

UNC SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK CLINICAL LECTURE SERIES
The Frank Daniels Endowed Lecture

**Trauma Work and Marginalized Groups:
Ethical Practice with Gender
Non-Conforming Individuals**

February 13, 2017

Tavi Hancock, LCSW
Durham, NC

In Memory Of



Inspired By



Also Inspired by the Work of Dr. Sand Chang



Things to Remember

- In discussing groups of people always assume that someone of that Identity is in the room with you
- Be mindful and aware of your own types of privilege and power
- We can talk about common themes without assuming universal truths

Experience Level

Please raise your hand if you ...

- have received training in working with transgender people.
- have received training on transgender issues by a transgender person.
- have worked with a transgender person.

Please turn to person next to you and brainstorm considerations and dilemmas that might arise.

JUNE 9, 2014

TIME

THE TRANSGENDER TIPPING POINT

America's next
civil rights frontier

BY KATY STEINMETZ



Laverne Cox, a star of *Orange Is the New Black*, is one of an estimated 1.5 million Americans who identify as transgender

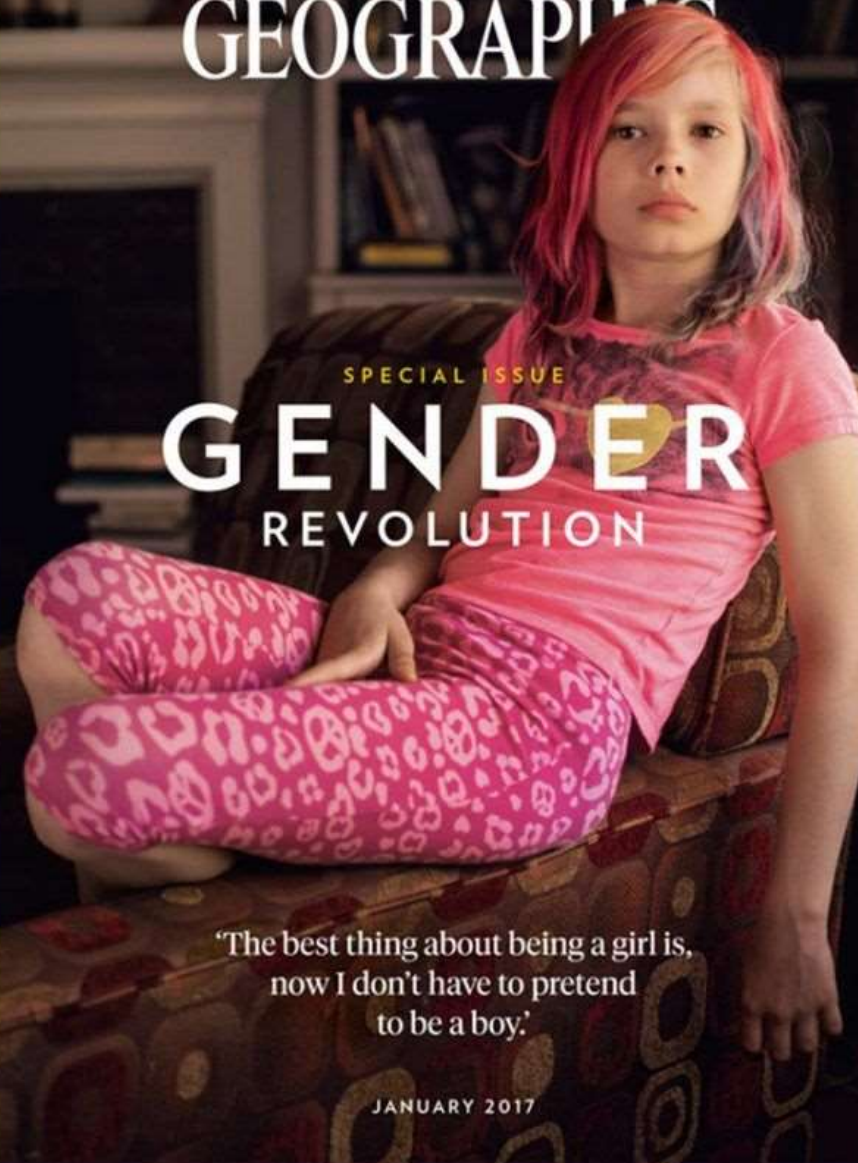
time.com

MAKING A MAN | THE SCIENCE OF GENDER | GIRLS AT RISK

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

SPECIAL ISSUE

GENDER REVOLUTION



"The best thing about being a girl is,
now I don't have to pretend
to be a boy."

JANUARY 2017

Increased Awareness

Neither Male Nor Female: Oregon Resident Legally Recognized As Third Gender

June 17, 2016 · 5:55 PM ET
Heard on All Things Considered

KRISTIAN FODEN-VENCIL

FROM 



...ile, married a woman and had a child. But Shupe felt neither male nor fully female. Now, an
...ipe to identify as non-binary, believed to be a first in the United States.

Kristian Foden-Vencil/KPBS News

Reality: State of Emergency

- ❖ 45% of those with unsupportive families have experienced homelessness, 30% of all TGNC have.
- ❖ 54% of those with unsupportive families have attempted suicide, 40% of all TGNC people have.
- ❖ 77% of TGNC K-12 students have been harassed, including 24% of whom have been assaulted at school, 17% have dropped out of school due to harassment (school pushout).
- ❖ 26 Trans people murdered in the US in 2016, 2 within the first week of 2017. Almost all were POC.
- ❖ 54% have experienced Intimate Partner Violence.

State of Emergency Continued

- **3x** higher unemployment rate than general pop
- **29%** living in poverty, 2x rate of general pop.
- **68%** do not have ID documents reflecting preferred name and gender, or do not have documents that match. Cost is cited as main barrier to this.
- **1/3** of TGNC with ID that seems inconsistent with appearance have been harassed, made to leave an establishment, or assaulted.
- Over **55%** of those seeking insurance coverage for gender related surgery were denied.

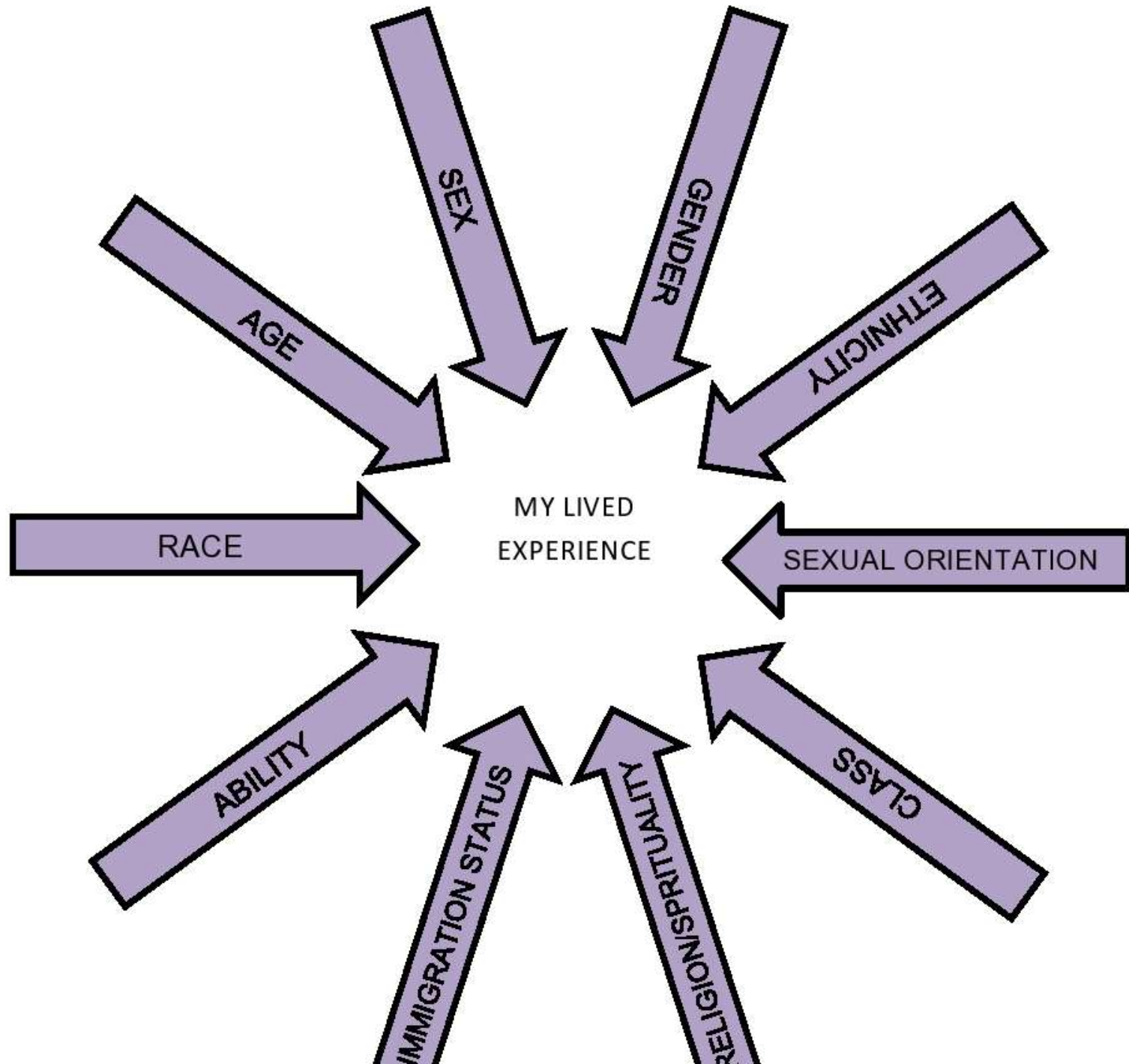
Reality Continued

- ❖ **1/3** who saw a healthcare provider in the past year reported a negative experience related to gender identity by the provider or medical employees.
- ❖ TGNC people are living with HIV at **5x** the rate of the general population.
- ❖ Over **30%** who were employed in the past year report being fired, denied promotion, or harassed and mistreated due to gender expression or identity.
- ❖ **77%** took steps to hide their gender identity at work to avoid mistreatment.

Ongoing, Complex Traumatic Experiences

- 70% of those who stayed in a shelter in past year reported being harassed, sexually or physically assaulted, or kicked out due to being transgender
- TGNC people are 4x less likely to own a home than the general US population.
- 1 in 5 TGNC have participated in underground economy (criminalized activity) for income.
- Of those arrested in past year, 58% experienced mistreatment such as being misgendered repeatedly, physical or sexual assault, and being coerced into sexual activity to avoid jail.

Intersectional Identities





HE OR SHE?

CUT TO SEE

D'awwww! Is it a boy or a girl?

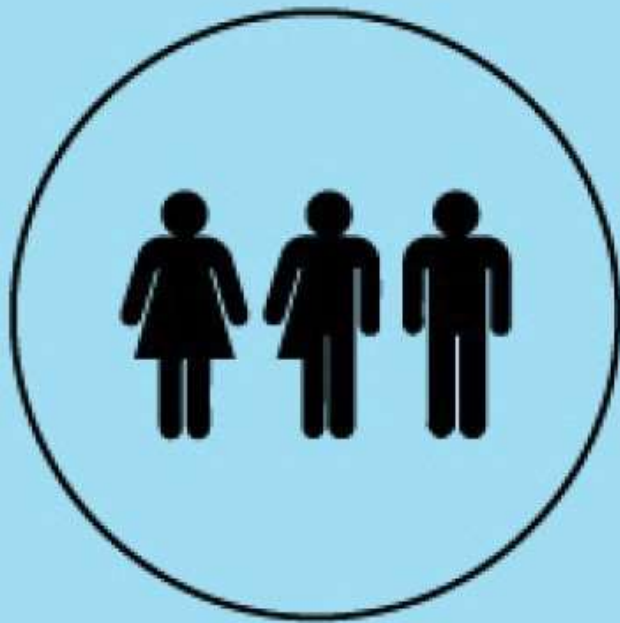
Not sure. It hasn't told me yet.



Cisgender: One who identifies with the sex assigned at birth

Cisgender Privilege: Unearned benefits based on alignment of assigned sex and felt gender

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO



If you can use public bathrooms

CHECK YOUR PRIVILEGE:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CISGENDER* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MALE | <input type="checkbox"/> ABLE-BODIED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CLASS | <input type="checkbox"/> HETEROSEXUAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHRISTIAN | |

*CISGENDER: a description for a person whose gender identity, gender expression and biological sex all align

privilege: unearned access to social power based on membership in a

Terminology

Transgender is not a noun or verb.

Correct: “Transgender people” “She's a transgender woman”.

Incorrect: “The transgenders,” “He's going to trans,” “They're transgendered,” “Those People.”

Some gender non-conforming people identify as trans and others do not. Some might identify as non-binary and trans or genderqueer and not trans.

Don't assume someone's identity based on appearance. Ask how someone identifies. Normalize asking about pronouns, even if you think you're among cis people.

Some Pronoun Possibilities

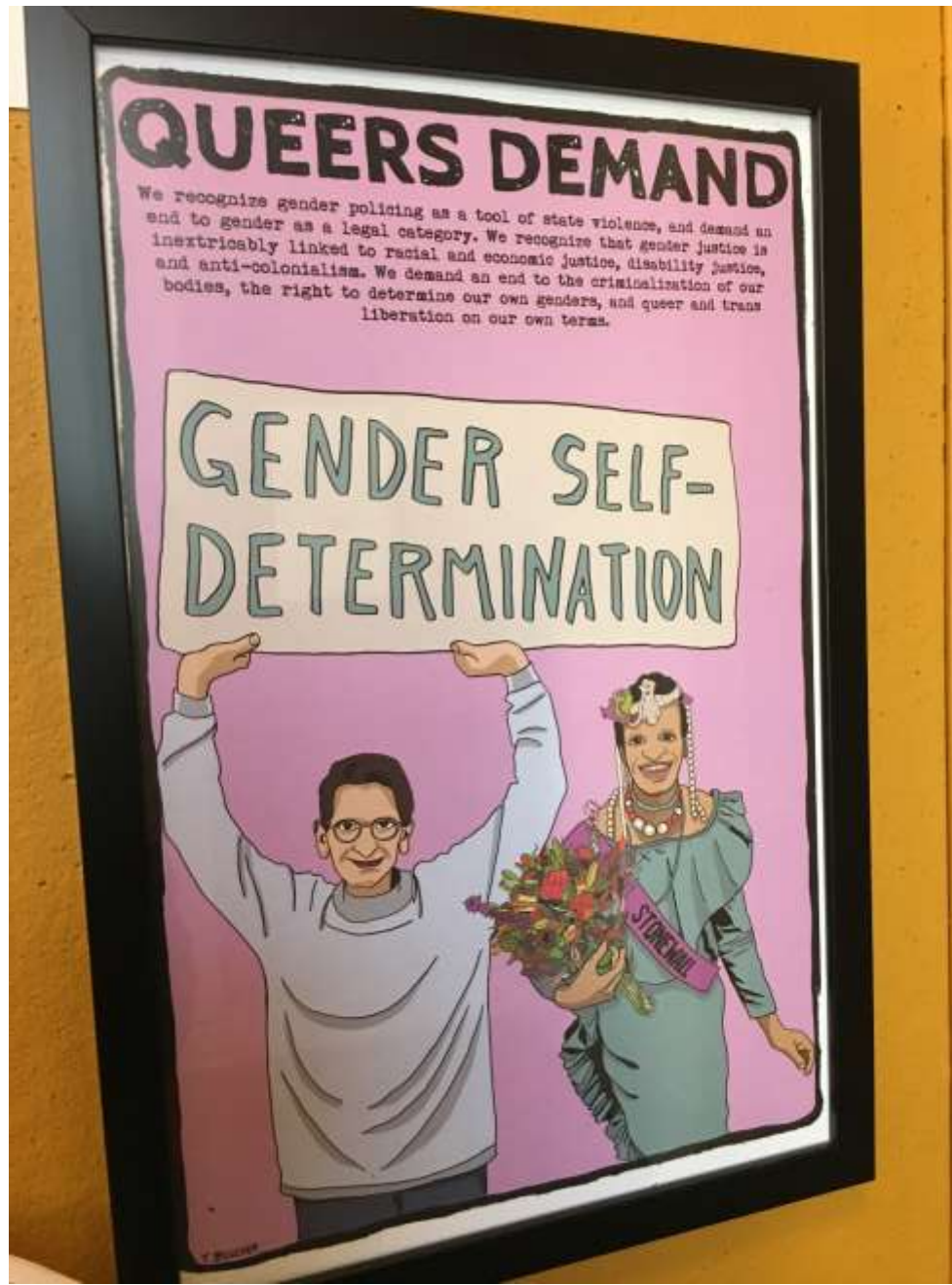
	Subject	Object	Pronoun	Pronunciation
Gender Binary	she	her	hers	as it looks
	he	him	his	as it looks
Gender Neutral	they*	them*	their*	as it looks
	ze	hir	hirs	zhee, here, heres
	ze	zir	zirs	zhee, zhere, zheres
	xe	xem	xyr	zhee, zhem, zhere

**used as singular*

Common Misconceptions

- ◆ When someone transitions, they are now “straight.” (Nope, trans people can be any sexual orientation.)
- ◆ All trans people know when they are young children that they are “in the wrong body.” (Nope, people recognize and understand their gender identity at a range of ages and in a variety of ways.)
- ◆ Transgender people want surgery to become the “opposite” sex. (Nope, some binary trans people do not desire any surgeries, while some non-binary people do. The types of surgeries someone might want vary and many or most people don't have financial access.)

Self Determination



Ethical Standard 1.02

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to **self-determination** and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals.

Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination when, in the social workers' professional judgment, clients' actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves or others.

Implicit Bias

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control.

Let's Not Forget: Trans and Gender Non-Conforming People are Resilient and Powerful



Trauma and TGNC Communities

- ◆28% avoid medical settings due to fear of discrimination.

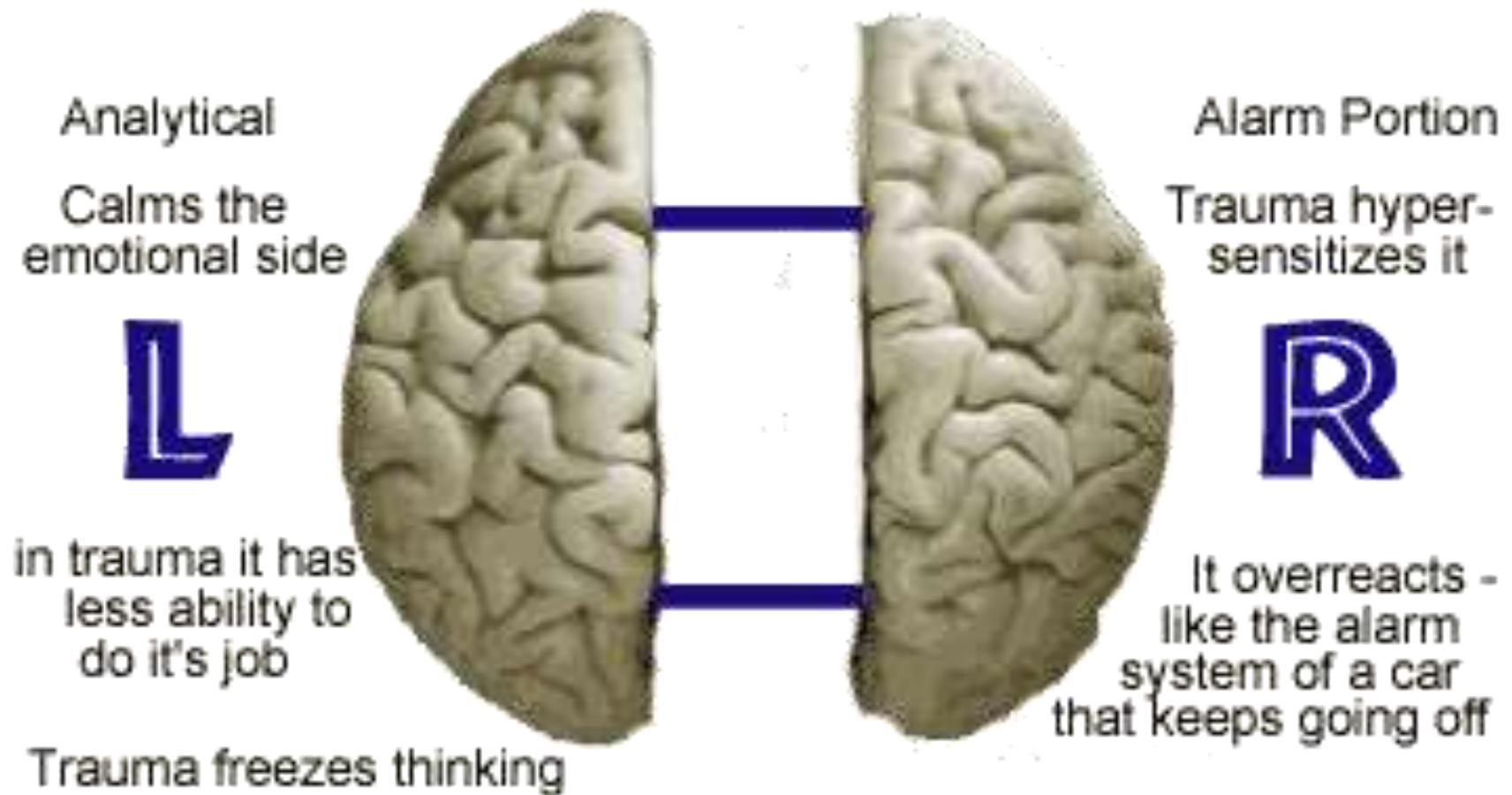
Historically psychiatry, mental health, and social work fields have discriminated against or mistreated trans folx.

- ◆50% report having to educate their medical or mental health provider.

Types of Trauma

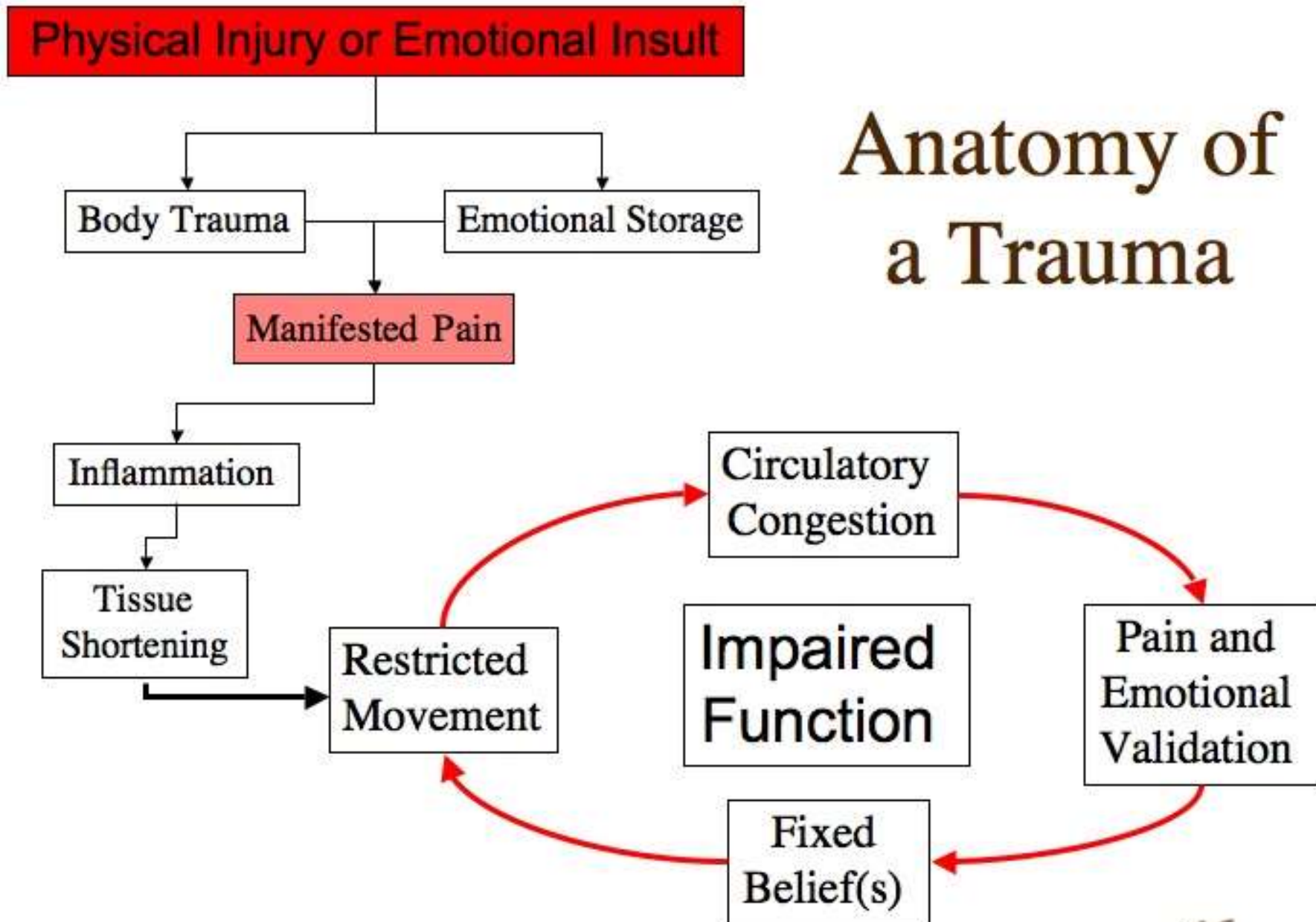
- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Preverbal/epigenetic
- Intergenerational / ancestral
- Grief / loss
- Religious
- Intimate
- Partner / domestic
- Systematic and institutional violence / discrimination
- Vicarious community trauma

Trauma and the Brain



Trauma and the Body

Anatomy of a Trauma



MicroAggressions

Subtle Forms of Discrimination

Lack of Safe and Accessible Spaces



Abuse, Sexual Assault, Intimate Partner Violence

50% of all Trans folx have experienced sexual abuse or assault in their lifetimes.

Many domestic violence or sexual violence survivor programs are not inclusive of or informed regarding transgender people

Resource: FORGE (online webinars, publications and resources for download for clinicians as well as some for use with clients)

Institutionalized Discrimination/Oppression

HB2



Trump/Pence Campaign/Election

DEAR INDIANA GOV. MIKE PENCE,

Trans people and immigrants deserve
EQUAL RIGHTS and **RESPECT**.

Everyone should be able
to get a legal name
change regardless of
citizenship status.

Change the **LAW!**

Transgender
Law Center

**Mike Pence Wanted to Use
HIV/AIDS Money to Fund
Conversion Therapy**



Mike Pence, Indiana Governor and Donald Trump's running mate, said in 2000 that he was in favor of sending money allocated to care for people with HIV/AIDS to organizations that provide conversion therapy.

Findings of the Study

- ◆Prevalence of mood disorders increased over **30%** among LGBTQ+ respondents in states with anti-LGBTQ+ campaigns and legislation
- ◆Prevalence of generalized anxiety disorder in the same respondents increased **248%**
- ◆Prevalence of alcohol use disorders increased 42% in the LGBTQ+ respondents in states with anti-LGBTQ+ campaigns and legislation
- ◆In comparison, straight, cis respondents in the same states did not show increase in mood disorders. They did show increase in anxiety disorder (27%) and alcohol use (18%).

Mental Health Outcomes / Trauma Indicators

- ◆Major Depression (hopelessness, helplessness)
- ◆Dissociation
- ◆Generalized Anxiety
- ◆Early initiation of substance abuse (2011 study: 25% report abusing substances specifically to cope with discrimination regarding gender)
- ◆Shame, Internalized Transphobia
- ◆Suicidal Ideation
- ◆Self Injury
- ◆Anger
- ◆Physical Pain Symptoms
- ◆Social Isolation/Withdrawal

Protective Factors/Improved Outcomes

- ◆ Social Policy Change to Enhance Protections
- ◆ Study in 2010 on effects of discrimination showed that marginalized people who **Did Not Accept** the discrimination as valid and normal and then **Disclosed and Discussed** their experience with others with shared identity had lower rates of psychiatric disorders.

This suggests that validating clients' experiences of discrimination and oppression and assisting with connection to supportive spaces of those with shared identities could lead to improved outcomes.

6.04 Social and Political Action



Ethical Pitfalls in Clinical Practice

- ◆ Assuming that one identity explains everything
- ◆ Asking inappropriate questions
- ◆ Not examining our own biases and ways our varying privileges might affect how we're viewing the client or our approach
- ◆ Conducting modalities such as: Somatic Experiencing, Yoga, EMDR, Mindfulness without checking in each time about a client's comfort level with being “in the body” or “bringing awareness” to the body. Not being aware of gendered language in “scripts” used in different treatments.

Ethical Pitfalls Continued

- ◆Not practicing new pronouns or names outside of session and then getting them wrong or avoiding it altogether when we see clients. Not checking in with clients, especially minors about how they want to be referred to with others (family members, teachers, school counselors, etc.)

- ◆Quote from therapist: “I realized that informed consent really is a paradigm shift from the ways I was trained to practice therapy.”

- ◆4.01 Competence

Not keeping up with new research, reading, training, or seeking consultation when needed.

Not having any personal relationships with trans people outside of the office setting.

Types of Trauma Treatment

- ◆EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Re-processing) Enhancement by Dr. Sand Chang: “Phase Zero= Therapist Humility”
“Phase Two= Future Empowered Transitioned or Authentic Self”
- ◆Somatic Experiencing
- ◆DBT (seek Skills Training Groups for gender non-conforming and transgender folx if your client wishes and inquire about trans-affirming environment of any group you are referring to)

Video of session
with 12 year old trans client

EMDR & Positive Cognition

Tavi's Resources

- Monthly consultation group for clinicians seeking to improve skills with trans and gender non-conforming clients. Spring/summer session beginning soon. Email tavi.castle.hancock@gmail.com for information.
- Individual consultation, call or email.
- DBT Skills Group for Trans and GNC ages 15 and up. Call 919-275-2216.
- QORDS summer camp, for queer and trans youth and youth of LGBTQ+ families ages 12-17, www.qords.org

Other Resources



Transgender Law Center

Making Authentic Lives Possible

Bibliography

- Hatzenbuehler, M., McLaughlin, K., Keyes, K. and Hasin, D. (2010). The Impact of Institutional Discrimination on Psychiatric Disorders in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations: A Prospective Study. *American Journal of Public Health. V. 100(3)*, 452-459.
- American Institute for Research. (2013). Practice Guidelines for the Delivery of Trauma-Informed and GLBTQ Culturally-Competent Care.
- McLaughlin, K., Hatzenbuehler, M., Keyes, K. (2010). Responses to Discrimination and Psychiatric Disorders Among Black, Hispanic, Female, and Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals. *American Journal of Public Health. V. 100(8)*, 1477-1484.
- Singh, A., Hwanhg, S., Chang, S. C., & White, B. (2016). Affirmative Counseling with Trans/Gender-variant People of Color. In A. A. Singh & l. m. dickey (Eds.). *Affirmative counseling and psychological practice with transgender and gender nonconforming clients*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Bibliography Continued

dickey, l. m., Singh, A. A., Chang, S. C., & Rehrig, M. Advocacy and Social Justice: The Next Generation of Counseling and Psychological Practice With Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Clients. In A. A. Singh & l. m. dickey (Eds.). *Affirmative counseling and psychological practice with transgender and gender nonconforming clients*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Chang, S. C. (2016). EMDR Therapy as Transgender-Affirmative Care. EMDR as a Culturally Attuned and Effective Psychotherapy. In M. Nickerson (Ed.), *Cultural competence and healing culturally based trauma with EMDR therapy: Innovative strategies and protocols*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.

National Council for Behavioral Health. Trauma in the LGBTQ Community: What Practitioners Should Know in the Wake of Orlando Shootings.