

Supporting the information needs of GSRD therapists

Recommended resources for counselling professionals interested, or training in, GSRD therapy

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Resource was adapted from an assessment part of the author's studies for an MA in Library and Information Studies at University College London.

Content warning:

Resources discussed cover the history of marginalized relationship types, including BDSM and sex work.

All resources are appropriate for a professional context. However, some pages in the Bishopsgate Institute Archives Guides include sexually explicit images and frank discussions of sexual relationships.

A key part of being a GSRD Therapist is staying up to date on current therapeutic practices and learning about communities covered by the GSRD framework. The resources below can support your practice and help you meet the seven key components of being a GSRD therapist.

All recommended resources are free to use, however, you may need to travel to a local or specialist library. Wherever possible, online alternatives are flagged.

The resources recommended assume that you are a professional in a UK context. If you would like to explore similar resources, but you're not based in the UK, talk to your local librarian!

General Guides

[Good Practice across the Counselling Profession 001: Gender, Sexual and Relationship Diversity \(GSRD\)](#)

The image shows the cover of a book titled "Good Practice across the Counselling Professions 001: Gender, Sexual, and Relationship Diversity (GSRD)" by Dr Meg-John Barker. The cover is white with a purple gradient at the bottom. The BACP logo is in the bottom left corner. To the right of the cover is a metadata box with the following information:

Good Practice across the Counselling Profession 001: Gender, Sexual and Relationship Diversity (GSRD)

Publisher: British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

Cost: Free

Access: Online

Focus: Therapy

LGBT affirming? Yes

Currency: Relatively up to date (2019)

Experience: Reported

Ease of Use? ★ ★ ★ ★

“[Gender, Sexual and Relationship Diversity \(GSRD\)](#)” is a free, online resource provided by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) as part of its series of good practice guides. It is written in a conversational style and is well laid out, with clear subject headings and a table of contents. However, there are intentionally very few in-text citations. This creates problems of reliability when controversial subjects are discussed.

The BACP guide ends with a summary of good practice and outlines suggestions for improving therapeutic practice. Definitions provided are broad enough that they are unlikely to become immediately out of date. However, the guide is five years old and there are some dead links throughout.

Other suggested resources

[Sage Handbook of Counselling & Psychotherapy, 5th edition.](#)

The *Sage Handbook of Counselling & Psychotherapy* includes a chapter on GSRD therapy. It is more recent, so the practices described will be more up to date. It's not available for free online, however, your local public library is likely to have a copy in their collection.

[Relationally Queer: A Pink Therapy Guide for Practitioners.](#)

Relationally Queer covers a wide range of topics applicable to GSRD therapists, including non-monogamy, different LGBT+ identities, and more. However, there are currently no UK public libraries with a copy in their collection. In some areas it may be cheaper to buy a copy than request via inter-library loan.

Databases: Access to Research

Access to Research



Publisher: Publishers' License Service	LGBT affirming? Some issues with terminology
Cost: Free	Currency: Up to date research
Access: Via library computers at participating public libraries	Experience: Reported
Focus: Therapy	Ease of use: ★ ★ ★

[Access to Research](#) is a database that provides free access to peer-reviewed journals to members of UK public libraries. Major academic publishers participate in the scheme. As of January 2020, 95% of UK public libraries subscribe to Access to Research, so you should be able to access it in most areas of the UK.

While it is free of charge, you must use a public library computer to use Access to Research. The database can be searched from home, but articles cannot be accessed from home or on personal laptops. Additionally, you can only make a single copy of an article.

The database includes almost 200 psychology journals, such as the *Journal of gay & lesbian mental health*, *Journal of sex & marital therapy* and *Sexual and relationship therapy*. However, be aware that the database can use outdated terminology in places.

Reliance on peer reviewed research, rather than “pop psychology”, is a key component of being a GSRD therapist. However, be aware that peer reviewed literature is not free of anti-LGBT biases.

If you're not sure how to use this database, or are struggling with searching, speak to your local public librarian and they'll be able to help.

Related resources

University alumni access

If you have a university degree, you may be able to access some databases as an alumni. The specific databases included will depend on your university. We suggest you check your university library website for more information or contact the alumni office.

Social Media: YouTube

YouTube



Cost: Free	Currency: Up to date/modern experiences	Suggested creators:
Access: Online	Experience: Reported and Own	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rowan Ellis. • Bob the Drag Queen. • Strange Aeons. • Philosophy Tube. • Watts the Safeword.
Focus: Community	Ease of Use: ★ ★ ★ ★	
LGBT affirming? Sometimes		

YouTube is increasingly becoming a starting point for research, as well as a way to connect with new communities. 96% of adults in the UK with internet access use YouTube at least once a month – meaning you are likely already familiar with the platform yourself!

YouTube hosts secondary and primary sources about GSRD communities. Sometimes, different types of resources can be mixed into the same video. It can also serve as a jumping off point for identifying other platforms for exploration. Podcasts will often post recordings to YouTube and large creators may mention Patreon or Discord accounts, all of which can serve as individual social media communities.

However, be aware that content creators focus on having a “right” or “wrong” opinion about GSRD-related topics. Internet content is subject to censorship, so some communities will use alternative language to disguise their content. There is no fact checking system on YouTube, so plagiarism or misinformation is often only exposed by other content creators. However, as your client’s introduction through GSRD communities may be through unreliable media sources, it may be useful to engage with inaccurate, but popular, content.

Some recommended channels are below, though keep in mind that these recommendations are made by a librarian – not a GSRD therapist.

- [Rowan Ellis.](#)
- [Bob the Drag Queen.](#)
- [Strange Aeons.](#)

- [Philosophy Tube](#) – specifically “[I Emailed My Doctor 133 Times](#)”.
- [Watts the Safeword](#).
- [Dominic Davies](#).

Related resources

Tumblr

Tumblr has long served as home for developing GSRD communities, as its role as a message board can work more effectively as a place for people from marginalized communities to find support. Exact user age range is difficult to judge, but it currently seems to lean towards younger users.

Organizations / Institutional Resources

Three of the seven GSRD core competencies require exploration of specific communities. For this, primary sources held in archives or special collections libraries can be an invaluable resource. All the archives and libraries recommended are open to the wider public. If you’re not sure how to access a collection, write the library or archive you wish to visit, and they will be able to give you additional support!

Bishopsgate Institute

Bishopsgate Institute Library and Archives



Zenka Bartek Archive



Nigel Young & Jonathan Blake Archive



Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners in the Nigel Young Archive

Collections: Holds one of the largest LGBTQI+ archive in the UK and the UK Leather and Fetish Archives

Cost: Free

Access: In person, with some online access

Focus: Communities

LGBT affirming? Yes

Currency: 1890s - present

Experience: Own

Ease of use: ★ ★ ★

The [Bishopsgate Institute](#)’s library and archive includes one of the largest collections of [LGBT archives](#) in the UK and the only archive dedicated to [BDSM/Kink communities](#). Collections range from the 1890s to the present day. Bishopsgate is free to use,

however, require visiting the Institute's London building. The library and archive are closed on weekends, though it is open late on Wednesday evenings.

The collections consist of primary sources, such as newspaper clippings, letters, diaries, photographs, and videos. Engaging with primary sources can reinforce and deepen your own knowledge about marginalized communities. However, as primary sources, they need a bit of interpretation – a document in isolation will not tell you the full history of a community.

Archive collections are generally named after the subject or donor, so you may need to spend some time reading collection descriptions to understand its relevance to GSRD history.

Selected material from the LGBTQI+ collections have been [digitized and are freely available online](#). Bishopsgate also publishes [blogs](#) that highlight specific archives or themes in the collection. They also run [events](#), such as tours of the LGBT+ and BDSM/Kink collections.

Related resources

No one institution will encompass the entirety of GSRD history. Below are other publicly accessible archives and library collections that may be relevant to you.

- [London Metropolitan Archives](#).
- [LGBT collections](#) at London School of Economics.
- [Manchester City Council LGBT resources and archives](#).
- [LGBT resource guide](#) produced by [Glamorgan Archives](#), Cardiff.
- [Lesbian Archive](#) and [Online LGBT resources](#) at the Glasgow Women's Library.
- [Digital Transgender Archive](#).

Audio Visual / Oral History

Eastside Community Heritage

Eastside Community Heritage: Hidden Histories

Changing Minds

Mental Health in LGBTQ+ communities

Click [here](#) for project website

Recording the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community on mental health and wellbeing, from growing up to today.



30 Years of Living with HIV

The 'Don't Die of Ignorance' Campaign

Click [here](#) for project website

The impact of the Conservative Government's HIV prevention campaign in the 1980's.



Collections: Oral histories about LGBT life in East London	Access: Online	Currency: 1960s - present
Cost: Free	Focus: Communities	Experience: Own
LGBT affirming? Yes	Ease of use: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	

Eastside Community Heritage provides free, online collections of oral histories. It is an independent charity based in Stratford, London and much of the website is devoted to online collections of photographs, videos, and audio recordings. Collections focus on East London communities and cover a range of topics, including LGBT history.

Oral histories are organized by theme, including a collection about LGBT Mental Health. Projects with only a handful of recorded participants, such as “Being Civil in Redbridge”, makes an effort to show LGBT people from a range of backgrounds with both positive and negative coming out experiences.

Individual project websites could disappear as resources age. However, as Eastside also has a physical archive, hopefully the oral histories will remain accessible as technology changes.

Related resources

- [OurStory Scotland](#).
- [Oral History Society's map of local LGBT Oral History projects](#).

Final thoughts

While it may seem daunting at first, there are a wealth of free resources available to support GSRD professionals develop and improve their practice. If after looking at this

list you're still struggling to find resources, speak to your local librarian as they may be able to help.