

Pride in Education 2020 - 27th June 2020

Opening speech from Professor Emeritus, Harvey Milk Institute Sue Sanders

Conference launch Laila El-Metoui

Welcome I am Professor Sue Sanders , my pronouns are she/her

I am excited to welcome a truly international audience, I am aware that many of you have ignored the call of your bed to be with us. Laila and I are thrilled by the overwhelming support we have received from the panelists, our sponsors (Zoom and Southwark Council LGBT+ Staff Network) the community partners and of course yourselves for showing up today. Thank you

At this crucial time when we are dealing with

- the global pandemic that is Covid19
- the global resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movements
- trans rights being attacked in the UK and so many other countries

Godless shall I continue? LGBT+ people in particular have been starved of LGBT+ support and services

including

- reduced access to health service
- poor to horrifying and shocking conditions in confinement for some people

- lack of social interaction
- moving to virtual platforms with all of its benefits and challenges

The list is long, and it seems to me that we are in a unique moment to recognise that when we return to our educational institutions, we have the opportunity to do things differently. We cannot go back to how it was, because how it was, wasn't working. How it was, never worked for many of us. The time is now. Time to make positive change.

Educators must have the knowledge to embed LGBT+ lives and issues into the curriculum and the whole school / college / university where there is education there must be inclusion.

Educators must have the confidence to celebrate people in all of their diversity.

We cannot go back to how it was or how it has been. This is why we put together this very comprehensive conference.

I set up LGBT History Month in 2005 as I was tired of the invisibility of LGBT+ people in their all diversity and the lies, we were told by omission. Under the auspices of Schools OUT UK of which I am chair, and I want to take a moment to thank Tony Fenwick our CEO for any year who is now unfortunately seriously ill, Tony, we are thinking of you and sending you all our best wishes.

We were determined to enable educational establishments to celebrate and make visible LGBT+ people throughout the year, we can't be boxed into one month, but February is a good start. It coincided with Valentine's day!

The UK celebrates LGBTHM every February and in America it is October, coincidentally, Black History Month is in February in the US and October in the UK... so that we don't clash !

Our websites have masses of free resources for people to use, to claim our past, celebrate our present and create our future.

The intention is to make all LGBT+ people visible, to enable people to recognize that we are members of so many communities, various faiths and beliefs and religions, genders, abilities, ages, sizes, differing incomes, cultures, and ethnicities, we are all in the same storm, but we are on different boats!

We also set up The Classroom with over 80 lesson plans that USUALISE LGBT people and issues throughout the curriculum and for all ages. All the lessons are free to use and are in Word, so you can play with them and make them your own, and each lesson has its own powerpoint.

Have a look in the chat for the links , we will also email them to you after the conference along with a link to the recordings for today. (<http://the-classroom.org.uk/home/the-modern-classroom/>)

I coined the word **USUALISE** as *Normalise* is problematic when describing humans, as it assumes there is a 'right' way of being and is therefore a pejorative term to many who consider themselves outside the majority. It also has connotations of 'trying to fit in' rather than embracing diversity and implying that there are some people who are abnormal.

Knowing our past is crucial

If we only have what the mainstream tell us about LGBT+ people, women, disabled people, and people of colour we would have no concept of the massive contributions those people have made or even know we have existed!

So we have set up the LGBT+ history festival OUTing the Past which has enabled over 200 presentations of LGBT+ history some from academics and many from amateur researchers keen to explore our history. We also have original theatre that presents forgotten LGBT+ history so we have the chance to learn through our hearts as well as our brains!

Each year we announce a new theme and have LGBT+ people who represent that theme. In 2021 it will be Mind Body and Spirit.

You may not realise that we are completely powered by unpaid volunteers.

We sell badges and lanyards which are our main source of funding and you can get them from our shop along with free posters that you can use to promote the month, the theme and our chosen representatives.

Have a look in the chat you will [see the link to our shop.](#)

All our work is driven by a desire to make LGBT+ people in all our diversities visible, proud and safe!

Today is a wonderful example of our work and I am indebted to Laila for having the idea and doing all the work to promote it, and gathering all the amazing experts together.

So without further ado let's hear from Laila

I'll keep it short as people are eager to join our very first webinar - looking at Primary schools education.

Thank you all for coming and welcome... and HAPPY PRIDE!! With so many virtual events happening online I am grateful for your time to be here with us today from all over the world.

What a day we have you must have all seen the programme ... 6 webinars , 30 panelists and dare I say the best brains we could find at such a short notice.

This is just the beginningWe are inspired to build on it... so watch that space ...

I'd now like to invite our panellists and chair to join us virtual and wish you all the very best , may you be safe and healthy ,

may we continue to move towards an ethical curriculum that is trauma informed and bias aware , full of compassion.

Steve Boyce will now take over and introduce the Primary school panel

Thank you

Laila El-Metoui

Stonewall Lesbian Role Model of the Year 2020

Pride in Education 2020 Founder