



Purple Reign

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INTERLAW

DIVERSITY FORUM

ABOUT THE INTERLAW DIVERSITY FORUM

The InterLaw Diversity Forum was established in 2008 by Founder & Chair Daniel Winterfeldt, originally as an inter-organisational forum for all personnel in the legal sector (for both lawyers, including private practice and in-house counsel, as well as non-lawyers). Its overall objective was to encourage LGBT+ diversity and inclusion in the legal sector. Since its founding the, InterLaw Diversity Forum has expanded its scope beyond LGBT+ to encompass all strands of diversity and inclusion, with a particular focus on cultural change in the workplace and 'multiple identities'/intersectionality.

The InterLaw Diversity Forum was created in response to a need for an organisation to address LGBT+ issues in the London legal sector. Until 2008 no London law firm had entered the Stonewall Work Equality Index's ("WEI") Top 100 Employers for LGB Employees, which placed the legal sector far behind its City peers. The WEI is the definitive national benchmarking exercise showcasing Britain's top employers for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff. In addition, top clients of City law firms had asked the London legal community to address LGBT+ issues and to create an environment where employees could reach their full potential irrespective of sexual orientation.

Since the launch of the InterLaw Diversity Forum, the legal sector's performance in Stonewall's WEI has dramatically improved. In 2007 there were no law firms represented in the Top 100 Employers and the legal sector ranked second from the bottom. In 2017 there were 17 law firms recognized in the Top 100 Employers, and the legal sector was the top-ranking sector overall. Stonewall has stated: "A major part of the movement forward for the [legal] sector has been the InterLaw Diversity Forum. It helped provide a sector-specific focus." Our successful track record has encouraged us to expand beyond LGBT+ and to advance equality in the legal profession as a whole.

The InterLaw Diversity Forum currently has more than 3,000 members from over 70 law firms and 45 corporates and financial institutions. We hold monthly panel-discussion meetings on topical issues for both our LGBT and BAME Networks. In 2014 we launched The Apollo Project, which holds an annual competition seeking out examples of best practice for inclusive workplace cultures, and provides these as a free resource that other organisations can adapt to their specific needs. We are currently updating our 2012 *Career Progression Report* for 2017, with new research data. Our annual Winter Carnival gala has to date raised over £400,000 for the Albert Kennedy Trust and Switchboard LGBT+ Helpline.

ABOUT PURPLE REIGN

Purple Reign is an InterLaw Diversity Forum initiative which uses a multimedia platform of photographic portraits, text profiles, and film. Purple Reign celebrates the success of LGBT+ professionals and recognizes the power of allies and intersectionality, with a goal of raising the self-esteem and career aspirations of LGBT+ youth, students and professionals, as well as reducing homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying by fostering increased understanding and empathy.

Purple Reign captures the images and stories of inspiring role models drawn from the fields of law, business, activism, the arts, government and sports. In Purple Reign I, shot by photographer Thomas Knights, the subjects are photographed in front of a purple background to highlight their LGBT+ identity or support as an ally. This is situated amidst a greater panoramic setting representing their profession. Through their profiles, written by acclaimed writer, activist, and Stonewall founding member Lisa Power, we explore their multiple identities across all strands of diversity and inclusion and celebrate their status as role models, allies, and leaders in their fields.

Purple Reign I was launched in 2014 at Mansion House, hosted by the Lord Mayor of London, Dame Fiona Woolf DBE. It was the first ever LGBT+ event held at Mansion House, and the first LGBT+ event ever hosted by a Lord Mayor.

Today we are unveiling the first portraits for Purple Reign II, with a new creative concept conceived by creative director Nicky Thompson and photographer Leonora Saunders in collaboration with Daniel Winterfeldt. Wardrobe and styling by Philip Stephens, designer and founder of Unconditional. In Reign II we aim to take the project in a fresh direction with strong artistic and innovative takes on inspiring figures.



REIGN II 2017-

“long live Purple Reign”





OLIVETTE COLE-WILSON
CO-FOUNDER OF STONEWALL - ACTOR





KATE MARTIN
FOUNDER OF COMMON ROOM





TIM HAILES
MANAGING DIRECTOR & ASSOCIATE GENERAL COUNSEL IN
THE INVESTMENT BANKING DIVISION OF JPMORGAN CHASE
& CO AND ALDERMANIC SHERIFF OF THE CITY OF LONDON





LENG MONTGOMERY
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION EXECUTIVE, SAINSBURY'S

OLIVETTE COLE-WILSON

Olivette Cole-Wilson is an actress, counsellor and adoption worker. A longstanding activist for LGBT rights, she was also one of the founding Members of Stonewall, the leading UK LGBT lobby group.

In my first proper job, when I was teaching, I hid my sexuality a bit. I was the only black teacher in the school and I wasn't fully out. Then I went to work in social services and I was a bit more out. Some of my co-workers were more difficult about that than others. At the same time I joined various groups like the London Womens Liberation Newsletter collective and the 106CR Group. That was consciousness-raising for women on the 106 bus route and some of us went on eventually to be part of the Black Lesbian Group. I was mainly a feminist in those days and then I went to the big London Women's Conference and met other black lesbians.

I was a vicar's daughter and had led quite a sheltered life, so it was all a bit of a shock being "out" in London. I remember going to the Sols Arms, a lesbian pub, and being asked if I was butch or femme. I was taken aback by that.

At work, you weren't out to your clients but I was in the office and other staff were variable in their reactions. After a while it stopped being an issue and the overt homophobia dropped away as it became more unacceptable. There's many more LGBT people out in these institutions now and people can't be overtly hostile. I remember in one local authority when somebody trans came to work with us and there was a lot of unspoken hostility. It was very difficult for them and they didn't last long. There was a bit more acceptance for gay men as long as they fitted into a stereotype but people seemed to find it harder to accept lesbians.

The nature of counselling is that people are mostly more open minded, but social services could be challenging. When I was doing drama training, a decade ago, I went back to teaching to support myself and I found that I had to challenge homophobia in the classroom a lot.

What would have helped was someone who could speak out and support us from a senior position. But you can still get one person who's keen to be supportive and other people shut them down. We need clarity and structure to be out at work, an LGBT support group, supportive management. Now, working in adoption, we also get lots of LGBT people adopting. It used to be much harder. The change in adoption law has been really positive.

Getting involved in the Black Lesbian Group was a highlight for me because until then I hadn't known any others. It was amazing. But even now, people can still be isolated. Answering the phones at London Friend opened my eyes to that.

I say "if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you always got". You need to manage change in your life. There's more support now than there ever has been, so even if you feel like the only one, reach out and connect with others. Call a helpline, go online, don't go through things alone.

In the old days there were people like Audre Lord and Whoopi Goldberg. Books we read had these strong American women in them who I made connections with, like Alice Walker, Maya Angelou. They weren't all lesbians but they were women-identified women. I didn't find so many of them in the UK until I got together with other black lesbian activists. Quentin Crisp was really out there. Among my friends I really admire Michael Cashman (Lord Cashman and another Stonewall founder). He's been so consistent. Role models should be people who are prepared to say the truth, be out and be supportive.

It was Michael who asked me to join Stonewall. I was very fired up at the time. Not enough change was happening, people were scared – especially teachers, because of Section 28. I thought it would be useful and it was good to find something where people were being constructive about change. It snowballed, and we got much further than we ever imagined. It's a proper foundation stone that people can build on. We do need to be involved in the establishment, but we mustn't get out of touch with the passion of people who are facing problems. It's really important that things are interconnected, LGBT people come from all races and classes. Not everybody has the support of a family member or another LGBT person, or even enough money to go to a club or bar to meet others. We mustn't forget our diversity. We mustn't forget what we went through and what we came from, because some people are still there. We must set an example.

TIM HAILES

Tim Hailes was elected Alderman for the Ward of Bassishaw in The City of London in May 2013. He is a Central London Magistrate, sitting in the Westminster, City and Hammer Smith courts, and the only openly gay Alderman in a court comprised of 25 members.

Tim is also a Managing Director in the Legal Department of the Corporate & Investment Banking Division of JPMorgan Chase & Co. and a Global Practice Group Head covering the Equities and Brokerage businesses. He has featured in a Financial Times piece on the experiences of gay people in the legal profession, appeared on the Radio 4 flagship 'Today' programme and is one of the most visible senior gay professionals in the UK legal and financial services industries today. He was an inspiration for the founding of the highly successful Interlaw group of LGBT legal professionals in London.

While a student he also worked for two members of Margaret Thatcher's cabinet (William Waldegrave and Peter Walker) and was the Chairman of a national Conservative student group. "I came out at Kings College London, which was a very liberating experience. I even went on a Section 28 demonstration while I was working for a Tory Cabinet Minister, I was so aggrieved about it. Then after graduating I went back to Bristol to read law and ceased any active involvement in party politics. By the time I returned to London to become a trainee solicitor at one of the top banking practices in The City I was back in the closet."

"I was sharing an office with a senior member of staff, an evangelical Christian, and I assumed he wouldn't be comfortable with my sexuality. We all have our own preconceptions about people and he turned out later to be absolutely fine with it. But I didn't know that at the time and sharing an office with someone who has the absolute say on your entire future career is a very sobering experience. I was out to a few people like my secretary and some of the other trainees, we even all went clubbing together, but not to most people at work. So I effectively led two lives. Moreover people in my personal life - many of whom did not work in The City or the 'boiler room' of a trainee in a professional services environment - didn't always understand that my job was a very demanding one, taking up some very anti social hours and last minute cancellations as you are stuck at your desk. One of my friends got so angry with me about this constant unreliability that he actually wrote to me at work and, since all letters at that time, even clearly personal ones, were opened by the Head of Department, he effectively outed me.

"The Head of Department concerned thought it was all rather funny and started to gossip about it with the senior lawyers for whom I was working. That was the first I heard about it - along with the opened letter delivered to me via an internal mail envelope with no other explanation. I was absolutely mortified. Luckily he talked to another senior staff member who was mentoring me at the time who was pretty dismissive of the gossip. He basically pulled everyone up short by asking "What does it matter? He's a bloody good lawyer." He stopped the whole "scandal" attitude in its tracks.

"That was an early example for me of a straight ally - his support made an enormous difference at a crucial point in my professional career. It also shows how important support networks are. In fact, I was able to be out after that, and everything was fine. Sometimes what looks like a setback can actually help define you.

“Now I’m one of the most visible gay men in the City and have a very responsible job in one of the ‘blue chip’ brands of the banking and financial services industry globally. Being able to be yourself is fundamental to success; if you don’t have to worry all the time about the nonsense and, frankly, the irrelevant you can focus all your energies on doing your job to the best of your ability. Societal shifts have made it easier than it was to come out than when that letter was opened in 1994, but it’s still important to have a visible network you can plug into for support.”

Tim was the Chair of the London branch of the JP Morgan Pride support network in London from 2004-2011. “My career highlight to date was becoming a Managing Director, because it was to some extent a glass ceiling being broken, and then being appointed a JP and elected an Alderman last year. I have been openly gay in both my professional and civic careers from the ‘get go’ after that pivotal experience back in my period as a trainee.

“Being a magistrate is incredibly grounding, because you actually see the reality of the world for a broad spectrum of very different people. Those of us working in the bubble of international high finance or the ceremonial and privilege of senior elected civic office can sometimes forget that actually isn’t the norm. I think that’s emotionally and psychologically important. I am lucky to have friends from all across the political spectrum and from all walks of life, not just in the business City.” Tim is also a longstanding supporter of key LGBT charities such as Stonewall and the Human Dignity Trust.

Tim’s motto is “Personal integrity. You have to have the confidence to be honest and true to yourself especially when that is counter to the prevailing wisdom or the popular course of action. Coming out as gay was hard - even harder than facing down a load of highly demanding traders at the height of the financial boom, well before the crisis, when some wanted to push the proverbial boundaries. But both were absolutely about personal integrity in the end.”

His advice to young LGBT people ? “First and foremost, be good at what you do. If you are good at what you do then what else you are really won’t matter to most people. Most people want to succeed in life and to be part of a team that drives success. Don’t pursue a career that pays well but makes you miserable and which you are therefore no good at. You are not a tree. Move. Work out what you’re good at, what drives you, where that creative energy and drive can best be deployed in order to create success for yourself and your team. If you’re good, you’re good - all round.

LENG MONTGOMERY

Leng Montgomery is a Diversity and Inclusion Executive for Sainsbury's, works in Social Media and is a passionate blogger. He also volunteers and speaks regularly with panels and media professionals about trans issues and is a Diversity Role Model ambassador. He has also appeared on Masterchef.

"My gender identity hasn't had that much impact on my working life. The change is in me. Being open about who I am is important to me. I feel fierce about it – I've got nothing to hide. Sometimes, in a work situation, I feel that there might be a risk but then sometimes you need to take risks to make progress. I've never liked lying and if I had to do it, I'd think I was in the wrong job.

"I had to restart my career when I transitioned but now it feels like there's a tipping point, an emerging trans visibility. But lots of people are still not happy to transition at work. It's good that we have more visibility, but we still need more allies and more role models in the workplace.

"Personally, most of the problems that I encountered were situations where people just didn't understand, or with organisations where the staff just didn't have the skill set to be able to treat me with respect. Banks, airports and so on where identity is an issue. Sometimes people feel entitled to be rude and to publicly humiliate you but I will always challenge that. I deserve respect. I wish that there was more confidence in the community to do that when it happens, but it's changing. Stuff like the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index becoming trans inclusive really helps. Having a mechanism that asks those questions can start the conversation. Stuff like Purple Reign makes people think about how we're their colleagues, their friends, their lovers.

"In the last couple of years I have had a lot of job rejections and some of them have been through being trans. But working with diversity charities and organisations, being named on the Independent Rainbow List, doing consultancy on trans issues makes me feel affirmed and that I'm getting somewhere. People are acknowledging what I care about – and working with inspiring people makes me happy. And sometimes people are amazing. I used to write a blog about my experiences and a total stranger came forward and funded my chest surgery that I was struggling with, just because I'd helped them understand their own child better. I hadn't asked for help, but they gave it.

"You should never underestimate that you gain allies by being resilient, but you also need to give allies space to help you. I was having a problem at an airport with someone who kept deliberately misgendering me who then wanted to do a full body search for no reason at all, but their colleagues supported me. They even suggested how I could "give feedback", subtly encouraging me to make a complaint. Allies can come out of nowhere as long as you hold your temper and challenge people politely.

"Do I have a motto? It depends on how many gins I've had. 'Don't forget who you are, never be ashamed of who you are and don't give bigots power.' I will never rush to condemn people with good intentions who make mistakes, but if people are deliberately being hostile I will challenge them.

“My advice to others would be to go with what you need. Try not to consider other people’s expectations of you. Honesty is important and it baffles me why gender identity should still be an issue.

“I didn’t have any role models when I started transitioning and I felt very alone. But now there are loads of people out there. Buck Angel, the people on My Transgender Summer, I admire Paris Lees and her style. But the people who inspire me most now are Monroe Bergman, Jacqui Gavin, Emma Cusdin for her work in the City and Jay Stewart who created Gendered Intelligence – people who are making change.



REIGN I

2014-2017

Note: All profiles in phase one are historic and may not contain up to date information regarding employers, etc.



DAME FIONA WOOLF, DBE
FORMER LORD MAYOR OF CITY OF LONDON

DAME FIONA WOOLF, CBE

Dame Fiona Woolf, DBE was recently Lord Mayor of the City of London, only the second woman to hold the role in its 850 year history. She is a Partner in the Energy and Projects group at City law firm CMS Cameron McKenna, and viewed as a pioneer in her field. During her career she has advised over 28 governments and has a worldwide reputation. She has also served as President of the Law Society and is a Justice of the Peace. She is a tireless advocate for equality and diversity, focusing on creating meritocratic workplaces and harnessing collective intelligence to drive change. “In a team or joint working environment, sometimes the issue of how to enable LGBT people to be their authentic best isn’t understood. Others see the sexuality as “not like me” and they are not always comfortable with that. A lot of it is unconscious – when people are seen as “other” they may be technically very good at their job but some people are not comfortable working with them. Also, some LGBT colleagues, even when invited to “join the gang”, to go out with the team, may be reluctant to do so for fear of not being accepted for who they are.

“It’s much better now that awareness has increased over the past ten years or so, though. On a spectrum of tolerance, the people at the far end have realised that they need to move away from prejudice. Some of them have even become stand-up out and out allies and when that happens it encourages more LGBT people to be themselves. It changes the workplace culture to one where everyone can be comfortable.

“It’s not just the younger staff, but also at the Partner level, we have to keep developing. Those who question things and raise awareness are making the workplace culture more welcoming. I’m passionate about this. Workplace culture is a subtle thing. That includes the one-to-one relationships too. We have to accommodate difference – it has real value to add to business effectiveness and team development.

“There is no room for complacency here. Employers need help in getting their heads around what their LGBT staff want, because people are not all the same. We can work on equal opportunities, on promoting through a true meritocracy, on a diversity agenda, but every person is different. We encourage our staff with disabilities to articulate their specific, personal needs but it should be the same for all the strands of diversity. It’s not one size fits all.

“In my early days in the City I encountered openly gay men who weren’t taken seriously because of their style and humour. It would have helped to have some quality leadership in diversity issues and a clear understanding of what “good” really looks like, rather than pushing the issue under the carpet. It would have been good to remind everyone what a meritocracy really looks like. We need to know more about what a good workplace looks like for LGBT people and we need their help. “Now we do have a lot of good leadership, including openly gay leadership. But in recent surveys that we did, while 84% of the staff said that their leadership understood diversity, only 27% of them felt under any sort of pressure to do something about it themselves. And 87% said that nothing was happening on diversity, despite the leadership getting it. So the message still isn’t getting through at all levels.

We are going to work with a couple of major business schools to find leadership tools that will incentivise the middle management, who are the keepers of the talent pipeline, to make a concerted effort on the diversity agenda in their teams. They are key to making change happen. One of the problems is that if someone is in a team with a homophobic leader, you may never know they are LGBT because they won't want to come out and talk about the issue.

"My career highlight was the first electricity restructuring and privatisation in England and Wales. Because we did it first in the UK, that enabled me to export the know-how and to be able to go out and work in lots of other countries. I have advised over 25 governments. Without this international career I wouldn't have had the credibility to be Lord Mayor. Being the President of the Law Society and then the Lord Mayor in quick succession was amazing.

"My motto is twofold - "get lucky" and "say yes". Don't wait for things to come to you, create your own luck, have a plan and work out how to get there and get a mentor to help you. At the same time, get out of your comfort zone and say "yes" to things. Some women think "I don't know if I can do that", but these days people want us to succeed so we will get support. In the Mayoralty, I had the motto "The Energy to Transform Lives", which played on my background as an energy lawyer. It was as much about individual energy, based on who you really are, as collective energy to achieve collaborative change.

"If I was to give advice, as a straight ally, I'd say be free to talk to people about things that aren't working for you in the workplace. Have a development plan and speak to someone who can help. If that's not your team leader, pick someone else. Show you want your organisation to do better and the contribution you would like to make to its objectives - know where you want to be heading. I know that Ian McKellen believes strongly in networks helping people to have the courage to talk, but it's not helpful if you just talk amongst yourselves. Networks need to reach out, to get their message across to a wider audience, using their natural allies. Talking amongst themselves is great for supporting individuals, but networks can make strategic contributions that will deliver real value to their organisations.

"At a senior level, Lord Brown has stood up and been counted. He went through hell and back when he came out but we are all in a better place for his doing so. And I can't admire Daniel (Winterfeldt) enough, in terms of pushing the agenda in a conservative profession and workplace. I had great support for the Power of Diversity and AudaCity programmes that I started last year from the LGBT community in the City Corporation and I have been looking forward to the launch of its LGBT network.

"Anybody who's stood up and declared themselves and shown what they've achieved is an inspiration to others and we all need to support them to capture the power of diversity in the workplace."



CLAIRE HARVEY
KPMG, HEAD OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

CLAIRE HARVEY

Claire Harvey, KPMG's Head of Corporate Responsibility, is better known to most people as the captain of Great Britain's Seated Volleyball Team in the 2012 Paralympics. She was previously a prison governor; she holds a Masters from Cambridge in Criminology. It's still not easy being out as a lesbian in sport and when you add that to disability and motherhood, she has plenty to say about diversity, inequality and the pointlessness of stereotyping.

"When I was 15, I joined a women's rugby team in an attempt to fit in as a young lesbian, but I wasn't butch enough; I didn't fit the type. And when I went into the prison service, I thought I was choosing my career but now I think that the harshness of being in a minority led me to focus on justice and equality, on trying to help people be the best they could. And part of it was where I would fit, and the prison service was stereotypically lesbian.

"I've always had a love of psychology because I want to understand people's behaviour better. Once I became a prison governor I did my best to support people being resettled back into the community, helping them do better in their lives. I had a trans prisoner and, up till then, policy was to go on someone's original birth certificate in how they were treated. I knew that was wrong, and I rewrote the policy to get them into the right prison for them, which has now become national policy.

"As people these days become more aware of sexual orientation issues and it's less taboo, with more images on television, it opens up young people's aspirations. It promotes dialogue and dispels myths, but we still have a long way to go, particularly for trans people. And of course it depends on where you live.

"It's been quite lonely sometimes, particularly after I acquired my disability. The gay movement isn't good with disability and I had kids too, and the movement wasn't very good with that either. The irony is that the LGBT community talks a lot about acceptance, but we have to give it if we want to get it. The community needed to be much more inclusive and diverse. It is much better now, there's a much wider range of role models and you don't have to be only disabled, only a mother or only a lesbian. You can be all the things you are.

"I think my career highlight has to be appearing on the side of a London bus for Pride. Their 'Freedom To...' campaign was inspired, it showed so many different people. Receiving the European Diversity Awards Hero of the Year Award was special, because it was voted for by the public, and that means more. And of course, leading the team out in 2012, knowing I was bringing my whole self to the table and not hiding anything. I hoped that I was an inspiration to people and if I was, to even one young gay or disabled person, then that's good.

"If I had a saying, it would be 'Success is being better today than you were yesterday, every day'. It's a comparative thing, just trying to do your best. My advice to teenagers is to surround yourself with positive people, but of course that's easy to say when you're older. When you're 14 or 15 it all feels massive and overwhelming, but it will eventually balance out. If people give you a hard time for what you are, they're not worth having in your life. Reach out to the people who can help – there's enough of us out there. Draw on the strength of others, we're waiting to help you.

"When I was younger, Billie Jean King was my icon. It was a surreal experience when we were both at the launch of the LGBT Sports Charter and she said 'I've been dying to meet you'. I'm really lucky. I have a great set of friends who inspire me every time I see them – that's real inspiration."



CLAIRE FIELDING & GORDON ADAMS
LAWYER, WRAGGE-LAWRENCE-GRAHAM

CLAIRE FIELDING & GORDON ADAMS

Clare Fielding is a planning lawyer at Wragge Lawrence Graham. Her main focus is on high-profile projects in central London, where she has worked on high-rise buildings, City offices, residential, retail and major regeneration schemes.

Gordon Adams and Clare Fielding work together on the Battersea Power Station development project, one of the most significant urban redevelopments in London for decades.

“I met Gordon as my client, he’s the Planning Director at the Power Station. We just hit it off and got on very well. It’s great working with someone like that and we both love the project.

“Until recently I was quite sensitive about my situation, as many trans people are. I tried to stay under the radar and I found that it didn’t help at work to do that; it created a barrier. Many trans people just want to move on in life and put their transition behind them. I did too, but I have come to think that you can’t pretend it never happened, it’s part of your identity and you should be proud of it. In the past, I left a job because I found it quite difficult to integrate and I think that may have at least in part been down to me not been as open as I am now.

“Trans people are becoming increasingly visible in society. It’s funny, you go through your whole life thinking you’re the only one, and then... like buses, trans folk seem to all come along at once. Attitudes are changing. Even just that it’s being talked about helps, which is why I wanted to take part in Purple Reign. Those of us who’ve been lucky enough to have a modicum of career success have a kind of duty to stand up and be counted I think.

“The biggest challenges I’ve faced - to be honest - have been inside my own head; the people around me, family, colleagues and friends have been universally supportive. Lack of self-esteem has been the biggest problem and I have had to overcome it. One thing that really helped me was when another partner in the law firm I was working in started to go through her transition too. She’s got a wicked sense of humour and really helped me to see the funny side of the whole ‘trans’ thing ... we take enormous delight in the absurdities of our situation and when we’re together we’re very politically incorrect, it’s great fun.

“On a career level, the Battersea Power Station project is the most exciting thing I’ve done. It was a real high point for me to get my new firm appointed on that project. The other highlight of my life has been the love of my family and friends, they’re really important to me.

“I don’t have a motto, but I have a little tale to tell. When I started at infant school aged four and a half, on the very first day the teacher pinned up a big sheet of squared paper, like a chart, on the wall. All of us had to go up and colour in one square on it, blue for the boys and red for the girls. When I got up, I coloured in a red one but my teacher told me off for spoiling the chart and made me go over it in blue. So for the whole of my first school year, on the wall was this chart with this many blue squares, that many red squares and one purple square. So when this project came along and the backdrop you’re using is a big purple square drape, I knew I had to do it!

“Society has moved to a point where it’s okay to be who you really are – so go ahead and be who you really are.”



BRIAN J WINTERFELDT
HEAD OF INTERNET PRACTISE AT KATTEN LAW

DANIEL K WINTERFELDT
HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS
AND DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PARTNER AT CMS

BRIAN J. WINTERFELDT & DANIEL K. WINTERFELDT

Brian J. Winterfeldt serves as head of the Internet Practice at Katten Law. He works with clients on the creation of global trademark and branding strategies, as well as the development of programs to enforce their intellectual property rights and protect against infringement of their trademarks, trade dress and copyrights in the United States and internationally.

Daniel K. Winterfeldt is head of International Capital Markets and Diversity & Inclusion partner at CMS. He is also founder and co-chair of the InterLaw Diversity Forum, an inter-organisational forum for the LGBT networks in law firms and all personnel (lawyers and non-lawyers) in the legal sector.

“Being gay has had a huge impact on my career. Early on, it was a negative impact but later it became a positive one. Your sexuality is an intrinsic part of who you are. We’re all complex individuals and that means I’m not just gay, I’m also American, I’m outgoing, I have a big personality.

“I’ve been out my entire life, but as I’ve got more senior I’ve unlocked more of the positive side of things, especially since starting InterLaw. That’s the group I founded seven years ago for LGBT legal people in the UK. Currently it has around 1500 members and supporters from over 70 law firms and 45 corporate financial institutions.

“Early on in my career I felt very isolated. I didn’t know any other LGBT professionals in London. InterLaw opened up a network for meeting other LGBT people but also straight allies, we’ve always been for both since day one. That gave me role models and also gave me supporters. The difference it’s made in the City is huge, like night and day since the start of my career here. Nobody talked about being gay in the City, even in 2000. There’s been a total revolution since then, due to the changing generations and the equality work that’s been done.

“I’ve always found I had an ally to help in difficult times, but often they’ve been a straight ally. Once I had a client, an organisation where one person was being homophobic. He said that he thought I was coming on to him. But my main contact there stuck up for me and told him to stop his behaviour, he really stuck his neck out for me.

“Overall, the positives outweigh the negatives, as long as you’re good at your job. But I did feel isolated and I needed a sense of community that was missing. I didn’t have a sense of having a long term career path as an out gay man until we founded InterLaw. Before that, I’d founded the forum of US securities lawyers and that had showed I could be a collaborative leader – it got me the London Stock Exchange as my first client, which was wonderful.

“Over the last three years I’ve led on the Athena Project for CMS, which highlights female role models and mentors within professional and political life. The success of that led to Purple Reign for LGBT people and our allies and to the Apollo Project, which is designed to give organisations tools to help make effective cultural change based on best practice. All of them came out of research that we did which showed the importance of diversity and social mobility within the legal profession.

“My motto is, you can do anything that you put your mind to. I come from a family of Holocaust survivors, so... My advice to anyone young would be, find a workplace that’s supportive and make sure that you’re good at what you do. If you’re different for any reason, you’re at risk of being disadvantaged so build your support network. And don’t assume they will all be LGBT or be like you.

“When I started there were no role models for me in London, though there had been people in New York who were visible. But now, Justice Etherton, Paul Jenkins the Treasury Solicitor, people like Lord Cashman are visible. Tim Hailes at JP Morgan started it all really, with an article in The Lawyer and his picture on the front cover. The headline said “JP Morgan tell law firms to shape up on gay issues”. That started the journey to InterLaw, it enabled me to show that the issue was important to our clients.”



to Barclays City of Cardiff Croeso i Barclays Dinas Caerdydd

AMY STANNING
DIRECTOR OF SHARED SERVICES, BARCLAYS PLC

AMY STANNING

Amy Stanning is Director of Shared Services at Barclays plc, a senior management post. She is also the co-Chair of Spectrum, the well established Barclays LGBT staff network.

“For me, my sexuality and gender identity came as parts of a package. People saw me as a straight male before transitioning but for me, gender identity had always been an issue. The longer things went on, the harder they became to deal with. There was this huge part of myself that I felt I couldn’t share because I hadn’t yet come to terms with it myself.

“That takes up so much of your attention and your energy that sometimes I was not as effective as I could have been at work. It simply got in the way, I couldn’t concentrate. Not to be melodramatic, but there was a lot of torment in there prior to transitioning, a growing sense of inner turmoil which meant I wasn’t giving my best. Reappearing as me, expressing myself and being comfortable with it, was huge. And part of that was also coming out as a lesbian, having all the conversations about sexuality not being the same as gender identity.

“It felt like a lead weight had been taken off my shoulders, though. Immediately post-transition it can be quite exhilarating because you finally feel free. The degree of acceptance at Barclays was huge. There was natural curiosity of course, so they got the Gender Trust to come in and talk to my team of immediate reports and to my peer group. They ran sessions to deal with all the questions that people of course had, allowed them to ask the difficult stuff that they were too embarrassed to ask me directly. In some ways I almost had to re-establish some relationships, I found, because people’s view of you is so bound up in your identity and appearance.

“I transitioned six years ago. Things have changed enormously over my life, but there’s still a way to go. I didn’t know anyone else then in a professional capacity that had transitioned. I knew people on social media who were in other walks of life but not in business – there was no visibility in the work environment then. From an early age I’d known of April Ashley and Jan Morris and Dana International at Eurovision but it was still seen as salacious news in the press.

“I now have a good number of people I know who have transitioned and are out in the workplace. Employee networks have made a huge difference to that. I co-chair the Barclays LGBTI staff group, Spectrum, and I was featured in all our Pride materials. It helps people feel that they can come forward, there are more of us in Barclays now. Being out, we can contribute to HR policies, support leadership on the issues. The sky hasn’t fallen in.

“It would have helped me in coming out to have had more visible role models. And a culture where we embraced inclusion; I saw diversity then as being about gender and race and a little bit about disability but I don’t remember sexual identity being discussed then. We’re really moving forward on that now, we sponsor Pride in London, we mobilise publicly on the issues, it’s unrecognisable. A more open conversation and easier access to the staff network would have helped, and that’s things I am working on now.

“I’m proud of the part I’ve played in developing a culture of diversity at Barclays and beyond. Last year at Pride, I was all over the Barclays promotional material and I felt like the poster girl for LGBT people and the fact that my employer was celebrating us. It was a bit of a London Olympics moment for me. Professionally, I’m always aiming for a new peak but landing my current role, which is a visible leadership one with a big team and a huge role in business development is my professional highlight.

“I have a number of sayings, not all of them repeatable. But the one I use all the time is simply “Be Yourself” because I spent so much of my life not doing that. It’s presumptuous to give people advice, but I want to tell young people that you can be yourself and true to yourself, and the sooner you do that, the sooner you’ll benefit. You’ll be happier, your relationships will be stronger, you’ll be more productive. There’s still lots to do but this is the best time there’s ever been in the UK to be LGBT, so take advantage of it.

“I look at publicly out and proud people like Paris Lees and Hannah Winterbourne here, Laverne Cox and Janet Mock in the States and admire them but the people who really inspire me are the ones I see every day just doing their jobs and getting on having a happy life, like Emma at Thomson Reuters, Kimberley at Lloyds, Sianice at Barclays who was Britain’s first trans bank manager. What helps me get through difficult times, and we all have them, are the people I see just getting on with it.”



HELEN GRANT MP
MINISTER OF SPORT & TOURISM, CONSERVATIVE PARTY

HELEN GRANT MP

Helen Grant MP is a British Conservative Party politician and solicitor. Since 2010, she has been the Member of Parliament for Kent constituency Maidstone and Weald, previously held by Ann Widdecombe MP. She is also the current Minister for Sport and Tourism and was previously jointly Under-Secretary of State for Justice and for Women & Equalities, leading the Government legislation on equal marriage. Grant was the first black woman to be selected to defend a Tory seat and her election made her the Conservatives' first female black MP.

Grant was born in Willesden, north London to an English mother and Nigerian father, but grew up in a single parent family after her parents separated and her father emigrated. She was raised on a council estate in Carlisle by her mother. She said in a 2008 interview with the Daily Mail that she was the victim of racist bullying at school. In a 2010 interview she spoke fondly of her childhood, and the house in which she grew up. "I had happy memories in that house and it gave me a good start in life, [...] There was deprivation around, there was certainly need, there was some domestic violence and there were some fights. But my memory of the square where we lived is that there was pride in people."

At school she was captain of the school tennis and hockey teams, and represented Cumbria in hockey, tennis, athletics, and cross-country. She was also an under-16 judo champion for the north of England and southern Scotland. She studied law at the University of Hull, after which she took a place at the College of Law in Guildford.

She established her own practice, Grants Solicitors, in 1996, which specialises in family law. She has subsequently said that as a practising lawyer she saw a 'huge amount' of domestic violence, and that it had a 'huge effect' on her subsequent Ministerial role. As a Justice Minister, she was described as the 'Minister for Victims' of crime, and stated her role as being to 'look after the interests of victims and witnesses of any crime, including domestic violence, sexual violence and rape.'

Grant met her husband, Simon, in 1990 and the couple, who married in 1991, have two sons one of whom served in the Royal Marines. They have a home in Surrey and another in her constituency in Kent.

In an interview with Stylist magazine, she said "I was a family lawyer for 23 years before I got into politics and saw a huge amount of domestic violence. I even had a woman turn up on my doorstep on Christmas Eve with a black eye, two carrier bags of clothes and three small children by her side. That wasn't uncommon and it's had a huge effect on my work now."

"My background has shaped my politics. I grew up on what you might call an infamous council estate in Carlisle with my mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. So I've always had really strong female role models; my mother even set up the first women's refuge in Carlisle. I'm the first black, female Tory minister but it's not something I think about too much. I don't think my sex or colour should matter, but some people find it interesting. If it breaks through one more glass ceiling, then that's a good thing."

As Minister for Sport she has continued to uphold the values of her Equalities portfolio for LGBT causes. "I am pleased that the majority of teams in the top tier of English football and the FA have backed the Football vs Homophobia campaign. Football is our national sport and we must do all we can to tackle any sort of discrimination in the game. I hope the campaign continues to go from strength to strength."

When the Olympics went to Russia, which had begun to legislate against LGBT equality and to turn a blind eye to homophobic violence, she told Pink News “The delegation from Britain is a matter for the British Olympic Association and that would be a decision for them. But we have raised with the Russian Government our concerns about their laws that affect the LGB&T community. We are completely committed to protecting the rights of LGB&T people in this country and abroad and that human rights are universal and should apply equally to all people.”

She has also supported moves to challenge homophobia in sport. As she told Pink News readers, “Over the last few years, the government has worked hard to help sport tackle prejudice through the Charter for Action Against Homophobia and Transphobia. We were pleased to see all the Premier League and Football League clubs pledge their support to the charter and we hope everyone in the game will continue their support by taking action with the Football v Homophobia campaign.”

Mrs Grant also congratulated former West Ham and German international footballer Thomas Hitzlsperger when he publicly announced that he was gay, saying to PinkNews: “It’s great news that Thomas Hitzlsperger has had the courage to come out... while we have made great progress in shifting attitudes towards the gay community, there are still many people who have hidden or who are still hiding their sexuality, through fear of homophobia. There is still more we can all do to help tackle homophobia in sport.”

In a message within the consultation on the future of civil partnerships following the successful equal marriage legislation, she said: “We recently celebrated a historic moment for our society – making marriage available to everyone, regardless of their sexuality or gender. Now all couples will be able to enjoy the opportunity to demonstrate their love for each other and the commitment they wish to make through marriage.

“Who will this law affect, other than two people wanting to commit to spending their lives together? Is fidelity something that should be discouraged? Will this legislation in any way diminish other people’s marriages – or my own? And is it anybody’s business to arbitrate over other people’s living arrangements? Of course not. Marriage embodies the principles of love, loyalty and commitment. These are all vital components of a strong society.

“Marriage brings stability, it binds us together and it makes our families stronger. So before we get carried away, let’s focus on the real issue here: two people wanting to spend their lives together. And what’s wrong with that? Marriage is a wonderful institution with enormous value – so why should it be denied to anyone?

“Equal marriage is about the fundamental values and principles which bind us together as a society. I remain of the view that, far from being a radical departure, equal marriage is simply one more in a long line of reforms which have strengthened marriage, ensuring it remains as relevant to our society as it ever was.”

She has also stood up for her own LGBT constituents. After a young gay man with HIV who was seeking work was treated disrespectfully and ignorantly by her local JobCentre, she wrote to her Tory colleague Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith, saying “It’s absolutely right that if people... do what they’ve done – go out, try to get work – that they should be given all the help and support that they need and deserve and at the same time, they must be treated with absolute dignity and respect.”



KATH & DAN GILLESPIE SELLS
PSYCHOTHERAPIST, WRITER, DISABILITY & LGBT RIGHTS CAMPAIGNER
LEAD SINGER, THE FEELING

KATH & DAN GILLESPIE SELLS

Kath is a psychotherapist, writer, disability rights campaigner and LGBT rights campaigner from the United Kingdom. She founded REGARD, a national volunteer-run organisation of disabled LGBT people. She was nominated as a Stonewall Hero of the Year 2010. In 2011 she was awarded the MBE for services to disabled lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Kath: "My sexuality has affected my entire working life - when I started nursing I had to hide it because I was living in the nursing home and signs of lesbianism were sniffed out by the Home Sister. I was 18 when I fell in love with a fellow student nurse. She was unable to keep it quiet and was asked to leave and told she'd never become a nurse. That was in the early 70s.

"When I became disabled, I had to give up nursing and retrain as a teacher. But I became increasingly isolated. No effort was made to include me. There were a few good eggs, but most of the staff avoided me. They lowered their voices as I approached, that sort of nonsense that lets you know you're unwanted. There was an ongoing issue over the staff room which was inaccessible so I had to have tea/coffee breaks alone.

"But once out, I was never going back. The disability community wasn't keen on my raising lesbian and gay issues, but equality's equality. I founded Regard because neither the LGBT nor the disability communities were interested in each other's concerns. It was a bit like a war on both fronts and I couldn't tackle it alone. I can't divide myself into lesbian, disabled, mother, woman - I'm all of them all the time.

By 80'/90's the independent living movement were advocating for disabled people to live in the community with paid personal assistants, or carers as they were often called then. But there was little thought given to the impact of this on a disabled lesbian like myself. I had one personal assistant who came to get me up for work, saw me in bed with my female partner and ran out of the house screaming that she might have caught AIDS from us. Another carer tried to beat the "demons" out of me. If we'd had had a safe place to talk about such matters it would have helped. Regard became the 'how-to' place for information & guidance on so many things relating to disability and sex.

"Disabled people weren't supposed to have a sexuality of any kind then. There's been enormous change and we now have the language to be able to talk about sex and sexuality. Self-organisation and campaigning has resulted in progress and these gains have come from the grass roots, we did the work ourselves.

"Living as an out disabled lesbian is still harder outside the London bubble. In my view the disability movement failed to identify enough politically aware disabled people to pass the baton on to and so we have no movement now. We need positive change but we also need to leave a legacy. You have to pass on the knowledge or change doesn't stick, you have to keep reinventing the wheel. Dan, my son, is very active in the LGBT community & I'm very proud of him. I remind him, probably too frequently, to take the long view, what will the outcome be down the line.

"When I was in it, Regard became a national organisation, it had a helpline, it was what was needed. Paul Gambaccini in particular was a wonderful patron for us, always turned up for our AGM. We had great fun and you can't have a movement without fun. Of course, we had my son Dan & his friends who provided music, we were all dancing in our wheelchairs and on crutches etcetera at our socials. You need that mix - campaigning and fun.

"In the long haul, a major highlight for me was being awarded the MBE. I was pleased to get the recognition. My three sons were with me in the Palace when the citation was announced loudly "for services to the disabled lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community". That was something.

“My motto is an old Irish saying - “you can’t kill a bad thing”. Every time you get knocked down, you get up again and fight because you were an awkward bugger to start with. That’s me. An important motto of the disability movement is “nothing about us without us”. Another of mine is “learn from yesterday, live for today and hope for tomorrow” it’s what I always used to tell the kids.

“Young people need to be able to identify who supports them, who’s there in your hour of need? Having someone you trust and look up to, a friend to help you when you fall. This happens if you’re part of a community, something bigger than yourself.

“Find your community. If you can’t find it, start one, like we did. We all need to feel good about ourselves, to have positive self-esteem, it grows with positive reflection from like-minded people and is damaged by isolation.

“In my day we didn’t have gay icons, we just had each other. People like Quentin Crisp – he was an awkward bugger who just stayed true to himself. My brother was one of the first openly gay councillors, he got caught up in the whole Section 28 thing and he received death threats. I’ve always been proud of him and others who live their lives true to themselves.”

Dan Gillespie Sells, lead singer of The Feeling, songwriter and producer, has said he’d always been happy to take one for the team by wearing his sexuality on his sleeve on stage. “I’ve always felt really strongly that I want people to know that I am gay,” he said. Explaining his call for more fearful celebs to emerge from the shadows, the star admitted: “I think sharing who you are and being yourself is so valuable...It’s so important. I think if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.”

“I work in the arts, even if it is rock & roll there’s a history of real connection with queer culture from the androgyny of Bowie to Freddy Mercury. If my sexuality has had any negative impact on my career, it was well hidden. But there is still an air of macho sensibility in indie music that I did have to deal with – pop is able to be more pretty, rock has a lot of macho behaviour. It’s been easier since I’ve been successful. It’s much easier being able to tell people to fuck off when you’re famous.

“There have been changes from when I started. It’s gone from mainly artists who came out (as LGBT) to artists being out before you even start your career. Now, we are seeing artists who are out before they break much more often, especially acts that aren’t tailored to a gay market.

“I was always out and the only difficult time was right at the beginning, when it’s tough all round for everyone. Once you’re in a professional environment it’s all much easier. People are more civilised, they’re good at their jobs, they’re less likely to see masculinity as a requisite for rock & roll. I’m lucky, I was in a band with cool guys anyway, who understand progressive ideas and wouldn’t take any shit about me. It’s harder for a solo artist, I couldn’t get a better bunch of guys.

“There’s something about, seeing it in retrospect, when you play Wembley Stadium or when you hear your song being played in the cafe on Eastenders, when it’s your childhood dream come true stuff – they’re iconic moments in a pop career. Like being on Top Of The Pops, I’m so grateful I got to do that before it was axed. Several times.

“I don’t really have a motto of my own, I just quote other people’s song lyrics. The one I probably quote the most would be from my Mum, by Cass Elliot, “Make your own kind of music/Sing your own kind of song”. If I had to give anyone advice, that would be it. Being true to yourself is the hardest path but it’s so important.

“I was lucky because my generation didn’t have too many icons or role models, not cool ones at least, not people I identified with. I was lucky with my family and with my Mum. I was a gay kid in a gay family which made it much easier. That’s why I’m involved with the Albert Kennedy Trust (who help gay teenagers). I’m so grateful to have grown up in a supportive environment with a family who understood and celebrated me.”



MIA YAMAMOTO
CRIMINAL DEFENCE ATTORNEY, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MIA YAMAMOTO

Mia Yamamoto is one of the most distinguished and successful criminal defence attorneys in Southern California. She was co-founder and past chair of the Multi-Cultural Bar Alliance (a coalition of minority, women's and LGBT bar associations in Los Angeles) and is the recipient of many awards including the Golden Key Award by the City of West Hollywood, The Liberty Award by Lambda Legal and the Harvey Milk Legacy Award by Christopher Street West/LA Pride. She has also been honoured by API Equality and the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission for her advocacy on behalf of the LGBT community.

"Until my transition I was a straight man. By the time I transitioned I was already working and well known so, as you can imagine, it had a pretty dramatic effect on the profession. I came out in 2003 and presented as a woman from then on, having surgery in 2005. Looking back, though, it didn't really impact on my work. Most people just got over the shock and got on with it.

"I wrote to all the judges I was likely to appear in front of and asked them directly if it would be a problem for them. Some were hostile, but I'm from a minority anyway and I'm used to prejudice for no good reason. I was born in an internment camp during the Second World War, when Japanese people in the US were interned as potential enemy aliens. You can imagine how unpopular Japanese-Americans were after Pearl Harbour, and even after the war when I was growing up. So being an outsider was nothing new to me.

"I like to think I made being trans more ordinary. I hope I gave others an inspiration to come out as well. I was as open as possible about what was happening, not just for myself but for others too. Lots of people started to come out to me and ask my advice, which was very gratifying. We created a wave to make it easier for any outsiders to speak up, not just trans people. Gay people came out to me too.

"I do wish I'd had others in front of me to invoke as role models, but it was new. It should be easier now that there's so much more positive attention to the issue. Awareness always helps inclusion, helps embrace others. We all have a lot to contribute and it's detrimental to society to exclude us.

"I've had so many career highlights. I've always been an activist, always fought for minorities including sexual minorities. There's been change in the military, the fight for same sex marriage, the inclusion of LGBT people in the judiciary and government, in the Fortune 500. Whatever award I am given, whatever it's for, I always highlight that I'm trans and that it's recognising that trans people have a place in society. When I transitioned, the very first time I walked into a courtroom afterwards, I said "I'm going to liberate this courtroom now". And now, everywhere I go, I say to myself "time to liberate (this place)".

"LGBT people have been invisible in most of our history. There were so many LGBT people serving in Vietnam, for example. Their courage has been ignored and they remain invisible." Mia's refusal to condone or continue that invisibility has made a key change in how trans people are seen in civic life and the legal profession way beyond her home town of Los Angeles. She also has a strong message about looking beyond your own concerns.

“What I always say to young people is, find the courage to be honest. Without honesty, what is there? The two things I hate are phoney and cowards, but it takes determination to be real. And you have to fight for other people’s causes, not just your own self-interest. When I was young, my kindred spirits were mostly homophobic or transphobic, so I had to struggle with other activists first. Getting other minorities into coalition with LGBT people and with women was vital. We all need to be part of each other’s revolution.

“All of us would like to think we’re making change. I didn’t know any other trans lawyers. I was prepared for ridicule because that’s what I heard from people around me. The only trans people seen in the criminal law system were either sex workers or drug users and they get a lot of disdain. But I got less than I expected. You do get to know who’s worth caring about.”



OMAR SHARIF JR
MEDIA SPOKESPERSON, GLAAD

OMAR SHARIF JR

It takes a while to track Omar Sharif Jr down because he is busy with his job, as Media Spokesperson for GLAAD, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation – the US group that challenges stigmatisation and misrepresentation of LGBT people and issues. Omar, grandson of the actor of the same name, is now based in New York and one of the best known voices in the US media on LGBT issues. He has come a long way from his previous career as a leading actor in Egypt.

What impact has his sexuality had on his working life? “Considering I work now as a professional gay person, it has everything to do with it. I’m the spokesperson for the largest LGBT media advocacy group in the world. We’re now expanding internationally; the media is going global and so are we. But, even as an actor, it played a role in shaping what I put forward. Now it is everything.

“I am very fortunate in that I can bring 100% of myself to work, but in 29 US states as a lesbian, gay or bisexual person and in 32 states as a trans person, you can still be legally fired just for being yourself. Every day we see new non-discrimination ordinances being brought forward and there’s movement across the US, which is great. But in other countries, like my home country Egypt, it’s going in the other direction.”

Omar shocked the Arab world, where he was a well known figure, by coming out as both gay and half Jewish in 2012. “I came out in the middle of the Arab Spring. The confluence of issues made it very complex. It aggravated my story so that I became a poster boy in a negative way that the government of that time, the Muslim Brotherhood, could use against me. It was very difficult but at the end of the day, knowing that there was a community, even if it was beyond our borders, told me that I wasn’t alone, that I had support. It told me that I was loved and it was okay to be different.

“In the middle of the revolution, I was asked to present an Oscar alongside Kirk Douglas. I was representing the movement onstage. That’s what provoked the backlash. I was the first visible, out gay person from the Middle East in the media worldwide. I lost a career and my friends but I’ve never been happier.

“The best revenge is to live the life you love. I would say to young people, you can’t be happy if you can’t live honourably. In terms of advocacy, the tweets and emails I get from youth across the Middle East, saying they are glad to have a positive reflection of what could be, that’s what’s important. And my family love me.”

As someone who holds a Masters in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics, it’s not surprising that Omar Sharif’s view of the world that needs changing is wider than just the LGBT movement. “I wasn’t speaking on behalf of just myself when I came out. It was an inclusive message about being one of many minorities at that time, finding voices in the Arab Spring. History is a fabric; woven and varied from different events, people and times. I was just hoping to help thread a stronger cloth, an enduring fabric.”



PROFESSOR STEPHEN WHITTLE
PROFESSOR OF EQUALITIES, MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

PROFESSOR STEPHEN WHITTLE

Professor Stephen Whittle was one of the first people to transition from female to male in the UK. He is now a highly respected Professor of Equalities Law at Manchester Metropolitan University.

“My gender identity is the thing that has had the real impact on my working life. My sexuality, my sexual orientation is irrelevant and anyway, it’s not something that I consider is for public consumption. But being trans meant that throughout the 1970s, I was considered to be some sort of sexual pervert. In the 1980s, I was considered to be some sort of mental deviant and in the 1990s, I suppose, some sort of gender anarchist. The key thing is that throughout the 1970s and 1980s, I was dismissed every time an employer discovered that I was trans.

“Eventually I started working for myself. I decided to train as a lawyer, because I felt that unless we understood the law, we couldn’t understand why people were able to dismiss us from our jobs so easily. ‘Things have changed amazingly for LGBT+ people, particularly so in the last four or five years. It is as if the message is finally getting through that being trans is absolutely irrelevant to how somebody works, irrelevant in what they can contribute to the workplace environment. Life was awful throughout the 1970s and the 1980s - it was really difficult to hide this huge secret about myself and I hated hiding it. But as soon as it was discovered by anybody, I was out of work within less than a day.

“I honestly don’t think I would have survived if it hadn’t been for my partner, Sarah, who never failed in her support. She has the most amazing integrity despite the fact that she herself, given the choice, would have preferred to have been a very private person. But she has always supported me and she always knew that I was the person I said I was.

“Things finally improved for me when I got a university teaching post. I had originally transitioned while working at a university in a laboratory job, and I now realise the advantages of working in a place where equality policies are the norm.

“There have been so many highlights in recent years, not least taking my mum to Buckingham Palace to see me receive an OBE for my work on gender issues. But perhaps the biggest highlight was going to America and receiving the Stonewall Award from the North American Bar Association for my contribution to the teaching of trans issues and the encouragement of young trans lawyers.

“My motto is “Life is not a dress rehearsal - make today your very best day”. If I were giving advice to young people now, it would be to be brave, to have courage. If I could survive doing this 40 years ago, then you can survive it now, when it is so much easier than it ever was before.

“My LGBT icon is Peter Tatchell, of course - I wish I was as brave as he is. And Petric Smith, who isn’t well known in the UK. He had an incredible life, including being the first female Methodist Minister in Alabama and the star witness in the trial of a Ku Klux Klan uncle for bombing a black church and killing four young girls. He was forced to leave town but, after transitioning, he came back and lived out his life as an anti-racist, LGBT and women’s rights activist. Look him up.”



TOP LEFT TO BOTTOM RIGHT

LISA POWER
MEP - FOUNDER, STONEWALL

OLIVETTE COLE-WILSON
ACTOR - FOUNDER, STONEWALL

SIMON FANSHAWE
BROADCASTER, WRITER - FOUNDER, STONEWALL

SIR IAN McKELLEN
ACTOR - FOUNDER, STONEWALL

LISA POWER MEP

Lisa Power MBE has had so many hats she could open a shop. She is a policy advisor on HIV and sexual health; has written on LGBT history, feminism and sex; was for 17 years the Policy Director of the UK's largest HIV charity Terrence Higgins Trust, and for 14 years a volunteer on London Lesbian & Gay Switchboard. She was also the Secretary-General of the International Lesbian & Gay Association, before helping to found Stonewall, the UK's highly successful LGBT lobby.

"I was very lucky in that from 1980 onwards I've always been able to make my sexuality and sexual politics part of my CV for jobs. In the 70s I was a shop assistant, but Switchboard gave me the skills to do advice work and I just kept going from there. You really can sum up my career as sex, drugs and rock & roll – I've worked on LGBT rights and sexual health and with drugs issues and in my spare time I supported music tours, and all of them as an out lesbian. I'm just not any good at being "in", so I had to find jobs where my lesbianism and knowledge of LGBT issues was an advantage.

"Things are massively different now from when I came out in the mid 70s. Sometimes I have to shake myself when I see a lesbian senior naval officer, or a gay judge, or a trans politician. A little bit of my head is still in the 70s, when coming out was an invitation to prejudice. I know things are much better now, that the boot is on the other foot and it's mostly socially unacceptable to be antigay in Britain, but inside me I'm still waiting to be emotionally clouted, to have to fight back. I know something like Section 28 could be only an election away, and the prejudice that people still encounter in much of the world could come back here. To paraphrase what they say about stocks and shares, homophobia can go up as well as down.

"I did get some of the prejudice at the time, like people saying "you talk too much about being gay" when in fact it was all they ever asked me about. Someone tried to queerbash me once, but there was only one of him and I kicked him quite hard. But I think my character deterred a lot of people from doing anything openly. I've experienced more open discrimination as a woman than as a lesbian specifically. How you handle yourself makes a difference and if you act confident, people pick up on that and are more likely to accept you. It was only when I started on Switchboard and heard the callers, often scared and repressed, that I realised quite how much harder it was for other people. Switchboard was a lifeline to many thousands and the most brilliant LGBT finishing school ever.

"I've been lucky and had lots of amazing experiences. Being the first out LGBT person to speak on gay rights at the UN, being around and available when some gay men thought of what became Stonewall and said "we need some lesbians too", doing a "die-in" with Queer Nation outside the White House, starting the first lesbian-run sex toy mail order business for women – so many good stories. I'm a great starter of things – organisations, newspapers, campaigns like HIV testing week. I can't help it, I just like getting stuck in.

"My motto is "history is for interfering with". I'm a historian by training and I'm so aware of the impact of individual actions on the course of history. Of course you need movements and mass action, but often just one person thinking "Why should I put up with this?" starts an avalanche. And I also say a lot "If you don't ask, you don't get". And it's true. Chance plays a big part in life, but you have to be prepared to grab those chances as they wander past you.

“So my advice to young LGBT people – any young people – is to grab your chances. You learn by your mistakes, as long as they don’t kill you, so take a chance or two. If you can’t grow where you are, move to where you can be yourself. Find the people who’ll want you. I was so miserable at school because I didn’t fit their mould, and I’ve gone on to have a brilliant time.

“I don’t have icons, though there are lots of people I admire, particularly people who stepped out into the unknown of being gay without being pushed. I admire anyone on their first Pride march, in their first relationship, taking their first stand for their human rights and those of others. And I admire them even more if they can have a laugh while they’re at it. We’re here to change the world, we might as well have fun while we’re doing it.”

OLIVETTE COLE-WILSON

Olivette Cole-Wilson is an actress, counsellor and adoption worker. A longstanding activist for LGBT rights, she was also one of the founding Members of Stonewall, the leading UK LGBT lobby group.

In my first proper job, when I was teaching, I hid my sexuality a bit. I was the only black teacher in the school and I wasn't fully out. Then I went to work in social services and I was a bit more out. Some of my co-workers were more difficult about that than others. At the same time I joined various groups like the London Womens Liberation Newsletter collective and the 106CR Group. That was consciousness-raising for women on the 106 bus route and some of us went on eventually to be part of the Black Lesbian Group. I was mainly a feminist in those days and then I went to the big London Women's Conference and met other black lesbians.

I was a vicar's daughter and had led quite a sheltered life, so it was all a bit of a shock being "out" in London. I remember going to the Sols Arms, a lesbian pub, and being asked if I was butch or femme. I was taken aback by that.

At work, you weren't out to your clients but I was in the office and other staff were variable in their reactions. After a while it stopped being an issue and the overt homophobia dropped away as it became more unacceptable. There's many more LGBT people out in these institutions now and people can't be overtly hostile. I remember in one local authority when somebody trans came to work with us and there was a lot of unspoken hostility. It was very difficult for them and they didn't last long. There was a bit more acceptance for gay men as long as they fitted into a stereotype but people seemed to find it harder to accept lesbians.

The nature of counselling is that people are mostly more open minded, but social services could be challenging. When I was doing drama training, a decade ago, I went back to teaching to support myself and I found that I had to challenge homophobia in the classroom a lot.

What would have helped was someone who could speak out and support us from a senior position. But you can still get one person who's keen to be supportive and other people shut them down. We need clarity and structure to be out at work, an LGBT support group, supportive management. Now, working in adoption, we also get lots of LGBT people adopting. It used to be much harder. The change in adoption law has been really positive.

Getting involved in the Black Lesbian Group was a highlight for me because until then I hadn't known any others. It was amazing. But even now, people can still be isolated. Answering the phones at London Friend opened my eyes to that.

I say "if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you always got". You need to manage change in your life. There's more support now than there ever has been, so even if you feel like the only one, reach out and connect with others. Call a helpline, go online, don't go through things alone.

In the old days there were people like Audre Lord and Whoopi Goldberg. Books we read had these strong American women in them who I made connections with, like Alice Walker, Maya Angelou. They weren't all lesbians but they were women-identified women. I didn't find so many of them in the UK until I got together with other black lesbian activists. Quentin Crisp was really out there. Among my friends I really admire Michael Cashman (Lord Cashman and another Stonewall founder). He's been so consistent. Role models should be people who are prepared to say the truth, be out and be supportive.

It was Michael who asked me to join Stonewall. I was very fired up at the time. Not enough change was happening, people were scared – especially teachers, because of Section 28. I thought it would be useful and it was good to find something where people were being constructive about change. It snowballed, and we got much further than we ever imagined. It's a proper foundation stone that people can build on. We do need to be involved in the establishment, but we mustn't get out of touch with the passion of people who are facing problems. It's really important that things are interconnected, LGBT people come from all races and classes. Not everybody has the support of a family member or another LGBT person, or even enough money to go to a club or bar to meet others. We mustn't forget our diversity. We mustn't forget what we went through and what we came from, because some people are still there. We must set an example.

SIR IAN McKELLEN

I could write a book about the impact that my sexuality's had on my life. I think as a gay man, I live as a gay man, I act as one. It's part of me. In all my life, I've only had one experience, that I know about, where I was not hired because I was gay. And that was before I came out publicly – but I told him I was gay. But generally the theatre is a safe space for mavericks, so it was not a problem.

It changed my life totally when I got involved with the other founders of Stonewall, many of whom had been going long before I had at such things. That was the biggest change for me. We started out by challenging the law. Now, there doesn't seem to be much more legal work needed but we do have to try and eradicate homophobia, in the schoolyards and in the pubs. The battle goes on but it's harder to see how it can be done. And of course gay people fare a lot better in some countries than in others still.

I was perfectly happy as a closeted gay man. I hadn't told my family and I never talked about it publicly, just to my friends, but I took that as our lot. But that was selfish and easy for me. I didn't feel the oppression that was inside me without me even knowing it, or as other people were feeling it. I had a charmed life, if you like. But if I was 20 now instead of in 1959 it would be lovely. As a gay man, it's much better now, we've joined the human race that we had been excluded from.

In terms of my acting career, I've enjoyed every job I've done in my life bar two. If you asked me about highlights, though they didn't seem like that at the time I'd say now that being at the Royal Shakespeare Company was one. And The Actors Company, which I was part of, was the first democratically run theatre company. In film, Gods and Monsters was the crucial one in terms of being considered more than a theatre actor, but Richard III was my own film and it was clearly influential in getting me X-Men and Lord Of The Rings. But the really big things that happen to you, you don't realise at the time that they are.

With Stonewall, we just got on with the job, we didn't think about how it would turn out. Coming out and getting involved, being of some use was a life-changer for me. Coming out tops everything else that I have done. When I spoke to Gareth Thomas (the Welsh international rugby player) to congratulate him on coming out, he said it was better than getting a hundred caps for Wales.

I go into schools now and speak to young people. I don't give young LGBT people specific advice, but I do encourage their friends and teachers to take their responsibilities seriously. The Stonewall Champions scheme tries to eradicate discrimination in schools. It's the very opposite of Section 28, which sought to silence us – they must talk about it now. Each school has a little group of LGBT people in it. Some of them are activists, and they don't need any advice from me apart from "stick up for yourselves". And it's the teachers coming out that act as role models in the school and encourage a sense of normality about being gay. But how they do that is up to them.

In terms of role models for me, I'm not sure I had any. I felt sorry for the older gay actors that I looked up to, people like John Gielgud and Alec Guinness. I copied what they did, as a young man, but it is wretched that they didn't feel able to act as role models. And because of that, I didn't even think in those ways, didn't even define myself. I wasn't rattling the closet door. I had a charmed life, was open with my friends but not to my family or in the press.

The subject (of homosexuality) was never mentioned when I was growing up. It was scarcely even mentioned in the theatre until the 1960s. And I didn't do dangerous things like having sex in public, so the law never bothered me. When I was knighted, people said I was the first openly gay man to be knighted but that wasn't true. I was the second, and Angus Wilson was before me. He lived as an openly gay man, unchallenged. James Whale was openly gay in 1930s Hollywood. It was possible for some. For me, I just needed the push of meeting the Stonewall people and getting involved.

SIMON FANSHAWE OBE

Simon Fanshawe OBE is now best known as a writer and broadcaster, an entrepreneur and the Chair of the University of Sussex's Governing Council. His packed and diverse past also includes winning the Edinburgh Festival's Perrier Award in 1989 as an openly gay stand-up comic and being one of the founders of the Stonewall Group, the UK's highly successful LGBT lobby.

"When I started getting involved in Stonewall I was mainly a comic, but I was already a social activist. I'd just stood down as Chair of War On Want, a development charity. Whether being gay has had an impact on my working life is hypothetical because it's just always been there. Thinking about it, I probably didn't understand the relationship between a "straight" gay man onstage and the audience, because there was nobody else at the time. The only openly gay comedians then were myself and Julian Clary and he was fabulous and burlesque, but I was in a suit, I didn't fit their expectations. As a performer you have to understand the audience.

"It's been interesting being both an insider and an outsider in my life. My class and being a white public school educated man balanced out my sexuality. It's not your sexuality as such, it's your deviation from the statistical norm that sets you apart. But it's been great fun. It probably had more of an effect on me personally than on my career. I'm a believer in the "Velvet Rage" theory – that (as LGBT people) we grow up with so little reinforcement till we come out that we can be on an arc, be disfunctional until we find convergence, till we can feel comfortable with our sexuality. That arc can be long or short, and for me it was quite long. I'm much more comfortable with myself now.

"We've normalised, we've gone from pariah status through faintly glamorous to more and more ordinary. But it's still very uneven, coming out can still be difficult and the environments in which we do it vary tremendously. But there is no doubt that things have changed massively over the past few decades in ways we never imagined when we started Stonewall. Kids still get bullied though, and I'm married to a Nigerian. Speaking to people there, it's like the fifties in Britain for gay men but with more violence.

"I've been relatively lucky, I've not experienced much abuse and none of it physical. I had hecklers as a comic but my real battles have been more personal and internal. What helps is the support of others, to stop me beating myself up. Nobody has ever told me I can't do things because I am gay, but I have often sabotaged myself. Insight from others has helped, talking honestly about how, even though we're proud, there are moments when we worry being gay will affect our business or our life. We've made great political strides but sometimes it is still difficult to be authentic, to be comfortable in your own skin. But love helps. I married at 57, so love for me is like diabetes – it's been late onset and it's a life changer.

"Highlights? The first time I presented Kaleidoscope (an arts programme on Radio 4), because that meant something to my parents' friends. Winning the Perrier of course was terrific because the show was so much fun. Now, when I'm working with people to help them transform their organisations and seeing them decide to commit to diversity publicly, that's fantastic to be a part of that change. And really, the first time I got drunk with Bea Arthur (the Golden Girls actress) in Australia.

"My motto is, if you don't make the phone calls, you won't get the work. Freelancers have that sewn in needlework into their underwear. And "be good, be better, be best", but that can be a rod to beat yourself with if you're not careful.

“Young LGBT people should just get on with it, live your life to the full, crack on. There’s nothing special about being LGBT or anything else, you make it special by the way you live your life and the values you hold. Never just say “whatever” – always commit yourself to something.

“Role models? As a student, I had two or three lecturers and people in the student movement who just did what needed to be done (for LGBT people). They were out and showing people like me what was possible. And who wouldn’t aspire to be Oscar Wilde if you’re in comedy? I remember going to see Bette Midler a long time ago and she performed with such chutzpah and cheek, as did Sue Ingelson in Australia, they had total cheek. That’s fantastically important, to find a performer who makes your guts laugh.

“The most important thing about Stonewall, for me, is that its power lies in being not just about gay people but about building the kind of society that we all want to be in. It’s about a set of values that are much bigger than us. When we were typing out the first document stating our aims, standing round a typewriter and chipping in, in Ian (McKellen)’s house, there was a real sense of occasion. We called it the Second Limehouse Declaration. And Bent, our first fundraiser, that made it feel like we were really up and running. I remember some meeting in the Lords which must have been about Section 28, and looking up and seeing Terry Jones and Michael Palin sitting in the window alcove and that made me realise – it was serious but it was also quite fun.” And much the same could be said for Simon Fanshawe, the man as well as his career.



SIR TERENCE ETHERTON
CHANCELLOR OF THE HIGH COURT

SIR TERENCE ETHERTON

Sir Terence Etherton is currently Chancellor of the High Court, Head of the Chancery Division of the High Court of England & Wales, and a Privy Councillor. As a member of the British Sabre Team he qualified for the Moscow Olympics in 1980. From 2010 to 2014 he was a Visiting Professor of Law at Birkbeck College in the University of London and lectured on subjects including diversity in the judiciary and Equity and Trusts.

“When I started out in the law I never thought I would be able to become a judge because in 1990, when I became a QC (Queen’s Counsel), I did not think it possible to go any further. Historically, nobody who was openly gay had. It was a hangover from the policies of the Lord Chancellor Lord Hailsham in the 1970s and 80s not to appoint openly gay men. So I planned my career on that basis. I thought I would leave the law at 55 and concentrate on other areas of public service. I did much work in mental health as a non-executive director and was actually the Chair of Broadmoor when I finally became a judge.

“The old system of waiting for patronage from somebody already in power was changed in 1997 by the Lord Chancellor Derry Irvine. After the changes you could put yourself forward for judicial appointment in a more open system. We now have a completely independent system and it is much more fair. But being gay and having no expectations had led me into those other areas of public life which had an impact on how I see things. It also gave me management skills which you really need these days as a senior judge. I am also a Jew and if you come from any minority you are conscious of the rule of law and sensitive to its role in protecting minorities. That makes me passionate about diversity.

“Over the last 30 years things have changed for LGBT people beyond all recognition. The 1967 Sexual Offences Act made things legal for gay men over 21 but that was about it. The really big developments came after the change of government in 1997 – the repeal of Section 28, the equal age of consent, the European Convention on Human Rights decisions about gays in the military, transgender rights, all happened or started to happen after that. And then same sex civil partnerships gave us a clear standing in the wider community, though I think marriage is the ultimate equality. The Strasbourg European Court of Human Rights and the Luxembourg Court of Justice of the European Union and the UK government got more involved in alleviating discrimination and protecting LGBT rights in many ways. In the UK protection under the criminal law was added onto existing anti-race discrimination laws.

“It was hard when I thought that what I wanted was not open to me because of my sexuality. It might have been even harder had I been camp or obviously gay. But barristers are largely meritocratic and I have never to my face encountered personal homophobia. As I have already mentioned, however, I did experience in earlier times what can be described as institutionalised homophobia.

“Being appointed a High Court Judge was wonderful. There is a lot of competition for it. There are only 108 High Court judges and the position is nationally and internationally highly regarded, so it was a moment of great pride. Becoming Chairman of the Law Commission of England and Wales in 2006 was also marvellous. The Commission advises the government on making new laws and repealing old ones. Currently, I am the fifth most senior judge in England and Wales, and I get to use those management skills that most judges never got diverted into acquiring because their career path was so much more straightforward.

"I have a formal motto on my coat of arms. It is a single Hebrew word; phonetically "Hinaini", which means "here am I". It is often used in the Bible when someone is responding to the Almighty. It was also the name taken by the first Jewish LGBT group in this country. For me, it says that I am a Jew, I am gay, you must accept me for who I am, and I am here to serve.

I am not a campaigning type of person, but I have spoken to many groups, particularly young lawyers, about my experiences. I feel my role is to promote understanding and acceptance, normalising a gay couple in the highest levels of the judiciary.

"I was the first High Court judge to take my same-sex partner to events. Andrew, my partner of over 35 years, always comes with me to important judicial ceremonies and social occasions. When Charlie Falconer became Lord Chancellor, he had all the senior judiciary to dinner in batches at the House of Lords and I took Andrew. He always comes with me to the Lord Mayor's Banquet too. People need to see us as an ordinary, loving couple. The one constant factor in my life is that I have loved the same man for over 35 years and that relationship is the most important thing in my life." Sir Terence and his spouse Andrew Stone were married in late 2014 in a traditional Jewish wedding ceremony at the West London Synagogue.

"In the 1970s we were firmly in the closet. There were not many people visibly LGBT, whereas there are so many now. But there were still fewer in the "establishment" professions. Role models are hugely important in encouraging people; it is also vital that women are seen to be in and successful in the legal profession and the judiciary.

"You should never desist from trying for something just because you are LGBT. You are entitled to be and you should be judged on your ability but do not expect to be promoted just because you come from a minority. Expect to get there on your ability. Do not lie about your true personality. Lying is corrosive and you will be a better person if you are honest about yourself. Most people will respect that and even be flattered that you have shared it with them."

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INTERLAW
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