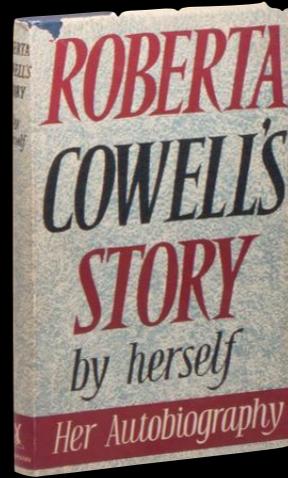


Reflections on Queering the Science Museum



#queeringthesciencemuseum @ellietheelement @damienarness



RAF Vet, Father of 2, Changes Into Woman

LONDON (UPI)—A World War II RAF pilot and former auto racing driver was reported to have undergone a conversion in what authorities said "may well be the most complete change of sex in the world's medical history."

British sources said that Robert Marshall Cowell, 35, father of two children, has completely changed sex after three years of operation and now is legally registered as Roberta Elizabeth Cowell.

Cowell, son of Mrs. G. M. Cowell, retired British nurse, was in a hospital in the recovering corps during the war before transferring to the RAF where he became a Spitfire pilot. He was shot down over France in 1941, captured and returned to 1945.

LEGAL SUCCESS: MARRIAGE

Cowell, who was divorced in 1942, was described as an attractive blonde hair who is known to her friends as "Betty."

The lawyers, who said they were authorized by the parties concerned to decline the court's jurisdiction, formally applied for an order in 1947, when they accepted Cowell's registration as a woman.

"The case was claimed to be the first in Britain in which an adult male has fully taken on the physical and mental characteristics of a woman."

Cowell's registration as a woman, the lawyers said, was accepted as evidence of a year of medical operations.

Persons connected with the case claimed "it would not be safe to complete change that Roberta and her husband."

GIVEN UP SOCIAL LIFE

It was said there is no known previous case in which a sex change occurring in a man who already is a father.

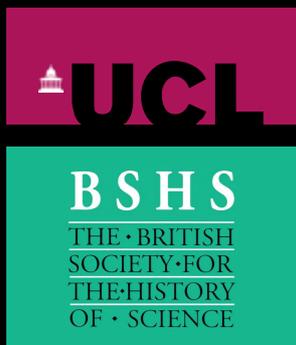
Before the war at 25, Cowell served overseas as a racing driver.

According to the lawyers' account, Cowell became convinced

Continued on Page 7



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TATE BRITAIN
TOUR

QUEER WALK THROUGH BRITISH ART LAUNCH

23 JUNE 2018

Out in Oxford

An LGBTQ+ Trail of the University of Oxford's
Collections

ANNEMARIE MCCARTHY
Lonely Planet Writer

3 JULY 2017

Madrid's Prado Museum launches LGBT-themed perspectives on its classical art collection

TOUR \ \ On now until Saturday, 29 December 2018

LGBTQ Tour

On the last Saturday of the month join our one hour tour which
explores gender and sexual identities.



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“identity-related needs motivate him or her to visit a museum and provide an overarching framework for that visit experience”

Falk, 2016, p.10



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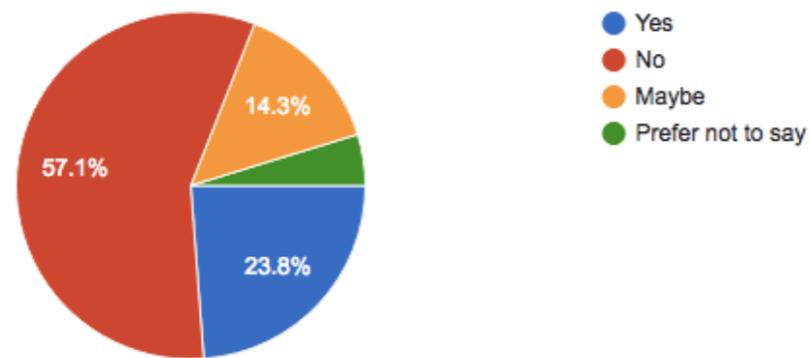
33% of respondents to our feedback mentioned “queer” or “LGBTQIA+” (or variants on these themes) as a motivating reason for attending our tours

20% of respondents to our feedback mentioned “STEM” or “scientist” (or variants on these themes) as a motivating reason for attending our tours



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Would you have come to the Science Museum on the day you came to the tour if we hadn't been running the tour?



Statistics from the feedback: 57% of respondents wouldn't have come to the science museum if the tour had not been running; 41% of respondents (who didn't work at the museum) had not been in the past year.

38%

of respondents only knew the story of Alan Turing

33%

of respondents didn't know any of the stories on the tour



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“My other starting point...is the premise that presenting LGBT history is not simply an exercise in inclusion. Rather, a focus on outsiders has the potential to reveal a great deal about the society as a whole. Various eras and cultures have defined the boundaries of what is considered "normal" differently, and by exploring those differences - and the experiences of those who were considered "abnormal" - we can catch a glimpse of the assumptions and priorities of the larger group. In this way, the study of cultural outsiders permits us all to learn about ourselves”

Ferentinos, 2015, p. 7



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Image credit: Royal College of Nursing



*Inclusion of stories that might sit outside the museum's conception of 'STEM' :
Jackie Wan, Nurse (L) - "I haven't been to any [LGBT Nursing Groups] myself just yet"
RCN oral history
Roberta Cowell (R), Mechanic and Pilot*



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“I liked the fact that it wasn't just about queer scientists (although that was very interesting) but also flawed scientific studies/the lack of scientific studies on sex/gender issues.”

“I was expecting it just to focus on figures from the history of science who'd been over looked / discriminated against (like Alan Turing) (not that focusing on these is a bad thing) but it went into much more detail.”

“It also took something - science - which we don't often look at through a queer lens.”

Three Respondents, 2018, Queering the Science Museum



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“I liked the combination of queer histories and critiques of the Science Museum’s presentation (or lack thereof) of queer content.”

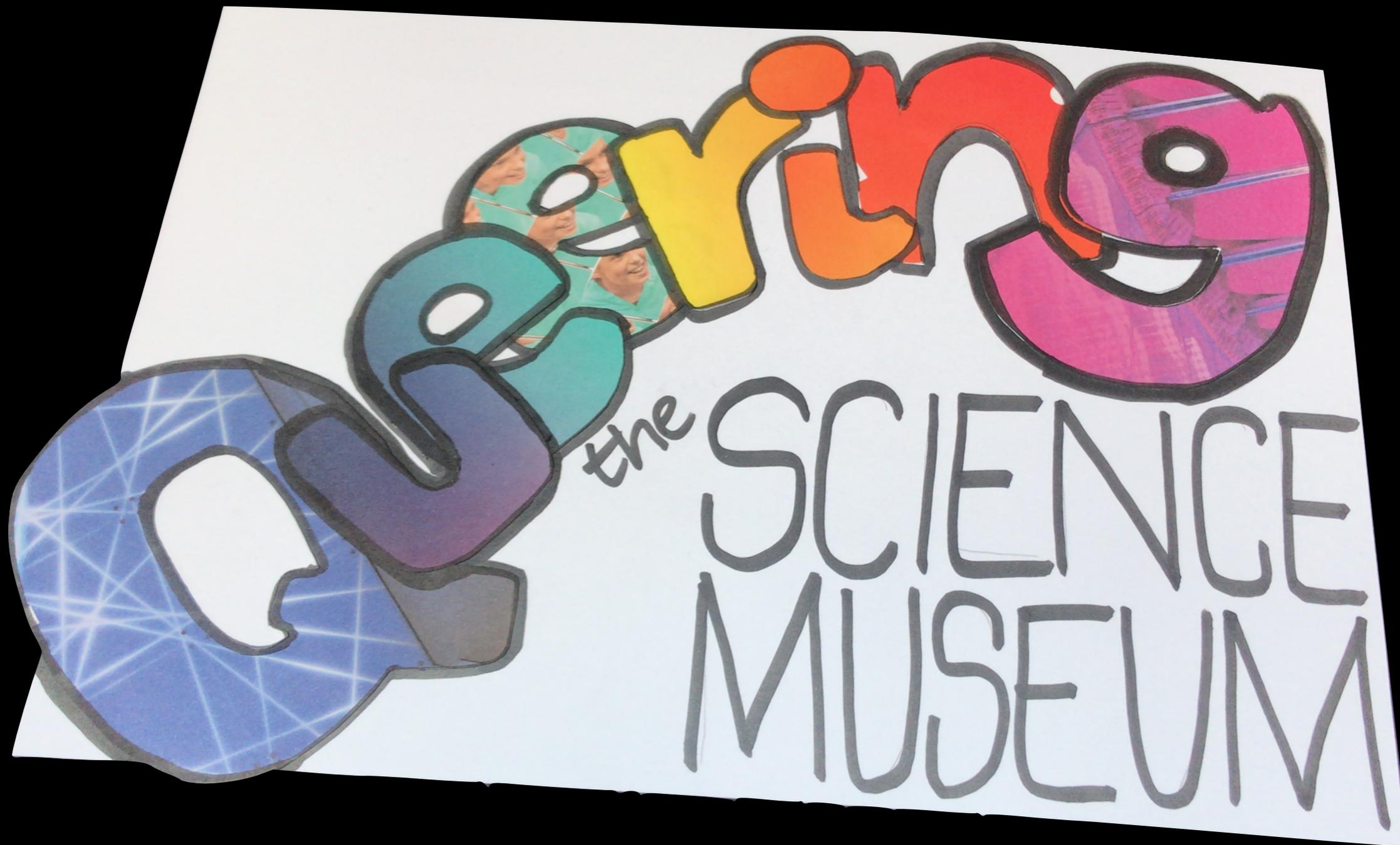
“It gave an alternative history in a space where the stories told about objects are often accepted without question. It really opened my eyes to the ways in which history is shaped by those who have the privilege to tell their stories from their perspectives. I thought it was incredibly important”

“...Multiple perspectives were explored and discussion was encouraged...”

Respondents, 2018, Queering the Science Museum



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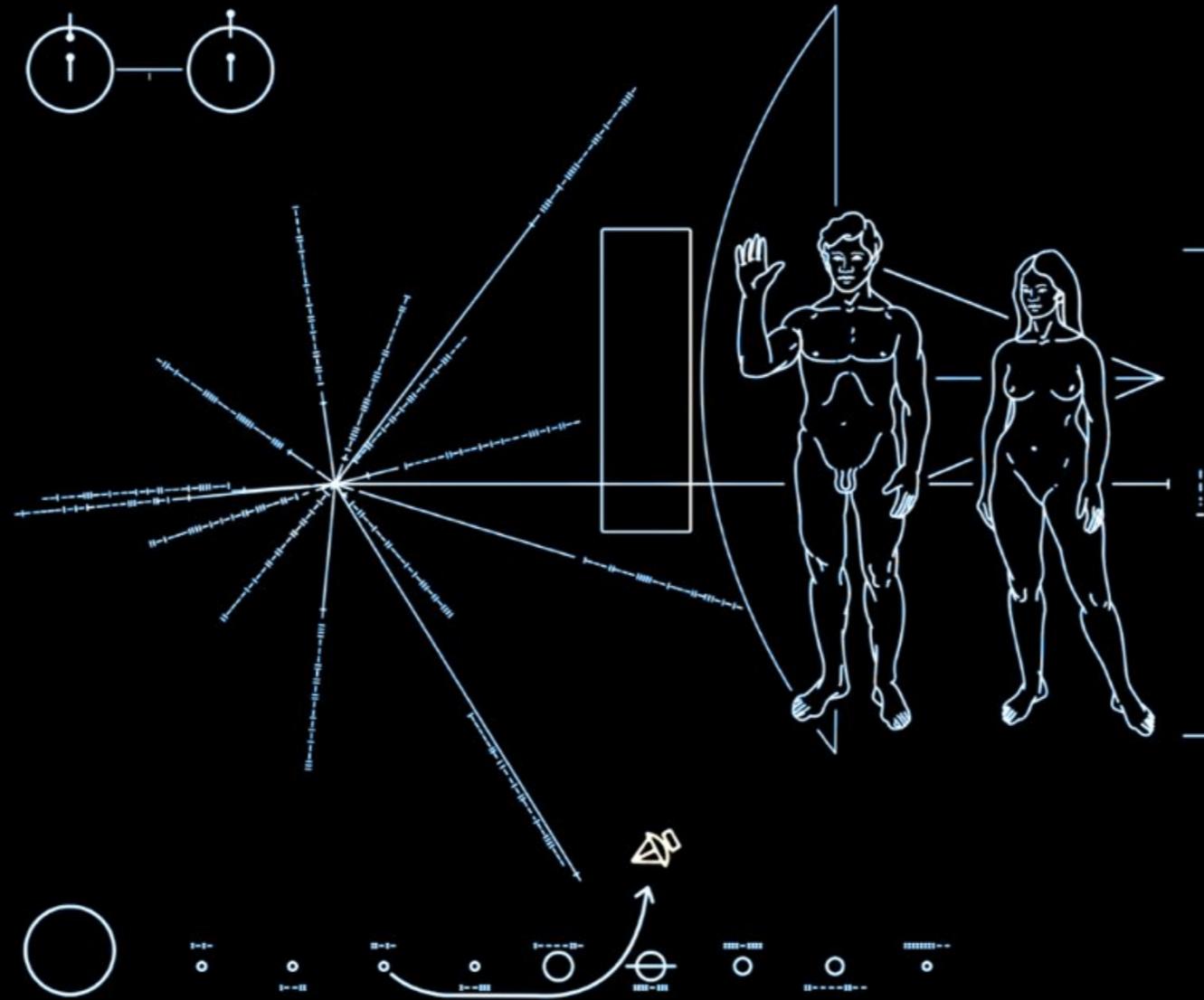
“...I just wish more science museums did this...”



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eg. Inclusion of Billy Doll on the tour is not specifically about “STEM” but it is about queerness and queer collections in the museum space. Are these two ideas incommensurate?



Use of the Pioneer Plaque: moves tour away from the museum-object and towards a experience, and summative critique and call-to-action at the end of the tour.



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Queering the Science Museum?

Can begin to unpack our identities and lived experiences through the science museum collections?

Can we use them to reach new perspectives and understands of ourselves by looking at these collections through a fresh queer lens?



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THE HISTORY
OF SCIENCE

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“museum collections ... show you not what there was but what was collected”

Bennett, in De Vorkin, 2005, p.574



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Cultural industries often exclude or “closet” artists that identify as, or reference queerness, feminism, gender and sexual politics, labour injustices and non-white discourses ... our aim is to facilitate and curate aesthetically and politically challenging projects in response to the lack of visibility and the difficulties in presenting such work within mainstream media and institutions”

Cuntemporary, 2018, online mission



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**“[W]hat is it, exactly, that makes an object queer?
Does the fact that a queer person owned an object
qualify it as a queer artifact, or must it related
explicitly to its owner's sexual identity?”**

Ferentinos, 2015, p. 112



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“If, as some theorists have argued, queer entails a refusal of meaning, registering a kind of disruptive negativity and incoherence at the heart of identity, language, and law, queer may well operate as a bar to the idea of the museum as a coherent, meaning-making machine”

Mills, 2008, p.46



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"It is also possible to imagine exhibitions that not only draw attention to the normalizing dimensions of collecting and classification as cultural activities...but that also reveal collecting itself as a potential site of queer affect and desire...[such] projects would turn, self-reflexively, on the notion that the objective, narratorial voice of museum authority is not the only voice to be heard"

Mills, 2008, p.48



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“[Given] a more radical queer perspective ... the exhibition was still very heteronormative, [reflected in] yet another set of messages - this time about appropriate forms of homosexuality and other sexual behaviours”

Cassidy et al., 2016, p.232



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“[H]ow one finds queerness historically or culturally might be a means of responding to the gaps and omissions that condition museum practice, and of ensuring that the meaning-making structures of the museum are themselves subjected to evaluation and critique. Such an analysis would participate in the general shift from object-centered to experience-centered understandings of museums in museum practice.”

Mills, 2008, p.50



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+ 3 000 000 *visitors*

6% *of DCMS GLAM visits*

happen at the

**SCIENCE
MUSEUM**

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OF SCIENCE

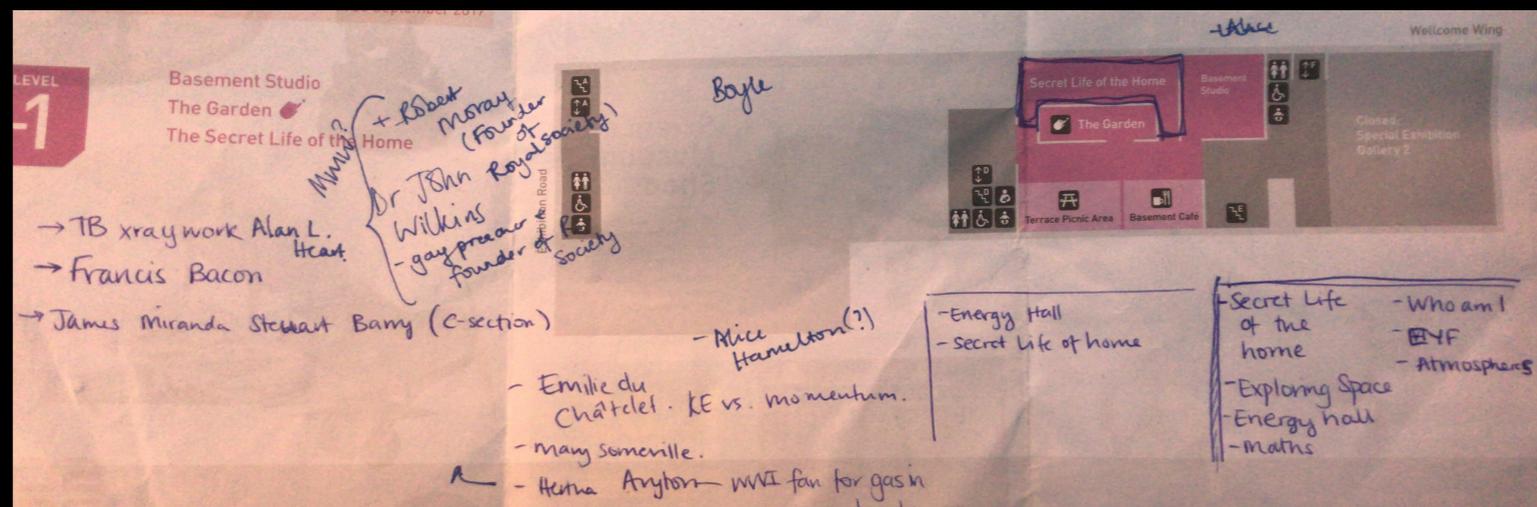
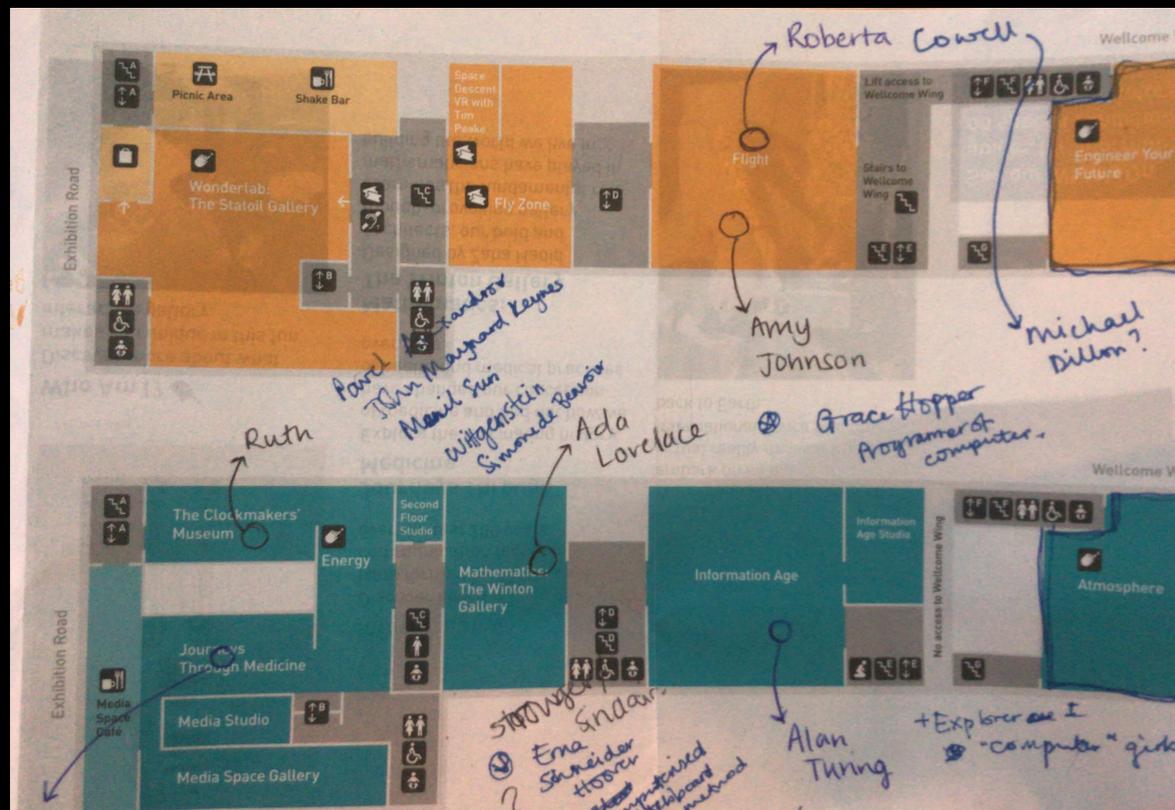


*Vole relationships and the idea of projection of human society onto sciences
(see *Queer Feminist Science Studies* for more information - “Why do Voles
fall in love?”*

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Images of maps showing our initially search for stories (queer and feminist lead) in the different galleries. Eventually we selecting stories that linked together but were not connected in a whole narrative to lead tour attendees through. Our aims and goals were shaped by the use of Queer Theory in the tour development



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Tour included a discussion of polyamory in voles; and multiple partners through discussion of the Gay and Lesbian Phonelines; but that most of the stories were about reasonably homonormative stories - could this be developed further?

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38%

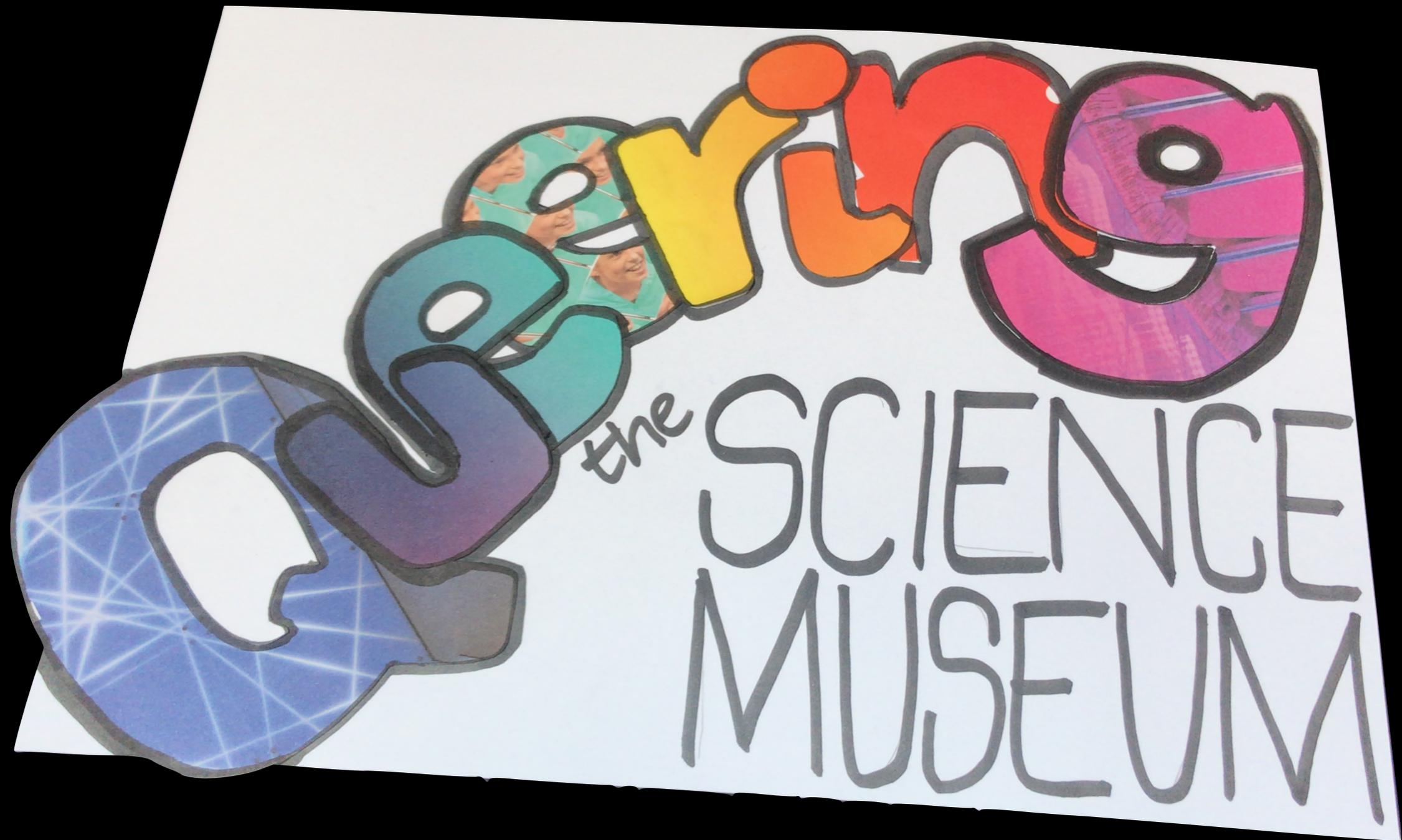
*of respondents only knew of
Alan Turing*

33%

*of respondents didn't know
any of the stories*



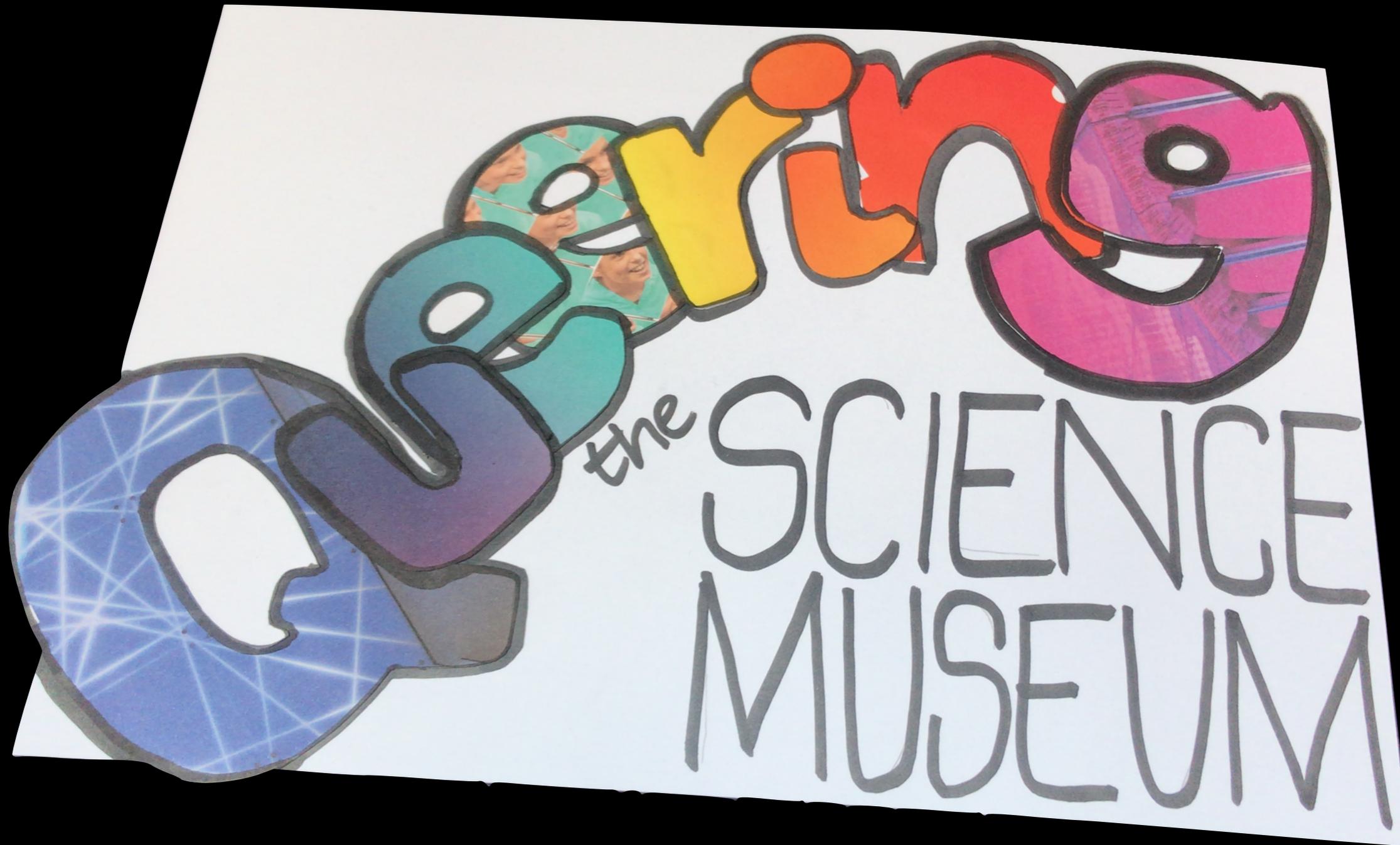
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Queer activism to engage publics in history of science



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Your tour guides, Ellie and Damien

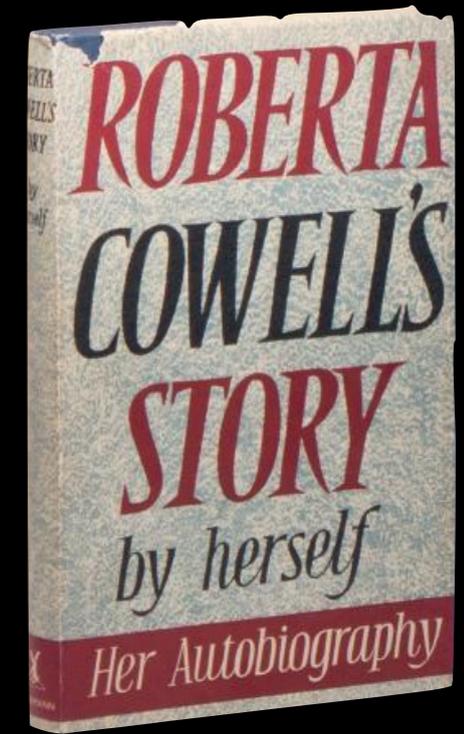
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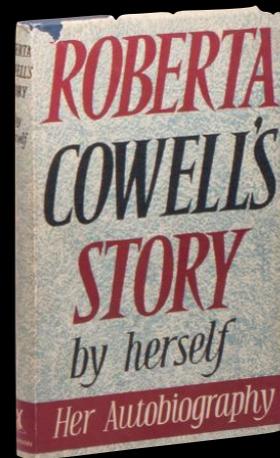
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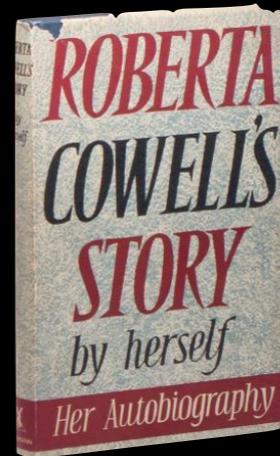
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British attorneys said that Robert Marshall Cowell, 35, father of two children, has completely changed sex after three years of operation and now is legally registered as Roberta Elizabeth Cowell.

Cowell, son of Maj. Gen. Sir Ernest Cowell, eminent British surgeon, rose to a captaincy in the engineering corps during the war before transferring to the RAF where he became a Spitfire pilot. He was shot down over France in 1944, taken prisoner and released in 1945.

COULD BECOME MOTHER
Cowell, who was divorced on April, 1952, was described as an attractive blonde now who is known to her friends as "Betty."

The lawyers, who said they were authorized by the parties concerned to disclose the case, said authorities formally recognized the sex change in May, 1951, when they accepted Cowell's registration as a woman.

The case was claimed to be the first in Britain in which an adult male has fully taken on the physical and mental characteristics of a woman.

Cowell's registration as a woman, the lawyers said, was accepted on evidence of a panel of medical specialists.

Persons connected with the case claimed "it would not be impossible under the circumstances of complete change that Roberta might bear children in the event she married."

GIVES UP SOCIAL LIFE.

It was said there is no known previous case in Britain of a sex change occurring in a man who already is a father.

Before the age of 20, Cowell scored successes as a racing driver.

According to the lawyers' account, Cowell became conscious

Continued on Page 7



Deborah Segars, 4, Detroit, with dollie, began series of shots for 21-day Pasteur treatment for rabies, after her puppy bit her and four others. Dog was found to be rabid, after it died at dog pound. All in area have been alerted.

(INS, Rome, Howard Adlery)

Hanged in 1692, Ann's No Witch

Although hanged as a witch in Salem in 1692, Ann Greenslade Pudeator was not then, and is not now, a witch, the Massachusetts Legislature ruled yesterday.

The House reversed the conviction of Ann, who was arrested in Boston, twice jailed and eventually hanged in Salem with four other hapless women during the witchery hysteria of those early days.

Ann, whose remains have rested for more than two and a half centuries, may not benefit directly from this legislative clearing of her name but her descendants, who have fought for

BRAINTREE COPS HURT IN CRASH

Two Braintree patrolmen, William Hayden and William Irwin, were injured yesterday when their cruiser was struck on Quincy ave. by a car operated by William Bichan of Whitman. Bichan was charged with drunken



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