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Providing Affirming Care for LGBTQIA+ Older Adults

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How Many LGBTQ Older Adults?

Today: 1.4 to 3.8 million in U.S.
(Harley & Teaster, 2016)

2030 estimate: 3.6 to 7.2 million in U.S.
(Harley & Teaster, 2016)

Three Generations: Invisible -- the oldest old
Silenced -- greatest generation
Proud – baby boomers and beyond

What's So Different?

Elder Issues

- Healthcare
- Housing
- Medication Costs
- Social Network: Family, Friends
- Income
- Retirement / Work
- Social / Recreational Activities

LGBTQ Elder Issues

- Healthcare
- Housing
- Medication Costs
- Social Network: Family, Friends
- Income
- Retirement / Work
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Aging Supports



Spouse
Partner



Children
& Grand



Family
Of Origin



Faith
Community



Local
Community



Social
Community



Social
Services

LGBTQ Aging Supports



Spouse
Partner

Children
& Grand

Family
Of Origin

Faith
Community

Local
Community

Social
Community

Social
Services

LGBTQ Aging Supports:

Boomers & Millennials



Spouse
Partner



Children
& Grand



Family
Of Origin



Faith
Community



Local
Community

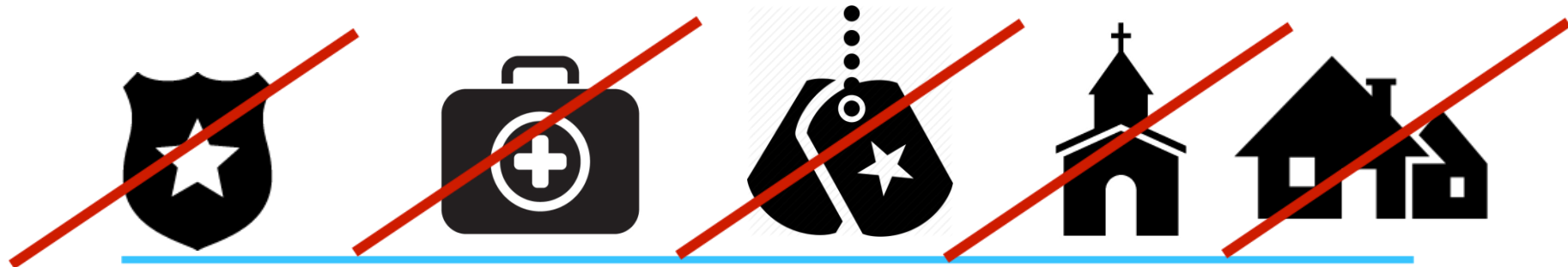


Social
Community



Social
Services

Mainstream Supports



Public Safety

Health Care

Military Service

Faith Community

Housing

Entrapment, Harassment

Mental Illness (until 1973) Institutionalization

Dishonorable Discharge

Sin Immoral

Eviction Harassment



Anna

Sarah

Born:	1930	1950
McCarthy Trials (1954)	24	4
Stonewall (1969)	39	19
APA/DSM (1973)	43	23
Harvey Milk Elected (1977)	47	27
Reagan Mentions AIDS (1987)	57	37
“Ellen” Comes Out on TV (1997)	67	47
Marriage Equality in MA (2004)	74	54
Don’t Ask Don’t Tell Repealed (2011)	81	61
DOMA Repealed (2013)	83	63
SCOTUS: Marriage Equality (2015)	85	65
November 2016 ongoing.....Today	90	70



Bisexuality and Aging

- Most invisible element in LGBTQ spectrum
assumption of identity based on current partner
community based on current partner
- Bisexual older adults: significant mental/physical health disparities compared with lesbian & gay older adult peers
- More internalized stigma and less identity disclosure which impact social network and social support

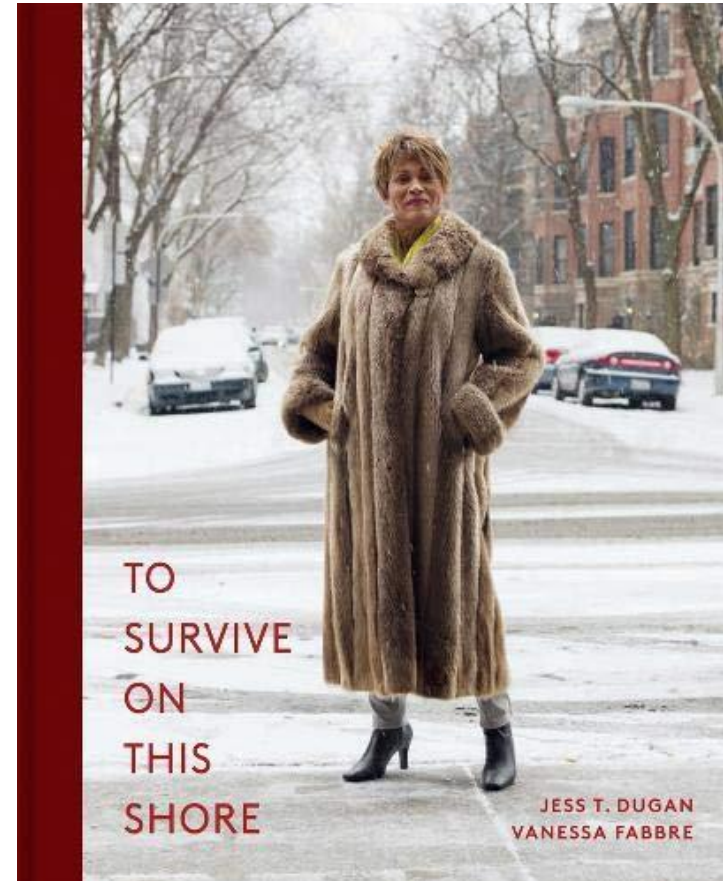
Fredriksen-Goldsen et al, 2017

- **Bisexuals 45+ less likely to be “out” with healthcare providers than lesbian/gay peers**
- **59% have children/grandchildren**
- **74% *do not* live in big cities**

AARP, 2018

Transgender Aging

- Transition early in life: some lived “stealth” with no history or context; significant losses
- Transition later in life: after milestones
 - Retirement, family grown, deaths
- Selective authenticity: maintaining different identities in different settings



LGBTQ Elders of Color



- Estimated 20% of LGBT community are people of color; estimated to double to 40% by 2050

Adams, Generations 2016 in MAP 2017

- Lifetime experience with minority stress (multiple identities, multiple stressors)
- What does it mean to be LGBT in one's racial/ethnic community?
- What does it mean to be old in one's racial/ethnic community?
- What does it mean to be a person of color in the LGBTQ community?"
- What does it mean to be old in the LGBTQ community?
- Flashback Sunday – LGBT Elders of Color

HIV/AIDS and Aging

- Disproportionally LGBTQ/MSM and People of Color
- 50% of all people in the U.S. living with HIV & AIDS are over 50 years old

CDC

- 70% of all people living with HIV in the U.S. will be over 50 years old by 2030

HIV/AIDS and Aging

- Long Term Survivors
 - as long as 25 years or more with HIV infection
 - almost 70% live alone
 - impact of stigma persists
 - impact of losses of late 1980s/early 1990s persists
 - HIV supports of early era now gone
 - increased poverty(early disability)
 - Accelerated Aging and comorbidities

HIV/AIDS and Aging

- New Infections/New Diagnoses in older adults
 - more likely to present with advanced disease
 - less likely to achieve CD4/immune recovery with ARVs
 - more rapid progression to AIDS and shorter survival

Discussing Sexual Health with Older Adults: sexuality exists along the lifespan

- Be proactive and don't wait for your patient to initiate the conversation
- Obtain a standard sexual history with open ended, non-judgmental questions, whether long standing patient or new intake: What is your sexual activity like these days?
- Organizational change: promote protocols for inclusion of respectful and affirming discussions of sexual health as a valued aspect of all patients

Dementia & LGBTQ Patients/Loved Ones

- Diagnosis – When and by whom?
 - Diagnosis could be delayed due to lack of socialization/family support and/or fear of doctor visits

- Care – Primary contact? Who manages? Who is informed?
 - Family may be estranged = partner may be ousted
 - May not have family or emergency contact information

- Legal Issues – “next of kin” vs. “family of choice”
 - Estranged/unaccepting family member may not respect relationship or wishes
 - LGBT friends may end up being HCP or POA
 - Legal Documents for Providers

Dementia & LGBTQ Patients/Loved Ones

- Dementia Fear: Loss of Filter
- What will I say or do?
- How will others respond?

Caregiving and Care Receiving

Most LGBTQ Caregiving is HORIZONTAL

General Population

women
90% birth/marriage

10% non relative

LGBTQ Population

men/women
35% partner/spouse
16% parent
9% other relative

32% friend

7% non relative/neighbor

The Aging and Health Report: Disparities and Resilience in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Older Adults, 2011

LGBTQ Bereavement Group: Current & Previous Losses; Broader range of losses

COVID-19 & LGBTQ Older Adults

Physical Isolation vs. Social Isolation

Outreach calls to nearly 500 LGBTQ older adults/caregivers

Weekly Zoom Drop In

Social Groups migrated to Zoom

Digital Divide – loaner tablets, training, support

Individual Practice

- **Challenge ageist assumptions about older adults**

- **Language of the times:**
 - Homosexual vs. Gay/Lesbian
 - Lifestyle vs. Orientation; Gender Identity/Expression
 - Friend, lover, partner, spouse, husband/wife
 - Euphemisms -- friend, roommate, cousin

- **Newer language and concepts:**
 - QUEER
 - Non-binary; Gender non conforming
 - Ally

- **Open ended questions, affirming environment**

Organizational Practice

- **Create inclusive service delivery systems -more than a rainbow sticker:**
 - HR policies
 - Staffing
 - Pronouns
 - Outreach material, website, social media
- **Enhance professional capacity and cultural competency:**
 - Workforce training and why it's important
- **Collaborations between mainstream providers and networks that serve LGBTQ community**

Resources for LGBTQ Older Adults and Caregivers

- Social Organizations
 - The Prime Timers, OLOC, RALLY
 - LGBT Elders of Color
- LGBTQ Friendly Community Cafes - 23 statewide in MA
- LGBTQ Friendly Senior Housing - 10 currently; 20 pending in US
- LGBTQ Bereavement Groups – time limited, free, statewide; all ages
- LGBTQ Senior Pride Coalition
- LGBT Aging Project Newsletter (Fenway/TFI/LGBT Aging Project)
- SAGE – NY and state affiliates
- Gen Silent –documentary about LGBTQ Aging/Caregiving (gensilent.com)
- National Resource Center on LGBT Aging (lgbtagingcenter.org)

What Supports Resilience?



Ability to be authentic
LGBTQ inclusive and affordable health care
Safe and affordable housing
Social network and community
Meaningful engagement
Livable income

Q & A

Are there any questions that
you would like to ask?

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