

A brief LGBTQ+ history of America 1924 - 2015

***anything that is underlined is linked to additional information**

1952

Christine Jorgensen is the first American who comes forward publicly about being transgender and speaks openly about her experiences with gender confirmation surgery and hormone replacement therapy.

1963

The first gay rights demonstration in the U.S. takes place on September 19th at the Whitehall Induction Center in New York City, protesting against discrimination in the military.

Some pictures.

1969

Police raid the Stonewall Inn in New York City in the early hours of June 28. This leads to four days of struggle between police and LGBTQ people. Transgender people, LGBTQ people of color, and youth are a major part of these "riots" that mark the birth of the modern LGBTQ movement.

1973

The board of the American Psychiatric Association votes 13-0 to remove homosexuality from its official list of psychiatric disorders.

1980

Democrats are the first political party to add "gay rights" to their platform during the Democratic National Convention.

1998

Matthew Shepard, a gay Wyoming college student, is brutally beaten by two young men, tied to a fence and left overnight in near-freezing temperatures. He dies six days later. Video

2004

Massachusetts becomes the first U.S. state to legally recognize same-sex marriage.

2015

The U.S. Supreme Court rules that states are constitutionally required to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, legalizing marriage equality in all 50 states.

1924

Henry Gerber forms the Society for Human Rights, the first gay group in the U.S., but the group is quickly shut down.

1953

The Lavender Scare begins. President Dwight D. Eisenhower declares homosexuals a threat to national security and ordered the immediate firing of every gay man and lesbian working for the U.S. government.

1966

The Compton Cafeteria Riot breaks out at a San Francisco eatery when trans women were denied service and arrested for breaking gendered clothing laws. Video

1970

The first "Gay Liberation Day March" is held in New York.

1978

Harvey Milk, one of the first openly gay elected officials is assassinated, along with the mayor of San Francisco. The charges against White were dropped to manslaughter.

1982

Nearly 800 people are infected with GRID (Gay-Related Immunodeficiency Disorder). The name is changed to AIDS by the year's end. Learn more about HIV/AIDS in the LGBTQ+ community.

2003

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

2011

The U.S. military policy "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" officially ends. This allows lesbian, gay, and bisexual people to serve openly in the military. The repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" does not lift regulations barring many transgender people from serving.