

# **The Impact of Racism & Historical Trauma through the Lens of Special Populations: LGBTQ+ People of Color**



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**NYS Making the Case for Health Equity Training**  
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# Delimitations

- While this presentation will address differences in gender and sexual identities, it is not intended to be comprehensive.
- Some of the presentation content may be challenging. Openness and empathy are key to navigating these challenges.



# Living Arrangements

- Mutual respect
- “Three, then me”
- “Ouch” rule
- Make space for others

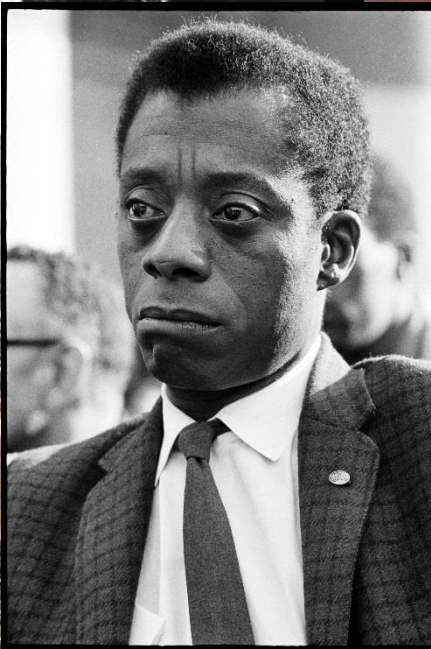
# Looking for a Miracle



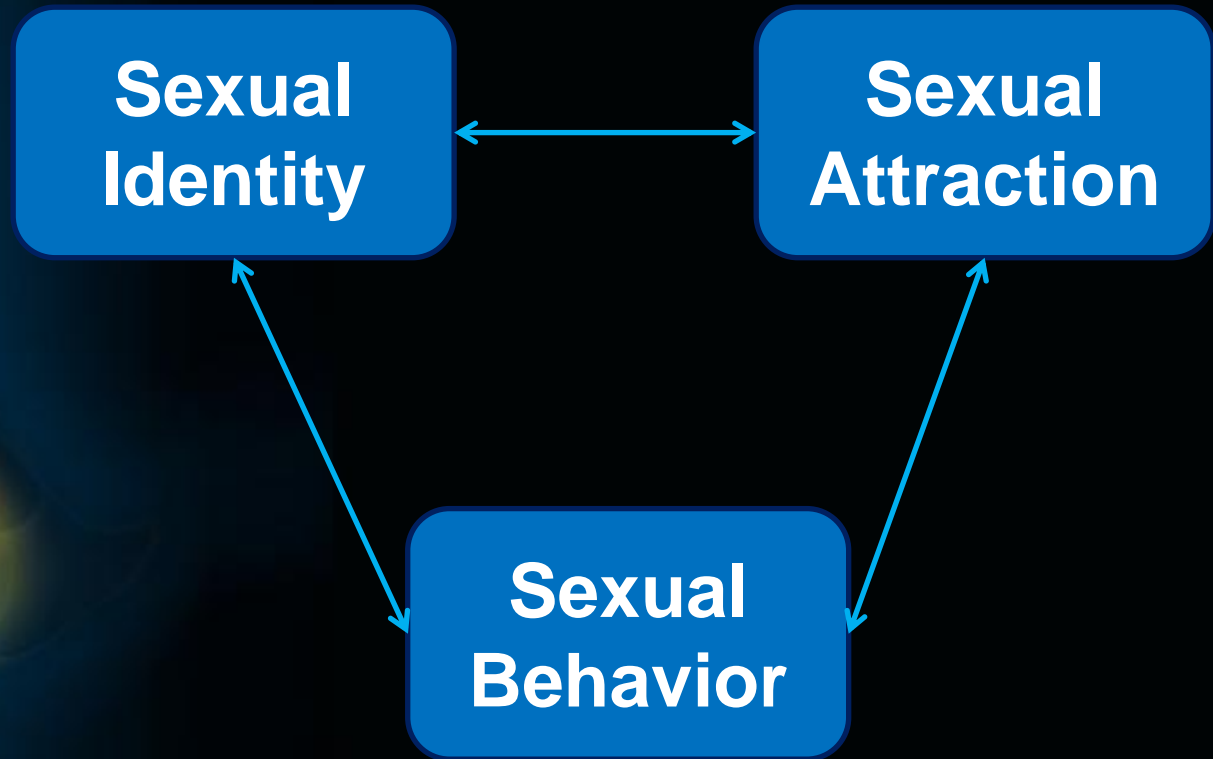
“I’m looking for a miracle,  
I expect the impossible,  
I feel the intangible,  
**I see the invisible...**”

--The Clark Sisters

# “The Personal is Political”



# Sexual Identity (aka Sexual Orientation)

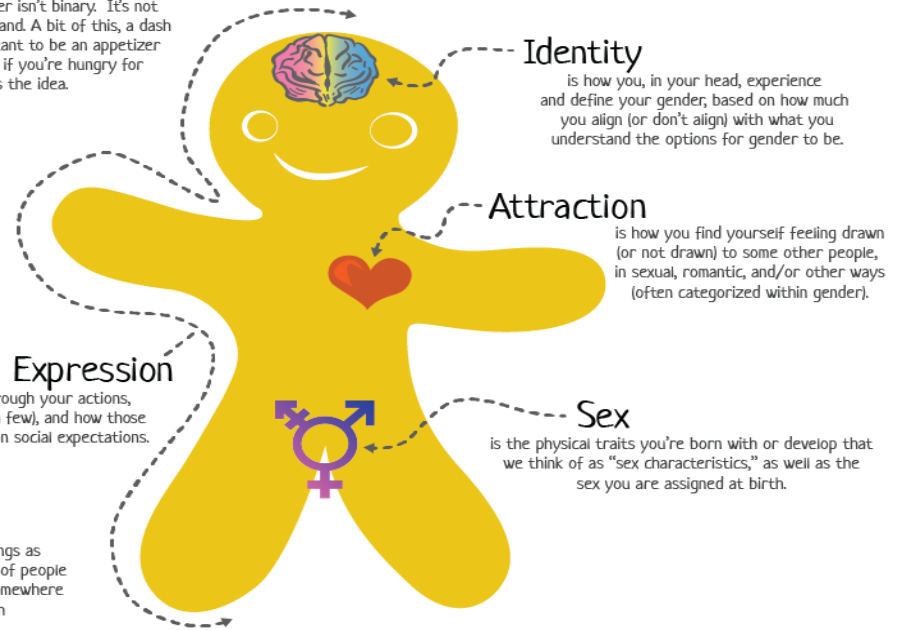




# The Genderbread Person

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more after reading it. In fact, that's the idea.



We can think about all these things as existing on continuums, where a lot of people might see themselves as existing somewhere between 0 and 100 on each

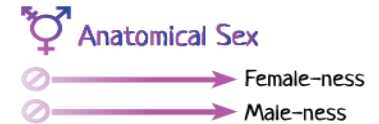
⊖ means a lack of what's on the right side



personality traits, jobs, hobbies, likes, dislikes, roles, expectations  
common GENDER IDENTITY things



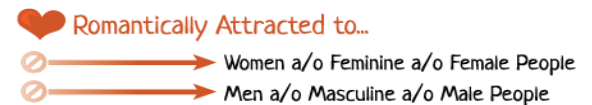
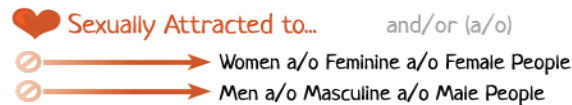
style, grooming, clothing, mannerisms, affect, appearance, hair, make-up  
common GENDER EXPRESSION things



body hair, chest, hips, shoulders, hormones, penis, vulva, chromosomes, voice pitch  
common ANATOMICAL SEX things

Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex  
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation

**Sex Assigned At Birth**  
 Female  Intersex  Male  
 Typically based solely on external genitalia present at birth (ignoring internal anatomy, biology, and change throughout life). Sex Assigned At Birth (SAAB) is key for distinguishing between the terms "cisgender" (when SAAB aligns with gender identity) and "transgender" (when it doesn't).



# Activity Time: Getting to Know You



**HELLO**  
my name is





# Activity Instructions

- On your sheet, write down as many of your roles/identities as you can
- Examples:
  - Parent
  - Woman
  - Stamp collector
  - Black
  - Pisces



# Activity Instructions

- Of the identities that you listed, choose the ONE (1) that is most important or relevant to you



# Activity Reflections

- How easy or difficult was it to choose one primary identity?
- What are the + / - ideas associated with your identity?
  - Where do those ideas come from?
- What if someone else chooses a primary identity FOR you?



# **Intersectionality**



# Intersectionality

- Sociological framework highlighted by K. Crenshaw (1989)
- Way of examining the relationships among multiple dimensions of social relationships
- How do categories like race, gender, class, sexuality, age, etc. interact?
- Shows how individual-level experiences reveal macro-level inequalities
- Encompasses both identities and structures



QUEER

Lesbian

Gay

Bi

Trans

Intersex

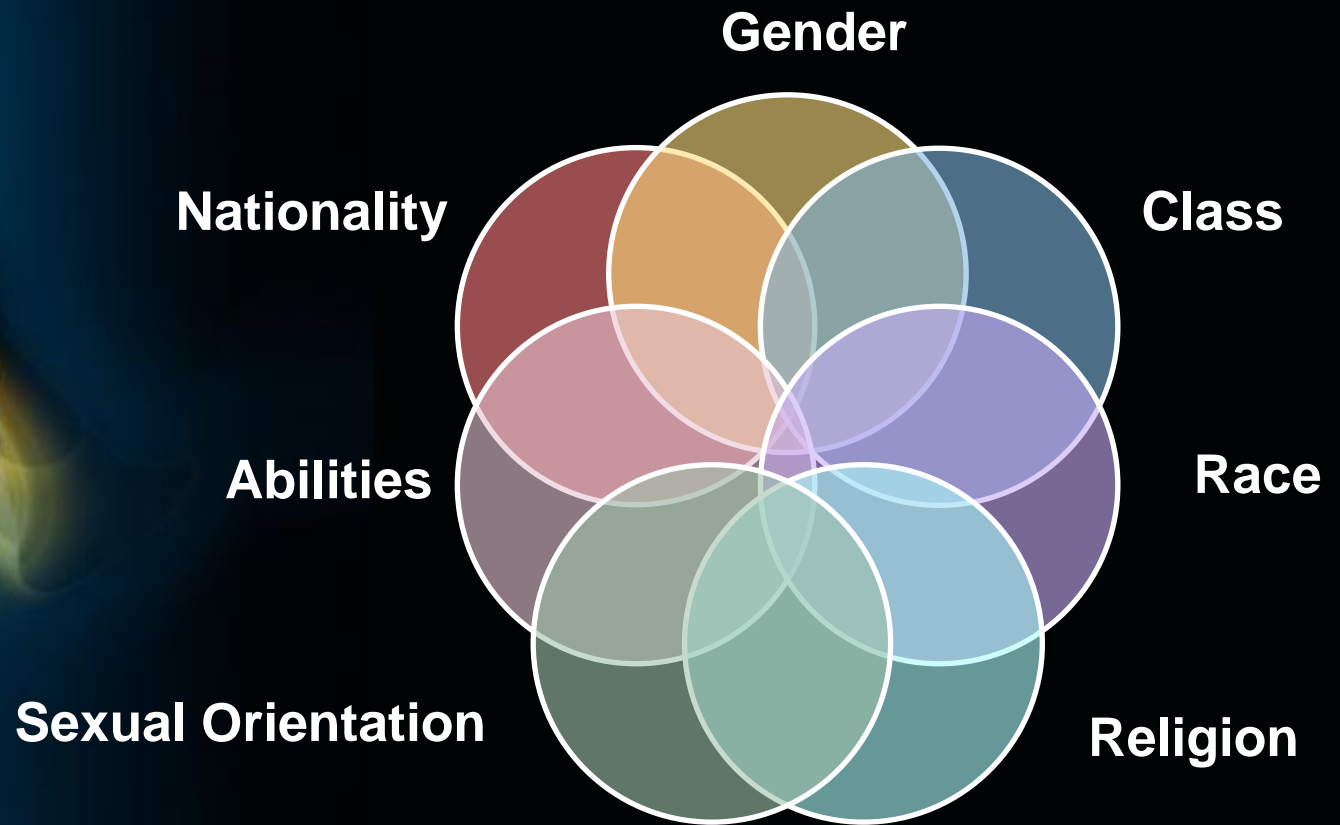
Pansexual

Asexual

All Others

[www.queerproblems.com](http://www.queerproblems.com)

# Intersecting Targets of Oppression





# Theory of Minority Stress

(Meyer, 1995, 2003)

- **What is stress (individual and/or social)?**
- **Minority Stress is:**
  - Unique
  - Chronic
  - Socially-based
- **How might minority stress be unique for LGBTQ+ people of color? Multiple-consciousness?**
- **Importance of stress-ameliorating factors and personal and group resiliency**





# **Unique Issues affecting LGBTQ+ People of Color**



# **LGBTQ+ People of Color**

(Human Rights Campaign, 2020)

- **Economic Insecurity**
- **Violence & Harassment**
- **HIV & Health**
- **Religious Intolerance**
- **Criminal Justice**



# **Social Determinants of Health and Black LGBTQ+ People**

(National LGBT Health Education Center, 2019)


- **Structural**
  - Job discrimination
  - Interactions with law enforcement
  - Unwelcoming physical and digital spaces
  - Language barriers
  - Inability to afford basic needs due to SES (no ENDA)
  - Black transwomen experience more violence, brutality
  - Lack of access to care (physical and mental health)



# **Social Determinants of Health and Black LGBTQ+ People**

(National LGBT Health Education Center, 2019)

- **Interpersonal**
  - Support against racism, but not for LGBTQ+ identity
  - Membership in religious communities
  - Less resources in interpersonal networks
- **Individual**
  - Depression, anxiety, PTSD, substance use, suicidality
  - Internalized stigmas
  - Limited providers with appropriate training, cultural competency, shared identity



**What comes to mind  
when you hear the  
term “Black church?”**



# African American Religious Life

- More frequent church attendance, higher rates of prayer, stronger feelings about their religious beliefs (Taylor, 1988)
- More likely to indicate the Bible is the word of God, believe that God sends misfortunes as punishment for sins (Taylor, 1988)
- More likely to remain influenced by religious beliefs even without current participation (Dyson, 2003)



# The Black Church and Homonegativity

- Homonegativity manifested in Black churches in varying degrees, from verbal hostility to silence (Ward, 2005)
- Homosexuality treated as a more egregious sin than others (Fullilove & Fullilove, 1999)
- Some churches have developed practice of an “open closet” (Fullilove & Fullilove, 1999)
- Homonegativity may contribute to the spread of HIV among African Americans (Fullilove & Fullilove, 1999)
- Existence of “affirming” alternatives (e.g., Unity Fellowship Church, Metropolitan Community Church)

# Does anyone know these men?





But it's not just the men...





# From the pulpit of Bishop Alfred Owens (2006)...

- "It takes a real man to confess Jesus as Lord and Savior. I'm not talking about no faggot or no sissy...Wait a minute! Let all the real men come on down here and take a bow...All the real men, I'm talking about the straight men...You ain't funny and you ain't cranky, but you're straight. Come on down here and walk around and praise God that you are straight. Thank him that you're straight. All the straight men that's proud to be a Christian, that's proud to be a man of God."

- [Bishop Carlton Pearson on CNN](#)



**Pastor preaches inclusion of gays**

Source: CNN

# The History of Black Sexuality





# Religiosity & Spirituality among Black SM Men

- Despite homonegativity, many AAMSM maintain high levels of religious involvement
  - Participation in ministries and auxiliaries (Pitt, 2010)
  - Awareness of/meeting place for other AAMSM (Jeffries et al, 2008)
  - Affirmation of African-American male identity, opportunities to serve their communities (Woodyard, Peterson, & Stokes, 2000)



# Religiosity & Spirituality among Black SM Men

- Conflicting messages lead to confusion, psychological distress, internalization of negative messages (Woodyard, Stokes, & Peterson, 2000)
- Attempts to “pass” as heterosexual in church while maintaining homosexual identity outside (Pitt, 2010)
- Development of coping strategies to resist anti-gay messages from religious organizations (Pitt, 2010)
- Personal spirituality provides resilience to anti-gay messages, acceptance of sexual orientation (Jeffries et al, 2008; Miller, 2007; Woodyard et al, 2000)



# IHNI Factor Analysis (N=261)

Item number	Item text	Factor loading
Factor 1: Gay affirmation (7 items)		
9	I see my homosexuality as a gift.	.81
6	I am thankful for my sexual orientation	.80
21	I am proud to be gay.	.79
1	I believe being gay is an important part of me.	.67
22	I believe that public schools should teach that homosexuality is normal.	.66
12	In general, I believe that homosexuality is as fulfilling as heterosexuality.	.63
8	I believe that more gay men should be shown in TV shows, movies, and commercials.	.50

# IHNI Factor Analysis (N=261)

Item number	Item text	Factor loading
<b>Factor 2: Personal and moral homonegativity (16 items)</b>		
15	Sometimes I get upset when I think about being attracted to men.	.83
<b>16</b>	<b>In my opinion, homosexuality is harmful to the order of society.</b>	<b>.82</b>
17	Sometimes I feel that I might be better off dead than gay.	.82
<b>19</b>	<b>I believe it is morally wrong for men to be attracted to each other.</b>	<b>.82</b>
5	I feel ashamed of my homosexuality.	.82
7	When I think about my attraction towards men, I feel unhappy.	.80
20	I sometimes feel that my homosexuality is embarrassing.	.80
3	When I think of my homosexuality, I feel depressed.	.79
<b>4</b>	<b>I believe that it is morally wrong for men to have sex with other men.</b>	<b>.77</b>
18	I sometimes resent my sexual orientation.	.76
23	I believe it is unfair that I am attracted to men instead of women.	.73
13	I am disturbed when people can tell I'm gay.	.66
<b>14</b>	<b>In general, I believe that gay men are more immoral than straight men.</b>	<b>.57</b>
11	I wish I could control my feelings of attraction toward other men.	.56
10	When people around me talk about homosexuality, I get nervous.	.56
<b>2</b>	<b>I believe it is OK for men to be attracted to other men in an emotional way, but it's not OK for them to have sex with each other.</b>	<b>.49</b>





# Thinking Intersectionally about LGBT Older Adults

- Racial disparities
  - Black & Hispanic LGBT older adults
    - More financial vulnerability
    - Higher risk of poor mental health
    - Higher rates of lifetime LGBT-related discrimination
    - Less family support after disclosure
    - Lower household income, education, identity affirmation
    - Higher levels of identity stigma
    - Higher spirituality

*(Kim, Jen, & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2017)*



# RECOMMENDATIONS



# Recommendations

- Increase visibility, awareness, and integration of LGBTQ+ POC lived experiences
- Examine and change our personal views and behaviors
- Assess the cultures of the institutions in which we operate

# How does the song end?



“The sky is the limit  
to what I can have...

Just believe and receive  
it, God will perform it  
today.”



# Contact Information

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