

# When Did It Happen

## An LGBT History Lesson

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**Age/Grade Level:** Grades 4-12

**Time:** 35 – 60 Minutes

**Materials:** LGBT history cards, LGBT history answer key, construction paper, pencils, markers.

**Overview:** This activity is designed as a fun and interactive way to raise students' awareness of LGBT people and the contributions they made in the history of the United States. Students will learn about key events in the LGBT civil rights movement. Students will have an opportunity to create signs regarding these events to spread awareness throughout the school.

**Objectives:**

- Increase students' awareness of LGBT people and their civil rights struggle.
  - Students will learn about events in LGBT history.
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**Procedure:**

**Part 1 – Introduction/Discussion (5 – 10 Minutes)**

**Goal:** Students will be introduced to the activity and begin discussing LGBT people and history.

**Activity:** Begin by telling students that this activity covers some major events and people in LGBT history in the United States. Let them know that this is an interactive lesson and they will be working with each other.

- Ask students to tell the class what they already know about LGBT history.
- Ask the class why they think they know so little about LGBT history?
- Ask the class why they think they haven't been educated about this group of people?
- Let the class know that only 10% of students are taught positive LGBT-related themes in class.
- Ask them what they know about current LGBT issues.

**Part 2 – Form a Line (10 – 15 Minutes)**

**Goal:** Students will work together to find the answers to the LGBT history cards.

**Activity:** Give each student a card with an LGBT historical event on it. Tell students to walk around the room discussing their LGBT event with other students. Let the students know they need to work as a group, to decide when these events happen. Tell students to form a line from the earliest event to the most recent. Designate one side of the room as the earliest, and the other side as the most recent.

**Part 3 – Discussion (10 – 15 Minutes)**

**Goal:** Students will learn the dates of the LGBT history events while discussing the events and their effects.

**Activity:** Have students read aloud their event. Let students know the dates of the events and make corrections to the line as needed.

Engage students in a guided discussion using these questions:

- *What did you learn from this activity?*
- *What surprised you? Why?*
- *Did you find this timeline difficult? Why? Are there other communities of people in the United States whose own history timeline might be challenging to do? Why?*
- *What other groups have been consistently left out of or misrepresented in our history books?*
- *What is the impact of the invisibility of a group of people? And LGBT people in specific?*

**Part 4 – Sign Creation/Closing (10 – 15 Minutes)**

**Goal:** Students will create signs pertaining to LGBT people and historical events to hang in the classroom or as displays throughout the school.

**Activity:** Have students work alone or in pairs to create their signs. Tell the students to reflect on a specific historical event, and to think about why they have never heard about this event before. Ask them to create a visual representation of the event, which also reflects on the silencing of LGBT people and history. As an alternative, students can write a poem about the historical event. Hang the signs and poems throughout the classroom or school for other students to see.

## When Did it Happen: An LGBT History Activity

**History Cards:** Please copy and cut along the dashed lines to make cards for the activity. Shuffle cards before handing to participants.

<p>We'wha, an accomplished Zuni weaver and potter (who would be considered by Western standards and norms as being male at birth) lived as a woman in the Zuni tribe, visits Washington, D.C. as an ambassador of the Zuni people. She is received by President Grover Cleveland as a "Zuni princess."</p>	<p>Henry Gerber forms the Society for Human Rights, the first gay group in the United States, but the group is quickly shut down.</p>
<p>Blues woman Ma Rainey is arrested in her house in Harlem for having a lesbian party. Her protégé, Bessie Smith, bails her out of jail the following morning. Rainey and Smith were part of an extensive circle of lesbian and bisexual African-American women in Harlem.</p>	<p>The first gay organization, the Mattachine Society, is formed. They referred to themselves as a homophile group.</p>
<p>Christine Jorgensen is the first American whose sex reassignment surgery became public. Her surgery caused an international sensation, and for many, she was the first visible transsexual in the media.</p>	<p>James Baldwin, African-American novelist and intellectual, publishes Giovanni's Room, a male love story.</p>
<p>Bayard Rustin, noted civil rights activist and gay man, is the chief organizer behind the historic March on Washington, which culminates with Dr. Martin Luther King's famous "I have a dream..." speech.</p>	<p>A police raid on the Stonewall Inn in New York City in the wee hours of June 28<sup>th</sup> leads to four days of battle between police and angry lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans identified people. Youth are a major part of these "riots" that mark the birth of the modern gay movement.</p>
<p>The board of the American Psychiatric Association votes 13-0 to remove homosexuality from its official list of psychiatric disorders, the DSM-II. The resolution also urges an end to private and public discrimination and repeal of laws discriminating against homosexuals.</p>	<p>Nearly 800 people are infected with GRID (Gay-Related Immunodeficiency). The name is changed to AIDS by years end.</p>



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Virginia Uribe begins Project 10, a program to support gay and lesbian students in a L.A. high school. The project is eventually adopted by the entire Los Angeles School District.

Billy Tipton, jazz musician, dies and is discovered to be female after presenting as a man since 1933.

Act Up a direct action activist group is founded in the LGBT Community Center in NYC to focus attention on AIDS related issues using civil disobedience.

Kelli Peterson founds a Gay-Straight Alliance at East High School in Salt Lake City, Utah. The city school board bans all "non-curricular" student clubs in order to keep the group from meeting.

Ellen DeGeneres, and her television character Ellen Morgan, come out. Ellen becomes the first show to feature a lesbian or gay lead character.

Matthew Shepard, a gay Wyoming college student is brutally beaten by two young men, tied to a fence and left overnight to die.

NYC Council expands the definition of gender to include protections for trans and gender-different people in the NYC Human Rights Law.

The Supreme Court overturns sodomy laws, proclaiming rights to privacy, and decriminalizing "homosexual" behavior.

Hundreds of same sex couples legally exchange marriage vows in Massachusetts, the first U.S. state to allow gay marriage.

Attorney and transgender activist Kim Coco Iwamoto is elected to the state-level Board of Education in Hawaii. She is the first openly transgender person to be elected to a state level office in the United States.

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<p>The Well of Loneliness by Radclyffe Hall is published in the United States. This sparks great legal controversy and brings the topic of homosexuality to public conversation.</p>	<p>The Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), considered to be the first lesbian rights organization, was formed by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon in San Francisco, California. The group was conceived as a social alternative to lesbian bars, which were considered illegal and thus subject to raids and police harassment. Founders claim they had no knowledge of the male-oriented homophile groups, such as the Mattachine Society, when they first established the organization.</p>
<p>The first gay rights demonstration in the USA took place on September 19th at the Whitehall Induction Center in New York City, protesting against discrimination in the military.</p>	<p>Gwen Amber Rose Araujo, a male-to-female transgender teenager dies after being attacked by multiple individuals. The events leading up to Araujo's death were the subject of a pair of criminal trials in which it was alleged that the attackers were angered by the discovery that Araujo - who, at the time, was living as female - was biologically male. In the most recent trial, two of the defendants were convicted of second-degree murder, but the jury concluded that no hate crime was committed.</p>
<p>Francis Bacon, a noted homosexual who coined the term "masculine love" publishes The Advancement of Learning - an argument for empirical research and against superstition. This deductive system for empirical research earned him the title "the Father of Modern Science."</p>	<p>Thomas Cannon wrote what may be the earliest published defense of homosexuality in English, Ancient and Modern Pederasty Investigated and Exemplify'd</p>
<p>The David Ray Hate Crimes Prevention Act of ___ or David's Law, is a bill first introduced in the US House of Representatives by Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee of Texas It is designed to reinforce hate crimes, and specifically makes sexual orientation a protected class alongside race and gender</p>	<p><i>Soulforce</i> an organization committed to confronting religious-based hate, visits 32 colleges and universities that ban enrollment of openly LGBT students.</p>
<p>At its annual convention in Atlanta, Georgia the American Psychiatric Association votes to support government-recognized marriages between same-sex partners.</p>	<p>Audre Lorde, critically acclaimed novelist, poet and essayist, who was politically active in the civil rights, antiwar, and feminist movements, a cofounder of The Kitchen Table-Women of Color Press and an editor of the lesbian journal <i>Chrysalis</i>, was named State Poet of New York.</p>

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Richard Cornish of the Virginia Colony is tried and hanged for sodomy.	Thomas Jefferson revises Virginia law to make sodomy (committed by men or women) punishable by mutilation rather than death
The first memorial to the Nazi's gay victims, a pink granite stone monument at Neuengamme concentration camp, inscribed "Dedicated to the Homosexual victims of National Socialism", is unveiled.	The first known conviction for lesbian activity in North America occurs in March when Sarah White Norman is charged with "lewd behavior" with May Vincent Hammon in Plymouth, Massachusetts.
Illinois becomes the first U.S. state to remove sodomy law from it's criminal code	The first Gay Liberation Day March is held in New York City.
New Hampshire becomes the 6 <sup>th</sup> state to allow same-sex marriages.	

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**Answer Key:** Use this list to reveal the correct order of events

1623: Francis Bacon, a noted homosexual who coined the term “masculine love” publishes *The Advancement of Learning*—an argument for empirical research and against superstition. This deductive system for empirical research earned him the title “the Father of Modern Science.”

1624: Richard Cornish of the Virginia Colony is tried and hanged for sodomy.

1649: The first known conviction for lesbian activity in North America occurs in March when Sarah White Norman is charged with "lewd behavior" with Mary Vincent Hammon in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

1749: Thomas Cannon wrote what may be the earliest published defense of homosexuality in English, *Ancient and Modern Pederasty Investigated and Exemplify'd*.

1779: Thomas Jefferson revises Virginia law to make sodomy (committed by men or women) punishable by mutilation rather than death.

1886: We'wha, an accomplished Zuni weaver and potter (who would be considered by Western standards and norms as being male at birth) lived as a woman in the Zuni tribe, visits Washington, D.C. as an ambassador of the Zuni people. She is received by President Grover Cleveland as a “Zuni princess.”

1924: Henry Gerber forms the Society for Human Rights, the first gay group in the United States, but the group is quickly shut down.

1925: Blues woman Ma Rainey is arrested in her house in Harlem for having a lesbian party. Her protégé, Bessie Smith, bails her out of jail the following morning. Rainey and Smith were part of an extensive circle of lesbian and bisexual African-American women in Harlem.

1928: *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall is published in the United States. This sparks great legal controversy and brings the topic of homosexuality to public conversation.

1950: The first gay organization, the Mattachine Society is formed in Los Angeles. They referred to themselves as a homophile group.

1952: Christine Jorgensen is the first American whose sex reassignment surgery became public. Her surgery caused an international sensation, and for many, she was the first visible transsexual in the media.

1955: The Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), considered to be the first lesbian rights organization, was formed by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon in San Francisco, California. The group was conceived as a social alternative to lesbian bars, which were considered illegal and thus subject to raids and police harassment. Founders claim that they had no knowledge of the male-oriented homophile groups, such as the Mattachine Society, when they first established the organization.

1956: James Baldwin, African-American novelist and intellectual, publishes *Giovanni's Room*, a male love story.

1962: Illinois becomes first U.S. state to remove sodomy law from its criminal code.

1963: Bayard Rustin, noted civil rights activist and gay man, is the chief organizer behind the historic March on Washington, which culminates with Dr. Martin Luther King's famous “I have a dream...” speech.

1963: The first gay rights demonstration in the USA took place on September 19th at the Whitehall Induction Center in New York City, protesting against discrimination in the military.

1969: A police raid on the Stonewall Inn in New York City in the wee hours of June 28<sup>th</sup> leads to four days of battle between police and angry lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans identified people. Youth are a major part of these “riots” that mark the birth of the modern gay movement.

1970: The first Gay Liberation Day March is held in New York City.

1973: The board of the American Psychiatric Association votes 13-0 to remove homosexuality from its official list of psychiatric disorders, the DSM-II. The resolution also urges an end to private and public discrimination and repeal of laws discriminating against homosexuals.

1982: Nearly 800 people are infected with GRID (Gay-Related Immunodeficiency). The name is changed to AIDS by years end.

1984: Virginia Uribe begins Project 10, a program to support gay and lesbian students in a L.A. high school. The project is eventually adopted by the entire Los Angeles School District.

1985: The first memorial to the Nazi’s gay victims, a pink granite stone monument at Neuengamme concentration camp, inscribed “Dedicated to the Homosexual victims of National Socialism”, is unveiled.

1987: ACT UP a direct action activist group is founded in the LGBT Community Center in NYC to focus attention on AIDS related issues using civil disobedience.

1989: Billy Tipton, jazz musician, dies and is discovered to be female after presenting as a man since 1933.

1991: Audre Lorde, critically acclaimed novelist, poet and essayist, who was politically active in the civil rights movements, a cofounder of *The Kitchen Table Women of Color Press* and an editor of the lesbian journal *Chrysalis*, was named State Poet of New York.

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