

ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE

Tonda L. Hughes, PhD, RN, FAAN

Henrik H. Bendixen Professor of International Nursing

Associate Dean, Global Health

Columbia University School of Nursing

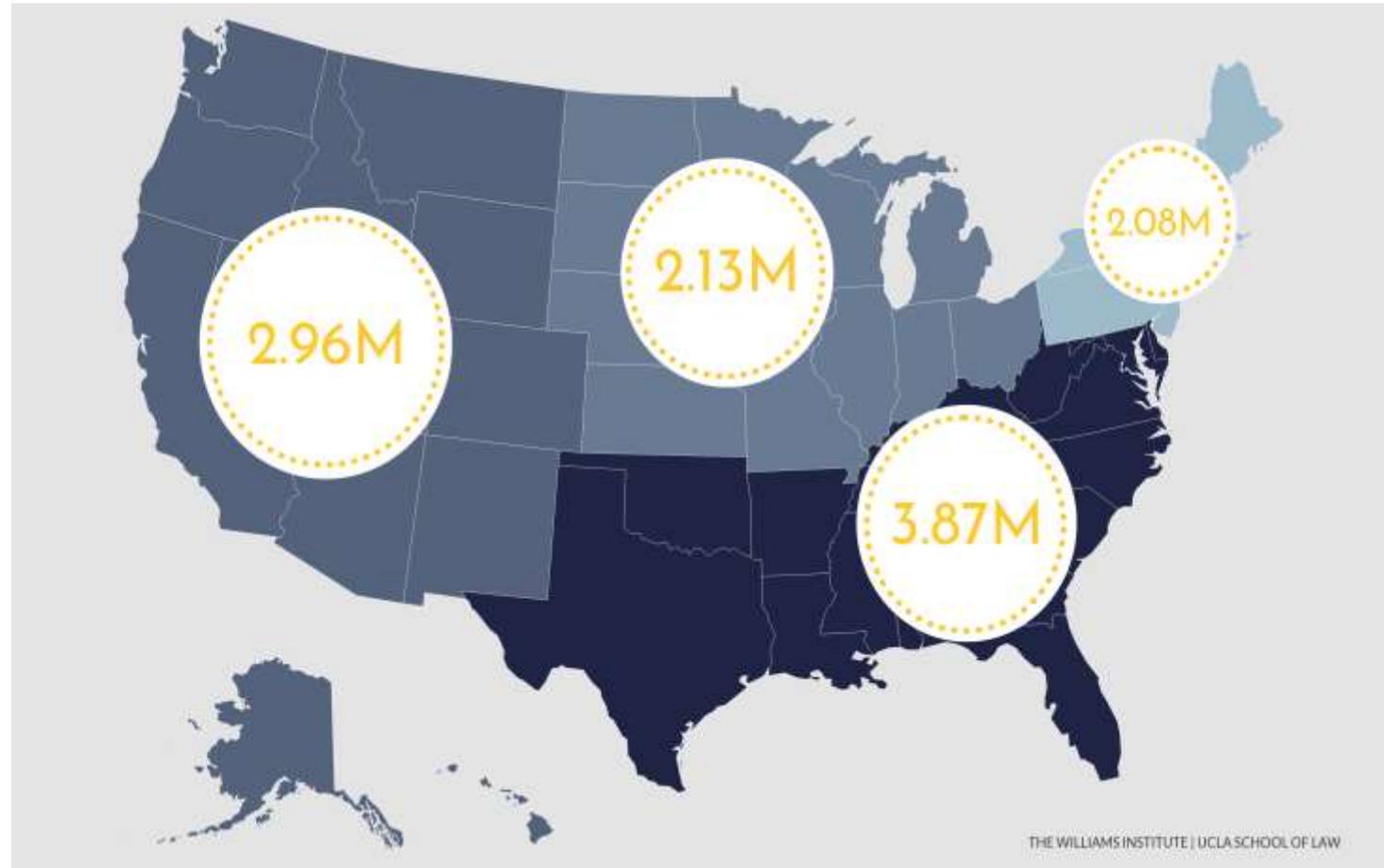
March 20, 2020

How many LGBTQ people are there in the US?

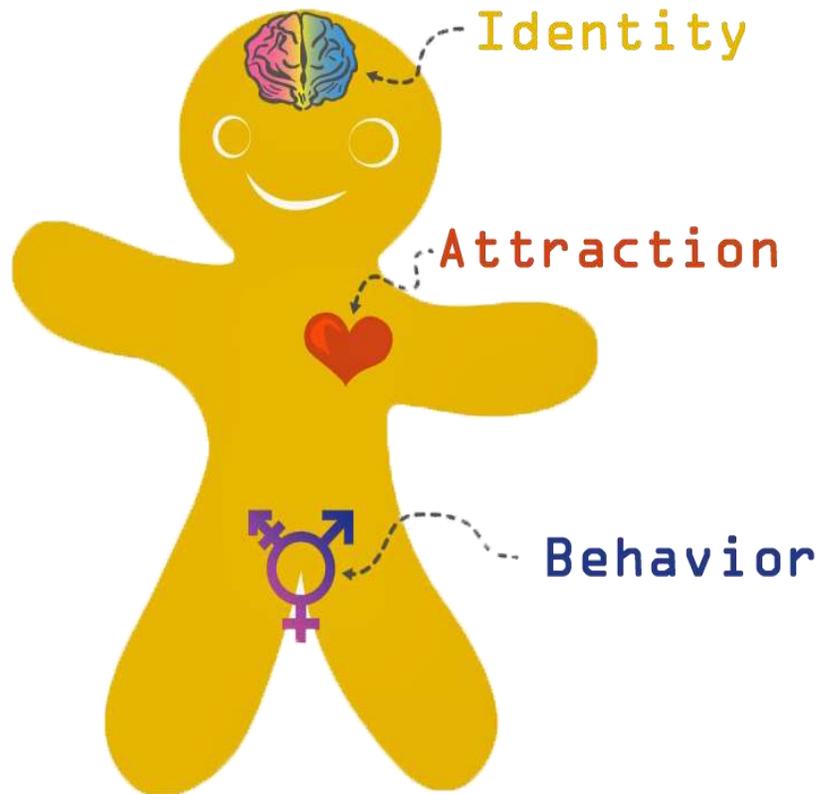
2017: An estimated **4.5%** of the US **adult** population identified as LGBT.

CA - largest number of LGBT residents (1,615K); Wyoming - the smallest (15K).

Largest population (3,868K) in the South; smallest in the Northeast (2,079K).



Size of the sexual minority population depends on a number of factors



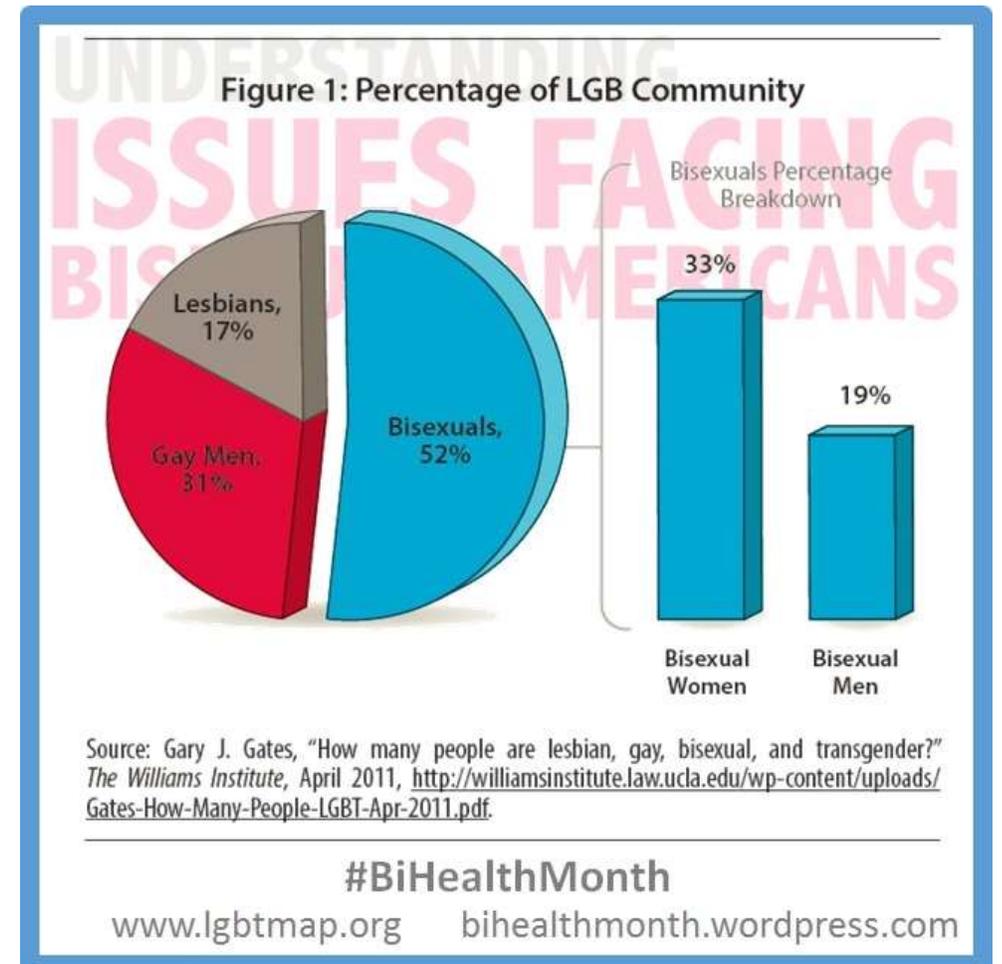
Compared with the number of adults who **identify** as LGB, 2X as many report same-sex **behavior** and about 3X as many report same-sex **attraction**.

- Younger people & women more likely to identify as LGB.
- Hispanics, Blacks & Asians more likely than Whites to identify as LGB.
- Adults with lower incomes more likely to identify as LGB.

Bisexual identity is more common than lesbian or gay identity

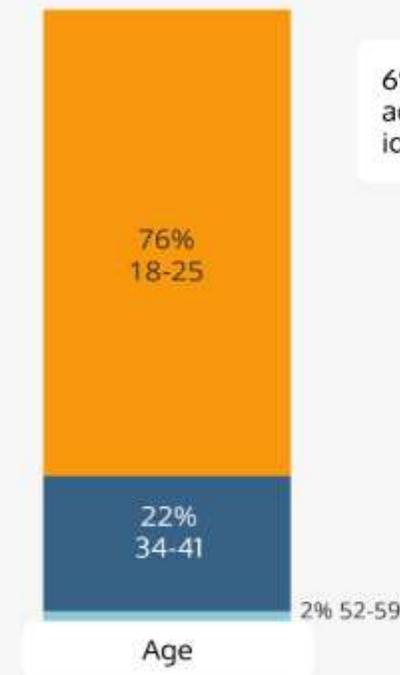
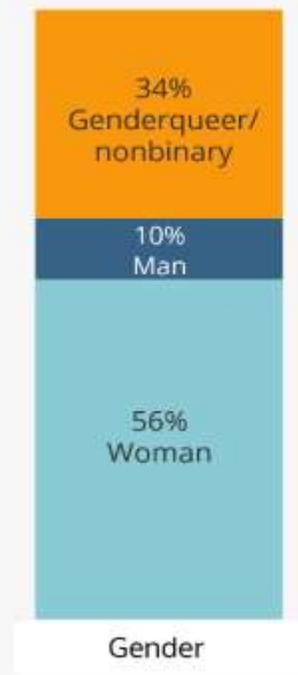
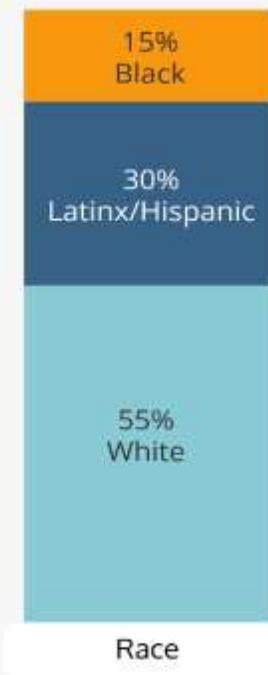
Slightly more than 1/2 of sexual minorities identify as **bisexual**.

Women are more likely to identify as **bisexual than lesbian**; **men** are more likely to identify as **gay than bisexual**.



The way sexual minorities identify is changing...

Characteristics of sexual minority adults who identify as queer in the US



6% of sexual minority adults in the US identify as queer

Estimates of the transgender population

An estimated 0.6% of the US adults (~1.4 million) identify as transgender

- Younger people more likely than older people
- People of color more likely than white people

Largest transgender populations

District of Columbia:	2.77%
Hawaii:	0.78%
California:	0.76%
New Mexico:	0.75%



LGBTQ Health Disparities

LGBT Health Disparities



- **Lesbian & bisexual women** more likely to be overweight or obese; less likely to receive preventive screenings; more likely to be heavy / hazardous drinkers.
- **Gay men**, esp. Black & Latino men, higher risk of HIV/STDs.
- **Transgender people**: high prevalence of HIV/STDs, violent victimization, mental health issues, and suicide.

LGBT Health Disparities

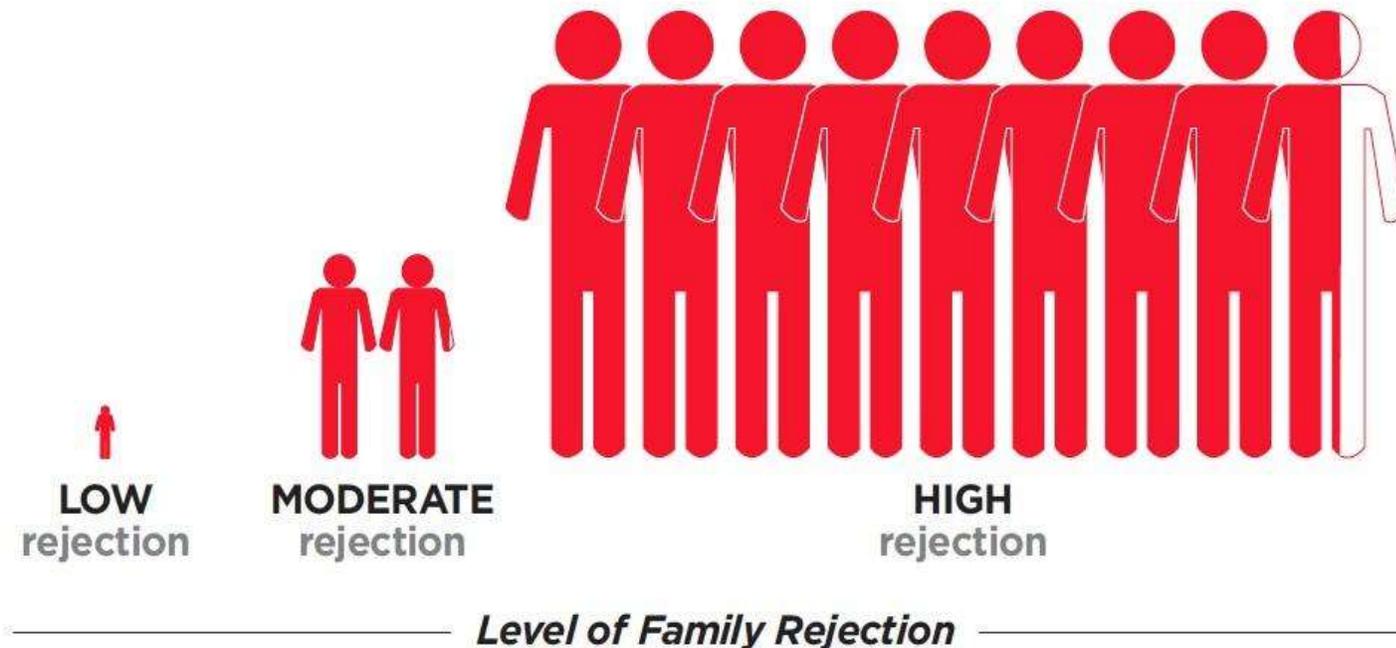


- **Older LGBT people** face additional health risks because of isolation and lack of social services.
- **LGBT people** overall have a disproportionately high prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use.

LGBT Youth at Elevated Risk for Suicide

Lifetime Suicide Attempts for Highly Rejected LGBT Young People

(One or more times)



LGBTQ Youth at Much Greater Risk of Homelessness



HOMELESS YOUTH
POPULATION



GENERAL YOUTH
POPULATION



Major Drivers of Health Care Disparities



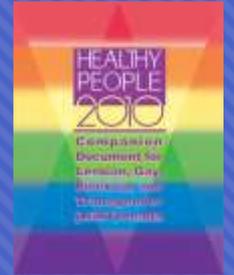
Social Determinants of LGBTQ Health



Adapted from: Healthy People 2020

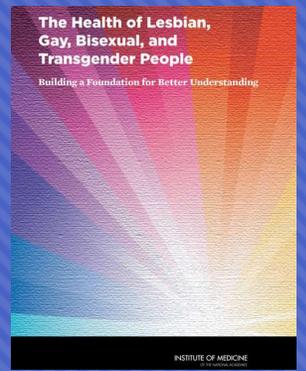
**Advances in the US
That Support Health
Equity for LGBTQ
People**

Advances in LGBTQ Health



- 1999, **IOM** - *Lesbian Health. Current Assessment and Directions for the Future*
- 2001, **Healthy People 2010** - LGBT health researchers, under auspices of GLMA, developed the **HP2010 LGBT Companion Document** (29 objectives)
- 2011, **Healthy People 2020** included LGBT health as new topic area
- 2011, **Joint Commission** - *Advancing effective communication, cultural competence and patient & family centered care for the LGBT community: A field guide*

Advances in LGBTQ Health



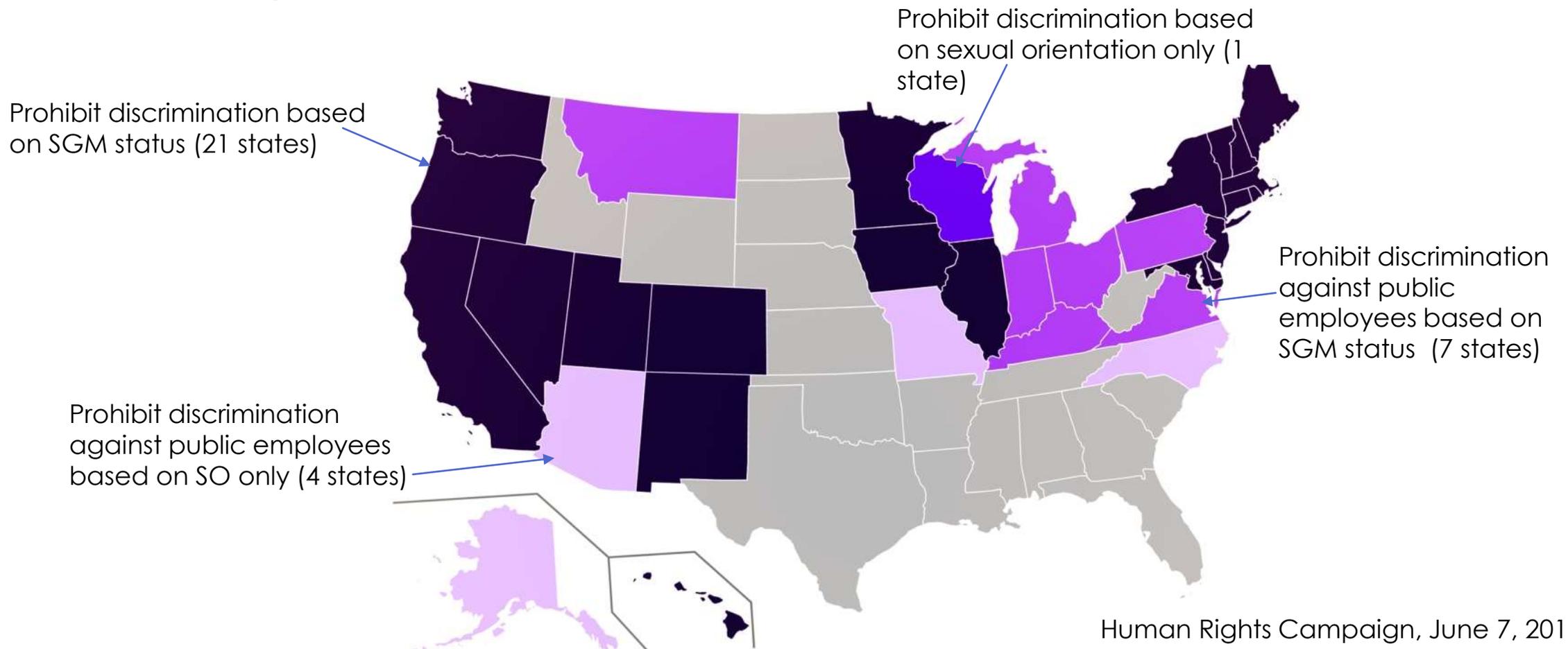
- 2011, **IOM report:** *The health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people: Building a foundation for better understanding.*
- 2015, NIH established the **Sexual & Gender Minority Research Office** (SGMRO).
- 2016, **SGMs formally designated a health disparity population** by NIH.

Other Important Advances

- 2009, **Hospital visitation rights**. DHHS regulations prohibit discrimination based on “race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.”
- 2010, Congress ended the military’s “**Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell**” policy.
- 2013 **Affordable Care Act** (ACA). Uninsured SGMs decreased by > 1/3.
- 2014 **AAMC** released the first guidelines for the care of LGBT, GNC & DSD.
- 2015 U.S. Supreme Court struck down all state bans on **same-sex marriage**, legalized in all 50 states.

**...Still More
Work To Do**

LGBTQ Employment Discrimination



LGBTQ Employment Discrimination

In 28 states, it is legal to fire an employee for being gay, lesbian, or bisexual

In 29 states, employers have the legal right to fire people who are transgender



Discrimination Against Transgender People



- Access to appropriate facilities, including **restrooms**
- Full participation in **school** and **sports**
- **Healthcare** for transgender youth
- **Religiously-motivated discrimination**
- Barriers to **ID documents** with name and gender

Discrimination in the U.S. Military

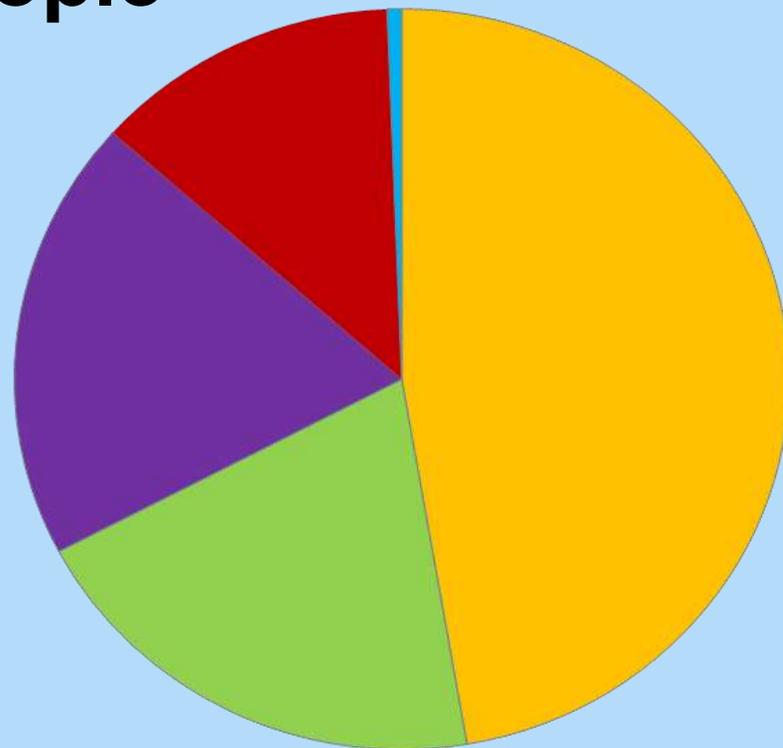
March 2018 Trump administration announced new policy that bans most transgender people from serving in the military.

After several court battles, the Supreme Court allowed the ban to go into effect in January 2019.

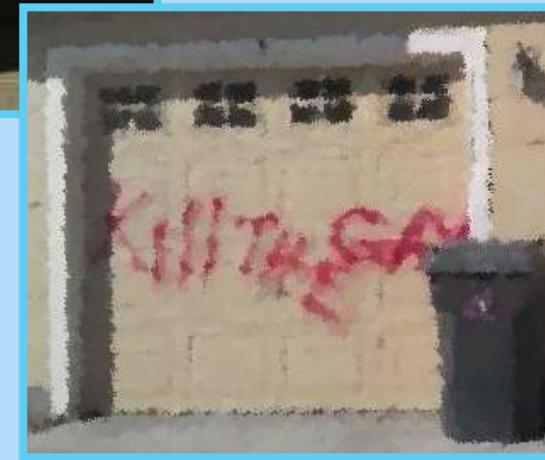
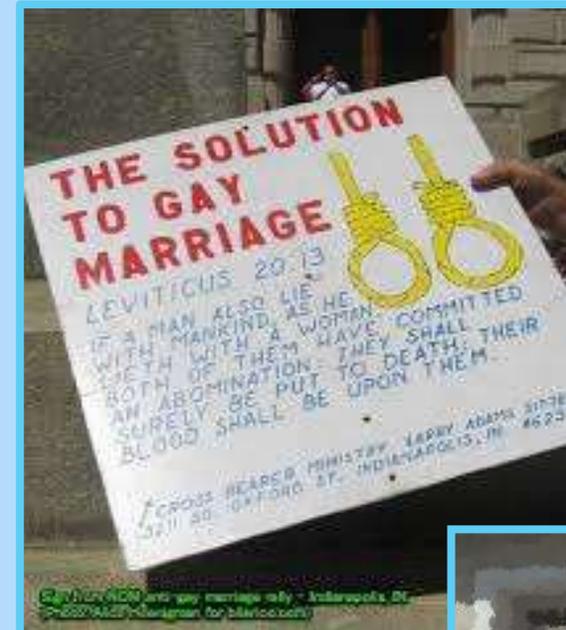


Hate Crimes

17% of Hate Crimes Target LGBT People



- Race
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation
- Ethnicity/National Origin
- Disability





Advances in Health Care Practice

Nursing Care of LGBT people

Integrative literature review - 24 articles: focused on nurses and on LGBT people's perceptions of nursing care

- Clear **evidence of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.**
- Many LB women (half), GB men (third), transgender (two-thirds) respondents reported previous **negative healthcare experiences.**

Inadequate care linked to a **culture of heteronormativity & lack of education** about SGM health.

Health Care Providers' Implicit and Explicit Attitudes Toward LGB people

- Implicit preferences for heterosexual vs lesbian and gay people common among heterosexual HCPs
 - Implicit **preferences for heterosexual women weaker** than for heterosexual men.
 - **Heterosexual nurses** held the strongest implicit preference for heterosexual vs gay men.

LGB people are reluctant to disclose their sexual identity to HCPs



REPORTED NOT DISCLOSING THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION TO ANY MEDICAL PROVIDER

LGBT Experiences with HCPs

Table 2: Health care professionals refused to touch me or used excessive precautions

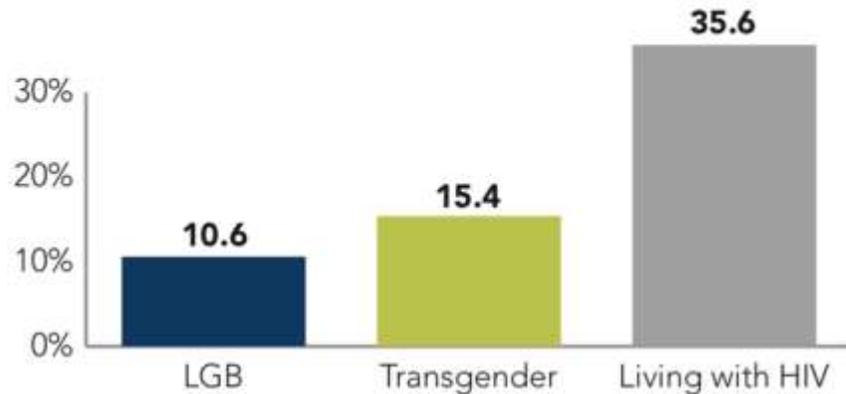


Table 4: Health care professionals blamed me for my health status

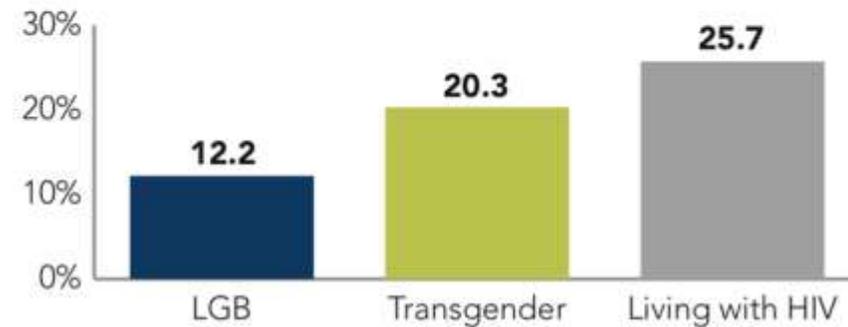


Table 3: Health care professionals used harsh or abusive language



Table 5: Health care professionals were physically rough or abusive



LGBTQ Health Clinics



we get you



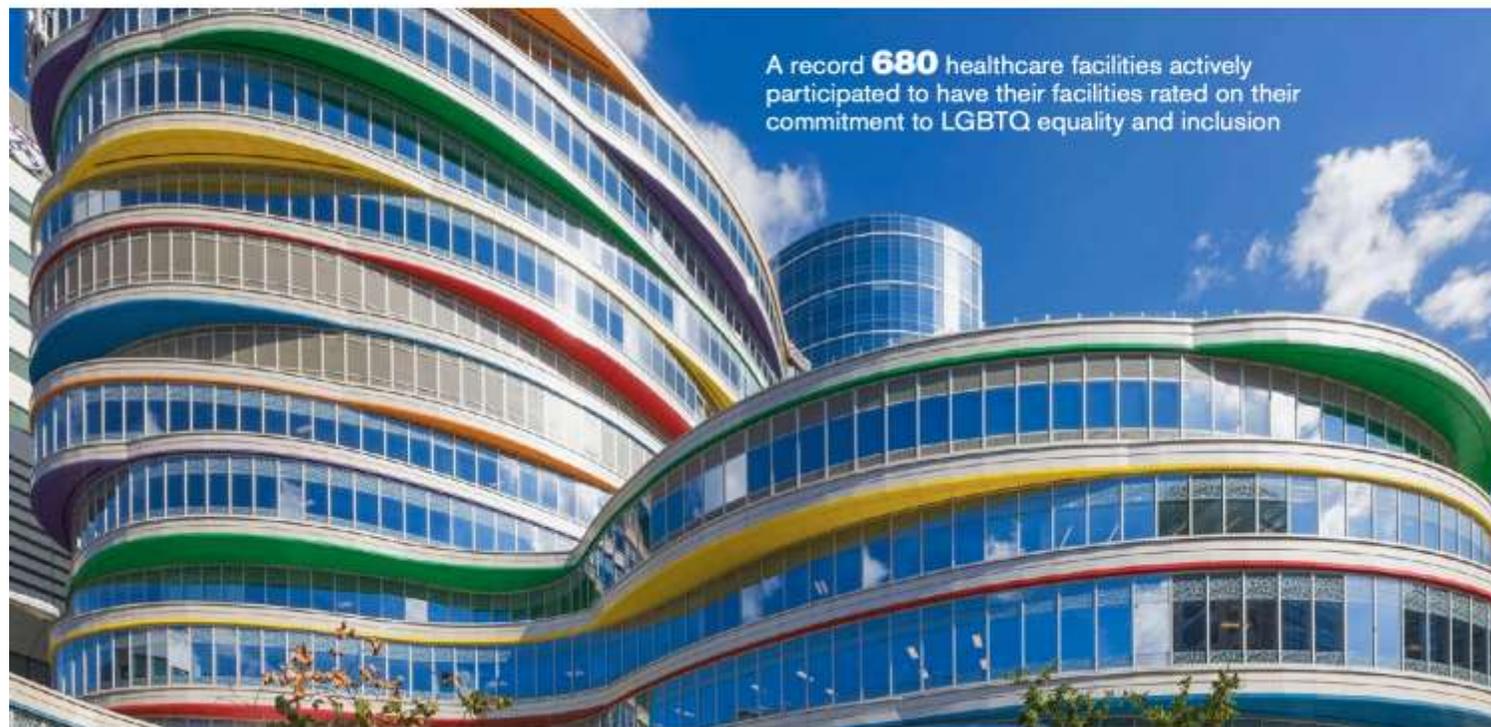
Human Rights Campaign Healthcare Equality Index



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
FOUNDATION

Healthcare Equality Index 2019

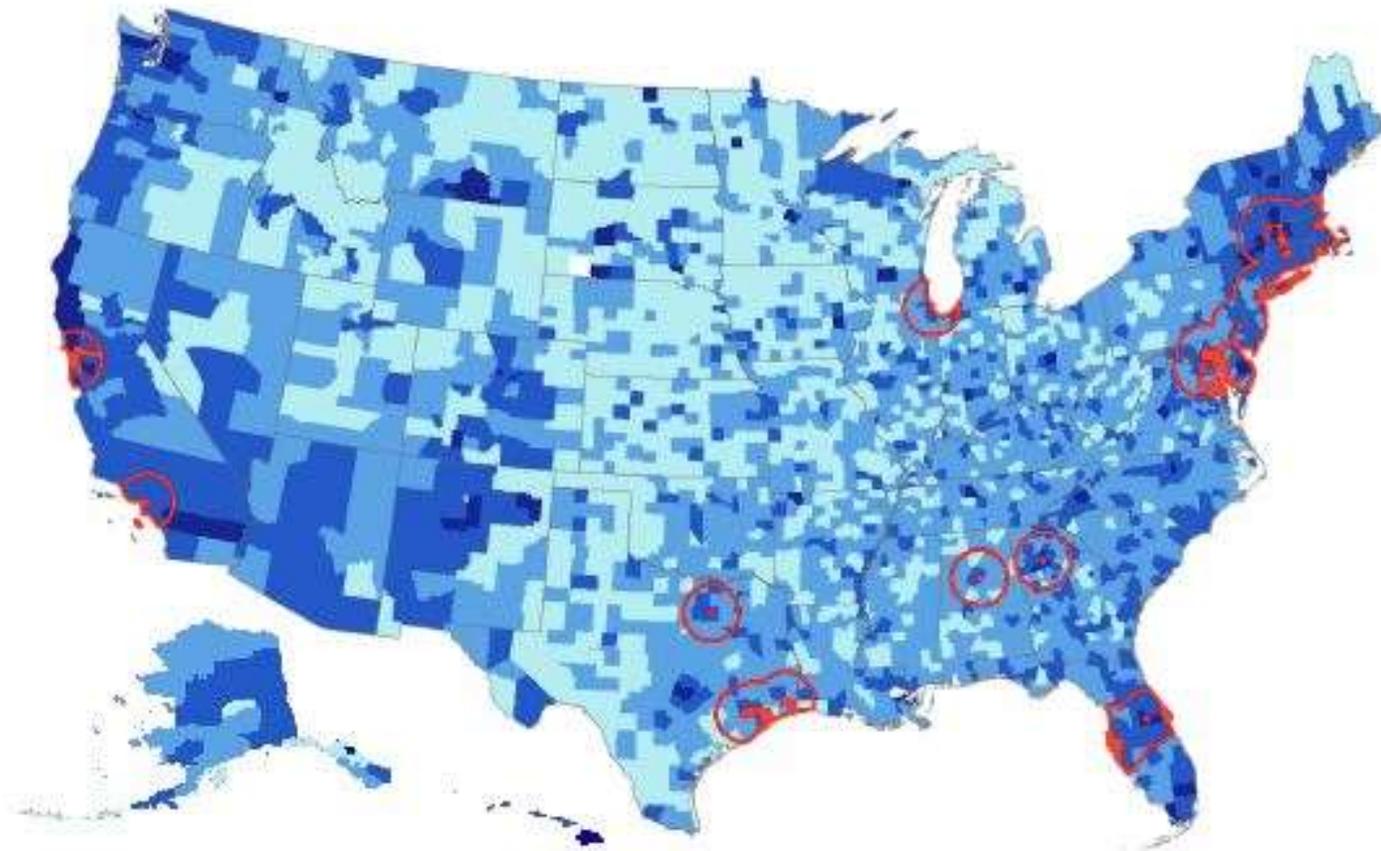
Promoting Equitable and Inclusive Care
for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
and Queer Patients and Their Families



A record **680** healthcare facilities actively participated to have their facilities rated on their commitment to LGBTQ equality and inclusion

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
10 Year HEI Participant and LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Leader

Community Health Centers that provide LGBT-specific services



- 213 LGBT centers in 37 states. Most provide services related to wellness (72%), HIV/STIs (65%), and counseling (52%).
- *Red circles - LGBT health centers.*
- *Darker shades - higher density of same-sex couples*

Advances in Health Care Provider Education

Assessment of Internal Medicine Resident Preparedness to Care for LGBTQ Patients

“... trainees **conflated sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression**, were **unaware of health disparities** unique to sexual and gender minorities, including substance use and mental health issues, and were **unfamiliar with preventive healthcare options** for sexual and gender minorities.”

LGBTQ Health Education: Nursing

National survey of nursing faculty knowledge, experience, and readiness to teach LGBT health

1200 faculty teaching in BSN programs

- 75% said **LGBT content** was **absent or very limited** in the courses they taught;
- 50% lacked **knowledge** or **awareness** of LGBT health issues.

LGBTQ Health Education: Medicine

- The **positive impact** of LGBT-specific content in medical education is well documented *Ard & Makadon (2012)*.
- Even a small amount of seminar content affected a **positive change** in resident physicians' **attitudes** toward the care of LGBT people *McGarry et al., 2002*

Training to Reduce LGBTQ-Related Bias Among Medical, Nursing, & Dental Students & Providers

Systematic Review of 60 articles on educational interventions

- **Bias-focused interventions** effective at increasing knowledge of health issues.
- **Experiential learning interventions** effective at increasing comfort in working with LGBTQ patients.
- **Intergroup contact** effective at promoting more tolerant attitudes.

Examples of Programs with Model SGM Health Curricula

- Boston University School of **Medicine**: *Model for Teaching Trans Healthcare*
- Columbia University School of **Nursing**: Transgender Health post-grad certificate for nurse practitioners
- Harvard **Medical** School: *Sexual, Gender Minority Health Equity Initiative.*
- Johns Hopkins School of **Nursing**: *LGBTQ+ Health Initiative*
- University of Louisville School of **Medicine**: *eQuality project*
- Vanderbilt University **Medical** Center *Program for LGBTQ Health*

Advances in Health Research

Early Studies of Sexual Minority People



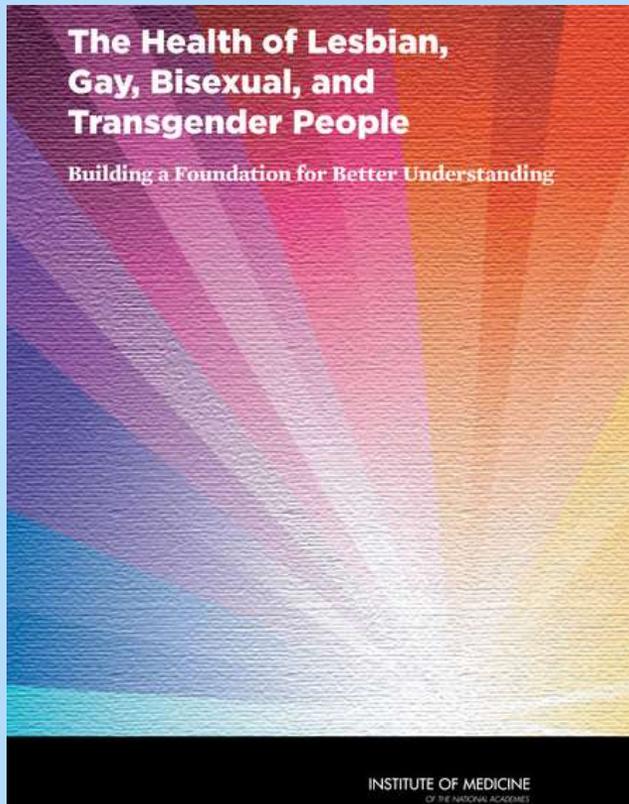
Maud's—Lesbian Bar in San Francisco (Circa 1966)

NIH Funded Research 1989-2011

628 funded studies related to LGBT health

- **541 (86%)** focused on **SMM** (most on **HIV/AIDS**)
- **85 (13.5%)** focused on **SMW**
- **43 (7%)** focused on **Trans** health

Institute of Medicine Report on the Health of LGBT People (2011)



Conclusion: “Far too little is known about the health needs of LGBT people”

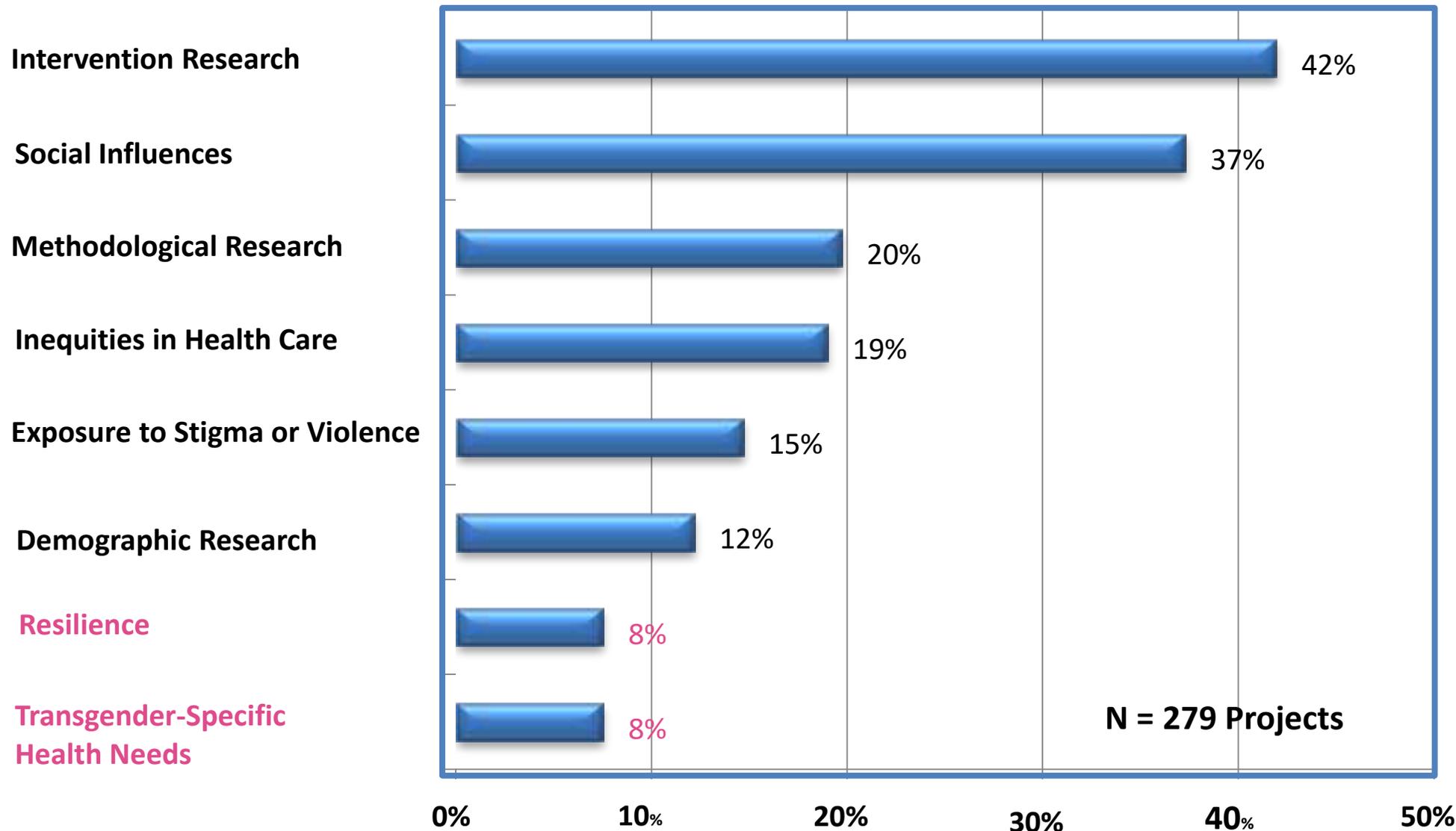
IOM Report: Five Priority Research Areas

Figure 1: Research Agenda



A number of different conceptual perspectives can be applied to priority areas of research in order to further the evidence base for LGBT health issues.

SGM Funded Research by IOM Priority Research Areas



Advances in Research with Sexual Minority Women

Chicago Health & Life
Experiences of Women
(CHLEW) Study 1999-2022

Dr. Tonda Hughes talks 20 years studying queer women's health

by Carrie Maxwell, Windy City Times

2019-04-30



Violence Across the Lifespan

- **SMW's rates of lifetime victimization are 2-3 times higher than those of heterosexual women**
- **CSA and CPA appear to be much more severe among SMW than heterosexual women**

Drabble et al., 2013; Hughes et al., 2010a, 2010b; 2014; Kaysen et al., 2012; Szalacha et al., in review; Wilsnack et al., 2008



Alvy et al., 2013; Wilsnack et al., 2012.



Interpersonal Violence

Australia Longitudinal Survey of Women's Health (ALSWH)

- Interpersonal Violence (IPV) strongly predicted **poor mental health**.
- Experiences of **multiple types of IPV** was the single strongest predictor of stress, anxiety and depression.
- Among heterosexual and SM women who had never experienced IPV, **mental health indicators were not significantly different**.

Health Risk Behaviors and Outcomes Vary Across Subgroups of SMW

- Risk behaviors and negative health outcomes vary substantially across sexual minority subgroups; **bisexual women** tend to show the highest risks & poorest health outcomes
- Women who **identify as lesbian and report only female partners** look very similar to heterosexual women in terms of health risks and outcomes

Bostwick et al., 2010;
Drabble et al., 2013;
Alvy et al., 2013;
Hughes et al., 2010;
McCabe et al., 2009;
Wilsnack et al., 2008

Bostwick et al., 2010

Health Risks and Outcomes Vary Based on How Questions are Asked

Sexual Identity Response Options

- **Exclusively lesbian**
- **Mostly/mainly lesbian**
- **Bisexual**
- **Mostly/mainly heterosexual**
- **Exclusively heterosexual**

Hughes et al., 2010, 2015; McCabe et al., 2011; McNair et al., 2011; Wilsnack et al., 2008

Mostly Heterosexual Women Also at Elevated Risk

- Women who identify as **“mostly” heterosexual** differ in important ways from women who identify as exclusively heterosexual



National Study of Health and Life Experiences of Women

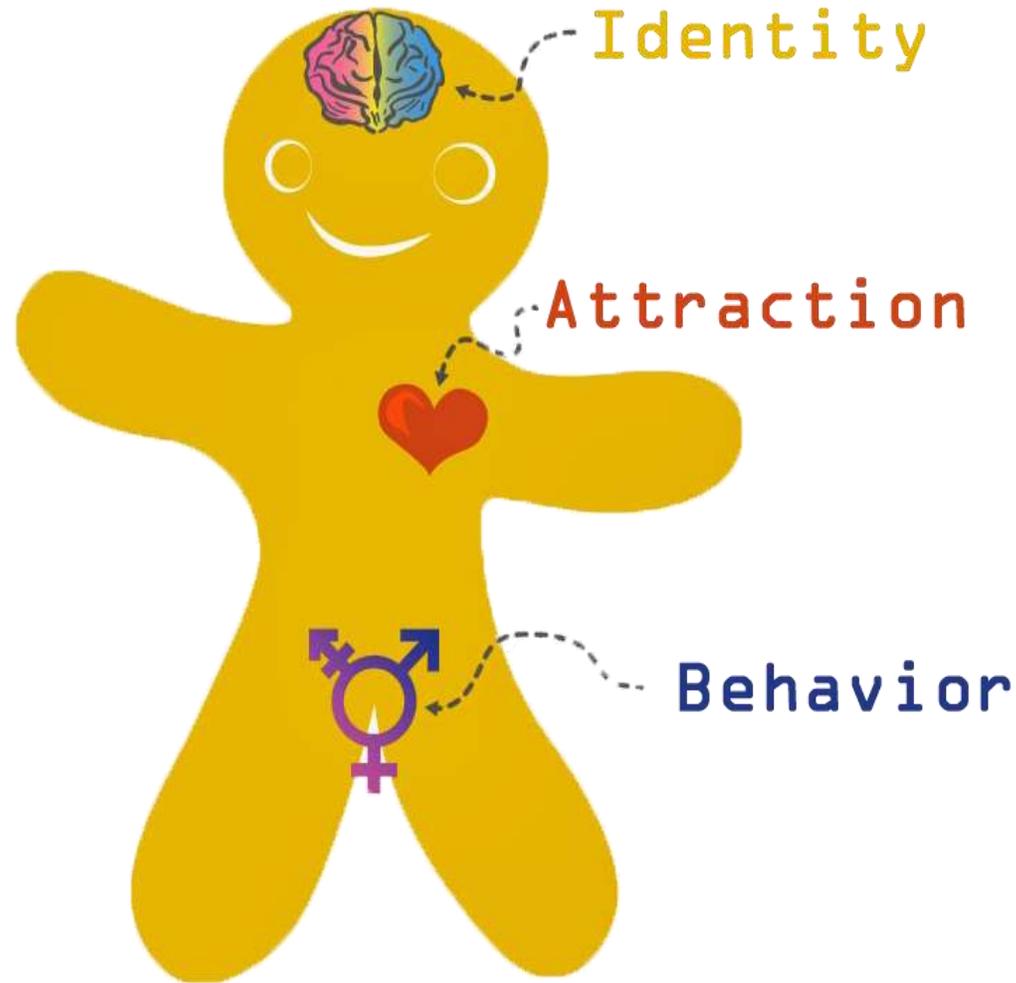
Substance Use	Only Heterosexual	Mostly Heterosexual	
Marijuana (ever)	18%	46%***	* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$
Marijuana (12 mo)	6%	26%**	
Cocaine (ever)	3%	11%**	
Cocaine (12 mo)	1%	6%*	
Heavy drinking (12 mo)	4%	15%***	
Intoxication (12 mo)	28%	57%*	
Binge drinking (12 mo)	13%	33%*	
Adverse drinking consequences (12 mo)	13%	33%*	
Alcohol dependence symptoms (12 mo)	10%	33%**	
Ever concerned about having a drinking problem?	19%	37%*	
Since last interview, concerned about having a drinking problem?	7%	22%*	Hughes et al., 2015

Australia Longitudinal Survey of Women's Health

Mostly heterosexual women:

- More than 3 times as likely as **exclusively heterosexual** women to have been in a violent relationship in the previous 3 years;
- Significantly **higher** on stress, anxiety and depression;
- Significantly **lower** on overall mental health and life satisfaction.

Major Dimensions of Sexual Identity



Many Factors affect Health/Health Risks



- Women whose sexual **identity matches their sexual behavior and attraction** are at **lower risk** of hazardous drinking than those whose identity does not match the other two major sexual orientation dimensions
- Women whose sexual **identity remains stable** have **lower risk** profiles than do those whose identity changes over time, *regardless of the direction of the change*

Talley et al. (2015)

Everett et al. (2016)

Influence of Gender Presentation



Higher femininity scores

associated with lower levels of discrimination but higher levels of internalized stigma and depression

In Contrast

women who rate themselves as more masculine report lower levels of internalized stigma and depression, but higher levels of discrimination, victimization and hazardous drinking

Risk of Pregnancy among Young SMW



Rates of Unintended Pregnancy - CHLEW



- **20%** report high rates of **unintended pregnancy**
- **Highest risk: SMW who are bisexual, Black or have high school education**
- **50%** identify as mostly or exclusively lesbian.

Everett et al., 2016



Illinois Civil Union Act, 2011



Women interviewed **after bill** enacted show **better outcomes**, including lower levels of perceived stigma and discrimination, depressive symptoms and hazardous drinking.

These **benefits most apparent for Black and Latina** women and **women without college level education.**



Model Research Programs

Northwestern



Institute for Sexual
and Gender Minority
Health and Wellbeing



LGBT
HEALTH

Columbia University Program for
the Study of LGBT Health

University of Pittsburgh



FENWAY  HEALTH

UCLA

School of Law

Williams Institute

**There is still much more to do to
achieve health equity for LGBTQ
people**



Thank You!



Tonda L. Hughes, PhD, RN, FAAN
Columbia University School of Nursing
th2696@Columbia.edu