

Timeline of LGBT history



25th/24th Century BCE

- [Khnumhotep and Niankhkhnum's](#) tomb is built in Egypt during the fifth dynast. It is believed that the two men may have been lovers, making this the first record of a homosexual relationship.¹

7th Century BCE

- **630 BCE** [Cretan](#) aristocrats institute formal relations between adult princes and adolescent boys, with the double aim to educate the youths and curb population growth. The practice, associated with gymnasia and athletic nudity, is quickly adopted throughout much of ancient Greece, influencing sports, literature, politics, philosophy, art and warfare, and leading, according to some, to a flowering of culture known as the Greek miracle.

4th Century BCE

- **338 BCE** The [Sacred Band of Thebes](#), an undefeated elite batallion made up of one hundred and fifty pederastic couples is destroyed by the forces of [Philip II of Macedon](#) who bemoans their loss and defends their honor.

1st Century

- **54** - [Nero](#) becomes [Emperor of Rome](#). Nero married two men in legal ceremonies, with at least one spouse accorded the same honours as an empress. Gay relationships are accepted and institutionalized in this time period.

4th Century

- **342** - The sons of [Constantine](#), [Constans](#) and [Constantius II](#), pass a law read variously by historians as outlawing gay prostitution, outlawing gay marriage, and most severely, outlawing homosexuality altogether.

6th Century

- **529** - [Justinian's Code](#) outlaws homosexuality in [Byzantium](#). However, the populations of [Constantinople](#) and other Byzantine cities are very much opposed to [Justinian](#) and [Theodora](#) on this issue, including the Christian laity. The public resists attempts by both Justinian and Theodora to prosecute their rivals with the law.

7th Century

- **650** - In early medieval Visigothic Spain, there is great persecution of scapegoats in an attempt to unite the Hispano-Roman majority with the Visigothic minority. These scapegoats include most notably gays and Jews. Homosexuality is criminalized. However, outside of Spain, homosexuality remains completely legal, and even relatively accepted, in almost all of Europe.

9th Century

- **800-900** - During the [Carolingian Renaissance](#), there is a large amount of complex gay poetry. There is no Carolingian law prohibiting homosexuality.

11th Century

- **1000-1100** - An eleventh century Byzantine legal treatise makes it clear that gay unions are well-known and legal in early medieval Byzantine society.
- **1000-1100** - In [Scandinavia](#), [cult transvestitism](#) persisted for centuries. As well, only sons who inherited their fathers' land could marry in early medieval Scandinavia. The others had to leave the land, and they joined warrior societies. Women, expected to remain strictly chaste, and punished severely for violating this rule, were unavailable. Thus, in these warriors clubs, pederasty was practiced as an institutionalized way of life, and a viable alternative to the untouchable women.
- **1051** - St. [Peter Damian](#) composed the *Book of Gomorrah*, in which he luridly described several varieties of gay sex, and said that they were quite common, especially among priests. In this regard he was quite correct; nevertheless, he had no luck convincing his contemporaries that homosexuality was a grave problem that had to be stopped. While Pope [Leo IX](#) saw homosexuality as a "grave sin," he was nevertheless reluctant to come down as harshly as Peter Damian wanted him to.
- **1100** - [Ivo of Chartes](#) attempts to convince Pope [Urban II](#) of the dangers of homosexuality. Ivo charged that Raoul/Ralph, [Archbishop of Tours](#), had the [King of France](#) install John as [bishop of Orleans](#). John was well-known as Ralph's lover, and had even had relations with the king himself, which the king openly bragged about. Urban, however, did not see this as a major problem. John ruled effectively as bishop for almost forty years and Ralph was well-known and well-respected, and continued to be so.

12th Century

- **1102** - The [Council of London](#) took measures to ensure that the public, quite tolerant of homosexuality at the time, knew that it was sinful, marking a significant shift in church attitudes towards homosexuality, which previously had been more or less indifference, or very mild condemnation. Many priests were homosexuals, likely one of the causes of the change in attitude, as moral reformers such as Bernard of Cluny called for change.

Timeline of LGBT history

(Continued)



13th Century

- **1250-1300** - "Between 1250 and 1300, homosexual activity passed from being completely legal in most of Europe to incurring the death penalty in all but a few contemporary legal compilations." - [John Boswell](#), *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* (1980)

14th Century

- **1327** - The deposed King [Edward II of England](#) is allegedly sodomized to death with a red-hot poker. Edward II was a well-known homosexual; his lover's genitals were cut off before he was beheaded. Edward II had a history of conflict with the nobility, who repeatedly banished his former lover [Piers Gaveston, the Earl of Cornwall](#).

16th century

- **1533** - King [Henry VIII](#) begins the English common law tradition of sodomy laws, proclaiming sodomy, then-defined as any non-procreative sexual activity, a crime. This includes masturbation, anal, and oral sex.

17th century

- **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.

18th century

- **1726** - [Mother Clap's](#) molly house in London is raided by police, resulting in Clap's death and the execution at Tyburn of all the men arrested
- Between 1730 and 1811, a widespread panic in the Dutch Republic leads to a spectacular series of trials for sodomy, with persecutions at their most severe from 1730 to 1737, 1764, 1776, and from 1795-1798.
- **1792** - France decriminalizes sexual acts between men

19th century



1825-1895

[Karl Heinrich Ulrichs](#)

the pioneer of the LGBT rights movement

- **1813** - Bavaria decriminalizes sexual acts between men
- **1835** - For the first time in its history Poland criminalizes homosexuality
- **1836** - The last known execution for homosexuality in Britain
- **1861** - In England, the penalty for conviction for sodomy is reduced from hanging to imprisonment
- **1867** - On August 29, 1867, Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs became the first self-proclaimed homosexual to speak out publicly for homosexual rights when he pleaded at the Congress of German Jurists in Munich for a resolution urging the repeal of anti-homosexual laws.

1868-1935

[Magnus Hirschfeld](#)

was a prominent German physician and gay rights advocate



- **1869** - The term "homosexuality" appears in print for the first time in a German pamphlet written by [Karl-Maria Kertbeny](#) (1824-1882).
- **1871** - Homosexuality is criminalized throughout Germany by Paragraph 175 of the Reich Criminal Code
- **1886** - The Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, outlawing sexual relations between men (but not women), is given Royal Assent by Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom
- **1892** - the word *bisexual* is first used in its current sense in Charles Gilbert Chaddock's translation of Kraft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*.

Timeline of LGBT history

(Continued)



1854-1900

Oscar Wilde

1895 - [Oscar Wilde](#) prosecuted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 for "gross indecency" and sentenced to two years in prison

- **1897** - [Magnus Hirschfeld](#) founds the Scientific Humanitarian Committee on May 14 to organize for gay rights and the repeal of Paragraph 175

1900s

- **1907** - [Adolf Brand](#), the activist leader of the *Gemeinschaft der Eigenen*, working to overturn Paragraph 175, publishes a piece "outing" the imperial chancellor of Germany, Prince [Bernhard von Bülow](#). The Prince sues Brand for libel and clears his name; Brand is sentenced to 18 months in prison.

1910s

- **1910** - [Emma Goldman](#) first begins speaking publicly in favor of gay rights



May 14, 1928 first issue of German lesbian periodical *Die Freundin*

- **1914** - The word *faggot* is first used in print in reference to gays in a vocabulary of criminal slang published in Portland, Oregon: "All the fagots [*sic*] (sissies) will be dressed in drag at the ball tonight".

1920s

- **1923** - The word *fag* is first used in print in reference to gays in Nels Anderson's *The Hobo*: "Fairies or Fags are men or boys who exploit sex for profit."
- **1924** - The first gay rights organization in America is founded in Chicago and is called the *Society for Human Rights*. The movement exists for a few months before being shut down by the police.
- **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.
- **1929** May 22 - [Katharine Lee Bates](#), author of *America the Beautiful* dies.
- **1929** October 16 - a Reichstag Committee votes to repeal Paragraph 175. The Nazis' rise to power prevents the implementation of the vote.

1930s

1933

Once vibrant "[Eldorado](#)" gay night club in Berlin after being shut down, with banners promoting "Hitler List 1"



- **1932** - The new Polish Criminal Code again decriminalizes homosexuality in the whole of Poland
- **1933** - The Nazi Party bans homosexual groups. Some homosexuals are sent to concentration camps. Nazis burn the library of Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Research, and destroy the Institute.
- **1935** - [Denmark](#) decriminalizes homosexuality.
- **1937** - the first use of the pink triangle for gay men in Nazi concentration camps

Timeline of LGBT history

(Continued)



1940s

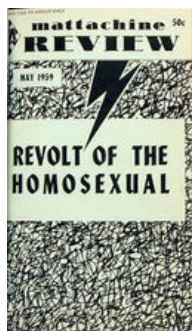
- **1944** - Sweden decriminalizes homosexuality



Erwin Schmitzek, Pink triangle prisoner interned in Auschwitz in 1941, murdered in 1942.

- **1945** - Upon the liberation of concentration camps by Allied forces, those interned for homosexuality are not freed, but required to serve out the full term of their sentences under Paragraph 175
- **1946** - "COC" (Dutch acronym for "Center for Culture and Recreation"), the earliest homophile organization, is founded in the Netherlands. It is the oldest surviving LGBT organization.
- **1948** - "Forbundet af 1948" ("League of 1948"), a homophile group, is formed in Denmark.

1950s



Mattachine Review published by the Mattachine Society

- **1950** - East Germany partially abrogates the Nazis' emendations to Paragraph 175
- **1950** - The Mattachine Society, the first American homophile group, is founded in New York. The RFSL (Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights) is formed in Sweden.

Alan Turing

considered the father of modern computer science.



- **1952** - Dale Jennings successfully uses the defense of entrapment against charges of solicitation. ONE, Inc. is founded in California.
- **1954** - June 7 - Alan Turing dies from cyanide poisoning, 18 months after being given libido-reducing hormone treatment for a year as a punishment for homosexuality. Arcadie is formed; it is the first homophile group in France.
- **1955** - Daughters of Bilitis founded in San Francisco, California.
- **1957** - The Wolfenden Committee's report recommends decriminalizing consensual homosexual behaviour between adults in the United Kingdom. Psychologist Evelyn Hooker publishes a study showing that gay men were as well adjusted as non-gay men, which was a major factor in the American Psychiatric Association removing homosexuality from its handbook of disorders in 1973.
- **1958** - The Homosexual Law Reform Society is founded in the United Kingdom.

1960s

- **1961** - Decriminalization in Czechoslovakia and Hungary
- **1962**- Illinois becomes first U.S. state to remove sodomy law from its criminal code.
- **1963**- Israel decriminalizes de-facto sodomy and sexual acts between men by judicial decision against the enforcement of the relevant section in the old British-mandate law from 1936 (which in fact was never enforced).
- **1966** - The National Planning Conference of Homophile Organizations is established. (It became *NACHO* (North American Conference of Homophile Organizations) in 1967).
- **1967** - The Sexual Offences Act 1967 decriminalises male homosexual behaviour in England and Wales, so long as only two men are involved, both are age 21 or older, neither is mentally retarded, neither is a member of the armed forces or the merchant marine, and neither is a resident of a jurisdiction where male homosexual behaviour is illegal (e.g., Scotland or Northern Ireland). The book "Homosexual Behavior Among Males" by Wainwright Churchill breaks ground as a scientific study approaching homosexuality as a fact of life rather than as a sin, crime or disease, and introduces the term "homoerotophobia", a possible precursor to "homophobia". Oscar Wilde Bookshop, the world's first gay and lesbian bookstore, opens in New York City.
- **1968** - Paragraph 175 is eased in East Germany. Canada repeals all anti-sodomy laws and Bulgaria decriminalize adult homosexual relations.
- **1969** - Stonewall riots - Paragraph 175 is eased in West Germany - Homosexual behavior legalized in Canada. FREE, first gay student group formed in the United States.

Timeline of LGBT history

(Continued)



1970s

- **1970** - [First Gay Liberation Day](#) March held in New York City, First Gay Freedom Day March held in Los Angeles, first Gay-in held in San Francisco
- **1971** - Homosexuality was decriminalized in Finland. Colorado and Oregon repeal sodomy laws; gay age of consent in the Netherlands changed from 21 to 16 (equalized; Penal Code Section 248bis dropped) The U.S. Libertarian Party calls for the repeal of all victimless crime laws, including the sodomy laws. Dr. Frank Kameny becomes the first openly gay candidate for the United States Congress. The University of Michigan establishes the first collegiate LGBT programs office, then known as the "Gay Advocate's Office."
- **1972** - Sweden becomes first country in the world to allow transgendered people to legally change their sex, and provides free hormone therapy. Norway decriminalizes homosexuality. Ann Arbor, Michigan becomes first city in United States to pass gay rights ordinance.
- **1973** - The American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from its DSM-II Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, based largely on the research and advocacy of Evelyn Hooker.
- **1974** - [Kathy Kozachenko](#) becomes the first openly gay or lesbian American elected to public office, when she wins a seat on the Ann Arbor, Michigan city council. Ohio repeals sodomy laws. Robert Grant founds American Christian Cause to oppose the "gay agenda," the beginning of the modern Christian Right in America



The [Gay Pride Flag](#), symbol of the Gay Rights Movement, was first flown in 1978 in San Francisco.

This is the current version, flying over the Castro in June 2005

- **1975** - [Elaine Noble](#) becomes the second out American elected to public office, when she wins a seat in the Massachusetts State House
- **1976** - [Robert Grant](#) founds Christian Voice to take his anti-gay-rights crusade national in United States.
- **1977** - [Harvey Milk](#) is elected city-county supervisor in San Francisco, becoming the third out American elected to public office. Dade County, Florida enacts a Human Rights Ordinance; it is repealed the same year after a militant anti-gay-rights campaign led by Anita Bryant. Quebec becomes the first jurisdiction larger than a city or county in the world to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in the public and private sectors.
- **1978** - San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone are assassinated by former San Francisco Supervisor Dan White. Rainbow flag first used as a symbol of gay and lesbian pride.
- **1979** - First national gay rights march on Washington, DC. Harry Hay issues the first call for a Radical Faerie gathering in Arizona.

1980s

- **1980** - The Democratic National Convention becomes the first major political party in America to endorse a gay rights platform plank. Homosexuality decriminalized in [Scotland](#). [David McReynolds](#) becomes the first openly GLBT individual to run for President of the United States, appearing on the Socialist Party U S A ticket.
- **1981** - Moral Majority starts anti-gay crusade. Norway becomes the first country in the world to enact a law to prevent discrimination against homosexuals. Hong Kong's first sex-change operation is performed.
- **1982** - Gay Games I. Homosexuality decriminalised in Northern Ireland. The Ten Percent Society becomes the first gay rights organization in North Dakota. Wisconsin becomes the first US state to ban gay discrimination.
- **1983** - Massachusetts Representative [Gerry Studds](#) reveals he is a homosexual on the floor of the House, becoming the first openly Gay member of Congress.
- **1984** - The lesbian and gay association "Ten Percent Club" is formed in Hong Kong. Massachusetts voters reelect representative Gerry Studds, despite his declaration the year before that he is gay. New South Wales decriminalizes Homosexual Acts Between consenting adults. Chris Smith, newly elected to the UK parliament declares : "My name is Chris Smith. I'm the Labour MP for Islington South and Finsbury, and I'm gay." This made him the first openly out gay politician in the UK parliament.
- **1985** - France prohibits discrimination based on lifestyle (moeurs) in employment and services. First memorial to gay Holocaust victims is dedicated
- **1986** - Homosexual Law Reform Act passed in New Zealand, legalizing sex between males over 16
- **1987** - ACT UP stages its first major demonstration, seventeen protesters are arrested. U.S. Congressman [Barney Frank](#) comes out as gay. Homomonument opened in Amsterdam, a memorial to persecuted gays and lesbians.
- **1988** - Sweden is first country to pass laws protecting gays and lesbians regarding social services, taxes, and inheritances. Section 28 passes in England and Wales; Scotland brings in almost identical legislation under Clause 2A - Canadian MP Svend Robinson comes out as gay. Israel decriminalizes (de jure) sodomy and sexual acts between men (the relevant section in the old British-mandate law from 1936 was never enforced).
- **1989** - Denmark is first country in the world to enact registered partnership laws (like a civil union) for same-sex couples, with most of the same rights as marriage (excluding the right to adoption and marriage in a church).

1990s

- **1990** - OutRage! forms in UK
- **1991** - Hong Kong decriminalizes homosexuality. Red ribbon first used as a symbol of the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- **1992** - The World Health Organization removes homosexuality from its ICD-10
- **1993** - Third gay rights march on Washington, DC. Sodomy laws repealed in the Republic of Ireland brought about by Senator David Norris. Russia decriminalizes consensual male sodomy. Norway enacts registered partnership civil union laws that grant same-sex couples the same rights as married couples, except for the right to adopt or marry in a church.

Timeline of LGBT history

(Continued)



1990s (continued)

- **1994** - AMA denounces supposed cures for homosexuality/Canada grants refugee status to homosexuals fearing for their well-being in their native country. Paragraph 175 is repealed in Germany. Israel's supreme court defines gay-couple's rights same as any common-law-couple's rights.
- **1995** - Sweden legalizes registered partnerships (a common-law marriage or civil union) with all the rights of marriage except for marriage in a church and adoption. The Supreme Court of Canada rules that sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- **1996** - South Africa becomes the second country to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in its constitution. Homosexuality decriminalized in Bosnia and Herzegovina (although Republika Srpska will finally remove homosexuality from its criminal code in 1998).
- **1997** - UK extends immigration rights to same-sex couples akin to marriage. Fiji is the second country to explicitly protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation in its constitution. Laws prohibiting private homosexual acts are repealed in Tasmania, Australia, the last Australian state to do so.
- **1998** - [Matthew Shepard](#) slain. Employment Equality Act introduced in Ireland, covering wrongful dismissal based on the grounds of sexual orientation. *Vriend v. Alberta*- sexual orientation is read into the IRPA, Alberta's human rights act.
- **1999** - California adopts domestic partner law. France enacts civil union laws (PACS) accessible to same-sex couples. The "Queer Youth Alliance" is founded in the UK. Israel's supreme court recognizes lesbian partner as another legal mother of her partner's biological son.

2000s

- **2000** - Clause 2A repealed in Scotland. Age of consent equalised in the United Kingdom. German Bundestag officially apologizes to gays and lesbians persecuted under the Nazi regime, and for "harm done to homosexual citizens up to 1969". Vermont becomes the first U.S. state to legalize civil unions. Israel recognizes same-sex relations for immigration purposes for a foreign partner of Israeli resident.
- **2001** - Same-sex marriage in the Netherlands legalized. Germany enacts registered partnership legislation. Soccer fans, clerics leading ultranationalist youth and skinheads stormed the first Pride march in Belgrade (at the time Yugoslavia, now Serbia), attacking and seriously injuring several participants and stopping the manifestation from taking place. The police was too poorly equipped to suppress riots or protect the Pride marchers.
- **2002**- Sweden legalizes adoption for same-sex couples, making Sweden's registered partnership nearly identical to marriage, with the exception of right to marriage in a church. Zurich extends marriage-like rights to same sex couples. Controversial openly gay Dutch politician [Pim Fortuyn](#) is assassinated by [Volkert van der Graaf](#).
- **2003** - Section 28 repealed in England and Wales; U.S. Supreme Court strikes down remaining state sodomy laws; Same-sex marriage in Belgium legalized, but is not equal to heterosexual marriage because couples lack adoption rights; a bill is introduced in the Canadian parliament to legalise statutory same-sex marriage (new style "common law" same-sex marriage was already created by Act of Parliament in 2000). Germany's Supreme Court upheld the country's civil union law which gives some of the benefits of marriage to registered same-sex couples.
- **2004** - Same-sex marriage in the United States: Massachusetts legalizes same-sex marriage in May while eleven other U.S. states ban the practice through public referenda in the November elections; Civil unions in Brazil: Rio Grande do Sul now accepts civil unions; Domestic partnerships in New Jersey legalized in July. In Canada, 85% of the population lived in a province or territory with same-sex marriage. Australia bans same-sex marriage, while New Zealand passes the Civil Union Bill.

Mahmoud Asgari and Ayaz Marhoni
Iranian homosexual youths executed in 2005.



- **2005** - State of California expands domestic partnership statutes to include most marriage rights available under state law. California domestic partnership is available to opposite-sex couples age 62 and older who meet certain Social Security qualifications, and to all same-sex couples age 18 and older without further qualification. Uganda and Latvia amended their constitutions to prohibit same-sex marriage. Same sex marriage legalized in Canada and Spain. Switzerland voted in favor of extending rights for registered same-sex couples. South Africa's Supreme Court ruled that it was illegal, under the country's constitution, to ban gay marriages. André Boisclair is chosen leader of the Parti Québécois, becoming the first openly gay man elected leader of a major political party in North America. UK introduces Civil partnerships with rights all but equal to marriage. Maine adds sexual orientation and gender identity to existing anti-discrimination laws. The Church of Sweden, the former state church, decides to hold blessing ceremonies for same-sex couples, who can already enter into registered partnerships equal to marriage. This decision prompted the Russian Orthodox Church to cut eccumenical relations to the Church of Sweden. [Connecticut passed Civil Union law](#).
- **2006** - Illinois outlaws sexual orientation discrimination. Washington State adds sexual orientation to existing anti-discrimination laws. An attempt to stage the first-ever gay pride march in Moscow ended with violence and mass arrests, after activists took to the streets despite the ban by mayor Yuri Luzhkov. The first regional Eastern European Pride - Internacionala Pride 2006 - took place in Zagreb, Croatia, with participants coming from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania. Kyle Hawkins becomes first openly gay male coach at the NCAA level of a men's team. United States Senate fails to pass an amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America making gay marriage illegal