



A program of The Well Project



Women, Gender and Sexuality: *Identity, Attraction, Connection, and Community*

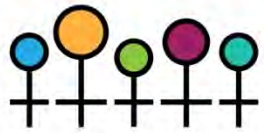
Tuesday, March 12, 2019

Together, we can change the course of the HIV epidemic...one woman at a time.

#onewomanatatime

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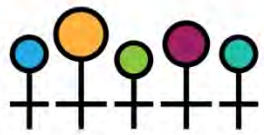
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Agenda

- Introductions
- Sexuality
- Gender identity
- Roundtable discussion
- Q&A



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Speakers



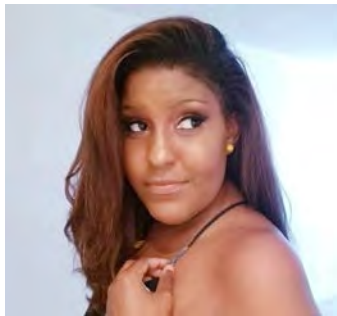
Dazon Dixon Diallo,
DHL, MPH
SisterLove, Inc.



Gina Brown, MSW



Tiommi Jenae Lockett



Tiffany Marrero



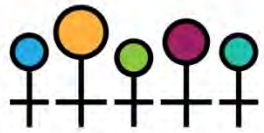
Maria Mejia



Krista Martel



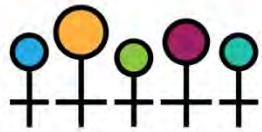
Olivia G. Ford



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Webinar Details

- Webinar will last approximately 90 minutes with Q&A at the end
- Use live chat box to communicate with other participants and panelists
- Enter questions for the panelists in the Q&A section (these will be posed at the end of the webinar)
- Participants' lines will be muted; use the 'raise hand' feature if you would like to be unmuted to ask a question



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About *WATCH!*

- ***WATCH!*** (Women's Advocacy and Treatment Coalition on HIV) is an ongoing HIV treatment advocacy and capacity-building webinar series
- The ***WATCH! 2019 series*** will take place throughout the year and will include **3-4 webinars**
- Webinars will be **recorded** and can be accessed on our website and [YouTube](#) after they take place
- **Certificates** for completed webinars available upon request



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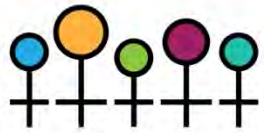
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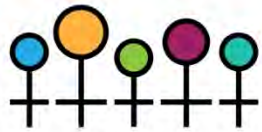


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Sexuality Is a Spectrum

- There are many ways to express a person's romantic, physical, emotional attractions to others
- Sexuality and gender identity are complex and can be **fluid**
- Connection with other people is exciting -- and there are so many ways to do it!





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What Is Sexuality?

- ***Sexuality*** (*n.*):
 - People's attraction to other people overall (also called "sexual orientation")
 - People's feeling of being sexual
 - Activities that have to do with being sexual
- Here we will primarily focus on the **first** definition -- to describe what and who people are attracted to when it comes to sex and intimate connection



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Sexuality Definitions

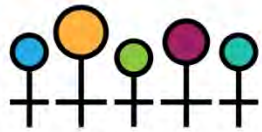
- **Asexual:** someone who does not experience sexual attraction toward any person, regardless of gender
- **Bisexual (bi):** someone who can have ongoing physical, romantic, emotional attractions to people of the same gender and another gender
- **Gay:** someone whose ongoing physical, romantic, emotional attraction is to people of the same gender, as in "gay men"
- **Heterosexual (straight):** someone whose ongoing physical, romantic, emotional attraction is to people of the "opposite" gender
- **Homosexual:** clinical term to describe someone whose ongoing sexual attraction is to people of the same gender; considered outdated and offensive www.thewellproject.org



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Sexuality Definitions

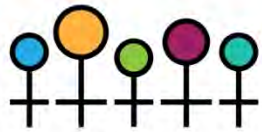
- **Lesbian:** a woman whose ongoing physical, romantic, emotional attraction is to other women
- **LGBTQ:** "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer"; "Q" can also stand for "questioning"
- **Pansexual:** someone who has the potential for emotional, romantic, physical attraction to people of any gender
- **Queer:** used to describe sexuality as not being exclusively straight, or because "lesbian" or "bisexual" feel limiting, or interchangeably with "LGBTQ"
- **Questioning:** someone in process of discovering and exploring their sexuality and/or gender identity
- **Same-gender-loving (SGL):** some prefer this term to describe attraction to people of the same gender



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What Is Sexuality?

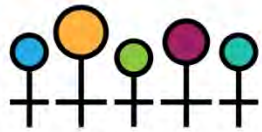
- Sexuality includes:
 - **identity** (what group a person considers themselves to be part of based on their sexuality)
 - **desires** (who or what a person feels attracted to)
 - **behaviors** (what sexual acts a person engages in)
- All these parts of a person's sexuality do not always “line up neatly;” ie, a woman who is attracted to women and has a woman partner may not always identify as a lesbian
- Not all people think about their sexuality in the same ways or using the same terms



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What Is Sexuality?

- Same-gender sexuality has become more acceptable in the past ~20 years
- Number of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual is increasing
 - Especially true among Millennials
 - First to grow up during a time when LGBTQ acceptance had increased
- Sexual minorities also less likely to be white than non-LGB population



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What Is Gender Identity?

Gender identity is not the same as sexuality

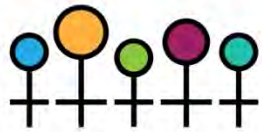
- **Sexuality** = who/what a person is attracted to
- **Gender identity** = who a person feels they are inside (regardless of what others assume)
- "LGBTQ" includes "T" for transgender
 - Though there is overlap, it is misleading to group transgender (a gender identity) with lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer (sexual orientations)



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What Is Gender Identity?

- **Gender binary:** the 2 genders ("male" and "female") most people think of when they think about gender
 - Considered limiting and oppressive
 - Often unfair consequences for people outside the binary
- There are many gender identities beyond and within “men” and “women”
- “Gender” often gets confused with “sex”
 - **Sex** (male, female, intersex): label given at or birth, based on biological characteristics (body parts, chromosomes)
 - **Gender:** ways that societies and cultures expect people to think, look, act based on assigned sex



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Gender Identity Definitions

- **Butch:** someone whose identity or expression leans towards masculinity; often masculine queer women/lesbians but can refer to any gender
- **Cisgender:** someone whose gender identity aligns with sex assigned to them at birth
- **Femme:** queer person of any gender who presents and acts in a traditionally feminine manner; often associated with feminine lesbians/queer women
- **Gender expression:** how people choose to show their gender identity on the outside, through clothing, appearance, behavior, language, voice, or other outer characteristics; also called "gender presentation"



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Gender Identity Definitions

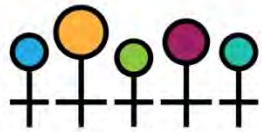
- **Gender minority:** person or group whose gender identity differs from that of the majority in society
- **Gender nonconforming:** someone whose behavior does not conform to traditional expectations of gender/whose gender expression does not fit easily into a single category
- **Genderqueer:** someone who rejects notions of fixed gender categories; may see themselves as both male and female, neither male nor female, or completely outside these categories
- **Intersex:** natural variations of people's physical bodies that are different from the narrow definitions of male or female
 - Some traits visible at birth (ie, baby having genitals that are not clearly male or female); others may not appear until puberty or show on the outside at all



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Gender Identity Definitions

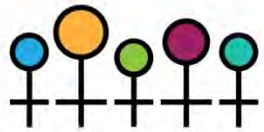
- **Nonbinary:** someone who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman; may identify as both, in between, or completely outside these labels; may also identify as transgender
- **Transgender:** someone whose gender identity and/or expression is different from sex assigned at birth
- **Two Spirit:** umbrella term used by some indigenous people in North America to describe gender identities beyond binary of male and female



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Sharing Pronouns

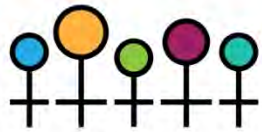
- **Pronouns** describe a person or thing, especially when not present
 - People often make (sometimes hurtful) assumptions based on name or appearance about which pronouns that person wants used
- It's often, **but not always**, true that people identifying as men use "he", as women use "she"
 - ie, a cisgender woman may use gender-neutral pronouns like "they/their," "ze/hir," "ze/zir"
- Sharing your own pronouns invites others to share their pronouns with you
 - Sharing in group spaces can help create a setting that welcomes gender nonconforming and intersex folks
 - May not be safe for some people to share – respect personal boundaries



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Sexuality and Stigma

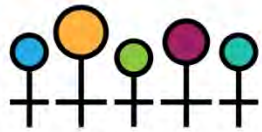
- Many cultures have some stigma against people who are not strictly heterosexual
 - Shows in common, everyday assumptions that everyone is straight (heteronormativity)
 - When the widespread belief is that heterosexuality is the "norm" it is easier for anti-LGBTQ violence, policies, laws to continue
- It may not be safe for a person who is not heterosexual to be open about their sexuality
 - Same-sex sexuality against the law in 73 countries (as of 2/11/2019)



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Examples of Sexuality-based Stigma

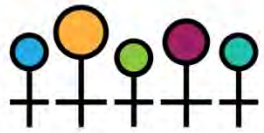
- **Tanzania (2018):** prominent politician ordered roundup and arrest of LGBTQ people in capital city
- **Russia (2013):** vague law made virtually all public displays of queer identity illegal
 - Numerous LGBTQ hate crimes followed
 - Numerous reports of torture, some deaths, of LGBTQ community members by law enforcement in Chechnya
 - Asylum applications from Russia to the U.S. have spiked during this time; continue to rise each year



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Examples of Sexuality-based Stigma

- **Uganda** (2014): law some called "kill the gays bill" attempted to punish same-sex relations with life imprisonment or death penalty
 - Later found to be invalid but it resulted in huge surge of anti-LGBTQ violence, murder of a prominent activist
- **United States**: while a destination for people seeking safety from violence due to their sexuality, until recently:
 - Same-gender sexuality was illegal in many U.S. states (until 2003)
 - Same-gender marriage was not allowed in every state (until 2015)

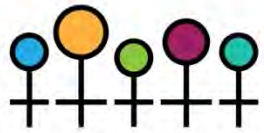


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Sexuality and Stigma

But there's good news!

- Even in countries where a person can go to prison for being who they are and loving who they love, people **resist, form communities and organizations, connect with and fight for one another**
- The **Indian** Supreme Court (2018) voted to remove a law that made same-gender sexual relations a crime

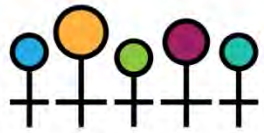


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What are Sexual Human Rights?

Sexual rights are universal human rights based on the inherent freedom, dignity, and equality of all human beings.

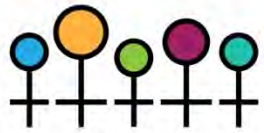
In order to assure that human beings and societies develop health sexuality, the following sexual rights must be recognized, promoted, respected, and defended by all societies through all means. Sexual health is the result of an environment that recognizes, respects and exercises these sexual rights.



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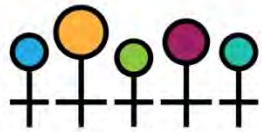
- The right to sexual freedom
- The right to sexual autonomy, sexual integrity and safety of the sexual body
- The right to sexual privacy
- The right to sexual equity and equality
- The right to sexual pleasure
- The right to emotional sexual expression



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What are Sexual Human Rights?

- The right to sexually associate freely
- The right to make free and responsible reproductive choices
- The right to comprehensive sexual information/education based on scientific inquiry
- The right to comprehensive sexuality education
- The right to sexual health care



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Stigma and Sexuality in the HIV Community

- Modern LGBTQ advocacy was shaped by early HIV activism
 - In the epidemic's early days, many more gay men were closeted (hiding their sexuality); few strong gay communities in many places
 - HIV was believed to only affect gay men; stigma against being gay and having HIV fueled one another, fanned flames of public hatred and fear
- Gay men came out in massive numbers – an important tactic to fight for advances in HIV treatment, care, and policy



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Stigma and Sexuality in the HIV Community

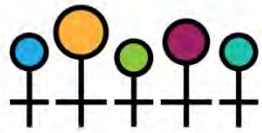
- Men who fought to come out as gay and living with HIV (or who were outed by others) suffered great consequences
 - Lost families, jobs, often their entire previous life
 - HIV community owes much to their courage and struggles
- Gay men continue to be the most visible face of the HIV community in many parts of the globe
- Very little said about women living with HIV whose primary relationships are with other women or transgender men



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Stigma and Sexuality in the HIV Community

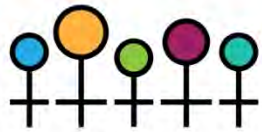
- Transgender women are highly vulnerable to HIV – roughly 1 in 5 U.S. transgender women are thought to be living with HIV
- Transgender men are also vulnerable – particularly those who have sex with cisgender men
 - Transgender men's sexuality and HIV risk are not well studied or understood
- Important to understand and document experiences and unique health needs of all of our communities



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Finding Voice, Finding Community

- Safety is one reason there are such tight-knit communities of people based on sexuality
 - Can identify spaces for support, to be themselves, to find others to fight for and with them
- Communities people connect with based on sexuality may change as their identity changes, over time
- Much progress has been made, but it **still takes a lot of courage for women to be open about their sexuality and the truth of its complexity**
- If this is part of your journey, know that ***you are not alone!***



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Finding Voice, Finding Community

- Local, national, international groups celebrate and affirm sexual diversity (see fact sheet)
- Online communities of LGBTQ people have flourished since the dawn of the Internet
- Social medial platforms like Facebook can also be good places to find community
- Several AGLM bloggers (and panelists on this webinar!) have written about sexuality
 - [4 Strikes Against Me...But I am Not Out!](#) by Maria T. Mejia
 - [I Have a Secret](#), by Gina Brown
 - [Why My Ex and Best Friend Li and I Broke Up After 10 Years Together and Married Legally](#), by Maria T. Mejia



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Personal Experiences and Perspectives on Sexuality and Gender

**Gina Brown, MSW; Tiommi Jenae Luckett;
Tiffany Marrero; Maria Mejia**

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Learn More!

- To learn more, and for links to articles featuring more details, please read the full fact sheet:
 - [Women, Gender, and Sexuality: Identity, Attraction, Connection, and Community](#)
- For more fact sheets and to connect to our community of women living with HIV, visit:
 - [www.thewellproject.org](#)
 - [www.facebook.com/thewellproject](#)
 - [www.twitter.com/thewellproject](#)
 - [www.instagram.com/thewellprojecthiv](#)
 - [www.youtube.com/thewellprojecthiv](#)