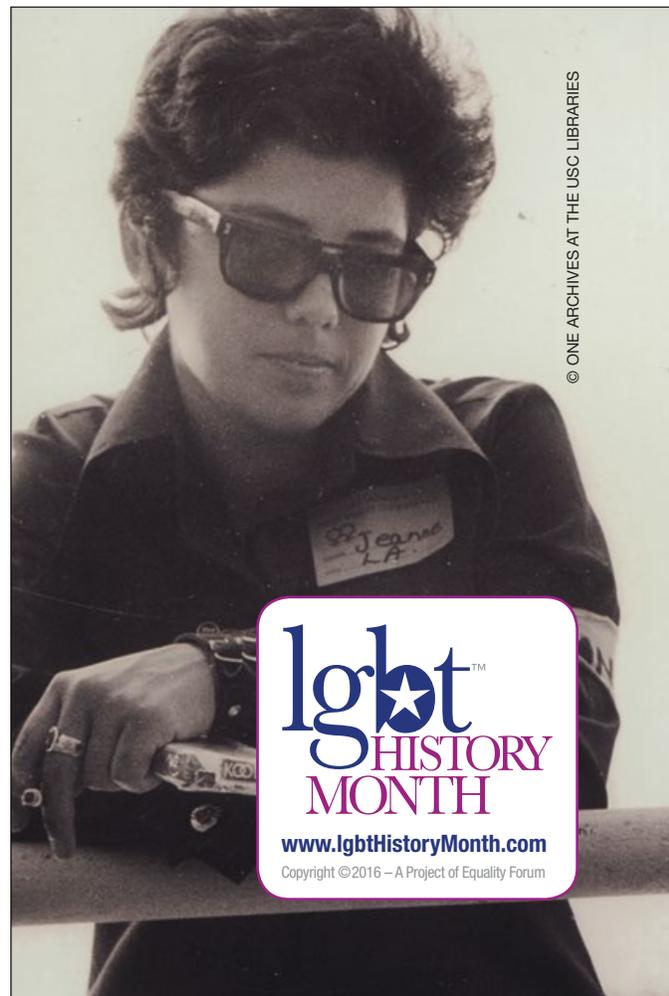
Córdoba also helped create the Gay and Lesbian Caucus of the Democratic Party and became one of 30 openly lesbian delegates to the 1980 Democratic National Convention. She created the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Press Association and was a founding member of the Connexus Women’s Center, where she worked to defeat a 1986 proposition that would have quarantined people with AIDS.

Among other organizations, Córdoba cofounded the Lesbian Legacy Coalition and the Lesbian Legacy Wall at ONE Archives in Los Angeles.

Throughout her life, she wrote passionately about women’s and lesbian issues. Her work has appeared in popular publications nationwide, including The Advocate, ICON, The Washington Blade and countless others. In 1981 she published the Community Yellow Pages, the first and largest LGBT business directory in the country. She also started Square Peg, a queer cultural magazine, in 1992.

Córdoba has received numerous awards. In 1978 she became the first out lesbian to appear in Who’s Who in America.

Córdoba spent 25 years with her partner, Lynn Harris Ballen, a feminist radio journalist. Before she died, Córdoba donated \$2 million to the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice.



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

MIDGE COSTANZA

b. November 28, 1931

d. March 23, 2010

PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER

“It is the link from the present to the past that gives us a spirit to address the future.”

Midge Costanza was a political activist and an adviser to President Jimmy Carter.

Margaret “Midge” Costanza was a political activist and an adviser to President Jimmy Carter. When Carter ran for president in 1976, Costanza served as co-chair of his New York campaign, delivering a fiery speech for him at the Democratic National Convention. When Carter was elected, she served as the assistant to the president for public liaison with an office next to the Oval Office. At the White House she earned the nickname “Window on America.”

Born in New York to Italian immigrants, Costanza began her political career as a volunteer for W. Averell Harriman’s gubernatorial campaign; she later served as executive director of Robert F. Kennedy’s 1964 Senate campaign.

Costanza became an outspoken advocate for LGBT rights and, in 1973, became the first woman elected to the Rochester (N.Y.) City Council. She then served as vice mayor of the city from 1974 to 1977.

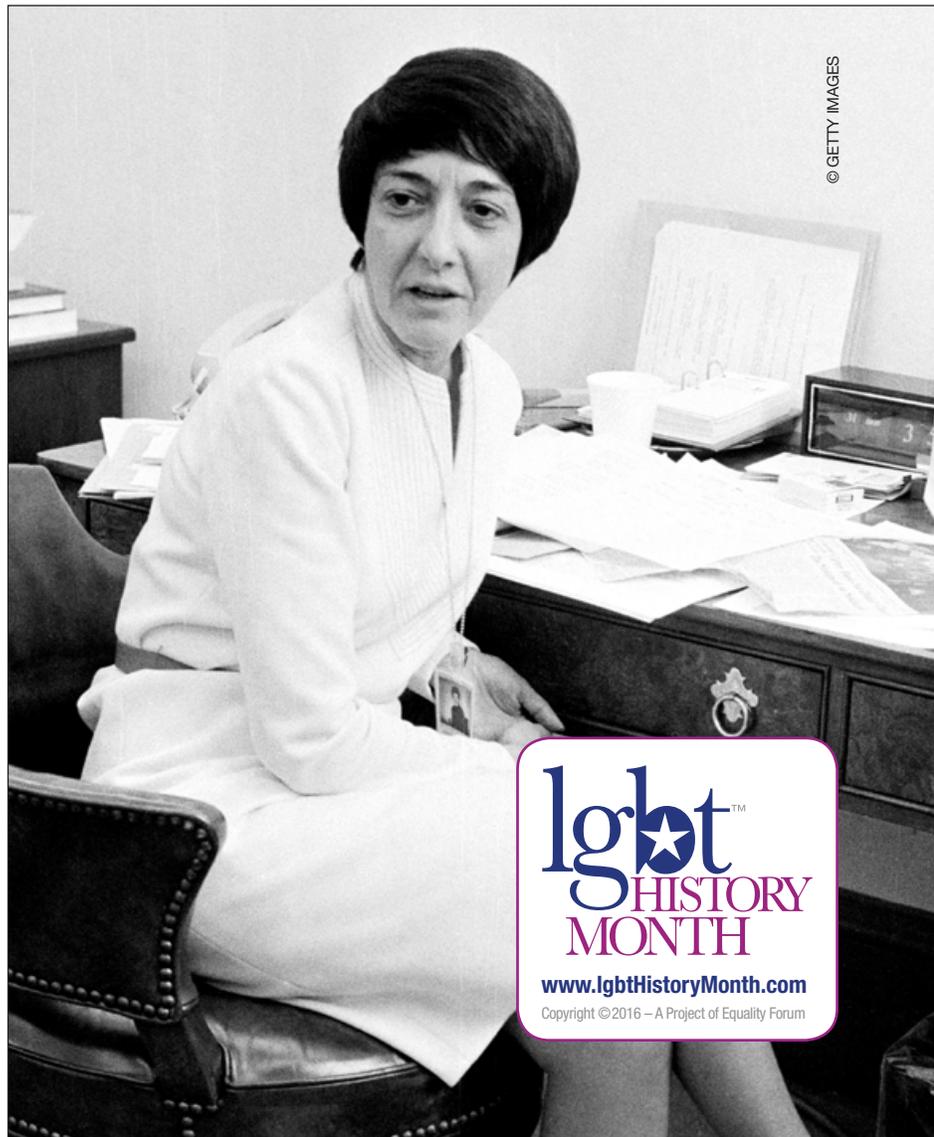
Costanza invited members of the National Gay Task Force to the White House during Anita Bryant’s controversial Save Our Children campaign. She also hosted a group of 30 women in protest of the president’s opposition to federal abortion funding. She was featured on the cover of Newsweek with the headline “Woman in the White House.”

After resigning from her White House post, she coached political candidates in public speaking and worked to get Barbara Boxer elected to the Senate in 1992. California Governor Gray Davis appointed Costanza as a special liaison to women’s groups, a position she held until 2003.

Costanza was a professor at San Diego State University, where she worked with the political science and women’s studies departments. She created the Midge Costanza Institute at the University of California at San Diego to help young people engage in political and social activism.

Costanza was also active with an AIDS research organization and fought for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. She worked tirelessly to elect more women to public office. In 2005 she joined the San Diego district attorney’s office as public affairs officer focused on the prevention of elder abuse.

In 2011 she was inducted into the San Diego County Women’s Hall of Fame at the Women’s Museum of California.



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

LILI ELBE

b. December 28, 1882

d. September 13, 1931

TRANSGENDER PIONEER AND PAINTER

Lili Elbe was a renowned Danish painter who underwent one of the first gender-reassignment surgeries.

“... The one hundred percent male and the one hundred percent female are theoretical.”

Lili Illse Elvenes, best known as Lili Elbe, was a transgender woman who received one of the first gender reassignment surgeries. Born in Denmark as Einar Magnus Andreas Wegener, Elbe worked as a successful artist before legally changing her name and living as a woman.

When Elbe was young, she studied painting at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, where she met a lesbian named Gerda Gottlieb. The two married in 1904, when Gottlieb was 18 and Elbe (still Wegener) was 22. The couple spent years traveling

through Europe. Elbe was known for her landscape paintings; Gottlieb illustrated books and fashion magazines. They eventually settled in Paris, where Elbe began living openly as a woman and became a muse for Gottlieb.

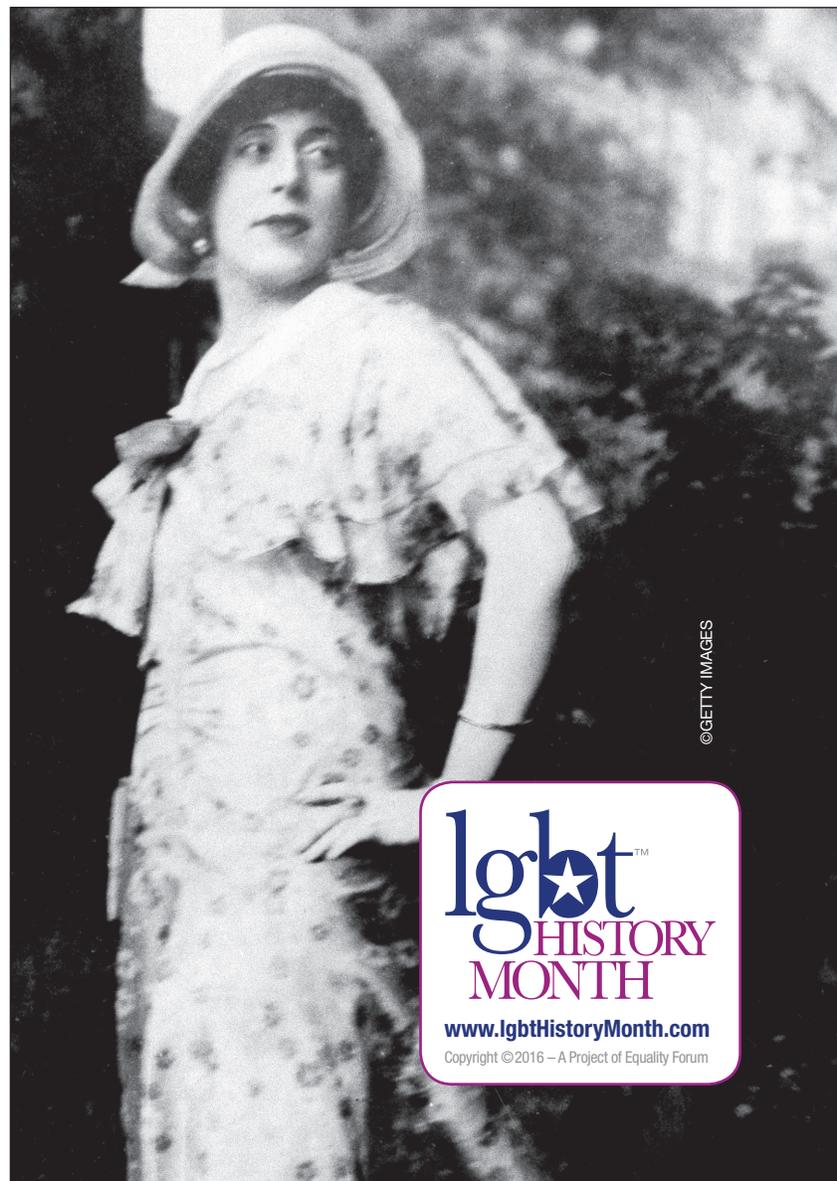
While in Paris, the couple was embraced by avant-garde social circles; the two women became the talk of the town. It shocked and fascinated the public when they found out that Elbe was a biological man. Newspaper articles were written about them all over Europe.

In 1930 Elbe relocated to Germany, where she had her first surgery to transition into a woman. The process was still experimental, but she had a series of operations under the supervision of the famous sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld. After transitioning, Elbe legally changed her name, and the Danish court invalidated the couple's marriage. Elbe also left the art world. In an essay, she explained the transgender experience:

“Our assumption as a society is that ... people come in two types, male nature and female nature. This has no scientific basis ... I try to move from the language of the two sexes are similar or different to language that means we are all different.”

Elbe and Gottlieb eventually parted, and Elbe began a relationship with French art dealer Claude Lejeune. In 1931 in hopes of one day bearing children, she had her final operation—the most experimental one yet—to implant a uterus and construct a vagina. There were severe complications, and Elbe died a few months shy of her 49th birthday.

The award-winning movie “The Danish Girl” provides a fictionalized account of Elbe's life, based on an international best seller that has been translated into dozens of languages. The LGBT film festival MIX Copenhagen pays tribute to the transgender pioneer by presenting awards called the Lilies.



©GETTY IMAGES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

UZI EVEN

b. October 18, 1940

ISRAELI GAY PIONEER AND SCIENTIST

*“You no longer have to be ashamed.
You can even be elected.”*

**Uzi Even is an
Israeli gay pioneer
and the first openly
gay member of
parliament.**

A pioneering advocate for LGBT rights in Israel, Uzi Even became the first openly gay member of the country’s parliament, the Knesset, in 2002. He is a professor emeritus of physical chemistry at Tel Aviv University, from which he earned a Ph.D. in physics and molecular chemistry.

Even worked for the Israeli army at the Nuclear Research Center. When the Israel Defense Forces discovered he was gay, Even was stripped of his security clearance and his rank as a lieutenant colonel. His testimony about the matter led Yitzhak Rabin’s government to change the law in 1993, thus allowing open homosexuals to serve in any position in the armed forces. The same year, under President Bill Clinton, the U.S. Department of Defense issued “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell,” which remained official U.S. military policy until 2011.

Even first ran for a seat in the Knesset in 1999. He lost, but in 2002 was appointed to a vacant seat. During his tenure in parliament, he helped advance LGBT rights and brought attention to important social issues related to the gay movement.

Even also helped to advance same-sex spousal protection on the university level, advocating for health care coverage for his partner. He brought same-sex adoption into the spotlight when he and his partner became the first gay couple in Israel to legally adopt (by then) their 30-year-old foster son—a young man who had been kicked out of his home at 16 for being gay. “We opened a door, ... a window for others,” said Even’s son, Yossi Even-Kama, “an opening of hope for the couples that will follow.”

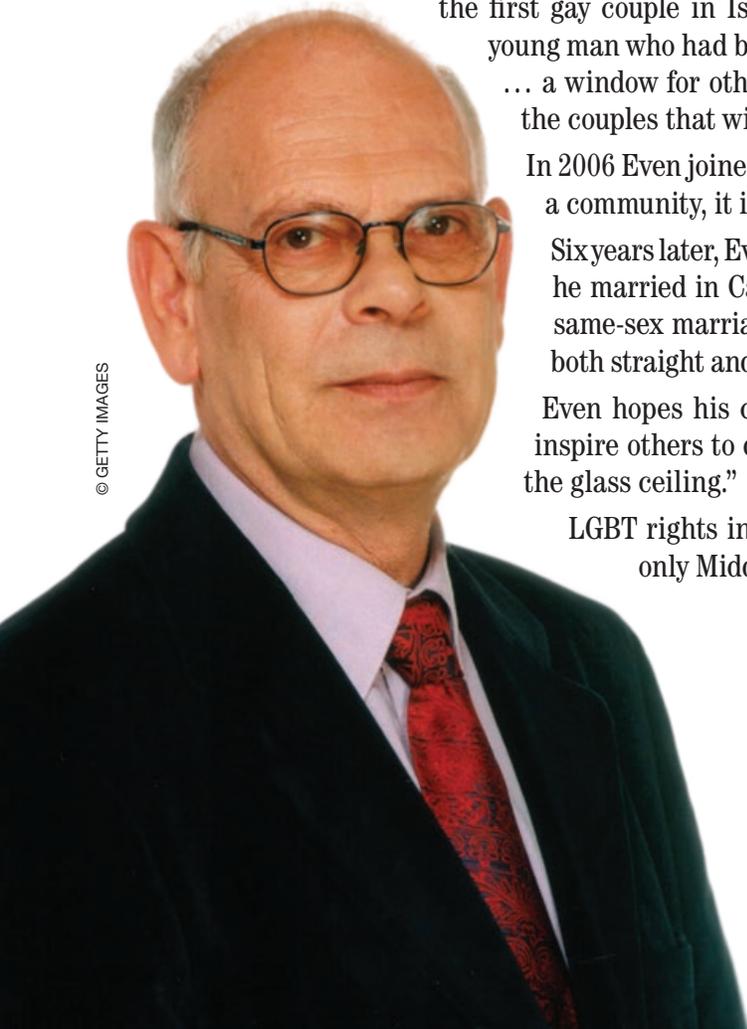
In 2006 Even joined the Labor Party in hopes of further advancing LGBT rights. “As a community, it is important that we be involved in a major party,” he said.

Six years later, Even set another legal precedent when he divorced his partner, whom he married in Canada in 2004. Because the Rabbinical Court does not recognize same-sex marriage, the divorce was granted in Family Court, paving the way for both straight and gay couples to bypass religious law in marriage matters.

Even hopes his coming out and public advocacy on behalf of LGBT people will inspire others to do the same. “It’s a symbolic act,” he said. “I’m the one breaking the glass ceiling.”

LGBT rights in Israel are the most advanced in the Middle East. Israel is the only Middle Eastern country to recognize same-sex marriage.

© GETTY IMAGES



MALCOLM FORBES

b. August 19, 1919

d. February 24, 1990

ENTREPRENEUR

Malcolm Forbes was an internationally famous entrepreneur and the publisher of Forbes magazine.

“Failure is success if we learn from it.”

Malcolm Forbes was an American businessman and publisher of Forbes, a magazine founded by his father in 1917.

The son of a Scottish-born journalist and an American mother, Forbes was born in Brooklyn and grew up in New Jersey. After graduating from Princeton as a political science major, Forbes enlisted in the Army in 1942 and served in Europe as a machine gunner in the 84th Infantry Division. He rose to the rank of staff sergeant before he was wounded in combat. He received both the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart for his heroism.

Forbes served as a borough councilman and later as a state senator in New Jersey. He ran unsuccessfully for New Jersey governor in 1957. It was publishing, not politics, however, that would eventually cement his fame and fortune.

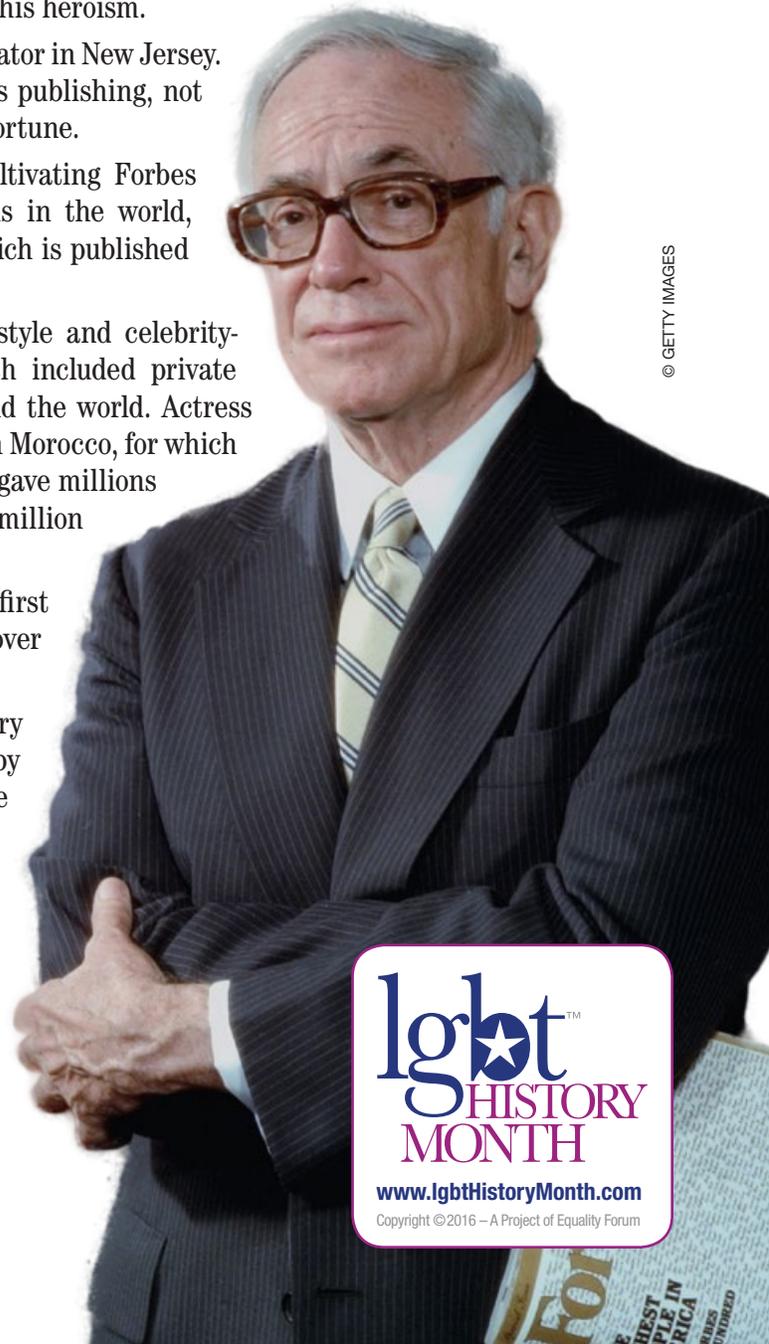
Forbes acquired control of the family business in 1964, cultivating Forbes magazine into one of the most successful print publications in the world, covering real estate, finance and business. The magazine, which is published in print and online, is still owned and operated by his family.

During the 1980s, Forbes became known for his lavish lifestyle and celebrity-studded parties. He regularly discussed his holdings, which included private jets, yachts, an international art collection and homes around the world. Actress Elizabeth Taylor co-hosted his legendary 70th birthday party in Morocco, for which the rich and famous were flown in on private jets. Forbes also gave millions of dollars to charity. His worth was estimated between \$400 million and \$1 billion.

In addition to life as a publishing mogul, Forbes became the first person to fly coast to coast in a hot air balloon; he also flew over Beijing, setting a world record.

It was only after his death in 1990 that he was outed in a story called “The Secret Gay Life of Malcolm Forbes,” written by Michelangelo Signorile. In the controversial exposé, Signorile asked, “Is our society so overwhelmingly repressive that even individuals as all-powerful as the late Malcolm Forbes feel they absolutely cannot come out of the closet?” The Forbes family has always denied the allegations.

Forbes was married for 39 years and had five children.



© GETTY IMAGES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

JOHN FRYER

b. November 7, 1937

d. February 21, 2003

PSYCHIATRIST AND DR. H. ANONYMOUS

“I am a homosexual. I am a psychiatrist.”



John E. Fryer, M.D., challenged the designation of homosexuality as a mental illness at the 1972 convention of the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Seated on a panel and disguised as Dr. H. Anonymous, he announced his homosexuality at a time when a medical license could be revoked on that basis. Fryer declared himself a proud member of the APA and explained that homosexuality was not the illness, but rather the toxic effects of homophobia.

Since 1952 the APA had listed homosexuality as a mental disorder in its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). Fryer's actions were pivotal in the declassification of homosexuality as a disease.

The DSM classification was first attacked in the 1960s by Gay Pioneer Frank Kameny, a Harvard-educated Ph.D. astronomer. Kameny and fellow activist Barbara Gittings waged a multi-year campaign against the APA. In 1971, after storming the APA's annual meeting, they were permitted to organize a panel discussion on homosexuality for the 1972 convention.

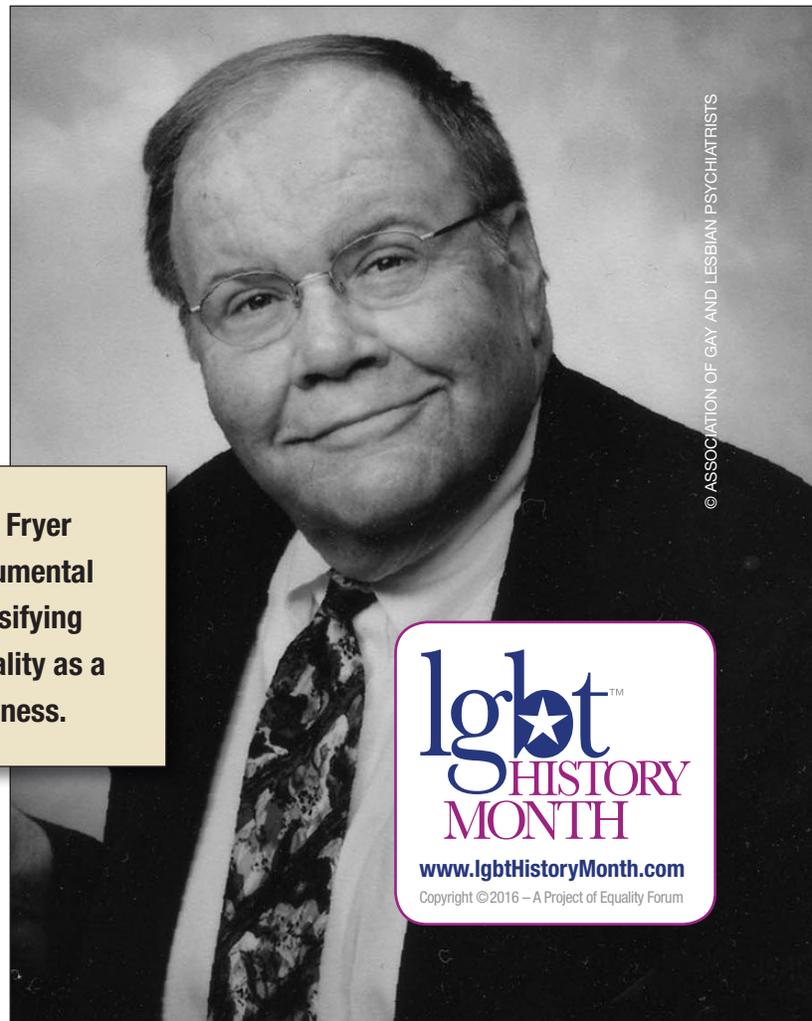
When no other gay psychiatrist would participate, Gittings recruited Dr. John Fryer. Concealing his identity with a mask and a voice modulator, he declared, “I am a homosexual. I am a psychiatrist.” He described the hardships homophobia imposed on homosexual psychiatrists and patients. “This is the greatest loss, our honest humanity,” he said, “and that loss leads all those around us to lose that little bit of their humanity as well.” The conventioners were transfixed. Subsequently, the APA formed a panel to evaluate the basis for the DSM classification. In 1973 homosexuality was delisted as a mental illness.

Fryer earned his medical degree from Vanderbilt University and began his psychiatric residency at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas, but grew depressed from hiding his sexual orientation. He relocated to pursue his residency at the University of Pennsylvania, but was forced to leave for being gay. He completed his residency at nearby Norristown State Hospital.

In 1967 Fryer joined the medical faculty at Temple University where he became a professor of psychiatry and family and community medicine. He was employed at Temple at the time of his panel appearance. Having been forced from residency and at least one job for being gay, he took a considerable risk, even disguised. “It had to be said,” he wrote in 1985, “But I couldn't do it as me. I was not yet full time on the faculty.”

Fryer lived in Philadelphia until his death. In 2006 the APA named an annual civil rights award after him. Barbara Gittings and Frank Kameny were its first recipients.

**Dr. John Fryer
was instrumental
in declassifying
homosexuality as a
mental illness.**



© ASSOCIATION OF GAY AND LESBIAN PSYCHIATRISTS

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

ESSEX HEMPHILL

b. April 16, 1957

d. November 4, 1995

POET AND ACTIVIST

“It is not enough to tell us that one was a brilliant poet, scientist, educator or rebel. Whom did he love? It makes a difference.”

Essex Hemphill was a prominent American poet who wrote about race and identity.

Essex Hemphill was an American poet who wrote about race and identity in the 1980s. He was also an important voice during the AIDS crisis. His work has been described as fiercely political and lyrical.

Born in Chicago and raised in Washington, D.C., Hemphill said that poetry became his refuge against the poverty and “otherness” he experienced as a young black man growing up in the nation’s capital.

After briefly attending the University of Maryland to study journalism, Hemphill became immersed in the Washington art scene and regularly read at open-mic nights and coffeehouses. To showcase his work and that of other modern black artists and writers, he cofounded the Nethula Journal of Contemporary Literature in 1979. In 1982

he cofounded the spoken word group Cinque.

Hemphill began publishing his poetry as chapbooks in 1985, including “Earth Life and Conditions.” In 1986 he received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. He gained national attention in 1989, when his work was published in the anthology “In the Life,” an important collection of writing by black gay men.

Hemphill edited the acclaimed 1991 anthology “Brother to Brother: New Writings by Black Gay Men,” for which he won a Lambda Literary Award.

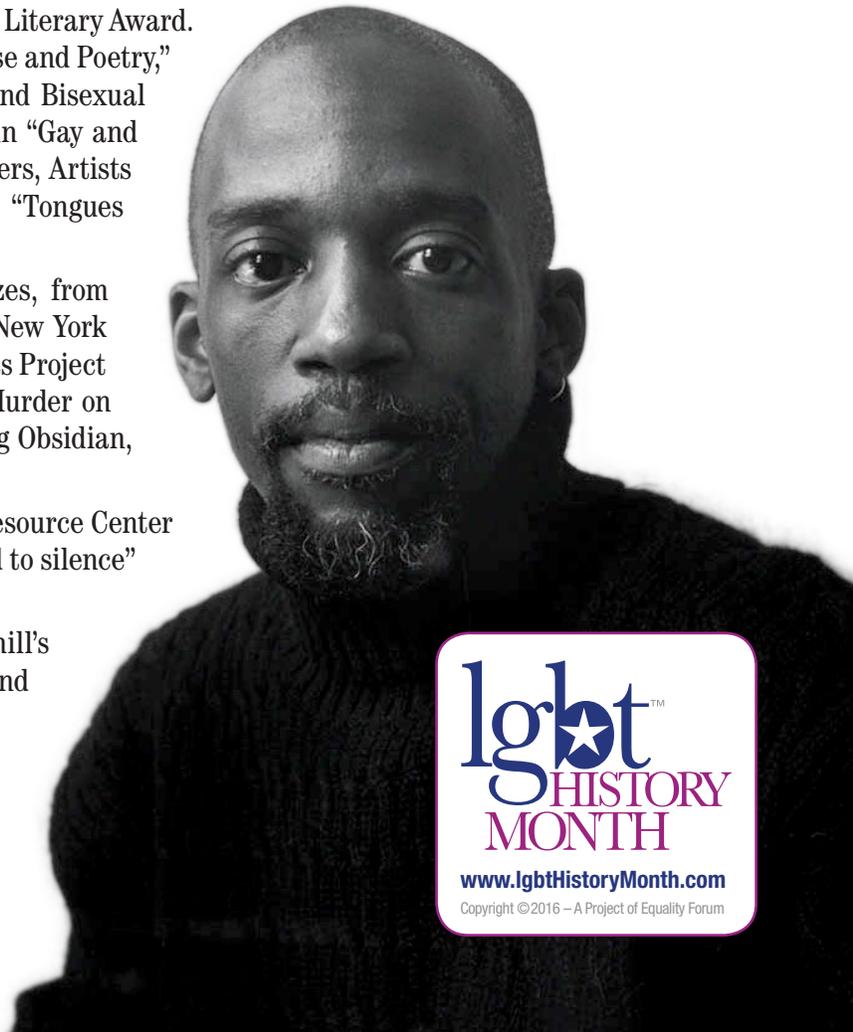
His first full-length poetry collection, “Ceremonies: Prose and Poetry,” won the National Library Association’s Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual New Author Award in 1992. His work is also included in “Gay and Lesbian Poetry in Our Time” and “Life Sentences: Writers, Artists and AIDS,” and in the award-winning documentaries “Tongues Untied” and “Looking for Langston.”

Hemphill has read his poetry to audiences of all sizes, from alternative theaters to the Kennedy Center and from New York to London. He received a grant from the Washington Arts Project to perform an experimental drama of poetry called “Murder on Glass,” and he has contributed to publications including Obsidian, Black Scholar, CALLALOO and Essence.

E. Ethelbert Miller, director of the African American Resource Center at Howard University, said Hemphill’s words “put an end to silence” in the black LGBT community.

“He was mesmerizing,” said Martin Duberman, Hemphill’s biographer. “He had these wonderful sort of alive eyes, and a beautiful speaking voice. It was electric.”

Hemphill died from complications of AIDS in 1995. He wrote about his experience with the disease in his most famous poem, “Vital Signs.” His published and unpublished works are collected at George Washington University’s Gelman Library.



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

ASHOK ROW KAVI

b. June 1, 1947

INDIAN GAY PIONEER AND JOURNALIST

Ashok Row Kavi is a journalist and the first gay man in India to speak publicly about his sexuality.

“Coming out was a natural defense mechanism.”

Ashok Row Kavi is an Indian LGBT rights activist and journalist. The first gay man to ever talk publicly about his sexuality in a country where homosexuality is still illegal, he is considered one of the most influential gay men in India. The Pink Pages lists him among the most influential LGBT people in the world.

“When you come out in India, gay identity becomes your primary identity,” Kavi said. “If you come out as an openly homosexual man and refuse to get married to a woman, then your homosexual identity becomes a form of rebellion and attracts a great deal of attention. All the other identities—being a good journalist, for instance—become backups.”

Born in Mumbai, Kavi was educated at India’s most elite schools, eventually graduating with honors in chemistry from the University of Bombay. As a young man, he had trouble coming to terms with his sexuality and trained as a Hindu monk. After a senior monk encouraged him to explore his sexuality, he went on to study at the International School of Journalism in Berlin. He became well known for his work for Malayala Manorama, India’s largest newspaper.

In 1971 Kavi started Debonair, an Indian men’s magazine modeled after Playboy, and in 1990 he founded Bombay Dost, India’s first and only gay magazine.

Kavi’s reporting for leading publications led him to cover the AIDS crisis. He became a representative at the International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam and also served as chairman of the Second International Congress on AIDS. In 1994 he founded Humsafar Trust, an LGBT service organization and drop-in center in Mumbai that specializes in outreach and educates people about HIV/AIDS and political issues. It also provides a rare place for LGBT people to meet and socialize.

In 1998 Kavi designed questionnaires for the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies at the University of California at San Francisco that have been used to help track the disease and to educate young gay men about risk.

After retiring from journalism, Kavi organized the first Indian conference about gay men and the first LGBT conference in Mumbai.

Kavi is an active member of Gay Bombay, the Mumbai District AIDS Control Society and the National AIDS Control Organization. He is also a visiting faculty member of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and the International Institute of Population Studies.



Copyright ©2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

FRANCES KELLOR

b. October 20, 1873

d. January 4, 1952

SOCIAL ACTIVIST

“No effective program can be made until we set our own house in order.”

Frances Kellor was an American social reformer dedicated to women’s issues and immigrants.

Frances Alice Kellor was an American social reformer dedicated to women’s rights and immigration issues. She spent her life advocating for workers and the naturalization of immigrants.

Kellor served as both secretary and treasurer of the New York State Immigration Commission and chief investigator for the state Bureau of Industries and Immigration. She also served as managing director of the North American Civic League for Immigrants and oversaw the American Association of Foreign Language Newspapers. Kellor cofounded the National Urban League.

Kellor grew up in Michigan, raised by a single mother. She earned money hunting with a slingshot and a rifle. After lack of money forced her to drop out of high school, she worked at a local newspaper. A few years later, two wealthy sisters invited Kellor to live with them and paid for her education.

In 1897, 23 years before women won the right to vote, Kellor became one of the first women to graduate from Cornell Law School. She later studied at the University of Chicago and the New York School of Philanthropy. For a time she lived at Hull House, the famous settlement house in Chicago, where she became interested in many of the issues that shaped her lifetime of advocacy.

A lifelong progressive and proponent of education, Kellor believed social change could be accomplished if more women and immigrants had the same opportunities as American-born white men. She studied the cause and effect of imprisonment rates of poor black women in the South and the economic conditions that led to crime. She founded the National League for the Protection of Colored Women, and she worked to eradicate poverty, to end prostitution and to provide education in urban areas. She went undercover to expose poor management decisions that endangered workers’ rights and safety.

During World War I, Kellor directed the National Americanization Committee (NAC), a group advocating English language education for immigrants. She believed that better communication skills would help them avoid workplace accidents and grow professionally. She also worked to get suffrage into the national party platforms.

Kellor never married. She enjoyed a long relationship with Mary Dreier, a fellow progressive in New York City. Together they created the Inter-Municipal Committee on Household Research, a group dedicated to protecting domestic laborers, and the Bureau of Industries and Immigration, which served as an arbiter between employers and workers throughout the country. The women shared a home in New York for 47 years, until Kellor’s death in 1952.



lgbt
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright ©2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

JIM KEPNER

b. August 19, 1923

d. November 15, 1997

JOURNALIST AND LGBT HISTORIAN

“I always had an innate sense that what I was doing was important.”

Jim Kepner was a pioneering journalist who helped research and chronicle the American gay rights movement.

Jim Kepner was a pioneering journalist who helped chronicle the modern American gay rights movement. His research led to the creation of the ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, the oldest LGBT history collection in the United States.

Kepner was abandoned as an infant in Galveston, Texas, and reportedly found under a bush, then adopted. By the time he was a teenager, he was already researching homosexuality, often mail-ordering gay publications and literature. A voracious reader, he studied the lives of famous gay men like Michelangelo and Walt Whitman.

In the 1940s, along with other artists and writers, Kepner joined the Communist Party. He wrote a column for the Communist newspaper, *The Daily Worker*, but was expelled from the party because of his homosexuality. Kepner went on to open Books on Telegraph Hill in San Francisco.

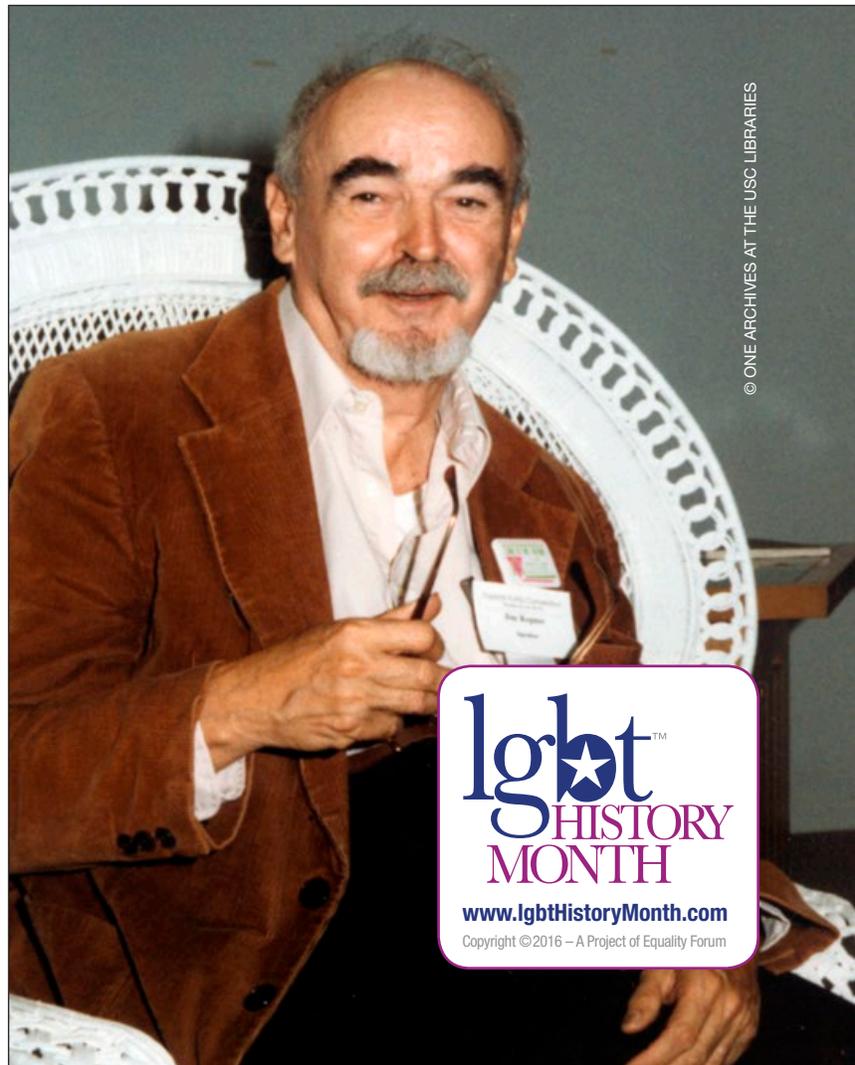
Kepner later joined the Mattachine Society, one of the earliest gay rights organizations in the country. He also began writing for *One*, the first gay magazine with regular circulation published in the United States. When a Los Angeles postmaster refused to deliver the magazine by mail, the case went to the Supreme Court. The magazine won its case and continued publishing to a growing base of subscribers. The ruling also opened opportunities for other LGBT publications to enter the marketplace.

Kepner was an important force behind *One*, as both a writer and an organizer. He created a research journal and events related to the magazine, turning him into one of the leading chroniclers of the modern gay rights movement. In 1956 he established the One Institute, which researched gay culture through the ages and around the world.

In 1966 Kepner launched *Pursuit & Symposium*, a homophile magazine. He also contributed to *The Los Angeles Advocate*, which later became *The Advocate*, the leading national LGBT magazine.

Throughout his life, Kepner collected records, souvenirs and other materials related to LGBT history. His collection, eventually the largest compendium of LGBT-related materials in the world, is housed at the University of Southern California; it contains more than two million artifacts and reference materials.

Kepner died at 74 from complications after surgery.



© ONE ARCHIVES AT THE USC LIBRARIES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

KAY LAHUSEN

b. January 5, 1930

GAY PIONEER

“Whatever the Founding Fathers envisioned as the rights and privileges of our citizens, we wanted for ourselves.”

Kay Lahusen is a gay pioneer and the first openly lesbian American photojournalist.

Kay Lahusen, also known as Kay Tobin Lahusen and Kay Tobin, is the first openly lesbian photojournalist in America. She was among the first women to chronicle and participate in the early gay rights movement. Her photographs appeared on the covers of some of the first LGBT publications in the nation, including *The Ladder* and *Gay Newsweekly*.

In 1961 Lahusen joined the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), the first lesbian organization in the United States. Shortly thereafter, she met Barbara Gittings, an activist who started the East Coast Chapter of the DOB and who is regarded as the mother of the LGBT civil rights movement. The pair began a lifelong relationship and became one of the most influential, pioneering lesbian couples in America.

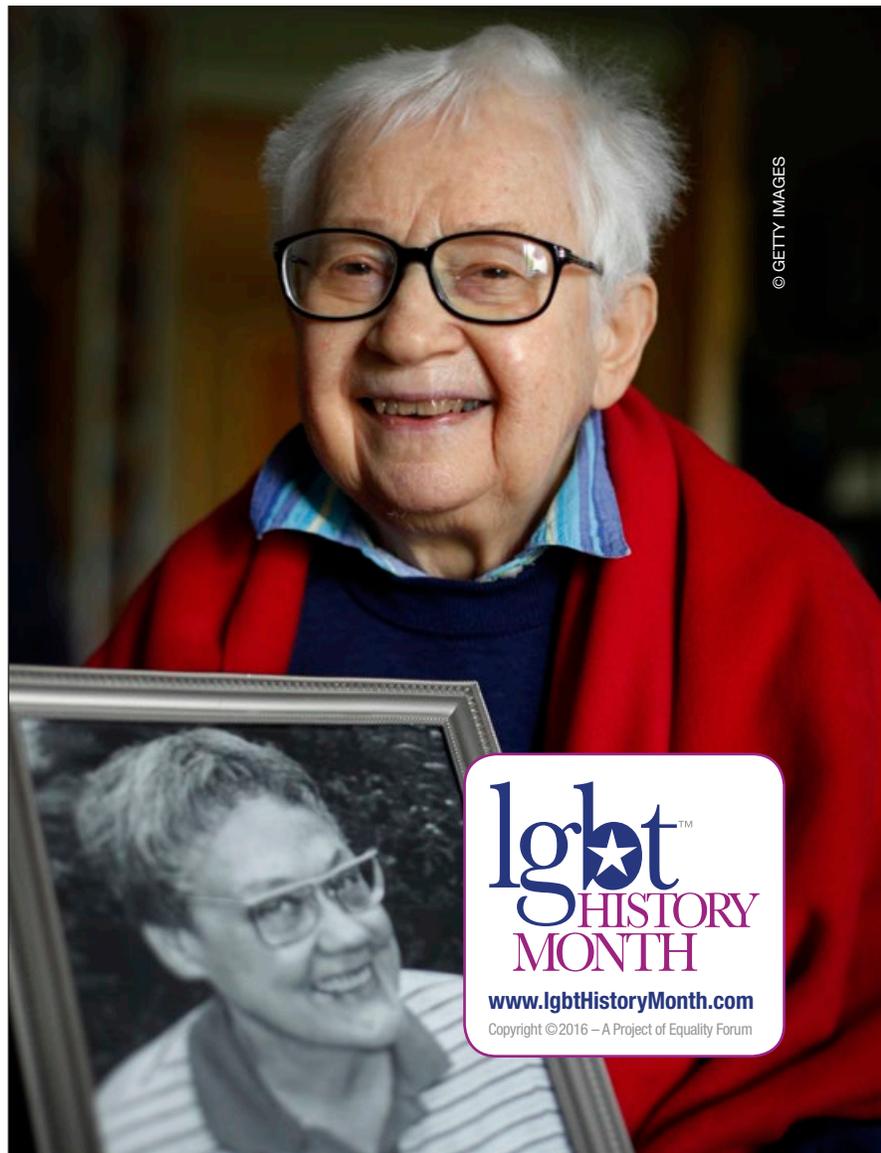
Lahusen initially garnered national attention in 1965, when she photographed and also protested in the first of what became a series of seminal public demonstrations for gay and lesbian equality. Spearheaded by Barbara Gittings and Frank Kameny, these first organized pickets were held in Philadelphia each Fourth of July from 1965 to 1969 in front of Independence Hall. Known as Annual Reminders, the demonstrations paved the way for the Stonewall riot in 1969.

In addition to her work as a photojournalist, Lahusen worked at one of the first gay bookshops in the country, the Oscar Wilde Bookstore in New York City, and with Gittings for the gay caucus of the American Library Association. Lahusen cofounded the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) and later the Gay Women’s Alternative in New York City.

Lahusen collaborated with many Gay Pioneers, including Frank Kameny and Jack Nichols, to publicize LGBT issues and present accurate, positive depictions of gays and lesbians. In 1972 she co-authored “*The Gay Crusaders*,” the first collection of short biographies of gay activists.

During her lifetime, Lahusen photographed thousands of events and activists of the gay rights movement. Her collection of writings and photos, along with Gittings’s writings and papers, is archived at the New York Public Library.

Lahusen and Gittings remained together for 46 years until Gittings’s death in 2007. Lahusen lives outside Philadelphia. She plans to be buried alongside Gittings at the Congressional Cemetery in Washington.



© GETTY IMAGES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

TERRENCE McNALLY

b. November 3, 1938

PLAYWRIGHT

“I think the theatre teaches us who we are, what our society is, where we are going.”

Terrence McNally is a Tony award-winning American playwright and screenwriter.

Terrence McNally is an award-winning American playwright whose career spans five decades. His work, which delves into themes of family, war, sexuality and religion, has earned him four Tony Awards.

Raised in Texas, McNally moved to New York City to attend Columbia University. His first job was as a tutor for John Steinbeck’s children. During this time, McNally wrote his first play, and Steinbeck asked him to write the libretto for the musical based on his novel “East of Eden.”

McNally spend much of his early career writing and submitting works to theater companies around the country. At the famous Actors Studio, he met the playwright Edward Albee, with whom he became romantically involved.

McNally’s first play was a flop, but he went on to write several successful off-Broadway shows, including “Witness” and “Sweet Eros.” His breakout, “Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune,” was later adapted into a film starring Al Pacino and Michelle Pfeiffer. Several of McNally’s plays have been adapted for the screen.

McNally’s “Lips Together, Teeth Apart,” about two married couples who spend a weekend on Fire Island, is a landmark play about AIDS. McNally also explored gay themes in the book for the musical “Kiss of the Spider Woman,” for which he won his first Tony Award. His play “Love! Valour! Compassion!” earned him another Tony Award for its portrayal of eight gay men facing issues of fidelity, love and happiness. In 1996 McNally was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame.

McNally’s controversial play “Corpus Christi” depicts a modern-day Jesus as a homosexual. The Manhattan Theater Club, the first company to consider staging it, received death threats and temporarily canceled the production before enjoying a successful run. The play continues to spark controversy.

In 2014 McNally’s play “Mothers and Sons” opened on Broadway. It explores the relationship between a mother and her dead son’s former gay partner. The play revisits McNally’s 1990 television movie, “Andre’s Mother,” for which he won an Emmy Award.

McNally and his partner, Thomas Kirdahy, married in Vermont in 2003, and again in Washington, D.C., in 2010. McNally’s collection of works and notes are held in an open archive at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin.



© GETTY IMAGES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

JANET MOCK

b. March 10, 1983

TRANSGENDER ACTIVIST AND AUTHOR

“My genital reconstructive surgery did not make me a girl. I was always a girl.”

Janet Mock is a New York Times best-selling author, television host and transgender advocate.

Janet Mock is a New York Times best-selling author, television host and transgender advocate. She hosts a weekly online series on MSNBC.com called “So POPular” and is the founder of #GirlsLikeUs, a social media project created to empower transgender women around the world. She came out publicly as transgender in 2011 and was featured in Marie Claire magazine.

One of five children born to an African-American father and a native Hawaiian mother, Mock spent much of her childhood in Honolulu before moving to California and Texas. She began her gender transition in high school. During her freshman year in college, she traveled to Thailand for gender reassignment surgery. The first person in her family to go to college, Mock attended the University of Hawaii and New York University, where she earned a master’s

degree in journalism. She began her career as a staff editor for People.com.

Mock has been a contributing editor for Marie Claire and a special correspondent for “Entertainment Tonight.” She has contributed to The Washington Post, National Public Radio, Salon and Slate.

In 2014 Mock’s book, “Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love and So Much More,” became a best seller; it traces her life growing up as a boy and transitioning into a woman. She also has written about her experience for The Huffington Post, Elle and The Advocate.

Mock has used her experience as a transgender black woman to help advocate for the LGBT community, women’s issues and multicultural awareness. She serves on the board of the Arcus Foundation, which is dedicated to LGBT and environmental advocacy.

Mock was featured in the HBO documentary “The Out List” and in the documentary “Dressed” and has appeared on television shows such as “Real Time with Bill Maher” and “The Colbert Report.” In 2015 Oprah Winfrey invited her as a guest on “SuperSoul Sunday.”

Among other recognition, Out Magazine named Mock to its list of Out 100 and TIME named her one of the 12 new faces of black leadership and one of the most influential people online. She has also earned awards from Planned Parenthood, the Feminist Press and others.

Mock lives in New York City with her husband, the photographer and filmmaker Aaron Tredwell.



© GETTY IMAGES

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

SHERRI MURRELL

b. October 17, 1967

BASKETBALL COACH

“Just because I’m a gay coach doesn’t mean I’m going to have gay players ... or turn my players gay.”

Sherrri Murrell is a pioneering out NCAA women’s Division I basketball coach.

Sherrri Murrell is the head coach of the Washington State University Cougars. She became the only openly lesbian coach in Division I women’s college basketball.

Born in Oregon, Murrell started playing basketball early. By the fifth grade, she was a star player. She attended Catholic school, where she was a starter for a team that won the 1985 Oregon state championship.

She attended Pepperdine University, graduating with a degree in public relations. In college Murrell played point guard, earning All-West Coast Conference honors in

1990. She became a graduate assistant coach before moving to California University. Murrell also played two years of basketball at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette.

Murrell coached at several universities in the Pacific Northwest, compiling an impressive record of winning games and recruiting talented athletes. At George Fox University, she was twice named the Cascade Conference Coach of the Year and led the team into the NAIA Top 25 for the first time in the school’s history. At Portland State, she reached the 50-win plateau by her 75th game, making her the fastest coach—men or women’s—in the school’s basketball history to do so.

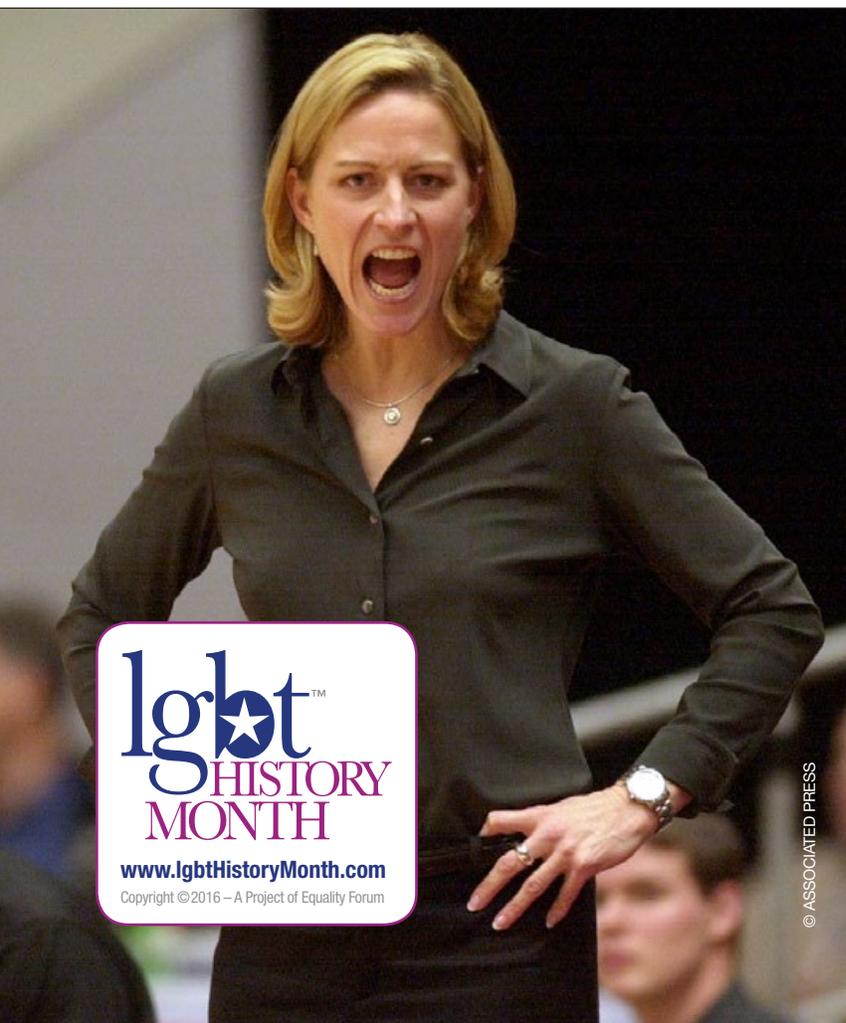
In 2002 Murrell joined Washington State University. The next year she became a member of the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association and the Kodak All-American Team Selection Committee.

As the WSU coach, Murrell saw home game attendance rise more than 86 percent. She is credited with recruiting Kate Benz, who became the first player in WSU history to lead the Pacific 10 Conference in rebounding.

Controversy arose for Murrell when a family photo of her and her partner, Rena Shuman, and their twins was included in the Cougar’s 2009 media guide. Although Murrell was already out to people she knew, it was the first time a coach of her stature had publicly come out in the United States.

“There are a lot of coaches out there that want to do this,” Murrell said in an interview. “But they’re just so afraid.”

Murrell spoke at the Nike campus about her experiences and appeared in the 2009 documentary “Training Rules” about Penn State coach Rene Portland’s “no lesbians” team policy. Murrell advocates for more coaches and players to come out at every level of sports. “The more that you have gay coaches being O.K. with who they are,” she said, “then you’re not going to have the negative recruiting.”



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright ©2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

© ASSOCIATED PRESS

DIANA NYAD

b. August 22, 1949

LONG-DISTANCE SWIMMER

“All of us suffer difficulties in our lives. And if you say to yourself ‘find a way,’ you’ll make it through.”

Diana Nyad is a record-breaking long-distance swimmer who swam from Cuba to Florida.

Diana Nyad is a record-breaking American endurance swimmer. In 2013 at the age of 64, she became the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida without a shark cage. It took more than 50 hours.

Nyad was born in New York City. Her family traveled internationally and she speaks four languages fluently.

Nyad began swimming competitively in seventh grade. Later in life, she publicly accused her high school coach, an Olympian and Hall of Famer, of molesting her—an experience that has haunted her. Although high school was a turbulent time, Nyad became a champion and was well on her way to the Olympics. Her dreams ended when a heart infection prevented her from competing.

Nyad went back to the sport in college where she began long-distance swimming with a vengeance. “I was swimming every stroke with anger at that man and that sexual abuse,” she told *Out* magazine. Nyad realized she was a lesbian and came out when she was 21.

Nyad set the women’s world record during her first long-distance race in 1970. She gained public attention when she swam around Manhattan in 1975 and again when she swam from North Bimini in the Bahamas to Juno Beach in Florida. Her first attempt to swim from Cuba to Florida, in 1978, was interrupted by dangerous winds. It took five more tries before she made history.

In the 1980s Nyad became a sportscaster for a series of major networks. She hosted her own show on CNBC along with travel documentaries and other programs. She became a longtime contributor to several public radio programs, including the “The Savvy Traveler,” which she hosted.

Nyad has contributed to *The New York Times*, *Newsweek* and other major publications. She is a popular motivational speaker and cofounded BravaBody—a company that provides online fitness advice to women over 40.

Nyad has written several books chronicling her life in and out of the water. In her 2015 book, “Find a Way: One Wild and Precious Life,” she discusses what she has learned from swimming. She is the subject of two documentaries, “Diana” and “The Other Shore.”

Nyad was inducted into the National Women’s Sports Hall of Fame and the National Gay and Lesbian Sports Hall of Fame and is an International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame honoree. A bronze plaque hangs at Smathers Beach, Florida, the finishing point of her 2013 swim from Cuba.



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

JEAN O'LEARY

b. March 4, 1948

d. June 4, 2005

PIONEERING ACTIVIST

*"I wanted to do something special,
to have an impact on the world."*

**Jean O'Leary was
a pioneering LGBT
activist and the
cofounder of National
Coming Out Day.**

Jean O'Leary was a pioneering LGBT activist who founded Lesbian Feminist Liberation, one of the first gay women's rights groups in the United States. She also organized the first National Coming Out Day in 1987 with Rich Eichberg.

Raised in Cleveland, Ohio, O'Leary joined the Sisters of Holy Humility of Mary after graduating from high school. She left the convent after earning a degree in psychology from Cleveland State University and moved to New York City to pursue a doctorate at Yeshiva University. In New York she became involved in the budding gay rights movement.

O'Leary was an early member of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the Gay Activists Alliance. She created Lesbian Feminist Liberation to draw attention to gay issues related to women. In 1977 O'Leary organized the first meeting of gay rights activists in the White House with the help of Midge Costanza, an out lesbian on the president's staff. During the event, O'Leary said, "This is the first time ... a president has seen fit to acknowledge the rights and needs of some 20 million Americans."

Her involvement in politics led O'Leary to become one of only three openly gay delegates to the 1976 Democratic National Convention. She served on the Democratic National Committee for 12 years and was the chair of the committee's Gay and Lesbian Caucus from 1992 to 2002.

During the 1980s, O'Leary was active with National Gay Rights Advocates, the largest nationwide LGBT group in America. It was among the first groups to publicly respond to the HIV/AIDS crisis, advocating for access to legal support and treatment. Sean Strub, founder of POZ magazine, said O'Leary's early AIDS activism, "particularly in expediting access to new treatments, saved many lives."

O'Leary and other gay and lesbian activists of the era have been criticized for not including transgender issues in their fight for equality. O'Leary later apologized, saying, "How could I work to exclude transvestites and at the same time criticize the feminists who were doing their best back in those days to exclude lesbians?"

O'Leary died of lung cancer at age 57, leaving behind a partner, a son and a daughter. The longtime AIDS activist Bob Hattoy said, "Jean taught gay men about feminism, she taught lesbians about AIDS, she taught feminists about gay and lesbian issues, and she taught Democrats about everything."



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

JAMES OBERGEFELL

b. July 7, 1966

MARRIAGE EQUALITY HERO

James Obergefell is the plaintiff in the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage.

“We have to stand up and say we’ve had enough.”

Jim Obergefell is the plaintiff in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage nationwide.

A Cincinnati resident, Obergefell married John Arthur in Maryland in 2013. Arthur was terminally ill with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease), and Obergefell filed a lawsuit to force their home state of Ohio to recognize him as the surviving spouse on Arthur’s death certificate. The couple alleged that the state’s governor, John Kasich, was discriminating against same-sex couples who were legally married out of state.

In 2015 the Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that state bans on same-sex marriage were unconstitutional, thus requiring all 50 states and U.S. territories to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

“Today’s ruling from the Supreme Court affirms what millions across the country already know to be true in our hearts,” Obergefell said upon learning the verdict, “that our love is equal.” President Barack Obama called the decision a “victory for America.”

Obergefell is an unanticipated activist. Born and raised in Sandusky, Ohio, he is the youngest of five children in a Catholic family. He came out as gay in his mid 20s and met Arthur in 1992. They lived together for 22 years before Arthur succumbed in 2014.

When Arthur was diagnosed with ALS in 2011, Obergefell became his primary caregiver. The couple flew to Maryland to legally marry just before Arthur died. They had already filed a federal lawsuit to allow Obergefell to be named Arthur’s surviving spouse. When the court ruled in favor of Obergefell, Ohio appealed the ruling and won. Obergefell took his fight to the Supreme Court.

Obergefell has become a marriage equality hero, traveling nationally and internationally. With Pulitzer Prize winner Debbie Cenziper, he is the co-author of “Love Wins: The Lovers and Lawyers Who Fought the Landmark Case for Marriage Equality.”



© JAMES OBERGEFELL



ELLEN PAGE

b. February 21, 1987

ACTRESS

“I’m tired of hiding and I’m tired of lying by omission.”

Ellen Page is an Academy Award-nominated actress and an LGBT activist.

Ellen Page is an Academy Award-nominated Canadian actress who has starred in “Juno,” “Inception,” “To Rome With Love” and the X-Men series. She has won nominations from BAFTA, the Golden Globes and the Screen Actors Guild, as well as a Teen Choice Award. Page was born and raised in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the daughter of a teacher and a graphic designer. Her first acting role was at the age of 10 in a Canadian television movie called “Pit Pony.” She earned work in Canadian films and television, including a breakout role in the 2005 film “Hard Candy.”

Page is most famous for her title role in the offbeat Canadian-American dramedy “Juno” (2007), about an unplanned teen pregnancy. The independent film won an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay and earned Page a nomination for Best Actress.

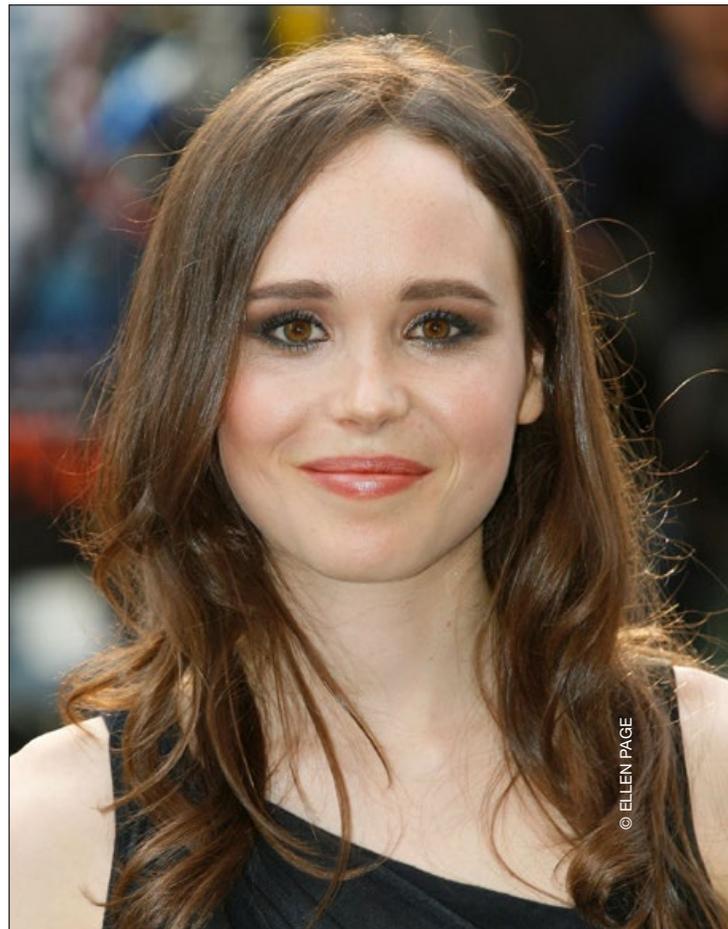
Page caught the attention of mainstream media. She was counted among FHM magazine’s “Sexiest Women in the World” and named to Entertainment Weekly’s future stars list.

In 2014 Page came out publicly during a speech at the Human Rights Campaign’s Time to Thrive conference benefiting LGBT youth. The same year she was named to The Advocate’s 40 Under 40 list.

Page has become an outspoken advocate for LGBT rights, producing a docu-series for Viceland called “Gaycation” in which she travels the world to discuss LGBT experiences. She has also called for an end to military dictatorship in Burma and describes herself as a pro-choice feminist, an atheist and a vegan.

In 2015 she played opposite Julianne Moore in the film “Freeheld,” a true story about a lesbian police officer with terminal cancer who fought the Ocean County (N.J.) Board of Freeholders to allow her pension benefits to be transferred to her domestic partner. The role was the first in which Page played a lesbian onscreen. She has said that the film and her coming out have liberated her.

“I’m on Twitter and I’m gay,” Page said, “and I talk about gay rights ... As a gay person living in Los Angeles, I get to do a job that I love that’s given me — let’s just be honest — money. I think it really is easy to forget what a lot of LGBT people face.”



OLIVER SACKS

b. July 9, 1933

d. August 30, 2015

NEUROLOGIST AND AUTHOR

“We speak not only to tell other people what we think, but to tell ourselves what we think.”

Oliver Sacks was an internationally renowned neurologist and best-selling author.

Oliver Sacks was a British-born physician and best-selling author who specialized in neurology. He spent most of his professional life in the United States. The New York Times called him “the poet laureate of medicine.”

Sacks came from a long line of scientists. His father was a physician and his mother was one of the first female surgeons in England. Sacks’s first autobiography, “Uncle Tungsten: Memories of a Chemical Boyhood,” chronicles his early experiences escaping the Blitz during World War II and being enrolled at a cruel boarding school.

Sacks graduated in 1956 from Queen’s College, Oxford, with a degree in biology and physiology. He came to the United States in the 1960s to complete a residency at Mt.

Zion Hospital in San Francisco. He pursued fellowships in neurology and psychiatry at UCLA. As part of his 2012 book, “Hallucinations,” he discussed his experimentation with recreational drugs and its effects on his brain.

After moving to New York City, Sacks began documenting his observations about neurological diseases, which led to his book “The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat.” His treatment of patients suffering from a rare illness became the basis of “Awakenings,” which was adapted into a 1990 Academy Award-nominated film starring Robin Williams and Robert DeNiro. His book “Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain” also inspired a film, “Musical Minds,” on

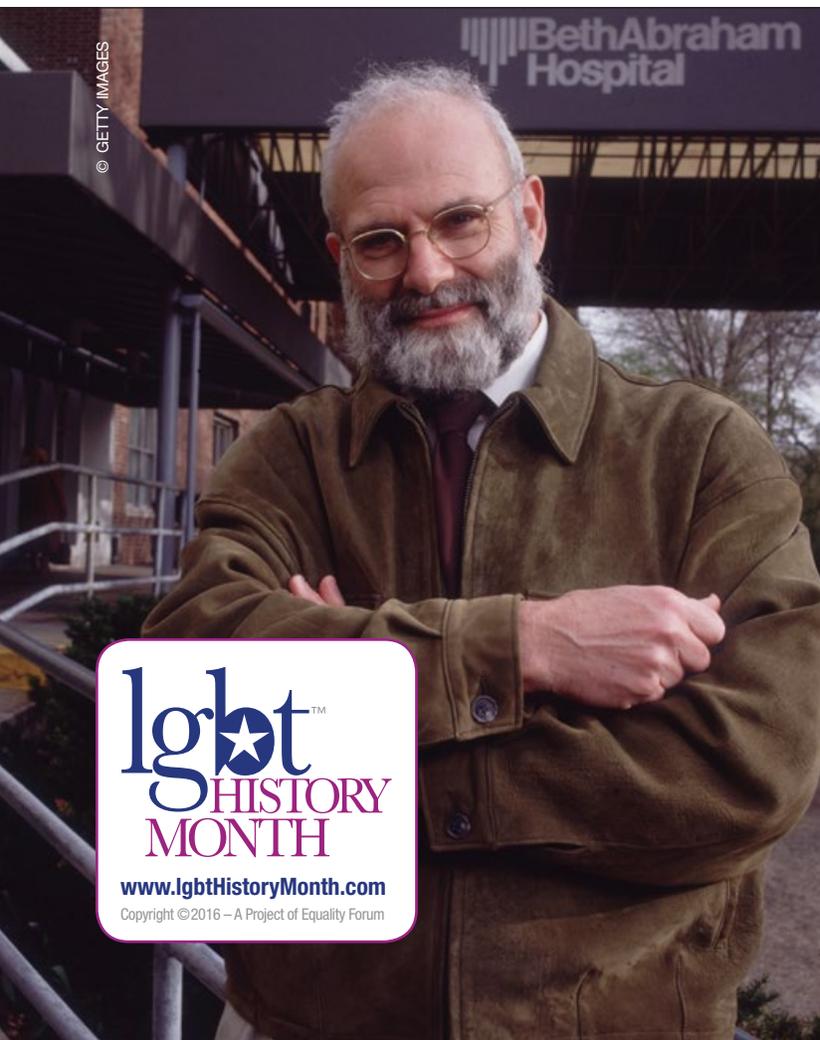
the PBS series “Nova.” Sacks created the Institute for Music and Neurologic Function, where he served as a medical adviser.

Sacks regularly contributed to The New Yorker, The New York Review of Books and The London Review of Books, as well as many medical publications. The recipient of numerous honors, he became a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1996 and was named a Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences in 1999. He was awarded a Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to literature in 2008.

Sacks lived alone for most of his life. He spoke about being gay for the first time in his 2015 autobiography, “On the Move: A Life.” He said he was celibate for 35 years before beginning a long-term relationship with writer Bill Hayes in 2008. “It has sometimes seemed to me that I have lived at a certain distance from life,” he wrote. “This changed when Billy and I fell in love.” They were together until his death.

Sacks wrote about his uveal melanoma, which affects the eye, in his 2010 book, “The Mind’s Eye.” When in 2014 the cancer returned in his liver and brain, he announced it in The New York Times. He died at age 82.

© GETTY IMAGES



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright ©2016 – A Project of Equality Forum

TAMMY SMITH

b. 1963

U.S. GENERAL

“Anyone who has ever busted through a glass ceiling got cut a little.”

Tammy Smith is the first out lesbian general in the U.S. military.

Tammy Smith is the first out lesbian general in the U.S. Army. She was named a brigadier general in 2012 and formally promoted during a ceremony at the Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery. She became the commanding general of the 98th Training Division.

Born in Oakland, Oregon, Smith began her military career when she received a four-year Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship. She graduated from the University of Oregon in 1986 and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Quartermaster Corps.

During her 30-year military career, Smith has served as a platoon leader in Panama, a logistic support detachment commander in Costa Rica and a company commander in South Carolina. She was stationed in Afghanistan, where she was chief of Army Reserve

affairs during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Smith holds a Doctor of Management in Organizational Leadership from the University of Phoenix and received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Lincoln University. She has been decorated with numerous medals and awards and is in the ROTC's Hall of Fame.

Smith married Tracey Hepner in 2012. The ceremony, held at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, was officiated by a military chaplain just two years after same-sex marriage was legalized in the nation's capital.

“For me it's really been transitional,” Smith said in an interview, “to go from being 100 percent in the closet to being globally gay.” She continued, “She [Tracey] has been so wonderful in helping me cut loose the shackles of those 26 years in the military, of having to hide a part of myself. I don't live a double life anymore.”

Hepner founded the Military Partners and Families Coalition, a national military advocacy organization that provides support, education and resources for LGBT military members and their families. Smith has become active in LGBT events and advocacy and has been honored by many LGBT organizations and publications. She served as grand marshal of the 2013 Gay Pride Parade in Washington.



ANDREW TOBIAS

b. April 20, 1947

DNC TREASURER

“I wanted to tell young gay and lesbian kids and their parents that you can have a good, happy, productive life.”

Andrew Tobias is a best-selling author and the treasurer of the Democratic National Committee.

Andrew Tobias is a well-known author and journalist, who has written several best-selling books. He was named treasurer of the Democratic National Committee in 1999 and has served on the board of directors of the Human Rights Campaign.

Tobias majored in Slavic languages and literature at Harvard, but demonstrated his business acumen running a million-dollar student business, Harvard Student Agencies, which included “Let’s Go: The Student Guide to Europe.” After graduating, he became vice president of the National Student Marketing Corporation and later wrote about the company’s demise in his book, “The Funny Money Game,” which garnered national attention.

At 23 Tobias enrolled in Harvard Business School, while writing for New York magazine. He joined the publication as a contributing editor after graduation, where he covered finance. He went on to write for magazines such as Esquire, TIME, and Parade, and to create the best-selling “Managing Your Money” software, which inspired many in the 1980s to purchase their first home computers.

In 1973 Tobias wrote a coming-of-age memoir, “The Best Little Boy in the World,” under the pen name John Reid. He eventually took public credit when the book was republished in 1998. He followed it with “The Best Little Boy in the World Grows Up,” which discusses his life as an out gay man.

“I wanted to tell young gay and lesbian kids and their parents that you can have a good, happy, productive life if you’re gay,” Tobias said in an interview. “You can be out and be respected.”

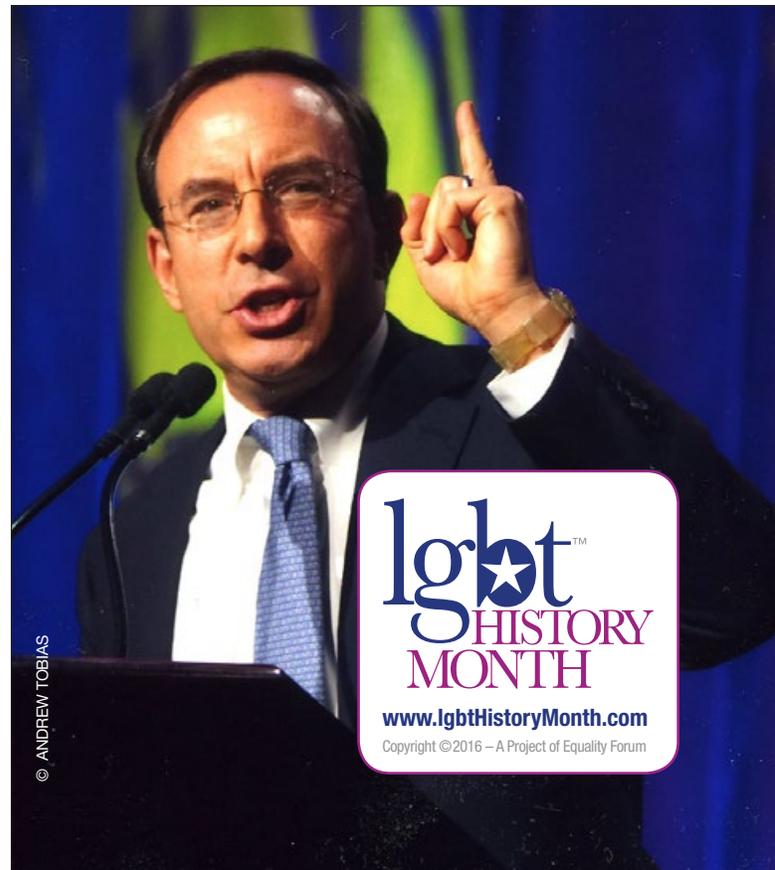
During the AIDS crisis in the 1970s, many of Tobias’s friends fell victim to the disease. Much of his advocacy since has focused on LGBT rights and health education. “I am the first to admit that I have been blessed in life,” he said, “and this is one of the reasons I feel a very strong obligation to try and make a positive difference.”

Tobias has published a dozen books, including three New York Times best sellers: “Fire and Ice,” a biography of Revlon founder Charles Revson; “The Invisible Bankers,” about the insurance industry; and “The Only Investment Guide You’ll Ever Need,” which is in its seventh edition.

An anti-smoking advocate, Tobias once blanketed the former Soviet Union with nightly ads urging, “Kids! Don’t become slaves to the tobacco companies like your parents.” In 2014 he told the top leadership of the Chinese Communist Party that he and other elected officials of the Democratic party were LGBT.

Tobias has received the Gerald Loeb Award for Distinguished Business and Financial Journalism, Harvard Magazine’s Smith-Weld Prize, the Consumer Federation of America Media Service Award, and GLSEN’s first Valedictorian Award.

Tobias had a 16-year relationship with Charles Nolan, a fashion designer who died in 2011.



JOSE ANTONIO VARGAS

b. February 3, 1981

IMMIGRATION ACTIVIST

“I am an American. I just don’t have the right papers.”

Jose Antonio Vargas is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, a filmmaker and an immigration rights activist.

Jose Antonio Vargas is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, a filmmaker and an immigration rights activist. He founded Define American, a nonprofit organization dedicated to immigration and citizenship issues, and launched #EmergingUS, a digital platform that focuses on race, immigration and identity.

Born in the Philippines, Vargas came to the United States when he was 12. He revealed his status as an undocumented immigrant in a 2011 essay in The New York Times Magazine, in an effort to promote dialog about the U.S. immigration system and to advocate for the DREAM act.

Vargas took an interest in journalism in high school. Before college he worked as a copy boy for The San Francisco Chronicle, eventually earning a private scholarship after being turned down for financial aid because he was undocumented. He graduated from San Francisco State and for years kept his status secret for fear of being deported.

Vargas came out in high school after seeing a documentary about Harvey Milk, the assassinated openly gay San Francisco politician. He later described the disclosure as “less daunting than coming out about my legal status.”

Vargas’s public immigration advocacy began with his revelatory 2011 essay. The following year, he wrote a cover story on his experience for TIME. He went on to direct a documentary called “Documented,” which premiered at the AFI Docs film festival in 2013. It was released in theaters and broadcast on CNN in 2014. The same year, Vargas was arrested in the border town of McAllen, Texas, after 21 years in the United States. He was questioned for hours, but then released.

In 2015 “Documented” earned an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Documentary and Vargas produced a television special, as part of MTV’s “Look Different” campaign, called “White People. The program examined what it means to be young and white in America.

Vargas has written extensively for publications such as Rolling Stone and The New Yorker and was a senior contributing editor at the Huffington Post. As a Washington Post staffer, his 2006 series on HIV/AIDS in Washington, D.C., inspired the documentary film, “The Other City,” which he wrote and co-produced. It premiered at the 2010 Tribeca Film Festival and aired on Showtime. Vargas was also part of the Washington Post team that won a Pulitzer Prize for reporting on the 2007 massacre at Virginia Tech.

Vargas has discussed his experiences as a gay undocumented immigrant on such diverse television shows as “The O’Reilly Factor” and “Real Time with Bill Maher.” He has received numerous honors, including the Freedom to Write Award from the PEN Center.



© JOSE ANTONIO VARGAS

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2015 – A Project of Equality Forum

BRUCE VOELLER

b. May 12, 1934

d. February 13, 1994

BIOLOGIST AND AIDS ACTIVIST

Bruce Voeller was a pioneering HIV researcher and a cofounder of the National Gay Task Force.

“We are everywhere.”

Bruce Raymond Voeller was a biologist and AIDS researcher who became a leading gay rights activist. He cofounded the National Gay Task Force and served as its executive director for five years. He helped lead the early fight against AIDS and founded the Mariposa Education and Research Foundation.

Born in Minneapolis, Voeller first confronted his homosexuality as a student. His school counselor assured him that he was not gay, but Voeller had felt same-sex attraction very early in life, which inspired his interest in biology.

Voeller graduated with honors from Reed College in 1956, winning a five-year fellowship at the Rockefeller Institute to complete his doctoral studies in biochemistry, developmental biology and genetics. He became a research associate at the Institute in 1961, and later a professor. He wrote four books and married a woman, with whom he had three children.

Voeller came out when he was 29 and divorced in 1971. In 1972 he was among a group that took over George McGovern's New York campaign office to protest the senator's opposition to gay rights. Voeller outlined a six-point statement before he was arrested, while chanting “gay power.”

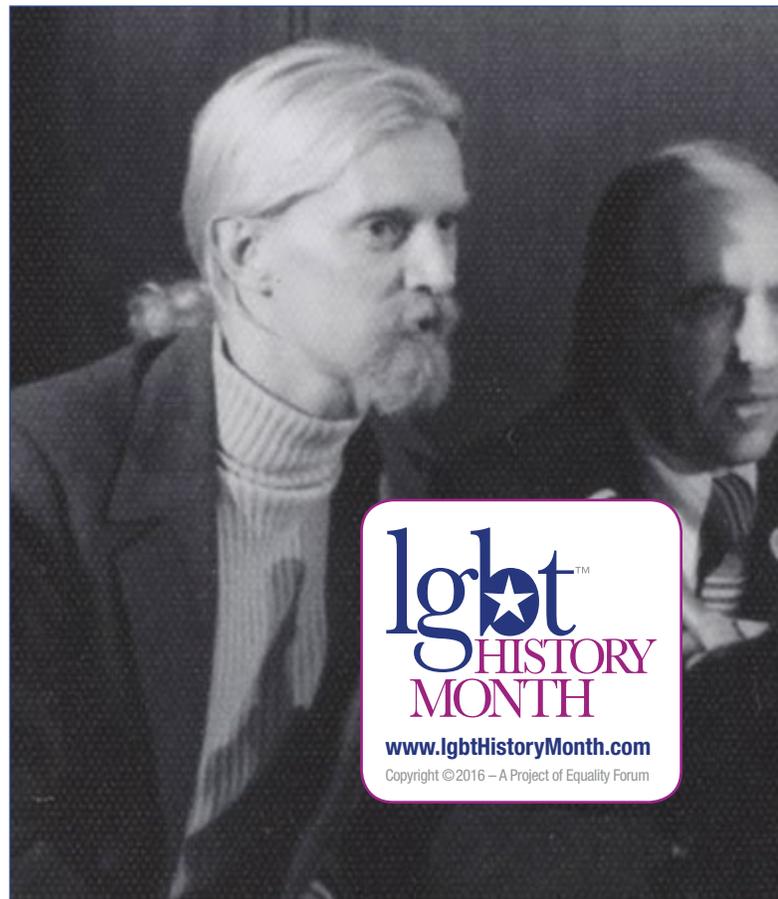
Voeller went on to become president of the New York Gay Activist Alliance. He founded the National Gay Task Force in 1973 (now the National LGBTQ Task Force), which became the first gay rights group to meet at the White House to discuss policy related to gay and lesbian Americans.

Voeller conducted pioneering HIV/AIDS research before the disease had a name. He co-edited “AIDS and Sex: An Integrated Biomedical and Behavioral Approach” in 1990 and wrote scores of papers on the subject. He also worked at Hunter College and Cornell University doing research on the effectiveness of condoms and spermicides in preventing disease.

In 1978, with Karen DeCrow of the National Organization of Women and Aryeh Neier of the American Civil Liberties Union, Voeller founded the Mariposa Foundation to study human sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases. Volunteers for the organization preserved important historical resources of the gay rights movement, which have become an archive on human sexuality at the Cornell University Library.

While with Mariposa, Voeller commissioned the famous George Segal sculpture of gay couples at Christopher Park, across the street from the site of the Stonewall riot. He also commissioned Dom Bachardy to create a series of portraits of Gay Pioneers, including Frank Kameny, Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin, Barbara Gittings and others.

Voeller died from complications of AIDS in 1994. His longtime companion, Richard Liuck, a former associate at the Mariposa Foundation, died the same year from an AIDS-related illness.



lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2016 – A Project of Equality Forum