

LGBT Women of History

Forward

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans History Month has been celebrated across the UK since February 2005.

Each year the event has become bigger and better, and we've no doubt that this year's will be the best yet with LGBT and women's groups running events, campaigns and highlighting the trailblazing LGBT women in whose footsteps we follow.

Unfortunately, LGBT people are all too often erased from the history books. This couldn't be truer for the LGBT women of history.

Sexism and Homophobia combined mean that LGBT Women's achievements are regularly overlooked not recorded, honoured or recognised. It is vital that we celebrate the role these women played in history and making sure their stories aren't left out of the history books.

The NUS LGBT campaign and the NUS Women's campaign believe that these exceptional LGBT Women should be celebrated as part of history month, and that's why we've produced this briefing.

It contains a useful guide to being more inclusive of LGBT women in your LGBT history month activities, a list of ten LGBT women of history - ranging from activists to actresses to boxers and singers. We've also included some top tips on how to use this information, as well as links to other organisations so you can find out more.

LGBT History Month is our opportunity to celebrate our past, contemplate our present and to look towards a more diverse and inclusive future: We hope you will join us in celebrating the amazing achievements of LGBT women.

Wishing you a great LGBT History Month!

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Introduction

An introduction to this briefing and the contents

In recognition of LGBT History Month, the LGBT and Women's Campaigns have produced this briefing as an opportunity to focus on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Women in History. In this briefing you will find the profiles of 10 LGBT Women from history who have made some remarkable and amazing achievements.

As well as providing information about some LGBT women who have made history, other sections in this briefing focus on ways in which you can implement this information and encourage your union to participate in celebrating LGBT Women of history.

We have also included information about other organisations who celebrate LGBT history and Women's history that should be able to provide you with more information and possibly materials that you can use when promoting LGBT Women of history in your unions.

Whilst we recognise the importance of focusing on LGBT women of history, we have also provided contact details of organisations that are campaigning on current issues that effect LGBT of today.

This gives your union an opportunity to further celebrate and support LGBT women in society today by getting involved with these organisations and promoting their campaigns within your institution.

It may also give you and your union the opportunity to think about local campaigns you would like to run on issues that affect LGBT women and provide information to your students about what they can do to participate in campaigns that support and promote equality for LGBT women.

This briefing celebrates LGBT women from history and highlights the need to campaign and achieve equality for all.

Join NUS in actively empowering and supporting LGBT women to affirm their places in society.

10 LGBT Women of History

Profile of 10 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Women who have made history.

Jane Addams (1860-1935)



LGBT History: Jane Addams Jane was close to many women throughout her life and was very good at eliciting the involvement of women from different classes in Hull House's programs. Her closest adult companion and friend was Mary Rozet Smith, who supported Jane's work at Hull House, and with whom she owned a summer house in Bar Harbor, Maine. The exact nature of their relationship has become a controversy after her death, with some historians believing Addams was a lesbian and in love with Smith, and others calling their relationship a romantic friendship, saying that while the women loved each other and lived together, that did not necessarily indicate a sexual relationship.

Family: One of nine children, Jane's father encouraged her to pursue a higher education, but not at the expense of losing her femininity and the prospect of marriage and motherhood, as expected of upper class young women.

Education: She was educated in the United States and Europe and spent seven months at the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia, but dropped out. Her parents felt that she should not forget the common path of upper class young women.

Career: Founder of the U.S. Settlement House movement. In 1889 Jane and her college friend, Ellen Gates Starr, co-founded Hull House in Chicago, Illinois, one of the first settlement house in the United States in about 1889. The house was named after Charles Hull, who built the building in 1856. When starting out, all of the funding for the Hull House came from Jane's inheritance.

Awards and Achievements: One of the first American women to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in Social Work.

Jenny Bailey (1962-)



LGBT History: Jenny Bailey was the First Trans Woman to become a Mayor in the UK. Jenny is currently in a relationship with Jennifer Liddle, a fellow male-to-female transsexual, who served as her mayoress.

Family: Bailey was born in Doncaster prison, where her father worked as a prison officer. She was brought up at Doncaster prison camp, and has said that her own confusion about her gender arose as early as aged 6 or 7.

In her 20s, she married a biological woman and fathered two sons. However, the marriage met with an amicable demise soon after; Jenny maintained a relationship with her former wife and upon hearing that Jenny was to be sworn in as mayor, her ex-wife said that she was "incredibly proud".

Education: In school, Bailey joined the radio club led by her physics teacher and decided to follow this interest in her professional working life. Aged 20, she received a sponsorship from local company Pye Telecom to take part in a three year training course. This involved placements at Lanchester Polytechnic, colleges in Coventry and industrial training in Cambridge.

Career: Bailey worked in several jobs as a telecommunications engineer before becoming involved in politics. Currently the Civic Leader of Cambridge City Council, Jenny served her mayoral term in 2007-08. Jenny became a member of the city council in 2002, when she was elected to represent the suburb of East Chesterton in Cambridge, becoming a Councillor for the Liberal Democrats.

Awards and Achievements: First Trans Woman Mayor in the UK. Jenny was keen to play down the significance of being the first Trans Mayor in the UK, saying: "I don't want to let it define me." She had undergone gender transitioning 11 years prior to assuming office in the council.

Jenny was honoured that her fellow councillors had chosen her to be mayor. On her appointment, she said to the BBC News, "'I think when we started this off we didn't have any anxiety at all. We thought 'we're transgender, but this is the 20th century, this is Cambridge, this is not an issue any more' - lots of people had known about us as transgender. I entered local politics because I believe in public service and because I wanted to make a contribution to the wonderful city we live in."

Christine Burns MBE (1964-)



LGBT History: Christine Burns is a transsexual woman. Christine came out to local Tory Leadership in 1994. The tabloids decided not to run the story because she was "too ordinary". She jokes about how she became involved in Trans activism: "I realised something had changed in 1997, when I realised it was more embarrassing to admit to being a conservative than to being a Trans woman."

Christine was among the first to gain a certificate recognizing her gender under the Gender Recognition Act 2004, which she had pushed for passage. She said, "For most it's been a profoundly personal thing - not something to shout about, but a piece of paper to hold, to have a little cry, and feel closure at last."

Family: No information available

Education: Christine attended the University of Manchester and completed an undergraduate degree in computer science, followed by a master's degree. She went on to work as an IT Consultant and a Conservative Party Activist before she came out about her trans history.

Career: Former Vice-President of Press For Change, a political lobbying and educational organisation that campaign's to achieve equality and human rights for all trans people in the United Kingdom, through legislation and social change.

Christine had joined Press for Change before coming out and was a leading figure in getting legal recognition for trans people. She has criticised mental health practitioners for bias against trans people, including asserting that some psychiatrists refer for surgery only those patients whom they consider attractive. She has also criticised research claiming that trans people are less happy after transition.

Awards and Achievements: Christine was honored with an MBE the same year as Stephen Whittle from Press For Change for their efforts on behalf of trans people. Her efforts were also praised by MP Gerald Kaufman.

Barbara Jordan (1936-1996)



LGBT History: Barbara Jordan had a close companion of 30 years, Nancy Earl. Barbara met Nancy an educational psychologist who would become an occasional speech writer in addition to Barbara's partner, on a camping trip in the late 1960s. Barbara never publicly acknowledged her sexual orientation, but in her obituary, the Houston Chronicle mentioned her long relationship with Earl, interpreted to

confirm her being a lesbian. After Jordan's initial unsuccessful statewide races, advisers warned her to become more discreet and not bring any female companions on the campaign trail.

Family and Education: No information available.

Career: In 1966, Barbara became a Texas Senator, becoming the first African American state senator since 1883 and the first black woman to serve in that body. Re-elected to the Texas Senate in 1968, she served until 1972. She was the first African-American female to serve as president *pro tem.* of the state senate and served one day, June 10, 1972, as acting governor of Texas. In 1972, she was elected to the United States House of Representatives, becoming the first black woman from a Southern state to serve in the House.

In 1976, she became the first African-American woman to deliver the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention. Her speech in New York that summer was ranked 5th in "Top 100 American Speeches of the 20th century" list and was considered by many historians to have been the best convention keynote speech in modern history until the 2004 keynote by Barack Obama. Despite not being a candidate Barbara received one delegate vote (0.03%) for president at the convention.

Barbara retired from politics in 1979 and became an adjunct professor teaching ethics at the University of Texas at Austin Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs. She again was a keynote speaker at the Democratic National Convention in 1992.

Awards and Achievements: Barbara was honored with the Elizabeth Blackwell Award from Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Jordan was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994. Other honors given to her include her election into both the Texas and National Women's Halls of Fame; she was awarded the prestigious United States Military Academy's Sylvanus Thayer Award, becoming only the second woman awardee.

Beth Ditto (1981 -)

LGBT History: Beth Ditto Beth is a lesbian who is well known for her outspoken support of both LGBT and feminist causes. She is a close friend of Scissor Sisters lead singer Ana Matronic, and considers her favorite song to be "Oh Bondage, Up Yours" by X-Ray Spex.



Family: She courted mild controversy in 2006 when, during an interview for NME magazine, she claimed to have eaten squirrels as a child, saying that "people in Arkansas just do – they'd think you were a freak if you ate squid there!"

No further information available.

Education: No information available.

Career: American singer-songwriter, most famous for her work with the indie rock band Gossip.

Beth is known for her noticeable stage dances and her unique and revealing image. She classes herself as a punk, and thus does not wear deodorant or shave under her armpits, having once remarked that "I think punks usually smell". She has been praised for her support of positive body image, despite comments from doctors that she may be causing harm to public health by normalising obesity. She also formerly contributed an advice column on body image to The Guardian newspaper.

Beth has also recently designed and launched a clothing collection for Evans women's wear.

Awards and Achievements: In February 2009, she was featured in London as the cover model for the premiere of *Love* magazine with prominent public advertising. On July 9, 2009, Beth's fashion collection for the UK retailer Evans started being sold online in select stores across the UK.

In 2006, Beth was nominated and won the 'Coolest Person In Rock' at the NME Awards. The following year, again at the NME Award, she was nominated for the Sexiest Woman of the Year Award. More recently, in 2008, she won the International Artist of the Year at the Glamour Awards.

Nicola Adams (1982 -)



LGBT History: The bisexual Olympic boxing champ topped the Independent on Sunday's annual Pink list. Nicola is Great Britain's most decorated female boxer. She started boxing at the age of twelve and had her first bout a year later. In 2007, she was the first ever English female to earn a medal in a major tournament when she won silver in the European Championships. Adams' love for boxing drove her to persevere for over ten years despite the sport's male bias. On 9 August 2012, Adams also became first openly LGBT person to win an Olympic boxing Gold medal, after her win at the 2012 Summer Olympics.

Family: In an interview with the Sunday Mirror Nicola said: "Life has been hard for me and my family over the years." It was tough for Nicola's mum Dee, 51, to make ends meet while bringing up her daughter and son Kurtis, 24, on a council estate in Leeds, West -Yorkshire. The family worked round the clock to pay for her -training.

Education: Adams was born in Leeds, West Yorkshire. She was educated at Agnes Stewart Church of England High School, Burmantofts, Leeds.

Career: She was the first English woman to earn a medal in the AIBA Women's World Championships in China – again she won the silver medal, but only narrowly beaten by the Polish World Number One.

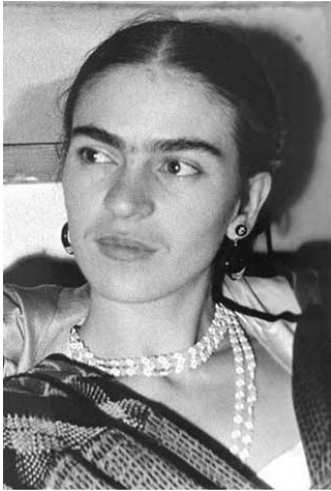
Injury threatened to rule out any further success as Nicola was side-lined for much of 2009 with a debilitating back injury. However, showing characteristic drive and determination, she slowly recovered from this, and was selected to be part of the first ever Women's GB Boxing squad in March 2010 – with the aim of training towards London 2012.

Nicola qualified for the London 2012 Olympic Games by winning her third World Championship Silver Medal. She faced the same opponent, China's Ren Cancan, in the Olympic Final, but this time was not to be denied. Nicola turned the tables on Cancan to become Olympic Champion, and win the first ever Olympic Women's Boxing Gold Medal.

Awards and Achievements:

2013 MBE
 2012 OLYMPIC CHAMPION
 2012 Silver – AIBA Women's World Championships
 2011 EUROPEAN CHAMPION
 2010 Silver – AIBA Women's World Championships
 2008 Silver – AIBA Women's World Championships
 BBC Sport's Personality of the Year, nominee

Frida Kahlo (1907- 1954)



LGBT History: Frida Kahlo was openly bisexual and had many extramarital affairs with both men and women. Her husband knew of and tolerated her relationships with women, but her relationships with men made him jealous.

Family: As a young artist, Frida approached the Mexican painter, Diego Rivera, whose work she admired, asking him for advice about pursuing art as a career. He recognized her talent and her unique expression as truly special and uniquely Mexican. He encouraged her artistic development and began an intimate relationship with Frida. They were married

in 1929, despite the disapproval of Frida's mother.

Their marriage was often tumultuous. Frida and Diego had fiery temperaments and had numerous extramarital affairs. Frida was furious when she learned that Diego had an affair with her younger sister, Cristina. The couple eventually divorced, but remarried in 1940. Their second marriage was as turbulent as the first. Their living quarters often were separate, although sometimes adjacent.

Education: As a girl, she participated in boxing and other sports. In 1922, Kahlo was enrolled in the Preparatoria, one of Mexico's premier schools, where she was one of only thirty-five girls. Kahlo joined a clique at the school and fell in love with the leader, Alejandro Gomez Arias. During this period, Kahlo also witnessed violent armed struggles in the streets of Mexico City as the Mexican Revolution continued. No further information available.

Career: Frida Kahlo was a Mexican painter. She painted using vibrant colors in a style that was influenced by indigenous cultures of Mexico and European influences including Realism, Symbolism, and Surrealism. Many of her works are self-portraits that symbolically articulate her own pain.

Awards and Achievements: The 100th anniversary of the birth of Frida Kahlo honored her with the largest exhibit ever held of her paintings at the Museum of the Fine Arts Palace, Kahlo's first comprehensive exhibit in Mexico.

A pre-Columbian urn holding her ashes is on display in her former home, *La Casa Azul* (The Blue House), in Coyoacán, which since 1958 has been maintained as a museum housing a number of her works of art and numerous relics from her personal life.

Martina Navrátilová (1956 -)



LGBT History: Martina Navrátilová is a Czech-American tennis player. In 1981, shortly after being granted U.S. citizenship, Martina came out publicly about her sexual orientation. During the early 1980s, she was involved with author Rita Mae Brown. From 1984 to 1991, Navratilova had a long-term relationship with partner Judy Nelson. Their split in 1991 included a much-publicized legal wrangle. Navratilova was featured in a WITA (Women's International Tennis Association) calendar, shot by Jean Renard with her Wimbledon trophies and Nelson's children in the background.

In her autobiography, *Being Myself*, Navratilova says that she had had romantic crushes on teachers of both sexes and, later, felt strongly attracted to other female tennis players.

Family: Martina was born Martina Šubertová. Her parents divorced when she was three, and in 1962 her mother Jana married Miroslav Navrátil, who became her first tennis coach. Martina then took the name of her stepfather (adding the feminine suffix "ová"), thus becoming Martina Navrátilová.

Education: No information available.

Career: Navratilova won 18 Grand Slam singles titles, 31 Grand Slam women's doubles titles (an all-time record), and 10 Grand Slam mixed doubles titles. She reached the Wimbledon singles final 12 times, including 9 consecutive years from 1982 through 1990, and won the women's singles title at Wimbledon a record 9 times. She and King each won 20 Wimbledon titles, an all-time record. Navratilova is one of just three women to have accomplished a career Grand Slam in singles, women's doubles, and mixed doubles (called the Grand Slam "boxed set").

Awards and Achievements: A former World No. 1. Billie Jean King said about Navratilova in 2006, "She's the greatest singles, doubles and mixed doubles player who's ever lived." Tennis magazine has selected her as the greatest female tennis player for the years 1965 through 2005.

Martina Hingis, another tennis star who also has been ranked World No. 1, was named after Navratilova.

In November 2008, Navratilova appeared on Series 8 of *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!* She came second.

Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir (1942 -)



LGBT History: When Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir became Prime Minister of Iceland, she also became the world's first openly gay head of government of the modern era.

Jóhanna married Þorvaldur Steinar Jóhannesson in 1970 and the couple had two sons. They later divorced. After Jóhanna's divorce, she joined in a civil union with Jónína Leósdóttir, an author and playwright, in 2002.

Family: Jóhanna was born in Reykjavík, Iceland. She has two sons from her first marriage.

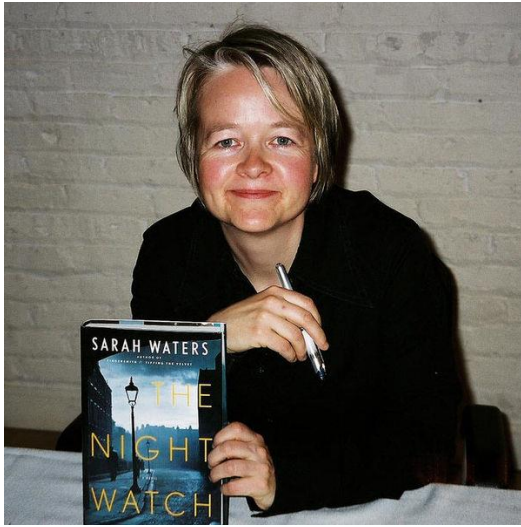
Education: She studied at the Commercial College of Iceland; a vocational high school operated by the Chamber of Commerce and gained a Commercial Diploma.

Career: She worked as a flight attendant with and as an office worker. She was active in the trade union movement from early in her professional life, presiding over the Board of the Icelandic Cabin Crew Association in 1966 and 1969 and over the Board of Svölurnar, Association of Former Stewardesses in 1975. She was also a member of the Board of the Commercial Workers' Union from 1976 to 1983.

Now Prime Minister of Iceland (since 1 February 2009), she had previously been Iceland's Minister of Social Affairs and Social Security from 1987–1994 and 2007–2009. She has been a member of the Althing (Iceland's parliament) for Reykjavík constituencies since 1978, winning re-election on eight successive occasions.

Awards and Achievements: As well as being the world's first openly gay head of government of the modern era, Jóhanna also became Iceland's first female Prime Minister.

Sarah Walters (1966 -)



LGBT History: Sarah Waters is a British Novelist who has been labeled a Lesbian Writer, due to all but one of her books containing lesbian themes. On this, she says "I'm writing with a clear lesbian agenda in the novels. It's right there at the heart of the books." And says that it is only "incidental," because of her own sexual orientation. "That's how it is in my life, and that's how it is, really, for most lesbian and gay people, isn't it? It's sort of just there in your life."

Family: Sarah was born in Wales and grew up there with her Mum, Dad and older Sister, whom she describes as "pretty idyllic, safe and nurturing." Her father, Ron, was an engineer who she describes as "a fantastically creative person" who encouraged her to build and invent. Sarah is in a relationship with Lucy Vaughan, a Copywriter. They live together in Kennington, London.

Education: Sarah attended university and studied English Literature, earning a BA from the University of Kent, an MA from Lancaster University and a PhD from Queen Mary, University of London. Much of the work that Sarah did for her PhD ('Wolfskins and togas: lesbian and gay historical fictions, 1870 to the present'), inspired her and provided some material for her future books. As part of her research, she read 19th-century pornography, in which she came across the title of her first book, Tipping the Velvet.

Career: Before becoming an author, Sarah was an academic. Sarah quickly went from her doctoral thesis to writing her first novel. Most of her novels are set in Victorian Society, making her work very research-intensive, which is an aspect she says she enjoys. To date, she has written five novels which are Tipping the Velvet, Affinity, Fingersmith, The Night Watch and The Little Stranger.

Awards and Achievements: Sarah was named as one of Granta's 20 Best of Young British Writers in January 2003. The same year, she received the South Bank Award for Literature. She was named Author of the Year at the 2003 British Book Awards. In both 2006 and 2009 she won "Writer of the Year" at the annual Stonewall Awards.

Each of her novels has received awards as well.

Celebrating LGBT Women of History

Information and tips on how to promote and celebrate Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans Women of history in your opinion.

This section will give you tips as to how you can use this information and encourage your Students' Union to celebrate LGBT Women of History. This is not just an opportunity for you to share the profiles of the 10 LGBT Women that feature in this briefing, but also a chance for you to think about other LGBT Women of History and ways in which you can use and share this information with the students at your institution and your community.

Top tips on how to highlight LGBT Women of History

- During February (LGBT History Month) and March (International Women's Day is on 8th March) ask your students' union and/or your institution for some space so that you can make a display about LGBT Women, both from History and today.
- Put on a *Feminist Histories, Feminist Futures* event and invite an LGBT woman who has achieved success and acclaim in her career or activism. Ask her to come and speak about her achievements and what needs to be done to ensure all LGBT women have equal opportunities to achieve success in their activism and careers.
- Encourage LGBT women to participate in the activities that your union women's and LGBT campaigns have to offer, such as your women's group.
- Make sure LGBT women have access to this briefing and other publications we have produced that encourage LGBT activism and offer support and guidance to LGBT Students
- Speak to LGBT Women in your institution about what would they like to see happen during LGBT History Month/International Women's Day and what they would like to happen in your union, to highlight this important time and LGBT Women's issues.
- Plan events and forge relationships with other clubs and societies about what they are doing during LGBT History Month for LGBT Women and offer support to them to achieve their chosen activities during this time.
- Put on an event to celebrate LGBT Women's achievements and successes, both from history and now. Highlight the importance of inclusivity and why LGBT women are an integral part of your women's campaign.
- Invite LGBT Women from your institution to put on an event where they can display some of their own achievements or

share their talents with other people from your institution. This could be anything from displaying artwork, to reading poetry to singing, to giving a talk about their academic achievements.

- Contact Local and National LGBT Groups and find out what sort of activities and information they have available for LGBT women and tap into their services. You can do this by encouraging LGBT women to attend external events, making sure information from these organisations is available in your union and inviting these organisations to your union to deliver talks and workshops on what they do and how they support LGBT Women.
- Showcase LGBT Women Alumni in your institution and/or historical LGBT Women figures from your area. You could even put together a presentation and/or a workshop to highlight these people and follow it up with a film or reading about or featuring one of the people.
- Speak to Sports teams in your institution or local community about what they are doing to highlight LGBT women in their chosen sport. If possible encourage a visible event or campaign, check out the Out in Sport resources for more guidance.
- Encourage lecturers and tutors to include LGBT women in the curriculum if possible, highlighting LGBT women of history who have excelled in that field.

Organisations who promote LGBT Women of History

Contact details of other organisations that celebrate and promote Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Women of History

Here are the contact details for organisations that promote LGBT Women of history and may be able to provide you with further information and materials to help promote LGBT women of history in your union and institute.

LGBT History Month

BM LGBT History Month
London
WC1N 3XX

e: listmgr@lgbthistorymonth.org.uk

t: 01582 451424

w: www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk

International Women's Month

e: info@international-women's-month.co.uk

t: 0845 0506352

w: <http://www.international-womens-month.co.uk/>

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Women of Today

Contact details of organisations who work and campaign on promoting and supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans of today

Here are some contact details for organisations that run campaigns that promote and support LGBT Women of Today and work on current issues that affect LGBT Women.

NUS Women's Campaign

Macadam House,
275 Gray's Inn Road,
London WC1X 8QB

e: women@nus.org.uk

NUS LGBT Campaign

Macadam House,
275 Gray's Inn Road,
London WC1X 8QB

e: lgbt@nus.org.uk

w: <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/lgbt/>

Macadam House
275 Gray's Inn Road
London WC1X 8QB
t 0845 5210 262
f 020 7380 0794
e nusuk@nus.org.uk
www.nus.org.uk