AGE DISCRIMINATION AND AGEISM AMONG LGBTQ2 OLDER ADULTS

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### Life Line markers of a 75-year-old LGBT person

| 1955 (age 12): | 1966 (age 23): |
| Daughters of Bilitis becomes first lesbian organization in US | Compton Riots in San Francisco |

| Transition of Christine Jorgensen increasing awareness of transgender lives | Stonewall Riots in New York |

| American Psychiatric Association removes homosexuality from list of mental illnesses in DSM | Murder of Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone in San Francisco (Dan White's "twinkie defense," 1979 conviction of manslaughter, subsequent White |

| 1980's | 1990's |
| 1983 (age 40): (BBWN) Boston Bisexual Women's Network formed and published newsletter; BIPOL: first bisexual political organization in San Francisco | 1999 (age 56): First Transgender Day of Remembrance |

| 2000's | 2010's |
| 2003 (age 60): US Supreme Court strikes down sodomy laws; MA Supreme Court authorizes marriages between same-sex couples (weddings begin the following year--first state) | 2013 (age 70): first White House roundtable on bisexual issues; Repeal of (Section 3) DOMA; Supreme Court strikes down Prop 8; 2015 (age 72) marriage equality |

The Unique Demographic Characteristics of LGBT Older Adults

■ More likely to live alone
  - About one in three (34%) LGBT older Americans compared to one in five (21%) of non-LGBT persons (SAGE, 2014)
    ■ In SF study (2013): 58% live alone (compared to 28% of older SF adults in general)
    ■ Especially gay men (4x higher in MetLife Boomer study, 2010)

■ Less likely to be partnered
  - About half (48%) LGBT older Americans are partnered compared to 70% non-LGBT older persons (SAGE, 2014)
    ■ Especially gay men (12% never-partnered – 4x higher than general population – MetLife, 2010)
The Unique Demographic Characteristics of LGBT Older Adults (cont’d)

- **Less likely to have children**
  - 15% have children *(SF study, 2013)*
  - *Among those who have children, 60% report that their children are not available to help them.*

- **More likely to turn to friends** *(SF study, 2013)*
  - Lesbians more likely to turn to partner, family, neighbor
  - Transgender persons more likely to turn to faith community
  - Gay men more likely to have no one to whom to turn
Experience of Discrimination

The "categories" we inhabit are not distinct

- Woody's (2015) qualitative study: one 67-year-old lesbian was quoted as:
  "...not only am I old, I am an old African American female ... and then when you add being a lesbian to that, that puts you in the toilet."

* 69% of Transgender adults reported gender discrimination
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gay</th>
<th>Lesbian</th>
<th>Transgender</th>
<th>Service Provider</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Ageism, concerns about finding partner/relationship; “Chances slim of finding Prince Charming after 50;” “No one wants to be the close and intimate friend of a 75-year old”</td>
<td>“some of the younger people deliberately avoided speaking to us; you could feel it. It was like a curse. It hurts so much.”</td>
<td>-Growing old is not something that can be discussed among trans people—it become a joke; “The community tries to erase aging”</td>
<td>- “the queer community is ageism on steroids”</td>
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<td>-Issues of trust: concerned about “being screwed over by younger persons, nieces, nephews”</td>
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<td>-When you are old and trans you get pretty lonely</td>
<td>- “Issues worst for older LGBT persons, given historical marginalization and being closeted”</td>
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<td>- “We need to educate younger gay men”</td>
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<td>-Cohort issues: younger persons transitioning today have access to different surgeries, hormones—don’t have the same experiences of having to pass—“don’t have to apologize for who they are”; Believe that younger cohort no longer want to identify as transgender—“they are better at being proud”</td>
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What would your life be like without homophobia, racism, sexism?

- Life in a world where they would not be deprived of critical possibilities and resources
- Life in a world where they would be safe and accepted, across the life course

**BUT ALSO,** a life without

- Enhanced self-concepts (stronger, focused, multi-dimensional)
- The communities formed in response to oppression
- The fight for social justice and equity

(Meyer et al., 2012)
Positive Marginality

The strength, resistance and radical possibilities that exist and develop in the margins of social disenfranchisement

• Create communities, families and political movements
• Empathy and generativity
• Authentic self-awareness

(Lewis & Marshall, 2012; Unger, 2000)