Super Queer History



Transgender - A long history, in short

Alan Hart

Introduction

A full exploration of Dr. Alan Hart would take a book of at least 200 pages. He is an interesting figure, and this short essay here only goes into one small aspect. For more on him, as well as a bibliography, visit my Alan Hard Archive at: https://superqueerhistory.com/alan_hart

As time and money allows, I would love to write more about Alan Hart. Some of these articles will be turned into zines, such as this one. Joining my patreon, even as a free member, both encourages me to write more, and allows you to be notified when I do. If you are able to support financially, the patreon is also a great way to do that: https://www.patreon.com/SuperQueer/

Another way to support financially is to purchase from my Super Queer Gear Store where you can purchase my designs as well as things I have imported: https://superqueergear.com/

Doctor Saves Many Lives, Gets Misgendered



Alan Hart from the Dust Cover of his books. 1943.

Alan Hart, born October 4, 1890, was a pioneering doctor who worked in tuberculosis care and treatment. Dr. Hart used x-ray technology to see tuberculosis in the lungs. Roentgen Rays (now called x-rays) were discovered in 1895, by 1898 it was shown that TB could be seen on x-rays. Dr. Hart was fascinated by this and began screening patients for TB.

Tuberculosis is a bacteria that infects the lungs, causing coughs and sneezes that spread the bacteria, through the droplets of spit expelled. Tuberculosis can sit in your lungs for months, or even years before active infection occurs, and

before Dr. Hart's discovery, there was no way to diagnose it in the early stages.

Once TB goes into an active state, the bacteria attacks the lungs, causing coughs, chest pain, coughing up blood, fevers, and more. The TB vaccine came out early in Dr. Hart's career and his work helped control the disease. TB is still not eliminated, but is much more controlled now.



Dr. Hart in the x-ray room at Tacoma General Hospital ca 1933.

While in Albuquerque in 1921 Hart became fascinated with x-rays and its use in diagnosing. He took this knowledge and made a lifelong career, working in Washington, Idaho, Connecticut and

more, all this time helping those stigmatized by TB, working toward better screening techniques, and all the while fighting with the stigma of his own that continues even after his death.

Not only was Dr. Hart a life saving diagnostician, he was also a best selling author. Dr. Hart wrote 4 novels from 1935 to 1942 about queer medical professionals. He also wrote an important text called “These Mysterious Rays: A Nontechnical Discussion of the Uses of X Rays and Radium, Chiefly in Medicine” which helped to remove some of the fear that surrounded x-rays. Despite all these great advances to our medical understanding, and adding 4 best selling novels and a well researched medical book for laymen, Dr. Hart continues to be stigmatized and misgendered.

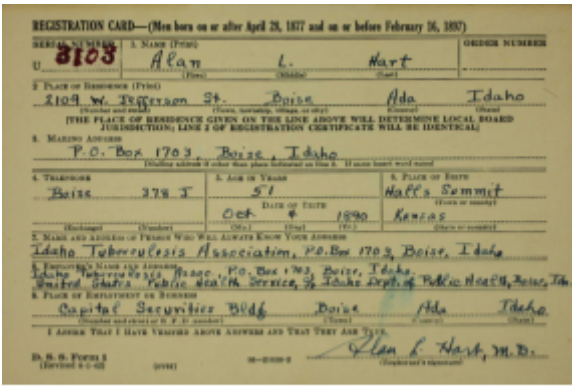


Dr. Hart’s Novels

Alan L. Hart was born Alberta Lucille Hart. Even as a child he told his mother that he was the man of the house, wore masculine attire, and did masculine things. He was attracted to women and married

twice. He signed up for the draft during both world wars, and lived as a man for his entire life. If his birth name were never known, he would have been a strong and important doctor, but since he was born a woman, this changes for many people.

Despite all of this, he is still often referred to as Lucille Hart and she/her pronouns are used when referring to him. In 1976, Dr. Johnathan Katz edited an important collection of stories called "Gay American History" where he, in the last entry in the section called Passing Women, wrote about Dr. Hart. In this Dr. Katz downplays Dr. Hart's transition, saying "she 'regarded herself as a boy' -- but only in the sense of 'wanting pockets in clothes'." A sentiment that every woman can identify with.


REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)

3103 Alan L. Hart

2109 W. Jefferson St. Boise Ada Idaho

P.O. Box 1703, Boise, Idaho

Boise 378 J 51 Oct. 4 1890 Hall's Summit Kansas

Idaho Tuberculosis Association, P.O. Box 1703, Boise, Idaho

Capital Securities Bldg Boise Ada Idaho

Alan L. Hart, M.D.

Dr. Hart's WWII Draft Card

Dr. Katz places Dr. Hart in the category of lesbian. From this the Lucille Hart Dinner was held from 1983 to 1991 as a fundraiser for LGBT rights in Portland, Oregon. Queer people became more familiar with Dr. Hart, and some realized that calling him Lucille

Hart was an insult and began to picket the dinner. Instead of rebranding as the Dr. Alan Hart Dinner, and continuing the good work, the dinner ended.

The people and organizations who misgender Dr. Hart are not malicious. Dr. Johnathan Katz is a prominent gay man, working to promote LGBT rights through the lens of history. The Right to Privacy Political Action Committee that held the Lucille Hart Dinner was raising money for legislation that would protect future generations of LGBT people. Both Dr. Katz and the Right to Privacy Political Action Committee are/were important to improving rights for LBTGQIA+ individuals around the US.

Just because someone is "well meaning" does not mean that what they say or do is not hurtful. We all make mistakes, and we can learn from them. As of the time of this writing, Dr. Katz is still active in queer history and doing a great job. The Right to Privacy Political Action Committee has ceased to function, but others have taken up the banner. Now let's right the wrong and make sure that we use the proper name and pronouns from now on.

For a list of sources used in writing this essay, please visit https://superqueerhistory.com/alan_hart

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